

# Taking Control of Addiction

The following ten tips from Calvary Center are provided to help those with an addiction begin to take control.

- Surrender your addiction to God. Admit you are powerless over your addiction and turn to the One who has all power.
- Join a recovery group and become involved in service. Twelve-step groups, church groups, Celebrate Recovery groups, and aftercare groups all provide safe places to receive support.
- Get a sponsor. Find someone in recovery who has what you want and spend time with them on a regular basis.
- Work the 12-steps of Alcoholics Anonymous with the guidance of your sponsor.
- Continue to take ongoing inventories of yourself. When you are wrong, confess it to God and another person.
- Make amends to the people you have harmed. When your “side of the street” is clean, guilt and shame can disappear and no longer trigger a relapse.
- Be aware of your triggers and have a plan to cope with them.
- Reach out to others. By sharing your recovery with others, you strengthen your own recovery program.
- Forgive those who have hurt you. Resentment is the number one cause of relapse. Holding on to resentment is like drinking poison and waiting for the other person to die.
- Earn the trust back from your loved ones. Be honest. When you say you will do something, do it and let them hold you accountable.

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The following are some “Do’s and Don’ts for Family and Friends of Alcoholics from Cheryl LaMastra, L.P.C., of Meier Clinics

1. Recognize the problem when there is one. Sometimes wives get maternal gratification from caring for drinking husbands and children may prefer a tipsy, happy daddy to a sour, sober one.
2. Don’t lecture or preach—it won’t help.
  - Let the alcoholic face the consequences of his/her behavior. Don’t protect the person.
  - Don’t pick up the pieces. Let the person pass out and leave them there. If they throw up, let them clean up after themselves in the morning.
  - Be matter-of-fact; don’t pretend it is funny.
  - Don’t say, “I told you so.”
  - Don’t buy the alcoholic a drink.
  - Don’t call in sick to work or school for your family member or friend.
  - Don’t bail the person out of jail.
  - Let *them* explain—not *you*. Let *them* apologize—not *you*.
  - Stop trying to control the person’s drinking behavior. You can’t!
  - Stop playing “games.” Stop hiding bottles or pouring them down the drain. Stop babying them.
  - Allow the alcoholic to be responsible for his/her own behavior.
3. Don’t give up hope. Alcoholics *can* recover.
4. “Save” yourself and get some support through Al-Anon, Alateen, or another support group, or seek individual professional counseling.

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