



### Alcohol Issues

Caregivers can be especially vulnerable to problems involving alcohol in two ways. They themselves can drink or take prescription drugs to ease the stress and pain of working overtime to care for a loved one or client. Second, caregivers are naturals at taking care of someone else, and can find themselves involved with a person who has alcohol dependence and needs someone to care for him or her.



Alcoholism is a disease that includes the following four symptoms:

- **Craving**—A strong need, or urge, to drink.
- **Loss of control**—Not being able to stop drinking once drinking has begun.
- **Physical dependence**—Withdrawal symptoms, such as nausea, sweating, shakiness, and anxiety after stopping drinking.
- **Tolerance**—The need to drink greater amounts of alcohol to get “high.”

### What is a safe level of drinking?

For most adults, moderate alcohol use is up to two drinks per day for men and one drink per day for women and older people. (One drink equals one 12-ounce bottle of beer or wine cooler, one 5-ounce glass of wine, or 1.5 ounces of 80-proof distilled spirits.) The beer or two you could drink without consequence in your 30s or 40s has more impact in your 60s or 70s.

Certain people should not drink at all, however:

- Women who are pregnant or trying to become pregnant
- People who plan to drive or engage in other activities that require alertness and skill (such as using high-speed machinery)
- People taking certain over-the-counter or prescription medications
- People with medical conditions that can be made worse by drinking
- Recovering alcoholics
- People younger than age 21.

There are many national and local resources that can help. The National Drug and Alcohol Treatment Referral Routing Service provides a hotline, 800-662-HELP, offering various resource information. Through this service you can speak directly to a representative concerning substance abuse treatment, request printed material on alcohol or other drugs, or obtain substance abuse treatment referral information in your State.

### Taking Care of Yourself—Dealing with Critical People

We are wired to go immediately into defensive mode when criticized. People criticize us for the same reason we criticize them. They may feel badly about themselves and reflexively get judgmental or lash out. Take time to genuinely consider the other person's point of view. We can learn to listen differently, to ask questions, to apologize for the part we play and define how we see things differently.

Tips to help you defuse a fight when an angry person approaches you:

1. **Recognize your defensiveness.** Catch yourself when you are focusing on the inaccuracies and exaggerations.
2. **Breathe.** Calm yourself with slow, deep breaths.
3. **Listen only to understand.** Do not interrupt, correct facts, or bring up your own criticisms.
4. **Apologize for your part.** It will help shift the exchange out of combat into collaboration. Save your thoughts about their part until later.
5. **Let the offended party know he or she has been heard and that you will continue to think about the conversation.**
6. **Draw the line at insults.** Exit from rudeness while offering the possibility of discussing the issue again.

Source: *Why Won't You Apologize?: Healing Big Betrayals and Everyday Hurts* by Harriet Lerner PhD



### Live Life Laughing!

Before you judge the younger generation remember who raised them.



### Inspiration

When you inherit a broken family, you can't throw it away and get a new one. What you can do is find people and situations that provide for you what your family cannot.

~ Iyanla Vanzant

### Memory Care

Individuals with moderate dementia may not remember how much they drank and may inadvertently partake in heavy drinking without even realizing it.