

## Character Traits of the Alcoholic

1. Grandiosity, put very simply, is an exaggeration of one's own importance. This can be demonstrated either in terms of one's strengths or weaknesses. In either case it is blatantly self-seeking or self-serving, putting oneself at the centre of attention, from the "big me" who has asked the answers to the "poor me" whose cup of self-pity runneth over and wants all of our attention. (Ask RecoverOz about our booklet on Grandiosity)

2. Judgmentalism is mutually related to grandiosity. It means that the alcoholic is prone to make value judgments - strikingly inappropriate evaluations - usually in terms of "goodness" or "badness".

3. Intolerance leaves no room for delaying the gratification of personal desires. This is accomplished by gross confusion of priorities with the result that a mere whim or passing fancy is mistakenly given more importance than genuine personal needs.

4. Impulsivity is the result of intolerance or the lack of ability to delay gratification of personal desires. Impulsivity describes behaviour which is heedless of the ultimate consequence for self or others.

5. Indecisiveness is related to impulsivity in the sense that while the latter takes no realistic account of the consequences of the actions, the former precludes effective action altogether. Indecisiveness stems from an unrealistic exaggeration of the negative possibilities of the action; so one wavers between two or more possible courses of action, more times than not- nothing gets done.

These conditions, grandiosity, judgmentalism, intolerance, impulsivity, and indecisiveness taken separately or together can lead to the following:

a) Mood swings, which are unrelated to the circumstances to which one tries to link them. Alcoholics zero in on what they want others to think is the cause of the mood swing, when it isn't that at all. More often than not it is something much deeper than the reason given. Inversely it can also be something totally insignificant with no substance at all (e.g. the sugar is too sweet or the donut is too round). Any excuse will do.

b) Unable to demonstrate emotions freely, naturally and without constraint. No emotional spontaneity, no genuine spark.

c) Introspection. A very healthy thing to do is difficult if not impossible for the "dry drunk". It means to look inward to one's examining each thought and desire, which is linked directly to one's attitude.

d) Detachment. Become aloof, display indifference, don't care one way or the other, no special likes or dislikes, they withdraw.

e) Self-absorption- with a tendency to call attention to whatever they have attained. Narcissism, which is quite simply self-love. They become pompous asses.

f) The inability to appreciate or enjoy themselves - nothing satisfies.

g) Evidence of disorganization, is easily distracted, complains of boredom, and nothing seems to fit.

h) A nostalgia sets in, a kind of wistful yearning for something of the past, such as freedom from care associated (falsely) with drinking, bars, drinking associates, and friends; the music, blue lights, and tinkle of the ice cubes in a glass in the neighbourhood saloon.

i) There can be a kind of romanticism, which includes unrealistic valuations of lifestyles and character traits which can be and usually are objectively dangerous to one's sobriety.

j) Escapism. Fantasizing, daydreaming, and wishful thinking are very much in evidence the individual slips farther and farther from reality.

***Recoveroz has a number of booklets on all the subject matter above. Give us a call to ask about them.***