

STEPS FOR RECOVERY

The 3 Keys to Achieving Long Term Sobriety

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The statistics are frightening when it comes to recovery from drug and alcohol addiction. Based on most available data, very few will manage to achieve continuous, long-term sobriety. While it certainly is possible, the odds are stacked against us. Many will struggle and fail to achieve this goal, so if you want to succeed, you need to have a firm grip on a few key principles that can propel you to success.

1. The zero tolerance policy

It is amazing how much this concept gets avoided and lost in the shuffle of spiritual wisdom in typical recovery circles. The idea is simple and powerful: you make a pact with yourself that you will not use drugs and alcohol no matter what, period. Then the rest of your life is simply structured around maintaining peace, serenity, and growth in pursuit of this goal.

But the key here is that the zero tolerance policy must come first. You simply "cannot go there." Practicing this can have a real impact on your overall level of happiness as well.

For example, if you are having a rough day and are experiencing thoughts of wanting to drink or use drugs, you have to use the zero tolerance policy and shut this down immediately. If you find that this isn't working, and the thoughts of using keep returning, then you must take immediate action to overcome your craving....before it escalates further. Different people might have different coping mechanisms for this. For example, some might call a friend or a sponsor, others might go to a meeting, and others might call a friend in recovery and share about their thoughts of using. Whatever works for you is what works....the key is that you need to be proactive in this solution and always maintain the zero tolerance policy with yourself. This means shutting down any glorification or romancing thoughts of drinking or using drugs.

2. Holistic approach

As your recovery continues and start to accumulate more time sober, the challenge of staying clean on a day-to-day basis starts becoming a little easier, and actually finding peace, serenity, and balance in your everyday life becomes the new priority. Relapse is still a threat, and always will be of course, but now the challenge starts shifting away from simply abstinence and towards achieving something greater with your life.

A holistic approach to recovery is what drives success in this area. As your recovery progresses, life becomes meaningful again, and the need for balance becomes increasingly important as the recovering person mounts more and more responsibilities in their life. There are a number of ways that a broad, holistic approach to recovery can facilitate achieving this balance for a lasting and powerful sobriety.

3. Creative life with vision and purpose

Want to know what really motivates the recovering alcoholic and has the potential to supercharge their recovery? The answer lies in moving beyond mere abstinence from chemicals and discovering the creative new life in recovery. This is about finding your passion and purpose in a new life while growing as a person and possibly helping other people in a meaningful way. Life becomes exciting again and you start to look forward to each new day.

Remember how exciting and fun the "good times" were when you first started drinking and drugging? Those days are gone forever, but you can start living with that same passion and excitement in your life again by discovering the creative life and applying the principles to your recovery.