

ALCOHOLISM — FROM PLEASURE TO PROBLEMS

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❑ PSYCHOLOGICAL PROFILE OF AN ALCOHOLIC

Alcoholism is a prolonged and progressive illness, fatal and deadly if not checked.

Behaviour ranges from pleasurable social participation to nightmares for the family.

✓ Alcohol stimulates centers responsible for pleasure and other desirable sensations.

✓ Drinking becomes necessary to deal with people at work and interact socially .

✓ Alcohol dominates thinking, emotions, and actions.

Graduation from occasional to regular drinking and then problematic drinking.

- Loss of control over the quantity or the duration or the frequency of drinks.
- Getting preoccupied with drinking and denying their dependence.
- And continue to drink or say “Cannot give it up”.

A false belief that "I can hold my liquor."
perpetuates the malady.

❑ May hold the liquor but at what cost?

➤ Losing your temper, indulging in violent and abusive behavior towards your spouse and children.

What happens further down the road?

- Increasing amounts of alcohol to produce the desired effect.
- Need to continue drinking in spite of the knowledge of its dangers.
- Withholding under pressure, deliberate or compulsive produces withdrawal symptoms.

Causes of Alcoholism Relapse

Physical dependence alone is not the cause of alcoholism.

➤ The pain of withdrawal tempts a person to drink again.

➤ Other causes are related to Biology, Genetics, Culture and Psychology.

Following people are at risk of becoming dependent

People with Positive family history.

➤ Depression.

➤ Anxious and Nervous.

➤ Children of alcoholics are more likely to begin drinking before the age of 20.

➤ Personality Disorders:

➤ Certain personality traits are more likely to fall prey to this habit.

➤ Impulsive, excitable, and novelty-seeking behavior.

➤ Such patterns get well established over a period of time.

Frequent accidents are often signs of drug or alcohol abuse.

- For women, the most serious risk factor for injury from domestic violence
- May be a history of alcohol abuse in her partner.

Children of alcoholics tend to do worse academically than others

- Have a higher incidence of depression, anxiety, and stress and lower self-esteem
- Than their peers and have high risk of accidental injuries from many other causes.

Denial of the problem is the biggest problem.

➤ Colleagues, friends or relatives recognize the dangers

➤ But the indulger is oblivious of the damage.

The CAGE Test

- Quickest test to assess the problem and it takes only one minute

(C) Attempts to Cut down on drinking.

- Annoyance with criticisms about drinking.

(G) Guilt about drinking.

(E) Use of alcohol as an Eye-opener in the morning.

Score of 2 or 3 should raise
an alarm

➤ And score of 4 is a definite sign
of alcoholism

Treatment

- Two basic goals of long-term treatment:
- Total abstinence.
- Replacement of the addictive patterns
- With satisfying, time-filling behaviors.

For 80% to 90% of people treated for alcoholism

➤ It relapses even after years of abstinence.

➤ Relapses of alcoholism are like relapse of any chronic illness

➤ And one should not get dejected and lose hope.

Three factors place a person at high risk for relapse:

➤ Frustration and anger

➤ Social pressures

➤ Internal Temptation- Craving

Self-forgiveness and perseverance are the behaviors essential for permanent recovery.

✓ Alcohol blocks out emotional pain and is often perceived as a loyal friend when human relationships fail.

✓ It is also associated with freedom and a loss of inhibition that offsets the tedium of daily routines

Even intelligence is no ally in
this process.

- The brain will use all its powers of rationalization to persuade the patient to return to drinking.

Being with people who drink socially without danger of addiction

- Is a difficult challenge to cope for an alcoholic.

“Why can't I?”

When he gives up what happens?

- A sense of isolation
- Loss of Pleasure
- Pity and not respect becomes the friends' attitude.

Promotes loneliness, low self-esteem and a strong desire to revert to drinking.

➤ A never ending vicious circle plunges him into doom.

From where does the sincere help come to an alcoholic ?

- Friends make fun of this newly sober person.
- Even worse, may encourage a return to drinking.
- They cannot tolerate a sober person amidst them.

Separation from these "enablers" is crucial for survival.

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The Current Alcohol Promoting Environment

Media, Music, Social Pressure & Sports

- Through very seductive advertising, liquor is promoted.
- Ghazals and drink go hand in hand.
- Many poets glorify alcohol and its effect.

The hope is in traits
recognizing your vulnerable personality

✓ And your inbuilt capacity to resist
temptation.