

Understanding the difference between the REAL alcoholic or addict and the Hard drinker or user



If you CANNOT STOP or moderate your alcohol or drug consumption, you may have a serious problem with addiction:

Q1: Given sufficient reason, (i.e. threat of ill health, divorce, love, reputation, being fired from your job, etc.,) can you stop your compulsive behaviour such as drinking alcohol or using drugs or gambling, etc., and never start up again?

Q2: Once you start your compulsive behaviour such as drinking alcohol or using drugs or gambling, etc., can you moderate or control your behaviour?

The fact is that most alcoholics or addicts...have lost the power of choice in using. Our so-called will power becomes practically nonexistent. We are unable, at certain times to bring into our consciousness with sufficient force the memory of the suffering and humiliation of even a week or a month ago. We are without defense against the first drink..drug, or other such compulsive behaviours such as gambling, sex, eating, etc.) *Page 24 of the book, Alcoholics Anonymous, 4th Edition*

Moderate drinkers/users have little trouble in giving up liquor/drugs entirely if they have good reason for it. They can take it or leave it alone.*Page 20-21 of the book, Alcoholics Anonymous, 4th Edition*

Then we have a certain type of hard drinker/user. He may have the habit badly enough to gradually impair him physically and mentally. It may cause him to die a few years before his time. If a sufficiently strong reason ill health, falling in love, change of environment, or the warning of a doctor becomes operative, this man can also stop or moderate, although he may find it difficult and troublesome and may even need medical attention.*Page 20-21 of the book, Alcoholics Anonymous, 4th Edition*

But what about the real alcoholic/addict? He may start off as a moderate drinker/user; he may or may not become a continuous hard drinker/user; but at some stage of his drinking/using career he begins to lose all control of his liquor/drug consumption, once he starts to drink or use. *Page 20-21 of the book, Alcoholics Anonymous, 4th Edition*

More About Addiction

MOST OF US have been unwilling to admit we were real addicts. No person likes to think he is bodily and mentally different from his fellows. Therefore, it is not surprising that our addiction careers have been characterized by countless vain attempts to prove we could act like other people. The idea that somehow, someday he will control and enjoy his addiction is the great obsession of every real addict.

The persistence of this illusion is astonishing. Many pursue it into the gates of insanity or death. We learned that we had to fully concede to our innermost selves that we were addicts. This is the first step in recovery. The delusion that we are like other people, or presently may be, has to be smashed. (This is step 1)

We addicts are men and women who have lost the ability to control our addiction. We know that no real addict ever recovers control. All of us felt at times that we were regaining control, but such intervals, usually brief, were inevitably followed by still less control, which led in time to pitiful and incomprehensible demoralization. We are convinced to a man that addicts of our type are in the grip of a progressive illness. Over any considerable period we get worse, never better. *Page 30 of the book, Alcoholics Anonymous, 4th Edition*

If, when you honestly want to, you find you cannot quit entirely, or if when drinking, you have little control over the amount you take, you are probably alcoholic. If that be the case, you may be suffering from an illness which only a spiritual experience will conquer. *Page 44 of the book, Alcoholics Anonymous, 4th Edition*