

50 Tools for Staying Clean & Sober

1. Get a complete medical checkup to lay a strong foundation for recovery. Be honest with your doctor about your previous lifestyle.
2. Keep it simple: Stay away from the first drink/drug.
3. Use the 24-Hour plan, try not to use the words “I gave it up *forever.*”
4. Learn as much as you can about chemical dependency through a professionally-directed recovery program.
5. Make a real commitment to recovery by being “accountable” to someone.
6. Consider the “disease concept” of recovery.
7. Be willing to consider that your illness had an impact on those you love and they will appreciate your recovery efforts.
8. Seek professional help through EAP, a detox program if needed, a rehab or a psychologist or social worker trained in addictions, available through your insurance plan.
9. Use support groups (AA, NA, MA, etc.) that have proven success over time.
10. Find and use a sponsor (a guide who will show you how it works.)
11. Get plenty of rest. Buy a new pillow to celebrate your recovery!
12. Consider having your sleep “screened” at EAP if your sleep partner complains of loud snoring, gasping noises or insomnia.
13. Eat with good nutrition in mind, avoiding junk/fast food out of convenience.
14. Take a good vitamin.
15. Cherish your emerging recovery as if it were a precious Chinese art object.
16. Be cautious of drinking occasions (weddings, holidays, etc.)
17. Develop good habits to replace the old bad ones you gave up.
18. Try to keep your moods even, avoiding extremes.
19. Get active in your support group, help out setting up, etc.
20. Identify with the feelings you hear at meetings, don’t compare “stories” or minimize your own.
21. Make new friends who are living sober, happy lives.
22. Be inspired by something you read.
23. Start reading a daily inspirational book focused specifically on sober living skills.
24. Avoid new emotional entanglements which could de-focus you from recovery.
25. Consider why you are staying clean and sober.
26. Postpone major decisions until you have a clear head.
27. Try not to “convert” others; keep the focus on your own recovery.
28. Accept other people for who they are. Don’t expect others to change or go into recovery just because you did.

29. Be willing to accept constructive input from other recovering people about what has worked in their lives.
30. Build good sobriety skills—know what your “building up to drink/drug” pattern is, what your “hot buttons” are.
31. At your support group, show your involvement by coming on time and staying until the end.
32. Continue to expand your ability to become honest with yourself.
33. Really remember your last 6 months of drinking/drugging by writing a letter to yourself.
34. Be alert for nagging depression and/or anxiety that does not improve with time.
35. Don’t overextend yourself into burnout.
36. Look at your finances. Are they a wreck from years of avoidance? Get professional help to deal with impending crises.
37. Are you guilt-ridden? Examine the sources of your guilt and consider using the 12 Steps to eliminate it.
38. Avoid substituting new addictions for the one(s) you gave up.
39. Incorporate some physical exercise and stress reduction techniques (yoga, visualization, meditation, etc.) into your life.
40. Consider getting professional help through BNL Health Promotions for stopping smoking.
41. Get professional help for persistent feelings of depression and/or anxiety in sobriety.
42. Try to avoid judging other people who are still drinking/drugging.
43. Learn about chemical dependency as a “family illness.”
44. Address co-existing addictions with professional help (gambling, sex, internet, shopping, etc.)
45. Keep an open mind to new ideas or ways of doing things. Strive to become emotionally resilient.
46. Develop a “spiritual eye” for solving problems. Cultivate your faith.
47. Be willing to accept responsibility for your role in any marital problems and seek professional help to solve them in sobriety.
48. Realize that quality sobriety is a *process, rather than an event*.
49. Be willing to accept positive feedback from others about the changes you are making in your life.
50. Remember that you will not always feel ambivalent about recovery and your life will have improved one day at a time.