



“Self-Survey for Substance Abuse (You or a Loved One)” - Summary

by Gary Alger, LADC
(Licensed Alcoholism and Drug Counselor)

Q: “Could I (or someone I care about) be developing a problem with Alcohol or Other Drugs?”

A: Any of the following warning signs could indicate a developing problem.

- You, someone you love, or someone who loves you, **wonders or worries if there might be a problem.**
- You, or your loved one, **tends to make excuses** about drinking or drug use, is **overly defensive**, or claims any number of **rationalizations**:
 - “I don’t drink every day.”
 - “I only smoke pot on the weekends.”
 - “I have never missed work.”
 - “I only drink beer.”
 - “I only drink at home; I never go out.”
 - “I know how and when to control how much I drink/use.”
- You **cannot be absolutely sure when, or if, you may lose control** while drinking or using (even if you can - and do - control it most of the time).
- Substance use **creates, or worsens, problems in other areas of your life**:
 - Estrangement from (or repeated conflicts with) spouse, partner, children or other family, regarding drinking or drug use – especially involving “broken promises”
 - Loss of, or changes in, friends and acquaintances, due to substance use
 - Absenteeism, tardiness or increased mistakes at work, due to physical problems from recent alcohol/drug use (i.e. hangovers).
 - Substance abuse violations at work
 - “MIA” (Missing in Action) at work, in order to drink, use
 - DWI (The average person typically can’t consume enough alcohol to reach .08, and still function, let alone make such a gross error in judgment.)
 - Fighting, Domestic Violence, Assault, following episodes of heavy drinking or drug use
 - Drug Possession arrest (forget about “bad luck” or “wrong place at the wrong time”)
 - Financial debts from alcohol/drug use
 - Compulsive Gambling or Spending, due to substance use, or while under the influence
 - Loss of income, due to termination or missed time
 - Doctor’s warning or cautions about effects of continued drinking or drug use (or concerns raised without apparent cause, if s/he is not aware of substance use)

RESPECTFUL REMINDER... a professional can always help you decide if further help is needed, but the bottom line is that it’s up to you (or the loved one) and the face looking back in the mirror.

Want to talk further? Give Solutions EAP a call at 800/526-3485. It’s confidential and free!!