



# SCOTTSDALE RECOVERY CENTER

[www.scottsdalerecoverycenter.com](http://www.scottsdalerecoverycenter.com)



## Help for Today Hope for Tomorrow

*Facing Addiction* with *NCADD* and *Scottsdale Recovery Center* remind you that if your drinking has caused problems in your relationships, at work, at home, financially, physically or legally, it's time to get **"Help for Today, Hope for Tomorrow."**

For more information about alcohol recovery, call **1-888-NO-DRUGS**. Help is ALWAYS available.

## Lethal Combination:

Mixing Alcohol and Medicine



You've seen the warning on medicine labels and the danger is real. Mixing alcohol and medications can cause nausea and vomiting, headaches, drowsiness, fainting, or loss of coordination. It can put you at risk for internal bleeding, heart problems, and difficulties in breathing.

Some medicines that you might never have suspected can react with alcohol, including many medications which can be purchased "over-the-counter." Even some herbal remedies can have harmful effects when combined with alcohol.

Alcohol, like some medicines,

can make you sleepy, drowsy, or lightheaded. Drinking alcohol while taking medicines can intensify these effects. You may have trouble concentrating or performing mechanical skills. Small amounts of alcohol can make it dangerous to drive, and when you mix alcohol with certain medicines you put yourself at even greater risk. Combining alcohol with some medicines can lead to falls and other serious injuries.

*Source: National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism*

<http://www.niaaa.nih.gov>

## April is Alcohol Awareness Month

### *Words of Encouragement from the Founder of Scottsdale Recovery Center*

Dear Friends,

Having suffered through substance abuse addiction and coming out the other side as a changed person, I understand the affects addiction can have on a family. This is why I opened *Scottsdale Recovery Center* over 10 years ago. I wanted to help other alcoholics and addicts find a life worth living. Drug and alcohol addiction can be a love affair that exceeds even the love of a family member, friends or oneself.

The programs we implement at SRC are designed to help the still suffering alcoholic and drug addict **get and stay sober**, for life. There is no gray area here — you're either sober or you're not. Teeter-tottering between sobriety and addiction for an addict or alcoholic is a recipe for disaster and from experience I can promise you one thing: continued incomprehensible demoralization.

*Scottsdale Recovery Center* was created to help those that have accepted their powerlessness over drugs and/or alcohol and are willing to do whatever it takes to achieve life-long sobriety. We can only provide the tools, resources and the foundation, *the willingness will need to come from within you*.

Having gone through multiple intense residential treatment centers as well as living in and managing sober living homes and working at treatment centers, what we offer WORKS. We know first hand one must be willing to walk through the uncomfortable, the unknown and the fear — to get to what is waiting on the other side.

The more comprehensive treatment and therapy one receives the better their chances are for life-long sobriety. Comprehensive and medically assisted treatment is the key ingredient in the recipe for everlasting sobriety. Thirty days is not nearly enough, four to six months is what we recommend.



### Our Mission

We aspire to set a whole new standard for long-term success within a demographic that is all too familiar with the horrors of addiction and relapse. In helping adults to identify their skills, rebuild their hopes, re-create their lives and rejuvenate their perceived values of their life's journey, we WILL make progress...one addict at a time, one alcoholic at a time, one family at a time. And while some have said that failure can be a learning experience, we choose a new way, a way of unwavering dedication and unbridled ambition toward success, recovery, joy and love!

*Contact us at anytime for help, we are here for you.*

Sincerely,

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# Hole Digging

When I first got sober, almost twelve years ago, I was told I had to find a sponsor. This was not negotiable.

I was in a tender state of mind. Barely able to speak at 12 step meetings — let alone stop crying long enough to do so. I felt overwhelmed and intimidated by this “idea” of finding a sponsor. To make matters worse, every person I met in the meeting rooms asked me if I had found one yet. I was feeling the pressure.

## ...And Just What is a Sponsor?

It was explained to me a sponsor would walk me through the 12 steps and I soon found out this can be a very emotional process. One had to call their sponsor every day — **every. single. day.** It didn't have to be a long conversation but a daily check-in was paramount.

I was also told to do absolutely anything requested of me. If she told me to go dig a hole in my backyard — I was to dig a hole in my backyard. No questions asked. This was a daunting notion to me and very uncomfortable. I was used to running my own life, and being my own boss. My fellow group members explained it was “my best thinking and decision making that got me here.” I couldn't deny that fact and “here” was not exactly where I wanted to be. But I started to pay attention in meetings to what other women shared and set out to find my perfect sponsor. That is, a sponsor perfect for me.

I was working with a temporary sponsor until that happened. She was great. She was a huge support and someone I could call every day, but we never made it past the first step. I was also getting more comfortable every day in the rooms of AA. Soon, the dimly lit 4 p.m. at the Fellowship Hall felt like home. Everything about that room and the people in it provided comfort. The people who had listened to me cry and mumble for three months were suddenly hearing me drop “f” bombs and rant about whatever was on my mind — no matter how random. These people lifted me up and carried me.

## I Found Her

Her name was Liz. We began, what turned out to be, the most life changing relationship I ever had. Our lives on the outside looked the same but it was the similarities of our “hidden” selves that connected us. We had known each other in high school and ran in similar crowds so we shared a history as well. It was huge for me to have someone from my “tribe” in this with me. Both Liz and I had “white picket fence” lives. Husbands, kids, PTA bake sales and yoga class made up our days, but that's not what bonded us. Both Liz

and I, closeted and hiding in our perfect white picket homes, were in alcoholic black outs every single night. Mine were violent black outs — the kind where you fall and fracture bones but can't seek help because you are too ashamed for anyone to see you so drunk. The kind where you pass out, alone, in your backyard with a burning Marlboro Light in your hand.

***“My fellow group members explained it was my best thinking and decision making that got me here.” I couldn't deny that fact and “here” was not exactly where I wanted to be.”***

The kind where you see double, trip on your own feet, spill everything and slur every word you speak. This last part, however, didn't matter because in our homes after 4:00 pm no one listened us to any more anyway.

We both suffered from that inner decay that wears you like a wet blanket. No matter how many showers we took or how much perfume we used — from the school teachers at drop off, or the yoga instructor at the 10 a.m. class knew we had a drinking problem. They could smell the decay emanating from our every pore and see it in our watery, reddened eyes.

Liz was three years sober when I met her, but we still recognized ourselves in one another. I was ready and willing to be her sponsee. All she had to do was help me with — everything.

She gently, patiently, but, undeniably, firmly guided me through the 12 steps listening to every detail of my life along the way. The ups and downs, the highs and lows, the lowest of the lows — nothing was left out, not even the most shameful and deplorable. We became the closest of friends. She saw a side of me I hid from everyone else including my own family. And I held nothing back.

The process took about six months. It was one of the hardest things I have ever done. I couldn't have done it without my sponsor, Liz. Everything I had been told from my fellows in AA came true. I felt a



great weight had been lifted. It was like the earth had opened up and swallowed me whole - digesting all the shameful, sorry parts and spitting back out a proud, hopeful and FREE me.

A lot has happened since that first six months and it wasn't all

good. My marriage fell apart and I had to start over at 36 with two young children BUT I was free — finally — from the prison of shame and addiction.

I started to become the woman I was always supposed to be. This journey was hard but extraordinary. All the pieces of my young, pre-alcoholic self began to show themselves again and I felt stronger than I ever had — ever. I started my own business, raised my daughters and held my head high every single day. I didn't hide from anyone and I re-discovered a world that I had forgotten about.

Soccer games, coffee with friends and matinee movies with buttered popcorn became enjoyable again. These small changes added up and suddenly I noticed that I enjoyed all 24 hours in a day not just happy hour. The biggest gift was remembering every day. I had become accustomed to piecing together the blurry wreckage of each 24 hours. This was true emotional and spiritual freedom — and I still choose freedom as my meeting topic at every AA birthday.

There is no doubt in my mind that Liz saved my life. I will add to this that I never did actually dig a hole in my backyard but I would have if she had asked.

*Amy Samuel-Meda is a Recovery Coach and Community Liason at Scottsdale Recovery Center, To reach her call 602-679-0043 email amy@scottsdalerecovery.com*

## Did You Know?

**Nearly 15.1 million Americans have alcohol use disorder or are alcoholic?**

**People ages 12 to 20 years drink 13 % of all alcohol consumed in the U.S.**

**More than 90 percent is in the form of binge drinking.**

**Alcohol-use problems cost society more than \$249 billion per year due to lost productivity, health care costs, business and criminal justice costs.**

## The Good News

**It is now estimated more than 20 million Americans are living lives in recovery.**

## Becoming Completely Willing

My life had become unmanageable and I realized it was time to get some help. Drugs and alcohol had consumed my life to the point of utter despair. After finally admitting that I had a problem I made the decision to finally seek help and go to detox. Over the course of 10 years I was in and out of detox facilities but kept finding myself using again and couldn't figure out why. I would attend AA meetings and hear all these stories of successful long term sobriety and I wanted to gain that for myself more than anything but didn't even know where to begin.

I slowly started to realize that simply going to detox wasn't going to be enough for me. I needed to seek long-term treatment and really put in the work to stay sober. Getting sober isn't simply just a weeklong period of removing substances from your body. It takes a lot of hard work in treatment and even after. I was finally willing to do whatever it took to get my life back in order. I realized it was time to really put in the work.

I completed my inpatient treatment and did everything that was asked of me. Upon leaving I attended meetings, got a service commitment and a sponsor and got to work. Over time I was able to complete my steps and continue going to meetings and things just started to get better for me.

I couldn't believe it had taken me so long to just do what so many before me had successfully done. Staying sober has been a tough journey but I wouldn't change a thing about it. My life is so much better today than I ever thought it would or could be. If you find yourself stuck in a world of drugs and alcohol and can't seem to get out of it I highly suggest reaching out to someone and taking suggestions. ***It was the best thing I have ever done for myself.*** — Kevin L

# Alcohol and Your Health

Excessive alcohol use led to approximately 88,000 deaths and 2.5 million years of potential life lost each year in the United States from 2006 — 2010, shortening the lives of those who died by an average of 30 years. Excessive drinking was responsible for 1 in 10 deaths among working-age adults aged 20-64 years. The economic costs of excessive alcohol consumption in 2010 were estimated at \$249 billion, or \$2.05 a drink.

## What is excessive drinking?

Excessive drinking includes binge drinking, heavy drinking, and any drinking by pregnant women or people younger than age 21.

**Binge drinking**, the most common form of excessive drinking— defined as consuming:

- For women, 4 or more drinks during a single occasion.
- For men, 5 or more drinks during a single occasion.

**Heavy drinking** —defined as consuming:

- For women, 8 or more drinks per week.
- For men, 15 or more drinks per week.

## Short-Term Health Risks

Excessive alcohol use has immediate effects that increase the risk of many harmful health conditions. These are most often the result of binge drinking and include the following:

- **Injuries** — motor vehicle crashes, falls, drownings, and burns.
- **Violence** — including homicide, suicide, sexual assault, and intimate partner violence.
- **Alcohol poisoning** — a medical emergency that results from high blood alcohol levels.
- **Risky sexual behaviors** — including unprotected sex or sex with multiple partners. These behaviors can result in unintended pregnancy or sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV.
- **Miscarriage and stillbirth or fetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASDs)** among pregnant women.

## Long-Term Health Risks

Over time, excessive alcohol use can lead to the development of chronic diseases and other serious problems including:

- High blood pressure, heart disease, stroke, liver disease, and digestive problems.
- Cancer of the breast, mouth, throat, esophagus, liver, and colon.
- Learning and memory problems, including dementia and poor school performance.
- Mental health problems, including depression and anxiety.
- Social problems, including lost productivity, family problems, and unemployment.



**There is always hope**, and at Scottsdale Recovery Center that hope is much closer to you than it may actually appear to be at this very moment. For over 10 years we have helped people discover a life worth living in sobriety.

### Learn more about us!

Contact us 24/7 **888.NO.DRUGS** and find out how you or your loved one's story will change at SRC.

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## Short-Term Health Risks

### Injuries

- Motor vehicle crashes
- Falls
- Drownings
- Burns

### Violence

- Homicide
- Suicide
- Sexual assault
- Intimate partner violence

### Alcohol poisoning

### Reproductive health

- Risky sexual behaviors
- Unintended pregnancy
- Sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV
- Miscarriage
- Stillbirth
- Fetal alcohol spectrum disorders (FASDs)



## Long-Term Health Risks

### Chronic diseases

- High blood pressure
- Heart disease
- Stroke
- Liver disease
- Digestive problems

### Cancers

- Breast
- Mouth and throat
- Liver
- Colon

### Learning and memory problems

- Dementia
- Poor school performance

### Mental health

- Depression
- Anxiety

### Social problems

- Lost productivity
- Family problems
- Unemployment

### Alcohol dependence

<http://www.cdc.gov/alcohol/fact-sheets/alcohol-use.htm>

# Ways to Avoid Addiction Relapse

If you or someone you love has attended a drug rehab program and successfully completed it, it is a huge accomplishment. While in treatment tools were provided to assist in staying clean and sober, relapse prevention plans were developed, and aftercare plans were made. Although successfully completing is a great feat, successfully completing treatment is just the beginning.

## 1. Avoid tempting situations.

If possible, stay clear of any situations that may place you in the way of temptation. These situations can be either physical or emotional. Avoid going places where there will be substance use or where there will be reminders of times you used. Also try to avoid people or situations that can be emotional triggers.

## 2. Develop a positive support network.

Often, addiction social circles consist primarily of “using buddies,” with supportive family and friends being distant outliers. Surround yourself with positive people who do not engage in substance use and who are supportive of your substance-free lifestyle. It is important to have healthy people who will be able to support you in your times of need. Sever unhealthy relationships and ties to unhealthy people. If necessary change your number, delete their numbers, block or delete them from social networking sites, and work on creating a new and healthier support network.

## 3. Create a healthy schedule.

This usually includes times for treatment and meetings, necessary activities such as work or family time, activities of daily living, and free time. Creating a schedule is a great way to develop a new and healthier routine.

By creating a schedule for when treatment has ended, the patient is able to continue that structured living. When scheduling for free time, it is important to find constructive activities to fill that time. The key is not allowing for time for frequent boredom.

## 4. Don't get complacent.

Complacency is dangerous. Many people are highly motivated after completing inpatient treatment to continue with an aftercare program or 12-step meetings. They also develop their support network and make other strides in their recovery. However, this motivation may dwindle over time. As progress continues, they no longer deem all of the recovery efforts necessary. Find what does work for you, stick with it and continue to make it work.

## 5. Don't view relapse as a failure.

If you were able to stay clean and sober before, you will be able to do it again. Reach out to others and seek help. Begin working your recovery program again. Process the events and emotions that led to relapse so that they are not repeated. By processing these situations, you can learn from your mistakes. This will only help you in your journey in recovery.

# Overdose on Alcohol?



Approximately 2 out of every 5 college students of all ages (*more than 40 %*) report binge drinking at least once every few weeks.

— A survey by the National Institute of Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA)



## Best Sobriety Practices to Take on the Road of Recovery

It is important to continue the good work you've already built upon during drug or alcohol addiction treatment by adding it to your new life in recovery. There won't be much awkwardness involved as your mind, body and spirit have already grown accustomed to this new way of living.

### SRC Alumni Top 10 Tips to Stay Sober After Treatment:

- Surround yourself with those who support sobriety.
- Be honest with yourself and others.
- Change your playground (*don't revisit the harmful ones*).
- Keep going to counseling sessions.
- Share your commitment to sobriety with your primary care doctor.
- Stay aware of potential relapse triggers and avoid them.
- Practice mindfulness each day through yoga, meditation, tai chi or hiking.
- Learn something new whenever possible.
- Engage creativity with art, music or writing.
- Fill your phone with numbers of other sober people and don't be afraid to ask for help.
- Call our 24-hour helpline, 888-NO-DRUGS

If you do take a step back due to a moment of weakness or unexpected life challenge, we're here to help you face it and keep moving forward. Remember, we are in this together and —our door is always open.

[www.scottsdalerecoverycenter.com](http://www.scottsdalerecoverycenter.com)

## What Happens to the Body During an Alcohol Overdose?

Alcohol depresses nerves that control involuntary actions such as breathing and the gag reflex (which prevents choking). **A fatal dose of alcohol will eventually stop these functions.**

It is common for someone who drank excessive alcohol to vomit since alcohol is an irritant to the stomach. There is then the danger of choking on vomit, which could cause death by asphyxiation in a person who is not conscious because of intoxication. You should also know a person's blood alcohol concentration (BAC) can continue to rise even if they are passed out. *It is dangerous to assume the person will be fine by sleeping it off.*

### Critical Signs and Symptoms of an Alcohol Overdose

Mental confusion, stupor, coma, or person cannot be roused  
Vomiting or Seizures  
Slow breathing (fewer than eight breaths per minute)  
Irregular breathing (10 seconds or more between breaths)  
Hypothermia (low body temperature), bluish skin color, paleness

### What to Do ?

Know the danger signals.  
Do not wait for all symptoms to be present.  
Be aware that a person who has passed out may die.  
If there is any suspicion of an alcohol overdose, call 911 for help. **Don't try to guess the level of drunkenness.**

### What Can Happen to Someone With an Alcohol Overdose That Goes Untreated?

Victim chokes.  
Breathing slows, becomes irregular, or stops. Heart beats irregularly or stops.  
Hypothermia (low body temperature). Hypoglycemia (too little blood sugar) leads to seizures.  
Untreated severe dehydration from vomiting can cause seizures, permanent brain damage, or death.  
Even if the victim lives, an alcohol overdose can lead to irreversible brain damage. Rapid binge drinking (which often happens on a bet or a dare) is especially dangerous because the victim can ingest a fatal dose before becoming unconscious. **Seek medical help immediately.**

**SUBSCRIBE NOW**

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RECOVERY CENTER

EXPERTISE. INSIGHT. SUPPORT.

## GET SOBER, STAY SOBER

Join the SRC online community to get the support you need.  
Subscribe to our newsletter or engage on social media

@scottsdalerecoverycenter

## The Good News

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