

DIVORCING AN ALCOHOLIC
**5 POWERFUL TIPS FOR
HUSBANDS AND WIVES**

PROVIDED BY:

Tampa Bay
MONITORING

A wooden heart and a glass of wine on a table. The background is a soft-focus photograph of a wooden heart and a glass of wine on a table, overlaid with a semi-transparent red filter. The heart is in the lower-left foreground, and the glass is in the upper-right background.



About This Guide

If you are in a marriage with someone whom you believe is struggling with alcohol, and find that you are at a crossroads, this guide will hopefully assist you.

This guide contains best practices as to what a spouse can expect when divorcing an alcoholic and how to best protect yourself and your family.

**This guide is provided to you by Tampa Bay Monitoring and is for informational purposes only. It is not intended to convey or constitute legal or psychological advice nor is it intended to substitute for obtaining legal advice from a qualified attorney or healthcare professional.*

About Tampa Bay Monitoring

Innovative Alcohol & GPS Monitoring Systems to Help Keep Communities Safe

Tampa Bay Monitoring provides alcohol monitoring devices nationwide and GPS monitors throughout the Tampa Bay area. We offer affordable solutions for parents, defendants, courts, and family law. Through our screening process, we can recommend and provide a device that is best suited for their medical needs and work situation.

We also provide information & community resources about alcohol & drug abuse, alcohol monitoring, mental health, and family issues. We have a list of programs & services for those struggling with alcohol, drugs, or mental illness.



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THE LINK BETWEEN ALCOHOLISM AND DIVORCE

Addiction impacts everyone's life it touches and dealing with a spouse who continues to abuse alcohol can be very scary and unpredictable.



Alcohol is the number one drug problem in the United States.

ACCORDING TO THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE ON ALCOHOL ABUSE AND ALCOHOLISM (NIH), 17.6 MILLION PEOPLE, OR ONE IN EVERY 12 ADULTS, SUFFER FROM ALCOHOL USE DISORDER OR ALCOHOL DEPENDENCE.

**DIVORCE IS
3-4 TIMES**

MORE LIKELY WHEN A SPOUSE HAS ALCOHOL ISSUES



THE LINK BETWEEN ALCOHOLISM AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Abuse is considered a socially learned behavior and is not necessarily the result of substance abuse. However, research indicates that among men who drink heavily, there is a higher rate of assaults resulting in injury.

ACCORDING TO
THE NATIONAL
COUNCIL ON
ALCOHOLISM
AND DRUG
DEPENDENCE

TWO-THIRDS
OF VICTIMS OF SPOUSAL
VIOLENCE REPORT THAT
THEIR ABUSER HAD BEEN
DRINKING.



Dealing with an Alcoholic Spouse

In the past, many people held the belief that you either are an alcoholic or you are not an alcoholic. Research has found this isn't always the case.

Someone could have a drink every day, but that does not necessarily mean that he/she has a drinking problem. Someone could also be a high-functioning alcoholic (HFA), one who is able to "maintain" their life responsibilities (job, school, relationships, etc.) yet continuously abuses alcohol. It is for this reason that alcoholism is best considered as existing on a spectrum rather than in terms of distinct categories.

Dealing with an Alcoholic Spouse

It is important to understand that although substance addiction is considered an incurable disease, there are treatment options.

You can openly express your concerns with your spouse and encourage them to get help. There are numerous recovery programs, support groups, counseling services, and other options available. How you approach your spouse will depend on many factors, such as **HOW SAFE YOU FEEL** about addressing them and how open you think they will be at the prospect of making a lifestyle change. That is why it is best to **SEEK PROFESSIONAL ADVICE** before moving forward.



DIVORCING AN ALCOHOLIC



UNFORTUNATELY, THERE'S ONLY SO MUCH YOU CAN DO TO HELP YOUR SPOUSE. IF THEY ARE IN DENIAL OR UNWILLING TO TAKE THE NECESSARY STEPS TO GET HELP, THERE MAY BE NOTHING MORE YOU CAN DO.

IF YOU FIND THAT YOU HAVE REACHED A POINT WHERE YOU FEEL YOU HAVE EXHAUSTED ALL OF YOUR EFFORTS, DIVORCE MAY BE YOUR ONLY OPTION.

#1



PROTECT YOURSELF AND YOUR CHILDREN

If you are in an abusive marriage and/or have any concerns at all about your safety and the safety of your children, you will want make a **WELL-DEFINED PLAN** to leave your home safely. You must take the necessary preparations for a **SAFE EXIT** and have a good support system in place to help you during this difficult time.

Plan for a safe place to stay, such as a close friend or relative's home. At the very least, be sure to have friends and family members whom you can reach out to in case of an emergency. *Be sure to check out our helpful links and resources at the end of this guide.

#2 GET LEGAL ASSISTANCE



Find a reputable local family law practitioner and set up a consultation to discuss your legal options. An attorney that has **specific experience and knowledge in divorces that deal with alcoholism** will be particularly helpful.

A good attorney will have the training and experience you may need to navigate through the divorce process during this difficult time. *Be sure to check out our helpful links and resources at the end of this guide.

In extreme cases of alcohol abuse, it may be necessary to collect evidence of your spouses drinking.

#3

GATHER
EVIDENCE

Any court is going to require evidence when you accuse a spouse of alcohol abuse. When minor children are involved, the process of divorce can be incredibly tricky. You must be able to prove that the spouse's alcohol abuse endangers the safety of the child. For that reason, an alcohol monitoring device may be necessary to provide the court a way to monitor, thus assure the safety of your child while in the care of the alleged alcoholic.

[CONTACT US/LEARN MORE](#)

#4

GET HELP FROM A COUNSELOR

Get help from a counselor and have your child(ren) go as well. Addictive illness and recovery programs like Al-anon, CoDa (Codependents Anonymous) and AcoA (Adult Children of Alcoholics) can provide additional support because you will be surrounded by those who have been through similar situations. *Be sure to check out our helpful links and resources at the end of this guide.

At first, it may seem that divorcing an alcoholic spouse can be more painful than just staying in the marriage.

#5

THE END IS
REALLY JUST
THE BEGINNING

The idea of being on your own can be terrifying, but if you ask those who have come out on the other side, they will tell you with absolute certainty that it was worth it. With pain comes personal growth. More importantly, the knowledge and wisdom you gain about yourself and your experience can put you in a unique position to inspire others in similar circumstances.

IMPORTANT REMINDERS

**I DESERVE
TO FEEL
SAFE AND
LOVED.**

**MY LIFE IS
ALREADY
FULFILLING.**

**I HOLD THE
KEYS TO MY
OWN
HAPPINESS.**

**A
RELATIONSHIP
WILL NEVER,
EVER DEFINE
ME.**

**I AM 100%
RESPONSIBLE
FOR MY OWN
HAPPINESS.**

**I'M WORTH
WHILE AND
DESERVING
OF LOVE.**

**I DON'T HAVE
TO CHANGE
MYSELF FOR
ANYONE
ELSE.**

**I WILL STAND
BY MY
DECISIONS.
THEY ARE
SOUND AND
REASONED.**

**I CHOOSE TO
BE HAPPY, NO
MATTER THE
SITUATION.**

**I FORGIVE
MYSELF. MY
MISTAKES ARE
A STEPPING
STONE TO
SUCCESS.**

**I AM ALWAYS
GROWING
AND
EVOLVING.**

**I AM
COMMITTED
TO MYSELF
AND
IMPROVING
MY LIFE.**



Remain committed to the process and love yourself enough to know that your well-being is ultimately worth it!

A group of people's hands are shown holding a large, light-colored wooden heart shape together. The heart is made of several horizontal wooden planks. The hands are positioned around the heart, with some fingers resting on the top and others on the sides. The background is a blurred indoor setting, possibly a community center or a meeting room. The overall tone is warm and collaborative.

HELPFUL LINKS & RESOURCES

HELPFUL LINKS & RESOURCES

HOW TO GET A RESTRAINING ORDER

If you are a victim of domestic violence you may obtain assistance in filing for an injunction for protection.

[CLICK HERE](#)

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE INFO & SHELTERS

Resources to help you identify abuse and offer support. Find nearby domestic violence programs and shelters.

[CLICK HERE](#)

HELPFUL LINKS & RESOURCES

DRUG & ALCOHOL RECOVERY

SAMHSA's National Helpline is a free, confidential, 24/7, 365-day-a-year treatment referral and information service (in English and Spanish) for individuals and families facing mental and/or substance use disorders.

[CLICK HERE](#)

FAMILY LAW ATTORNEYS

Attorneys that have specific experience and knowledge in divorces that deal with alcoholism.

[CLICK HERE](#)

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**SHOULD YOU HAVE ANY FURTHER
QUESTIONS, DO NOT HESITATE TO
CONTACT US.**

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