

8 Tips to Maintaining a Sober Life

By Daniel Stuart Olmes

1. Don't drink – This seems straightforward, but the simple fact remains that no one can force you to drink. It's a deliberate and conscious choice every person struggling with alcohol faces. Every addict also asks themselves the million-dollar question. Maybe I can control it this time? Maybe it won't be as bad as before? In my experience this is a dangerous mindset, a dangerous question we all know the answer to.

2. Tell the world – The more people that know you're struggling with alcohol the more love you'll feel and the more people you'll hold yourself accountable to. Shed the fear of embarrassment or shame. Everyone has a weakness or stuff going on in their lives. Don't hide it. Celebrate that you've made a courageous and strong decision and know that every day following Day 1 of your sobriety will be better than the one before it.

3. Love someone – Love is what kept me sober. In the beginning, I lost a relationship that was very important to me. Someone I was in love with. That loss that kept me sober in those early days. I wanted more than anything to prove to her that I could do it and that I was worthy of her love. I wanted to be the man she deserved.

4. Blame yourself, not others – No one forced you into this situation with alcohol. It was your choice in the end. No one else's. You can pretend that you drank because someone else failed you, but in reality, you failed yourself. The quicker you come to terms with this the quicker you'll make meaningful progress—real healing.

5. Run!!! – Physical fitness is an absolute key to sobriety. We all drank because we didn't feel "good" in one way or another. Running and physical exercise, lifting weights, yoga, etc. provides a tremendous release and makes us feel better. It calms our souls. If we don't feel good physically, then I believe all else can crumble. The temple foundation must be strong. I'm not a fan of anti-depressants and anti-anxiety medications. I was prescribed these in my final days with alcohol and they turned me into an absolute robot, an emotionless void of a human being. In the end... there's not many things that can compare to how you feel after a six-mile run.

6. Read!!! – Reading in many ways is a lost art. There are so many beautiful things in the form of the written word. Reading was imperative in my sobriety. The perspective and wisdom I gained from others was invaluable. And it taught me exactly how arrogant and short-sighted some of my conceptions of the world actually were.

7. Faith – Develop a belief in something beyond than yourself. Come to an understanding of what God means to you. Look out at the night sky in awesome wonder... because we have to live for some purpose. We don't live just to die. It has some meaning. Once you determine what that meaning is for

you, why would you ever want to cover it up with alcohol. Why would you want to blur the awesome wonder of life? Yes... it's difficult sometimes, but it's supposed to be.

8. Get honest with yourself – You'll never make any progress if you don't become completely honest with yourself, of why you do the things you do. Your fears. Your resentments. These are things that linger in the past and the future and completely take you out of the present moment. The moment you try to be someone else—something you're not—is a day you're in big trouble. Dissatisfaction and getting too far removed from my true self were some of the main reasons I drank.