

Celebrations and Holidays

Can celebrations and holidays threaten your recovery?

Celebrations and holidays are often a hard time for people in recovery because they can expose you to these triggers and situations:

- alcohol or other drugs, which may be present
- increased stress
- heightened emotions
- free time without structure
- lack of access or limited access to your sponsor or recovery support group
- stress about money or finances

How can you protect your recovery during celebrations?

Talk to your sponsor and lay out a plan for coping with celebration triggers. Some of us try to take shortcuts or don't make our recovery the priority. It's easy to become busy or overconfident. We forget that without abstinence from alcohol or other drugs we will lose all the things that are valuable in our lives.

Recovery Action Step

Take another recovering person with you for support during the celebration. Having someone there who understands your fears and urges is important. It keeps you accountable.

Recovery Action Step

Talk to your sponsor or recovery support group. Make a relapse prevention plan to handle the triggers that you might encounter during celebrations and holidays.

Let your sponsor know if you may be in a tough situation during an upcoming work party or at a Christmas dinner. Make sure you have a way to leave the party or celebration if you feel your recovery is threatened.

continued

Personal Recovery Story

“My friend Brian and I were both planning to go to a Halloween party thrown by our mutual friends. I’m in early recovery, so before the event I told Brian that I wasn’t sure how I would react to being around an open bar where beer and wine were served. We discussed the situation and decided that we would drive separately so that I could leave if I needed to.

“I wanted some extra support, so I brought another recovering person with me to the party. And I brought the phone number of my sponsor—just in case I needed someone else to help me and keep me accountable.”

—*Sarah, in recovery from alcohol addiction, sober for seven months*