

~Tips to Keep your Sobriety Honest~

- At meetings, **discuss anything that may affect your sobriety**, including but not limited to:
 - OTCs and medications that your health care professionals are suggesting you take
 - hanging out in high risk places, such as bars, clubs and raves, celebrations that focus on alcohol
 - contact highs from being in enclosed places with those who smoke dope
 - doing business with those who use cocaine, cocktails, and other recreational drugs as a networking lubricant
 - dealing with chronic pain and insomnia
 - alcohol in foods and toiletries

Since drugs directly affects your sobriety you **MUST** openly discuss them in 12-Step meetings. Step Twelve tells us to "practice these principles in all our affairs." There is no way to practice these principles in all our affairs unless we can *talk* about all our affairs. People who believe in Honest Sobriety know that if we take drugs, including abusing unnecessary medications, our disease is activated. It is considered relapse by those who want to stay clean and sober and understand the disease of addiction. Alcoholism *is* addiction, never forget it.

- Find CDA (Chemically Dependent Anonymous/www.CDAweb.org) and make sure to read their basic text. **CDA supports AA** and encourages you to talk openly about all mind-affecting chemicals, including necessary and unnecessary medications. Also get their pamphlet on medications.
- Tell your health care professionals (physicians, dentists, psychiatrist) that you are an alcoholic *and* addict and **must NOT take addictive type drugs** or even those that have a potential for dependency. If you don't tell every one concerned with your health care that you are a chemical dependent, your inner addict is making sure it has a foothold in the door and it will eventually bring you down.
- Make sure your **sponsor understands that a drug is a drug is a drug**. No matter how long your sponsor has been sober or how well respected they are in a particular program, if he or she doesn't 'get it' about mind-affecting, mood-altering chemicals, you must get a sponsor who does.
- Be sure that **how you introduce yourself in 12-step meetings is honest** and includes the idea that all mind-affecting chemicals are part and parcel of your disease. Some people can simply say "addict" because they know without reservation that "addiction" includes alcohol and prescriptions. Some say "I am an alcoholic and drug addict" because they are identifying lifestyles, the legal drug alcohol and the illegal street drugs. Many people are opting for "I'm chemically dependent." Avoid narrowing your introduction and leaving the door open for your disease to take hold. Saying, "My name is X and I'm a cocaine addict," can give your inner addict hope, thinking than maybe drinking or pain pills will be alright because they are not cocaine. You might want to say, "My name is X, I'm an addict and my drug of choice is _____."
- **Never celebrate or condone separate birthdays** such as one for alcohol and one for other drugs. Honest Sobriety has one anniversary: the day you stopped using mind-affecting, mood-altering chemicals as well as unnecessary medications. There is no compromise on recovery. It is false pride to try to celebrate separate "birthdays." Real pride comes from *real* sobriety. We call this **Honest Sobriety**