

PROFILE OF RECOVERY

Profile of a High-Functioning, Holistically Healthy, Person in
Recovery

Continuing Recovery

The Profile of a Recovering Alcoholic

Converting Character Defects into Assets of Character

Profile of a high-functioning, holistically healthy, person in recovery.

Skills

Value

Behavior, Feelings, Thinking

Body, Mind, Emotion, Spirit

Characterize Spiritual Life

Communication Skills

Relationships

What skills do they demonstrate?

- Listens, accepts input from others.
- Takes personal responsibility for solutions to problematic situations and issues.
- Actively works and applies the 12 steps.
- Takes full responsibility for own behavior.

What values do they demonstrate?

- Honesty
- Integrity
- Service to others
- Loyalty
- Trustworthiness
- Commitment and love.

What are their behavior, feelings and thinking like?

- Their behavior is consistent with the norms of society and a positive attitude is present.
- Their feelings are, for the most part, of gratitude and acceptance.
- Their thinking is geared toward recovery and living a free life.

How do they look after their body, mind, emotions, spiritual life and relationships?

- With love
- Respect
- Kindness
- Tolerance
- Willingness
- Openmindedness.

How would I characterize their spiritual life?

- It would resemble an ongoing exploration of how to improve the quality of each day.
- You would be able to tell how well their program is working for them, by witnessing their daily adherence to their spiritual principles.

What kind of communication skills do they have?

- Their communication skills would be honest and open.
- They would be easy to talk to and you would feel safe talking to them.

What kind of relationships with other people do they typically have?

- Their relationships are healthy and non-toxic.
- They give as much as they receive from other human beings.
- They are open and honest.

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Continuing Recovery

- Honest and realistic about self and problems
- Socializes with others
- Listens and accepts input from others
- Asks for help, accepts help from others
- Chooses positive attitudes
- Focuses on personal recovery

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- Is trusting and shares with others
- Harmonious relationships
- Turns will over to higher power
- Stable lifestyle
- Has learned minimal social, life, and living skills, including communication

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- Takes full responsibility for own behavior
- Appears warm friendly, caring of others
- Attends plenty of 12 step meetings
- Has close working relationship with sponsor
- Reasonable expectations of self and others
- Shares thoughts and feelings openly

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- Considerate, displays humility
- Has an attitude of gratitude
- Acts maturely - has high frustration tolerance
- Actively works, or applies the 12 steps
- Fully accepts needs from abstinence from all drugs
- Looks after physical health, diet and exercise

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- Looks after emotional health – aesthetic experiences and intimate relationships
- Has a capacity for play, playfulness, and humor
- Understands and accepts disease concept
- Open and sharing about recovery process
- Openly shares about personal disease experiences

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- Identifies personal issues and stuckness
- Takes personal responsibility for solutions to problematic situations and issues
- Appears peaceful, comfortable with self
- Acts cheerful, outgoing
- Actively helpful and supportive of others

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- Has developed an over-arching attitude and philosophy toward life, existence, and death
- Discusses spiritual aspects of recovery
- Activates full fledges personal values
- Engages spiritual practices - prayer, meditation
- Pursues spiritual growth and development
- Develops capacity for love and service

The Profile of a Recovering Alcoholic

Los Angeles Times March 20, 1984

By DR. JOSEPH A, PURSCH

The Profile of a Recovering Alcoholic

"Exactly what is a recovering alcoholic?" I was challenged by the talk-show host; "How can you tell he's not just biding his time?"

The answer is very simple. A recovering alcoholic no longer drinks alcohol in any form, for any reason. For years, he was unable to live comfortably without alcohol. He tried many "easier, softer ways." He finally experienced a life-style change (usually through treatment and self-help groups). As a result of his changed outlook, he now lives comfortably, happily and productively without using alcohol. Also, he uses no other mood-altering drugs unless they are essential to his mental health and have been prescribed and monitored by a psychiatrist who understands addiction.

The Profile of a Recovering Alcoholic

He has switched from booze (or pills) to people without making sick substitutions. He has not substituted an eating disorder (obesity, bulimia or anorexia) or compulsive gambling to cope with the ups and downs of everyday life; nor has he become a psychosomatic patient who is addicted to doctors, allergy medicines, Physiotherapy, etc.

He no longer is angry toward the people who coerced him into treatment. On the contrary, he is grateful to them because they had the courage and the compassion to be honest with him. He no longer asks why God did this to-him, nor does he agonize over the cause ("Were the alcoholic genes on my father's side or on my mother's side?").

The Profile of a Recovering Alcoholic

He doesn't scrutinize the daily papers to see whether a pill has been developed which would enable him to drink without getting drunk. (He now knows that he usually drank in order to get drunk, and that if such a pill were invented, he wouldn't take it.)

He no longer is ashamed over his alcoholism, any more than he would be if he had diabetes. On the contrary, he is glad that he has an illness which forced him to become "weller than well"; he can see that he is a better person today than he was even before his drinking became a noticeable problem.

The Profile of a Recovering Alcoholic

Although he respects the “Traditions” of Alcoholics Anonymous, he no longer is secretive about his alcoholism. (Some alcoholics I know are so anonymous that their alcoholism is a secret even to them.) He has told his family, his friends and other significant people about it. True, he doesn’t advertise it, or pester other people with his abstinence, but he does share insight from his recovery freely, dispassionately and optimistically when appropriate, or when it would help others.

The Profile of a Recovering Alcoholic

If he is in psychotherapy (and he may well be, just you or I might be), the focus is on "here and now" living problems; on how he can make his life better, more successful and serene by coming to understand how some of the past events in his life still cause him to behave in a maladaptive way today. Most importantly, his therapy is not aimed at "strengthening his defenses so that he can become a controlled social drinker again.

The Profile of a Recovering Alcoholic

Finally, his sense of humor has returned. He no longer takes himself or others too seriously. He has also learned the difference between being assertive and aggressive: He's no longer a doormat or a dictator.

Actually, it's easy to spot a recovering alcoholic when you see one. You will recognize him by his solid step, friendly smile, firm handshake, good eye contact healthy self concept, and an almost palpable inner peace which is seldom seen in other people.

Converting Character Defects into Assets of Character

Changing Low Self Esteem to a Sense of Self Worth

Low Self Esteem > Sense of Self Worth

Debits	Conversion Factor	Assets
<p>LOW FRUSTRATION TOLERANCE is inability to endure for a length of time any uncomfortable circumstance or feeling</p>	<p>EASY DOES IT God is neither ahead of His time nor behind it</p>	<p>PATIENCE</p>
<p>ANXIETY exists in an exaggerated way in the alcoholic. t is subject to nameless dreads and fears</p>	<p>SERENITY PRAYER</p>	<p>STABILITY</p>
<p>GRANDIOSITY can be described as the “organization of the universe around the perpendicular pronoun.</p>	<p>SURRENDER Resign as General Manager of the universe</p>	<p>HUMILITY Easy to live with</p>

Low Self Esteem > Sense of Self Worth

Debits	Conversion Factor	Assets
<p>PERFECTIONISM sets impossible goals with inevitable failures and resultant guilt</p>	<p>TOLERANCE There but for the grace of God go I</p>	<p>LEADERSHIP Sees need- Follows through</p>
<p>WISHFUL THINKING is the science of arranging to do what he wants to do, then making it appear reasonable.</p>	<p>LIVE IN THE HERE AND NOW</p>	<p>CREATIVITY - value oriented – sets high goals</p>
<p>ISOLATION and deep insecurity deprive him of the , real generosity needed to make close and enduring friendships. He is a loner.</p>	<p>AA 12TH STEP Carry the message.</p>	<p>AFFIRMATION caring person</p>

Low Self Esteem > Sense of Self Worth

Debits	Conversion Factor	Assets
<p>SENSITIVITY exaggerates all the unpleasant interpersonal relationships we experience</p>	<p>SENSE OF HUMOR EMPATHY AA'ers have a God-given ability to laugh at themselves</p>	<p>EMPATHY</p>
<p>IMPULSIVENESS “I want what I want when I want it.”</p>	<p>ONE DAY AT A TIME First things first</p>	<p>SPONTANEITY creative action</p>
<p>DEFIANCE is a characteristic probably the result of unbearable conflict and anxiety that makes itself evident when he rejects society.</p>	<p>LIVE AND LET LIVE</p>	<p>ADAPTABILITY accept people as they are</p>

Low Self Esteem > Sense of Self Worth

Debits	Conversion Factor	Assets
DEPENDENCE on other persons exists in some form in all alcoholics.	LET GO AND LET GOD Child-like trust	INTERDEPENDENCE work well in the hierarchy
CON ARTIST Needs no explanation	HONESTY Foundation stone of AA program	PERSUADER-creative-verbal-sensitive to people