

SAUK VALLEY VOICES OF RECOVERY NEWSLETTER

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COMMUNITY NEEDS DRUG TAKE BACK PROGRAM

Drug take back programs allow for expired, unused, or unwanted medicines to be disposed of safely. October 24, 2020 was National Drug Take Back Day. According to Clay Whalen from the Dixon Police, the department took in 400 pounds of pharmaceutical drugs to be destroyed. 400 POUNDS! If you or someone you know have medications to be destroyed, they can be dropped off at the Dixon Police Department's lobby Monday through Friday, 7 am to 5 pm.

STAYING SOBER DURING THE HOLIDAYS

NOTABLE PODCASTS:

1. THE ODAAT CHAT:

"EP 126--ARLINA ON LIFE IN RECOVERY"

2. THE BUBBLE HOUR:

"EP 37--MARYBETH MURPHY ON HOLISITC
WELLNESS IN RECOVERY"

3. ELEVATION RECOVERY:

"EP132--CHRIS AND MATT ON ADDICTION,
RECOVERY, AND HAPPINESS"

4. 40 MINUTES OF FAITH PODCAST:

"AUG 29--ADDICTION WITH MICHELLE"



RECOVERY 101

10 WAYS TO AVOID HOLIDAY ADDICTION RELAPSES

The holidays are a time to eat, drink, and be merry. But what if you're a recovering addict? The season for cocktails, parties, and good times can be a tough one to navigate.

"The holidays are a stressful time, and many people find that using a substance is a way of coping with stress," says Kate Rhine, a licensed clinical social worker and certified addiction counselor in Denver. Ramped-up family time also can be emotional for many, especially those recovering from addiction, Rhine adds. For people without close family ties, loneliness may set in.

You don't need alcohol, cigarettes, or drugs to make your holiday season festive, but you do need this go-to guide to stay clean:

1. Start Each Day With a Plan to Fend Off a Relapse

"An alcoholic needs to wake up each morning thinking about how to stay sober that day," says Peter R. Martin, MD, a professor of psychiatry and pharmacology and director of the Vanderbilt Addiction Center at the Vanderbilt Psychiatric Hospital in Nashville, Tennessee. "Once they have a plan, they should be fine for the rest of that day." The key is staying focused on your goal of sobriety.

2. Evaluate Each Situation

Rank scenarios as low, medium, or high risk for you. In early recovery, spend more time in low-risk situations and avoid high-risk, Rhine says. If you're further into recovery and will be in a situation that is medium- or high-risk, such as a party with an open bar, rely on your plan. Arrive early and duck out a bit early, she suggests. Drive yourself so that you can leave when you're ready.

3. Bring the Party With You

Take along a food or safe drink that you enjoy. For instance, if champagne is a big temptation for you at a New Year's soiree, bring a flavored, sparkling water to sip as the clock counts down.

4. Know Your Triggers

Addicts should know their triggers for relapse and how to manage them, Dr. Martin says. The most common triggers correspond to the acronym HALT — when you feel hungry, angry, lonely, or tired. Take care of yourself, mentally and physically, to ward off these triggers.

5. Don't Forget to Eat

Low blood sugar can leave you anxious or irritable, Rhine says. This, in turn, can make you feel impulsive and tempted by substances. Have a nutritious meal or snack about every three hours.

(cont on pg 2)



LIFESTYLE OVERHAUL RESOLUTIONS IN RECOVERY

According to the American Psychological Association, some overly ambitious resolutions made during the New Year only result in excess stress for people who slowly start to slide back to their old habits as days go by. They, therefore, recommend that recovering individuals make small and realistic goals/resolutions, with a clear idea of how to achieve and maintain them. Here are 7 unique and realistic New Year resolutions to help you in recovery:

1. [Try New Things](#)
2. [Keep a journal!](#)
3. [Stay Positive](#)
4. [Communicate](#)
5. [Get Moving](#)
6. [Be Inspired](#)
7. [Ask for Help When Needed](#)

--pathwaysreallife.com



Have a virtual or socially distanced event in the New Year?
Contact us to get the word out! INFO@SVVOR.ORG

HAPPY ☆ NEW ☆ YEAR



RECOVERY 101

10 WAYS TO AVOID HOLIDAY ADDICTION RELAPSES



6. Keep Stress Under Control

(cont from pg 1)

Many people turn to alcohol or illegal substances as a way to cope with stress. So when stress strikes, take a few minutes to decompress and meditate instead. Push away thoughts of substance use.

"Just because you have a thought doesn't mean you have to act on it," Rhine says. Also make time for regular exercise. "The urge to drink alcohol or use a drug often feels physical," she explains, so giving your body something else to do can satisfy the craving.

7. Distract Yourself

Bring along a buddy who doesn't drink, smoke, or use drugs to help you stay sober at social functions. Find an area far enough away from the bar, and strike up a conversation with someone. Offer to help your host so that you stay busy with little tasks.

8. Rehearse Responses

If you're not ready to share the fact that you're in recovery with your elderly aunt or a distant cousin at your family holiday dinner, use a discreet strategy for turning down alcoholic drinks or other substances: Create a script that you can use to decline off-limits offers.

9. Learn to Move Past Your Cravings

A craving only lasts about 20 minutes, Rhine says, so if you can stay strong for a short period, the urge should pass. Move to a different setting, meditate, or breathe deeply. Talk yourself out of acting on your urge, she suggests, by saying something like, "The reality is, I can't stop at one drink, and I can choose to have something non-alcoholic instead." Remember how much is at risk if you give into your craving.

10. Lean on Your Support System

If you're part of a support group, make time to attend a few extra meetings during the holidays to stay on track. If you need help finding a support group, the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence offers a list of organizations you can contact. Stay close with helpful friends and family and those you've met during your recovery journey, and understand that your friends who abuse substances may have to celebrate without you this year.

--EverydayHealth.com

