



A Checklist of Symptoms Leading to Relapse

(Source: Hazelden Pamphlet – Another Look at Relapse)

Watch for these: they indicate trouble.

1. **Exhaustion:** Allowing yourself to become overly tired or in poor health. Some alcoholics are also prone to work addictions – perhaps in a hurry to make up for lost time. Feel bad enough, and you’re likely to begin thinking that a drink wouldn’t make it worse.
2. **Dishonesty:** Telling unnecessary little lies to co-workers, family, and lies to yourself all over again.
3. **Impatience:** Things are not happening fast enough, or others are not doing what they are supposed to.
4. **Argumentative:** Arguing small and ridiculous points of view with the need to always be right.
5. **Depression:** Unreasonable and unaccountable despair may occur in cycles, and should be dealt with – talked about.
6. **Frustration:** At others, and also because things are not going your way.
7. **Self-Pity:** “Why do these things always happen to me?” Nobody appreciates all that I am doing. (For Whom?)
8. **Cockiness:** “I’ve got it made.” No longer fear alcoholism. Going into drinking situations to prove to others that you have not got a problem.
9. **Complacency:** “Drinking was the furthest thing from my mind.” Problem is that staying sober was no longer a conscious thought either.
10. **Expecting too much from others:** “I’ve changed. Why hasn’t everyone else?” It is a plus if they do, but it is still your problem if they do not. You can’t expect others to change their lifestyle just because you have.
11. **Letting up on disciplines:** Prayer, meditation, daily inventory, AA attendance. This can stem either from complacency, or boredom. You cannot afford to be bored with your program. The cost of relapse is too great.



12. **Use of mood altering chemicals:** You may feel the need to ease things with a pill, and your doctor may go along with you. You may never have had a problem with chemicals other than alcohol, but you may easily lose sobriety by starting this way. The reverse is true for drug addicts who start to drink.
13. **Wanting too much:** Do not set goals you cannot reach with normal effort. Do not expect too much. "Happiness is not having what you want, but rather wanting what you have.
14. **Forgetting gratitude:** You may be looking negatively on your life, concentrating on problems that still are not totally corrected. It is good to remember where you started from, and how much better life is not.
15. **"It can't happen to me!"** This is dangerous thinking. Almost anything that can happen to you, and is in fact more likely if you get careless. Remember that you have a progressive disease and will be in worse shape if you do have a relapse.
16. **Omnipotence:** This is the feeling that results from a combination of many of the above. You feel that you have all the answers for yourself and others. No one can tell you anything. You ignore suggestions and advice and support of others.
17. **Feelings of loneliness:** Also a combination of many of the above forms. I start to feel that no one needs or wants me, no one understands me. Why stay sober anyway?

Others: Compulsive/impulsive behavior, tunnel vision, wishful thinking, feeling of hopelessness, periods of confusion, irregular eating/sleeping patterns, "I don't care" attitude, loss of daily structure, and listlessness.