

**Ask Dr. Steve . . .
How Can I Tell If I
Have a Problem with
Alcohol and Other
Drugs?**


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For information, please contact Dr. Steve Frisch, Psy.D. at
Info@AliveAndWellNews.com
(847) 498-5622

Although the author and publisher have made every effort to ensure the accuracy and completeness of information contained in this book, we assume no responsibility for errors, inaccuracies, omissions, or any inconsistency herein. Any slights of people, places, or organizations are unintentional.

For years I have been the collector of a wide variety of quotations. Too often, however, I carelessly neglected to note sources. In preparing this book I have spent countless hours attempting, unsuccessfully, to locate the origins of some of the quotations cited. If you know the sources please contact me at the numbers listed in this book. My apologies to the authors and to the readers for the absence of credit.

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For Sophia

As you encounter the inevitable obstacles that life will place in your path, I hope you can draw strength and courage from the following words from Mary Manin Morrissey.

I love you!

*God is present in all things,
even those events and circumstances that seem terrible.*

*Within any circumstance is the seed
that can bear the fruit of the greater good,
if we are willing to ask God
to lead us in bringing forth that good.*

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About the Author

Dr. Frisch is a clinical psychologist in private practice in Chicago, Illinois and Northfield, Illinois. He is a graduate of the Adler School of Professional Psychology where he received his doctorate in clinical psychology. He received his masters degree from National-Louis University where he specialized in addictions counseling. His undergraduate degree was awarded to him by the University of Cincinnati, where he graduated with honors.

Dr. Frisch received post-doctoral training in two specialties at the Adler School of Professional Psychology. He completed a certificate training program in clinical hypnosis at the Center For The Advanced Study Of Clinical Hypnosis. He also completed a certificate training program in Marriage and Family Counseling. He is licensed by the state of Illinois as a clinical psychologist. He was certified in Illinois by IAODAPCA as a certified drug and alcohol counselor in 1988.

Dr. Frisch's first book, *The Comparative Effectiveness of Group Therapy Versus Individual Therapy As Measured By Self-Concept, Interpersonal Orientation, and Degree of Emotional Adjustment*, was an empirical investigation of the treatment modalities he utilizes in his private practice. This book was based on a study he conducted to demonstrate the effectiveness of his treatment protocols.

His treatment philosophy has grown out of his diverse clinical background in which he has worked with a variety of different clinical populations. From these diverse experiences, Dr. Frisch has assimilated a variety of assessment and treatment interventions into his integrated treatment philosophy.

Dr. Frisch has worked on the staff of both inpatient and outpatient chemical dependency programs. This experience provided the foundation for his work with the issues that arise from the impact of chemical dependency on the individual, the family, and the workplace.

As a result of his work in the field of chemical dependency, Dr. Frisch founded the Adult Children Institute. This treatment clinic specialized in working with adults who were raised in families emotionally organized around the influences of drugs and alcohol, sexual and physical abuse, and emotional neglect.

The Adult Children Institute developed treatment interventions that enabled the program's participants to develop effective ways to heal from the aftereffects of trauma experienced in their earlier development. These aftereffects included substance abuse, depression, anxiety, low self esteem, shame, and relationship issues such as fear of emotional intimacy and commitment.

Dr. Frisch co-developed and was the coordinator of a mental health program for homeless adults who required treatment for substance abuse and emotional disorders. He developed an individualized assessment and treatment protocol that provided the impetus and support for each individual to rebuild their lives within their local communities.

The Pathfinders programs represent the integration of Dr. Frisch's ongoing research and work in the area of human growth and potential development. Program participants

develop the necessary awareness and skills to create an empowered life that maximizes their full potential for both their interpersonal and professional lives.

Whether by individual consultation, group experiences, workshops, or seminars, Dr. Frisch engages his audiences with a mixture of common sense and sound psychological principles of change that awakens and inspires his audiences to the possibility of what their lives can potentially become. He consults with individuals, couples, groups, and organizations that are seeking to implement the principles of development, change, and growth in their lives.

A Message From Dr. Steve . . .

Hi. My name is Dr. Steve. I am a clinical psychologist in private practice in Chicago, Illinois and Northfield, Illinois. *Ask Dr. Steve . . . How Can I Tell If I Have a Problem with Alcohol and Other Drugs?* is the first of fourteen books in my series about chemical dependency. In this series you'll learn how to:

- Identify whether or not you have a problem with alcohol and other drugs
- Identify whether or not your teen has a problem with alcohol and other drugs
- Stop abusing alcohol and other drugs
- Stay abstinent from alcohol and other drugs
- [Re]construct a Recovery-based lifestyle
- Cope with a loved one who abuses or is dependent on alcohol and other drugs
- Recover from the effects of living with the problem drinking and drugging of a friend or loved one
- Repair those relationships damaged by chemical dependency
- Raise your children to be alcohol and other drugs free

The books in this series are continually updated with new exercises, new information, and specific answers to your

questions at my website, www.AliveAndWellNews.com. This service is available to you free of charge. Simply go to my website and click on the link, *Dr. Steve's Workbooks*. There you'll find additional, continually updated exercises designed to help you stay clean and sober, enrich your Recovery, and deepen your emotional and spiritual development. Be sure to explore the other links at www.AliveAndWellNews.com for more information about chemical dependency, Recovery, personal improvement, relationship enrichment, communication skills, relationship skills, parenting skills, and emotional and spiritual development.

For information about the other books in this series go to www.AliveAndWellNews.com. Find the link, *Book Release Info*, and click on it for information about:

- *Ask Dr. Steve . . . How Can I Tell If I Have a Problem with Alcohol and Other Drugs?*
- *Ask Dr. Steve . . . What Do I Need To Know About Chemical Dependency?*
- *Ask Dr. Steve . . . How Can I Stop Abusing Alcohol and Other Drugs?*
- *Ask Dr. Steve . . . How Can I Prevent Relapse from Alcohol and Other Drugs?*
- *Ask Dr. Steve . . . How Can I Stay Clean and Sober?*
- *Ask Dr. Steve . . . How Can I [Re]Construct a Recovery-based Lifestyle?*
- *Ask Dr. Steve . . . How Can I Cope With a Loved One Who Abuses Alcohol and Other Drugs?*
- *Ask Dr. Steve . . . How Can I Heal Those Relationships Harmed By Chemical Dependency?*
- *Ask Dr. Steve . . . How Can I Create My Spiritual Practice?*

- *Ask Dr. Steve . . . How Can I Build a Great Relationship with My Children?*
- *Ask Dr. Steve . . . How Can I Raise My Children Not To Use Alcohol and Other Drugs?*
- *Ask Dr. Steve . . . How Can I Tell If My Teen Has a Problem with Alcohol and Other Drugs?*
- *Ask Dr. Steve . . . What Should I Do If My Teen Has a Problem with Alcohol and Other Drugs?*
- *Ask Dr. Steve . . . What Do I Need To Know About Alcohol and Other Drugs?*

G.B.U.

Steve

Introduction

As a clinical psychologist I spend the greater part of my day helping people identify whether or not they have a problem with alcohol and other drugs. In so doing, I've found that the difficulty for most people lies not so much in identifying the problem as in accepting that a problem exists in the first place. Although the reasons for this are many, I've found that when people are properly informed about exactly what an alcohol and other drugs problem is and is not, they're much more able to not only identify, but accept the problem that they might have, as well as apply the necessary solutions.

There are far too many myths, far too many biases, and far too much misinformation that warps one's thinking about the exact nature of, as well as the solution(s) to, one's alcohol and other drugs problem. So, in the hope of better informing, with the desire to debunk a few myths, in the wish of eliminating the biases and prejudices about alcohol and other drugs problems and the people who have those problems, and with the aim of illuminating some solutions to one's alcohol and other drugs problem, I've written this book.

I've integrated two elements in order to best explain what an alcohol and other drugs problem is and what you can do about it. The first element comprises two diagnostic categories that appear in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, Fourth Edition, or DSM IV. Those two

diagnostic categories are *Substance Abuse* and *Substance Dependence*. My discussion about the signs and symptoms of Substance Abuse and Substance Dependence, are based on the diagnostic criteria for Substance Abuse and Substance Dependence as provided by the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, Fourth Edition.

To clarify, the diagnostic categories, Substance Abuse and Substance Dependence are broad diagnostic terms that refer to two separate and distinct clinical phenomena. The diagnostic term, Substance Dependence, refers to what is better known as alcoholism, drug addiction, and/or chemical dependency.

The second element that I've integrated in the writing of this book are excerpts from the e-mail that I've received from readers of my online newsletters, columns, and books that appear at www.AliveAndWellNews.com. Over 150,000 people from more than 47 countries subscribe to my newsletters and read my columns. Many of my readers write to me about their concerns about either their own, or a loved one's consumption of alcohol and other drugs. With their permission, I've included excerpts from their e-mail in order to bring to life the signs and symptoms as they appear in my reader's lives and perhaps in your life as well.

Please note that the names I use to refer to the writer of each excerpt are fictitious names that I've randomly made-up. I have changed or deleted altogether any information that may identify the writer of the e-mail.

So what exactly is it that we'll discuss in this book? Here are but a few of the questions that I'll answer for you.

- What is an alcohol and other drugs problem?
- What are the signs and symptoms of an alcohol and other drugs problem?

- What differentiates normal consumption of alcohol and other drugs from Substance Abuse?
- What differentiates Substance Abuse from Substance Dependence?
- What should you do if you decide that you have a Substance Abuse problem?
- What should you do if you decide that you have a Substance Dependence problem?
- What treatment options are available in order to learn how to most effectively manage a Substance Dependence problem?
- What strategies can you use to manage a Substance Dependence problem for the long-term?

In chapter 1, I'll identify two types of alcohol and other drugs problems—Substance Abuse and Substance Dependence. In this chapter I'll present to you the signs and symptoms of Substance Abuse and Substance Dependence.

In chapter 2, we'll examine the alcohol and other drugs problem known as Substance Abuse. The discussion in this chapter will be based on the diagnostic criteria that appears in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, Fourth Edition.

This chapter is an overview of what Substance Abuse is, how Substance Abuse differs from the normal consumption of alcohol and other drugs, and what the signs and symptoms are for determining whether or not you have a Substance Abuse problem.

In chapter 3, I'll discuss the steps you can take to reduce your alcohol and other drugs consumption if you decide that you have a Substance Abuse problem and want to do something about it. I make the same recommendations to you that

I make to those individuals I meet within my private practice.

In chapter 4, we'll discuss the specific alcohol and other drugs problem—Substance Dependence. Again, the discussion in this chapter will be based on the criteria that appears in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders*, Fourth Edition. This chapter is an overview of what Substance Dependence is, how Substance Dependence differs from Substance Abuse, and what the signs and symptoms of Substance Dependence are.

Following chapter 4, we'll examine six specific signs and symptoms of Substance Dependence. The first sign of Substance Dependence, *continued consumption of alcohol and other drugs despite the recurrence of adverse consequences*, has actually already been discussed in chapter 2. For both Substance Abuse and Substance Dependence share in common this symptom. The other five signs and symptoms for Substance Dependence are discussed individually in chapters 5 through 9.

In chapter 5, we'll examine the sign of Substance Dependence, *preoccupation with the consumption of alcohol and other drugs*. In chapter 6, we'll examine the sign of Substance Dependence, *reduction in time spent on important social, recreational, and/or occupational activities*. In chapter 7, we'll examine the sign of Substance Dependence, *development of tolerance*. In chapter 8, we'll examine the sign of Substance Dependence, *development of a withdrawal syndrome*. In chapter 9, we'll examine the sign of Substance Dependence, *loss of control over one's consumption of alcohol and other drugs*.

After we finish examining the signs and symptoms of Substance Abuse and Substance Dependence, we'll then discuss the *nature* and *cause* of Substance Dependence. In chapter 10, we'll examine how Substance Dependence, also known

as alcoholism, drug addiction, or chemical dependency, is a bio-psycho-social-spiritual disease. I use the rest of chapter 10 to discuss the phrase bio-psycho-social-spiritual. The significance of the phrase, bio-psycho-social-spiritual, is as follows: the complex interplay of these four elements—biological, psychological, social, and spiritual is the cause of Substance Dependence. The last statement enables one to debunk many of the myths and biases that people have in attempting to explain what causes alcoholism and drug addiction as well as describe an individual who is an alcoholic or drug addict.

In chapter 11, we'll discuss the nature of the disease, alcoholism and drug addiction. We'll examine what a disease is as well as what the nature of the disease of alcoholism and drug addiction is. By understanding the cause and the nature of the disease of alcoholism and drug addiction, one is better able to understand and accept the *how's* and *why's* of what one will have to do in order to manage their disease.

In chapter 12, we'll discuss the first step that an individual has to take in order to effectively manage the disease of alcoholism and drug addiction—decide to abstain from ALL alcohol and other drugs. In this chapter, I'll review some of the information previously discussed in order to make a case for why abstinence from ALL alcohol and other drugs is necessary.

In chapter 13, we'll discuss the second step that an individual should take if they've decided to stop consuming alcohol and other drugs—medically supervised detoxification.

Although it's simple enough to say that abstinence is a necessary condition for the management of your disease, abstinence is not necessarily a simple state to achieve, let alone maintain. In chapter 14, we'll examine the treatment options available to help you manage the disease of alcoholism and

drug addiction. Treatment is an option for helping you achieve initial abstinence as well as develop the skillset necessary to maintain abstinence.

In chapter 15, we'll examine seven strategies for long-term management of the disease of alcoholism and drug addiction. Because alcoholism and drug addiction are chronic, progressive, and prone to relapse, it's critical that individuals develop long-term strategies for how to maintain abstinence from ALL alcohol and other drugs.

In chapter 16, I'll discuss with you the recommendations that I make every day to people just like you who want to abstain from consuming ALL alcohol and other drugs.

Thank you for taking the time to examine your alcohol and other drugs consumption. For those of you who discover that you have an alcohol and other drugs problems, I hope that you find helpful information in this book that will enable you to alleviate and/or manage your alcohol and other drugs problem. If you have any questions of me, please feel free to contact me at DrSteve@AliveAndWellNews.com.

Please note that the information in this book is provided for the sole purpose of informing you, the reader. The information provided in this book is not intended to be a substitute for a healthcare provider's consultation. Please consult your own physician or appropriate healthcare provider about the applicability of any opinions or recommendations with respect to your own symptoms or medical conditions.

