

How to Help Yourself Not Use or Drink: Menu of Subjects

After 1) receiving medical care, and 2) developing skill with a) emotion regulation, b) attention management, c) thought management, and d) physical awareness, developing skill with the following subjects can assist people in abstaining from substances problematic for them. Please rank the subjects in order of importance to you.

Rank	Subject	Description
	Hope	List of myth-busting, moralism-busting quotes and definitions.
	Treatment Plan	Outline, in simple but clinical terms, of what research suggests should comprise an initial, evidence-based treatment plan for substance use disorder, popularly termed "addiction."
	Medical Care	Brief guide to requesting medical care for substance use disorder, and for related medical and health concerns.
	Replacements	Assistance with figuring out what substances did for you and what might help instead.
	Needs	A list of practical matters that might cause stress in your life and consideration of what might help ease one or more of them.
	Environmental cues	Consideration of what sets you up to return to use and what might help you alter what's going on, avoid it, or muscle through it.
	Love	Consideration of the research on the interrelationship of love and addiction in the brain's neurocircuitry, what that might mean to you, and how that might help you recover.
	Self-counseling: Trauma	If you're one of the 2/3 of people with addiction having experienced trauma, this is what the research says you can do to help yourself with trauma.
	Self-counseling: Anger	If you have "anger issues" and have been prescribed "anger management," this is what the research says you can do to help yourself with anger.
	Self-counseling: CBT, DBT, CM	Top, evidence-based therapies that can assist with abstinence and/or harm reduction are cognitive behavior therapy (CBT), dialectical behavior therapy (DBT), and contingency management (CM). An overview of these concepts may offer ideas on ways to provide the essence of these top-tier therapies for yourself.
	Relationships: Partnerships	A few skills—fostering safety, attunement, reflective listening, noticing and acknowledging others' thoughts, empathizing with (safe) others' feelings—can improve relationships with one's partner, as well as with one's children, neighbors, co-workers.
	Relationships: Family and Friends	Self-generated list of criteria by which one decides how much to engage in current relationships.
	Relationships: Employers & Employees	A realistic look at how businesses make money, the differences in power and dependence that can result, and how to help yourself have a satisfying, stable experience at work.
	Sex	Becoming aware of one's own views of sexuality, pregnancy, and sexually transmitted infections, and learning to talk those over with a potential partner prior to sexual intimacy, can assist with a sense of safety, well-being, and stability for oneself and one's partner.
	Self-care	After getting medical care, you can do things on your own to help yourself maintain stability and a sense of well-being.
	Planning	Using the skill of awareness, you can track anything you want—for example, caffeine intake, sleep patterns, spending, screen time—and decide what's working and what's problematic. "Beginning with the end in mind," you can decide what you want to have happen, and figure out needed next steps.
	Stigma	Contempt for people with addiction is real, costly and dangerous, occurs internally and socially, and the subject has to be addressed directly.