

## **Four Addiction Recovery Mistakes - Avoid These Pitfalls & Achieve Successful Recovery From Addiction**

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Addiction recovery is a challenging time, and none of us are born with a manual inside us. Recovery is as individual as a fingerprint, yet reliant on a few wise principles that can make the difference between success or losing control. Avoid these 4 recovery mistakes to achieve a more solid recovery:

**1. Relying On Willpower aka 'White Knuckling It'.** You convince yourself that you can will yourself into avoiding addictive behaviour, as if sheer determination was the solution. The problem here is that the frame is inadequate. You must identify solid reasons - or benefits - for stopping addiction. For example, you decide to stop drinking so you can be the kind of person you want to be. Without clarifying what you want to gain from recovery, addictive thinking can gain leverage and talk you into engaging in compulsive behaviour all over again. Identifying the benefits of recovery is an excellent starting place that, along with other relapse prevention strategies, can provide the foundation for a solid long term sobriety.

**2. Going It Alone.** You decide that you will find your way through recovery without the embarrassment (or companionship) of letting anyone in on this. You quietly opt to avoid counsellors or groups because you feel that you have the strength to break free from addiction on your own. You may be successful, but the odds are against you recovering in isolation. And isolation may have contributed to addictive habits in the first place. Human beings are social animals. We have a biological as well as psychological need for bonding, back-up and mentorship, especially during challenging times. If you are not a group person, and are not attending counselling, then find someone you can trust who understands what you are going through. This will not only help you feel supported, but can help make you accountable as well.

**3. Feeling Over-Confident.** You achieve a few days, weeks or months of sobriety and then 'decide' you will never relapse again. At this point you may choose to stop attending counselling or groups because you believe you are becoming invincible. This is where the optimism that you need to sustain recovery can turn into its ugly cousin - cockiness. Over-confidence is one of the major causes of relapse. Recovery is ongoing work. But remember that you will probably not always have to be as vigilant about your recovery as you need to be at the outset. We are all imperfect beings, addicted or not, and a humble and receptive attitude is a hallmark of psychological well being, as well as a sign of good recovery.

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**4. Avoiding Emotional Sobriety.** You over-focus on stopping addictive behaviour and see abstinence as the end point. You may not realize that you still have work to do, or understand the big picture of recovery. But abstinence is the beginning, not the end, of recovery. You need to know that abstinence is merely the cessation of addictive behaviour - and can last an hour, a day, a week or indefinitely. What gives abstinence staying power, and turns it into true recovery, is the development of good emotional self-management skills. Emotional sobriety is about learning to experience, accept and be guided by your emotions, and to reframe pessimistic thinking, without self-medicating with substances or compulsive behaviours. Emotional self-management is both the long term task and foundation of recovery. Most people find they benefit from counselling or group support to help them successfully find their way through the challenges of emotional recovery.

***Glynis Sherwood** - Your Addiction Recovery Expert - is a Counsellor, Therapist, Consultant and Coach living and working in Vancouver, BC. To learn more about how to help you and your family become more resilient when overcoming addiction, please visit my website [www.RecoveryCounsellingSolutions.com](http://www.RecoveryCounsellingSolutions.com) . While visiting my site I invite you to claim my **Free Report: "7 Addiction Recovery 'Red Flags' and What To Do About Them"**. You are also welcome to contact me for a **Free Consultation** by telephone: 778-837-0616, or by email: [Info@GlynisSherwood.com](mailto:Info@GlynisSherwood.com) .*