

- Binging—using heavily—for many hours or several days.
- Feeling unable to quit.

WHAT LEADS A PERSON TO MISUSE DRUGS OR ALCOHOL?

Psychological, biological, social, and physiological factors might all play a role in whether or not a person comes to abuse drugs or alcohol. A family history of substance abuse can make a person more vulnerable to addiction, and social factors, such as peer pressure and ease of availability can increase the likelihood of a person developing a problem with drugs or alcohol. In addition, once a person begins using heavily, physiological changes often take place, and that person may then become physically dependent, requiring him or her to continually use the substance in order to avoid withdrawal symptoms.

Alcoholism tends to run in families, although not all children of people addicted to alcohol become addicted themselves, and there is some debate among psychologists about the degree to which alcoholism is genetic. Some researchers are searching for an addiction or alcoholism gene, while others point out that simply witnessing a parent drink in response to stress increases a child's likelihood of choosing to drink in response to stress. Studies do show that genes, such as those that have an effect on the way a person responds to alcohol, may be responsible for about half of the risk of developing alcoholism. Some of these genes increase a person's risk, while some may instead decrease the risk of a person's developing alcoholism.

Research indicates that the vast majority of people who are addicted to drugs or alcohol have an underlying mental health condition or significant emotional/psychological difficulty. About half of all people with mental health diagnoses will face challenges with drugs or alcohol at some point in their lives, usually as a result of using drugs or alcohol to self-medicate.

People who misuse drugs or alcohol often do so as a way of coping with experiences, memories, or events that emotionally overwhelm them. Whether they are equipped with appropriate coping strategies or not, people who misuse substances rely on the immediate gratification of drugs and alcohol as an alternative to facing the issues at hand. In the long term, however, reliance on drugs and alcohol will almost surely

Anger Management

Anger management refers to a process. It can help people identify stressors. People learn steps to help them stay calm in anger management. They may then handle tense situations in a constructive, positive way.

The purpose of anger management is to help a person decrease anger. It reduces the emotional and physical arousal that anger can cause. It is generally impossible to avoid all people and settings that incite anger. But a person may learn to control reactions and respond in a socially appropriate manner. The support of a mental health professional may be helpful in this process.

EXPLORING THE ROOTS OF ANGER

Many different events can make someone angry. These may include:

- **Internal events** such as perceived failures, injustices, or frustrations
- **External events** such as loss of property or privileges, teasing, or humiliation

Anger may result in externalizing behaviors. These can include verbal arguments and tantrums. Anger can also cause internalizing behaviors. Internalizing behaviors can include sulking or increased symptoms of depression. People may show anger through aggression. Aggression is the biological function of anger. It is an evolutionary response that helps prepare people to fight off threats.

Inappropriate displays of anger may mean a more serious mental health or emotional issue exists. People who receive anger management therapy learn skills to slow their reaction to anger. This can help them identify the reason for their feelings. The roots of anger may be buried in emotional trauma, addiction, grief, or other issues. But a natural inclination may be to find temporary relief in lashing out. This can obscure the true cause of the anger. If this is the case for you, working with a therapist might be helpful.

HOW ANGER MANAGEMENT WORKS