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## ADDICTION TO ALCOHOL: MYTHS AND FACTS

Being able to tell myth from fact is an important step in recognizing and preventing alcohol abuse.

 Think about how these myths have affected you, and respond to the following questions.

**Myth 1:** *Overcoming addiction to alcohol is simply a matter of willpower.*

**Fact:** Prolonged exposure to alcohol alters the brain in ways that result in powerful cravings and a compulsion to drink more. These changes in the brain make it very difficult to quit by sheer force of will alone.

Has believing this myth kept you from seeking help for yourself or another? ☐ Yes ☐ No

How can overcoming this myth help you? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Myth 2:** *Addiction to alcohol is a disease; there's nothing you can do about it.*

**Fact:** Most experts agree that addiction is a brain disease, but that doesn't mean its victims are helpless. The brain changes associated with addiction to alcohol can actually be treated and even reversed through therapy, medication, exercise, and other treatments.

Has believing this myth kept you from seeking help for yourself or another? ☐ Yes ☐ No

How can overcoming this myth help you? \_\_\_\_\_

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**Myth 3:** *All alcoholics have to be allowed to hit rock bottom before they can recover.*

**Fact:** Recovery can begin at any point in the addiction process. In fact, the longer abuse continues, the harder it is to treat. Don't wait to intervene until you or someone you care about has destroyed a family and a promising military career.

Has believing this myth kept you from seeking help for yourself or another? ☐ Yes ☐ No

How can overcoming this myth help you? \_\_\_\_\_

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**Myth 4:** *You can't force someone into treatment. An alcoholic has to want help.*

**Fact:** Treatment doesn't have to be voluntary to be successful. People who are pressured into treatment are just as likely to benefit from it as those who enter voluntarily. Many formerly resistant addicts decide they want to change once they are alcohol-free.

Has believing this myth kept you from seeking help for yourself or another? ☐ Yes ☐ No

How can overcoming this myth help you? \_\_\_\_\_

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**Myth 5:** *If treatment didn't work the first time, there's no point in trying again.*

**Fact:** Recovery from addiction to alcohol is a long process that often includes relapses. A relapse doesn't mean that treatment has failed. It means it's time to get back to treatment or try a different treatment approach.

Has believing this myth kept you from seeking help for yourself or another? ☐ Yes ☐ No

How can overcoming this myth help you? \_\_\_\_\_

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