



Why Sometimes Intoxication and Therapy Just Don't Mix



Our View on Alcohol & Drugs

Many people enjoy drinking alcohol or using drugs. We are not against it. We do know that sometimes it can cause problems in life and it gets in the way of therapy. We see your strength and courage for attending therapy even while drunk, buzzed, or high, but showing up under the influence may stop work towards your goals and may pose a safety risk to you and other clients.

How it Interferes with Therapy

- Inability to consent to therapy. A person who is intoxicated may not be able to make an informed decision about therapy and treatment. Therapy while intoxicated is not always an ethical or healthy choice.
- Substance use blocks the brain's ability to process the issues talked about in session and in healthy decision making.
- Your safety may be at risk: whether by risk of overdose or by how you made it to our office.
- Seeing someone buzzed or high in the waiting area can be triggering for others who may be working on similar issues and can interfere with their ability to make progress towards their goals.

Alcohol/Drugs as a Barrier

We want to help! If you find it hard to avoid being high/buzzed for your therapy, sessions can be rescheduled and the focus of treatment may need to be on addressing substance use.

Help Us Help You:

If alcohol/drug use becomes a barrier to therapy, sometimes this means we need to explore alternative treatment options so that therapy can be helpful. If so, we will make recommendations for treatment based upon your individual needs and circumstance.

Resources that can help

- Detox – See your local detox center or call Thunder Bay's Balmoral Center at **623-6515**. If beds are full keep calling frequently until one becomes available.
- Rapid Access Addiction Medicine (RAAM) at Norwest Community Health Centre **626-8487**
- Thunder Bay Counselling Center for RAAM, Assessment and Referral to Treatment **684-1880**
- Alcohol and Drug Helpline at **1-866-531-2600**

Strategies to Start with

- Avoid the people, places and things that make it more likely to use/drink
- Practice saying "no". Say no to people who want to use/drink with you. It's not rude or selfish. It's you taking care of *you*.
- Substitute alcohol and drugs with alternatives like juice or pop or a distracting activity
- Deep breathing or meditation
- Consider the consequences
- Make a list of reasons not to
- Call a supportive friend
- Consider "10-10-10" How will drinking or using now affect me 10 minutes from now, 10 hours from now, 10 months from now?

Other Resources:

- Smith Centre **684-5100**
- Dilico Adult Treatment Centre **623-7963**
- Anishnawbe Mushkiki **343-4843**
- Kin-Na-Chi-Hih **623-5577**
- Crossroads Centre **622-2730**
- 3C's **767-4172**
- Alpha Court **345-2120**
- SOS Team **620-7678**
- AA Intergroup **623-1712**
- Alanon/Alateen **622-1906**

"Change happens when the pain of staying the same outweighs the pain of change."

- Unknown Author

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