

# MOSAIC MENTAL HEALTH TIPS

THE OFFICIAL EAP NEWSLETTER FROM MOSAIC COUNSELING

## WORRIED ABOUT A LOVED ONE'S DRINKING? WHAT TO DO

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[HTTPS://TINYURL.COM/MMHT-APRL24](https://tinyurl.com/mmht-aprl24)

**April is Alcohol Awareness Month**—a time to raise awareness and understanding of alcohol use and misuse. This particular article speaks about how to have a tough conversation without making it any more difficult.

When you're concerned that someone you love drinks too heavily, it can be hard to know what to do. You may not know what to say or how they'll react if you bring it up.

Regardless of why you're hesitating, when at least one of these things are true, you're not wrong for wanting to talk about it:

- You worry about how much or how often your loved one drinks.
- You make excuses for how they act when they drink.
- You've been hurt or embarrassed by your loved one when they were drinking.
- The amount of money they spend on alcohol concerns you.
- You bail your loved one out when their drinking keeps them from responsibilities.
- Their behavior when they drink makes you nervous or upset.
- You've called or thought about calling the police because of your loved one's drinking.

## What Helps:

**Study up.** Find out as much as you can about the effects of alcohol and the signs of alcohol misuse so you have facts on hand.

**Time your talk right.** A conversation when they've been drinking or are stressed is likely to trigger a lot of emotions that could get out of hand. Choose a time when you're both well-rested and clearheaded.

**Focus on results.** Explain how their drinking could be affecting their health and how it will continue to cause harm. Express your concern for their well-being as someone who cares for them.

Remember that it will take them time to change.

**Expect pushback.** They may be defensive and deny the problem. Try not to take it personally. Think of it as planting a seed that will blossom into new, healthy habits.

**Prepare a plan.** Have some concrete next steps for them to choose from, in case they're ready to get help. Look for local Alcoholics Anonymous meetings, find counselors that fit their insurance plan, and research treatment facilities. Offer to give them a ride if they need one.

**Seek support.** Confronting someone about their heavy drinking can be hard on you, too. Talk to a trusted friend, counselor, or spiritual leader about what you're going through.

You can also find groups of folks who are in the same situation as you are. Organizations like Al-Anon, Nar-Anon, and Alateen have networks all over the country and online to support those dealing with a loved one's heavy drinking.

You can't fix the problem or change their behavior. But you can present your concerns in such a way that they might see things more clearly and get the help they need. Consider the following when planning to voice your concerns.



**Stay connected.** Continue to do things you enjoy together. Encourage their hobbies and healthy friendships.

Be ready to stay the course and support them as they work on themselves and seek treatment.

## What Doesn't Help:

**Don't lecture, shame, or threaten.** If you blame them or come on strong, it can backfire. You may have better luck with a more caring approach.

Try not to judge or use emotion to steer the conversation. Remember that you aren't their therapist or counselor. It's not your job to diagnose or treat them.

**Stop covering their tracks.** It can be hard to step aside when you see someone doing self-destructive things. But when you make excuses or cover their dropped responsibilities, it keeps them from seeing the consequences of their actions. Of course, if they or others are in serious, immediate danger, call 911.

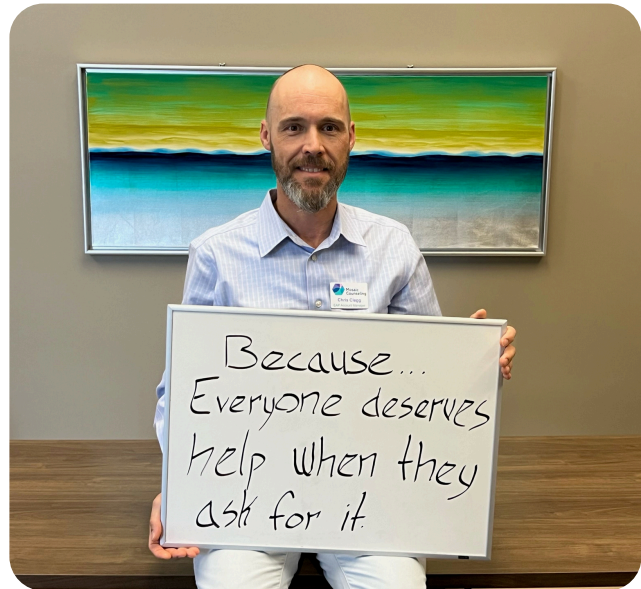
**Don't let it consume you.** You may care deeply and want very much to help, but be sure you're taking a step back from time to time. Don't let negative feelings get to you. Their drinking isn't your fault.

Taking care of your emotional and mental health can help you better help them.



## Use Your Resources.

Approaching this type of conversation with someone you care about may be difficult, but alternatively, ignoring their alcohol issues may lead to more complications in their life and your own. Using available resources like the Employee Assistance Program through Mosaic Counseling will help you along the journey. Seeing a therapist separately or as a pair could be very helpful along the way. 🧠



## Meet Your Advocate:

Hello! I'm Chris Clegg, the EAP Account Manager, but I like to refer to myself as your **EAP Advocate**. Years ago, I used my EAP with another employer, and while it was very helpful, it did not feel private to access and I had no idea what I was doing. Our EAP process is designed to eliminate those issues, but if you have a question about the EAP or something seems wrong, please call, text or email me and I'll get you an answer. My contact info may be found at the bottom of page 1 and I welcome calls, texts, or emails at any time.

Privacy is typically the #1 client concern that I hear about when it comes to using the EAP and we take that responsibility very seriously. I am legally required to protect your privacy. No one will know if you use the EAP or even if you ask a question about it.

At the end of the day, we want you to receive the help that you are seeking without complicating anything else in your life. If we can do that, we are successful.