

The Laundry List - 14 Traits of an Adult Child of an Alcoholic

- 1) We became isolated and afraid of people and authority figures.
- 2) We became approval seekers and lost our identity in the process.
- 3) We are frightened of angry people and any personal criticism.
- 4) We either become alcoholics, marry them or both, or find another compulsive personality such as a workaholic to fulfill our sick abandonment needs.
- 5) We live life from the viewpoint of victims and we are attracted by that weakness in our love and friendship relationships.
- 6) We have an overdeveloped sense of responsibility and it is easier for us to be concerned with others rather than ourselves; this enables us not to look too closely at our own faults, etc.
- 7) We get guilt feelings when we stand up for ourselves instead of giving in to others.
- 8) We became addicted to excitement.
- 9) We confuse love and pity and tend to "love" people we can "pity" and "rescue."
- 10) We have "stuffed" our feelings from our traumatic childhoods and have lost the ability to feel or express our feelings because it hurts so much (Denial).
- 11) We judge ourselves harshly and have a very low sense of self-esteem.
- 12) We are dependent personalities who are terrified of abandonment and will do anything to hold on to a relationship in order not to experience painful abandonment feelings, which we received from living with sick people who were never there emotionally for us.
- 13) Alcoholism is a family disease; and we became para-alcoholics and took on the characteristics of that disease even though we did not pick up the drink.
- 14) Para-alcoholics are reactors rather than actors.

Tony A., 1978