



EXCLUSIVE

Fabulous Real Life

TIPPLE TOO FAR From 'taking the edge off' to downplaying habits – 8 signs your partner is addicted to alcohol after Brad Pitt opens up

Plus, what NOT to say to someone struggling with alcohol dependency

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ALCOHOLISM can affect people in all sorts of ways - and the signs of someone being dependent on it can often be challenging to spot.

Just days ago, [Brad Pitt](#), 61, opened up on his battle with [alcoholism](#) after [his bitter split](#) from actress [Angelina Jolie](#), 50.



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As Brad Pitt opens up on his battle with alcoholism, here we reveal the eight signs your partner may be going through something similar Credit: WENN



The Hollywood star reveals his life spun out of control following his bitter split from actress Angelina Jolie Credit: Getty



Sandra Parker, the UK's number one sober coach, has shared how to help loved ones Credit: Sandra Parker



She also acknowledged what not to say Credit: Getty

The actor [sat down with Hollywood podcaster Dax Shepard](#) and was honest about his issues with [drugs](#), [booze](#) and addiction, and how his life spun out of control after his [marriage](#) breakdown.

And while the majority of us like to enjoy an alcoholic beverage now and again, whether that's a glass of [wine](#) or a few beers, for some people, [alcohol](#) can be a huge issue.

Widespread issue

Hundreds of thousands of adults in [England](#) are considered to have alcohol dependency.

In 2019 to 2020, Public Health England found an estimated 608,416 adults were dependent on alcohol - a two per cent increase from 2015 to 2016.

Not only this, but according to a 2021 [study](#), people with common mental disorders, such as [depression](#), anxiety and phobia, are twice as likely to report an alcohol use disorder than people without common mental disorders.

Expert advice

For those eager to know more about the signs of alcoholism, Sandra Parker, the UK's number one sober coach has shared her [top advice](#).

The founder of [Just the Tonic](#) tells [Fabulous](#) what you should know if you are “worried about your partner's drinking but unsure if it's really a problem”, plus “what to do about it”.

Sandra tells us: “In my role as a sobriety and control alcohol coach I have worked with hundreds of successful people – from entrepreneurs to sports professionals – and I've seen how easily drinking can shift from social to dependency, especially for high achievers.”

She also alerts against people “hiding empties or downplaying how much they drink” and those who are “increasingly exhausted.”

Additionally, Sandra claims that “what used to be weekend drinking has crept into every evening” could indicate alcohol dependency, while those who “make excuses to drink more,” could be in trouble.

But that's not all, as Sandra acknowledges that those who “get defensive or change the subject if you mention their drinking”.

Those who “stay up late drinking alone after everyone's [asleep](#),” could also need help to battle their drinking.

How to help a loved one

If you've spotted any of these signs in your loved ones and are concerned about someone you love and their drinking, here's what works.

 **Change is possible - with the correct support people can get complete control of their relationship with alcohol without feeling deprived**

Sandra Parker

Sandra advises: “Share your concerns in a kind non-judgemental way using specific examples.

“Listen without criticism if they open up. Support any positive changes they try to make.

“Understand they might need professional help. Know that change is possible - with the correct support people can get complete control of their relationship with alcohol without feeling deprived - even if they have been struggling for decades.”

Eight signs your partner may have an alcohol addiction

ACCORDING to Sandra Parker, here are the eight warning signs to look out here:

- That nightly glass of wine has become a full bottle to "take the edge off"
- They wait until the kids are in bed to start drinking
- Hiding empties or downplaying how much they drink
- What used to be weekend drinking has crept into every evening
- They are increasingly exhausted
- They get defensive or change the subject if you mention their drinking
- Making excuses to drink more
- Staying up late drinking alone after everyone's asleep ■

Even more importantly, it's crucial that you know what *not* to say to someone struggling, as Sandra adds: “This is what people often say which makes things worse: ‘Just have the one’ and ‘Why can’t you just be like a normal drinker?’.

Additionally, Sandra warns against saying ‘You just need more willpower’ and questioning ‘Can't you just cut down?’.

Do YOU want to give up alcohol?

IF you want to give up alcohol, Sandra Parker, the UK's number one sober coach has shared her advice.

The founder of '[Just the Tonic](#)' advises: "Focus on what you're noticing yourself. Be honest with yourself about what you're drinking."

"If you've been trying this for a while, you probably need help."

"I always advise people to try to cut down rather than just stop, because if you try to stop, it's like you're just ripping the alcohol out and you're not really working out why you're drinking."

"Get expert help." ■

Sandra, who once battled [alcohol addiction](#) herself, highlights that what Brad's story proves is that "alcohol dependency is not about success or willpower."

She recognises that for many, just like Brad, alcohol can become "a way of coping."

As a result, she says: "It's about recognising when alcohol has taken control and getting the right support to change."



Those who get defensive or change the subject if you mention their drinking could be in danger of alcohol dependency Credit: Getty