

## **Sober Holidays!**

Sober holidays for those of us in recovery can also present some problems. Thoughts can creep in like maybe I can just have one eggnog or what a happy time; I know how to make it better or I feel lonely; a drink would sure pick me up.

There are several techniques that I and others have found very helpful in maintaining sobriety and recovery during these sometimes tempting and difficult times. During the holidays, sober people are often confronted with drinking and using situations for the first time since they began their recoveries. There are solutions.

Plan your days. Let your sponsor or friend in recovery know where you will be and have that person's number with you just in case.

### **Plan B**

If you must attend a party or gathering where alcohol is being served ... then have a Plan B ... an escape route.

If you are with a friend or spouse, tell them before you go that you may feel uncomfortable around alcohol and that you need to be able to leave the party on a moments notice without having to explain why. In fact, you can always have an alternative place to go – like for coffee or out to a movie.

With this arrangement negotiated when you arrive at the gathering, tell your host or hosts that you can probably only stay for a short time but you will know more in a while after you make a telephone call.

Then you are not obliged to stay and what usually happens is that you have a great time because the pressure to stay is off. If you are on your own, make sure you have your sponsor's or a sober friend's phone number that you know will be home so that you can call or even meet with them if you feel the need. That's "Plan B".

### **Thanks, I'd love a drink!**

What if someone asks you if you would like a drink and you don't particularly feel like explaining to them that you have a disease that requires you not to drink, one day at a time, and that you are a recent graduate of the local treatment center?

What I do is say "What a good idea. I would love a drink! Do you have a soda-water with lemon or coca-cola?" This allows me to say yes and get what I want as well. Very few people will press anything alcoholic on us but when they do I simply say "Not right now thank you, but a coke would really hit the spot."

Stay away from Christmas cake rum balls and dubious punches and eggnog. Just an accidental taste can start us off running again!