



## ADULT CHILDREN OF ALCOHOLICS

There are certain generalizations that recur in one form or another at virtually every group meeting. These perceptions are worthy of careful examination and discussion:

1. Adult children of alcoholics *guess* at what *normal behavior* is.
2. Adult children of alcoholics *have difficulty following a project through* from beginning to end.
3. Adult children of alcoholics *lie* when it would be just as easy to tell the truth.
4. Adult children of alcoholics *judge themselves* without mercy.
5. Adult children of alcoholics *have difficulty having fun*.
6. Adult children of alcoholics *take themselves very seriously*.
7. Adult children of alcoholics *have difficulty with intimate relationships*.
8. Adult children of alcoholics *overreact to changes* over which they have no control.
9. Adult children of alcoholics *constantly seek approval and affirmation*.
10. Adult children of alcoholics usually *feel that they are different* from other people.
11. Adult children of alcoholics are *super responsible* or *super irresponsible*.
12. Adult children of alcoholics *are extremely loyal* even in the face of evidence that the loyalty is undeserved.
13. Adult children of alcoholics *are impulsive*. They tend to lock themselves into a course of action without giving serious consideration to alternative behaviors or possible consequences. This impulsivity leads to confusion, self-loathing and loss of control over their environment. In addition, they spend an excessive amount of energy cleaning up the mess.

This list can be useful in a number of ways:

1. To gain greater knowledge and understanding of what it means to be the child of an alcoholic and how the process evolves over time;
2. To use as a self-help or clinical guide for working toward individual growth; and
3. As a basis for discussion groups of Adult Children of Alcoholics.

Woititz, Janet G., *Adult Children of Alcoholics*, Health Communications, Inc., 1983