

STOP OVER DRINKING &
LEARNING TO KNOW YOU

DAY 2

WEEKDAYS WITHOUT WINE

YOUR QUICK GUIDE TO MANAGING
YOUR DESIRE TO DRINK

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Understanding Urges

There is a reason that your brain has such a strong desire for alcohol. The long and the short of it is, you taught your brain to desire it. The **GOOD NEWS** is that you can unlearn your desire. Yesterday, I taught you how to be an observer of your thoughts so you can see what comes up for you when you want to pour the first drink and what costs and benefits there are to having a drink. I had you look at what it would be like if you didn't have alcohol dominating your life and what those costs and benefits are. (If you haven't done that worksheet you must go back and do it in order for this to work).

Desire is a feeling. We think that desire just springs up within us without any of our control. However, there is a step by step unveiling of *thoughts* that happen that create our *feelings*.

ALL FEELINGS COME FROM OUR THOUGHTS.

The **GOOD NEWS** is we do have control. The control we have is in our **thoughts**. What happens is that we have such a long stream of thoughts creating the desire/urge and it's just too many to pay attention to. We just feel like the feeling of desire just bubbles up inside of us on its own. The first step to unlearn our desire for over drinking was awareness of our thoughts, which I taught you yesterday, now we have to interrupt that thought and create a new neural pathway to stop the thoughts and ultimately the desire for alcohol.

A Note on Desire:

We need desire to survive. We need desire to evolve as a species. If we didn't we would perish. For example, we have a need and desire for food. We need food to survive. We know that if we go out and hunt (shop) for it and then we consume it we will survive. When we eat the food a chemical (dopamine) is released in our brains. Our brain says, "Hey, this is important stuff. I better pay attention so I can get more of that for my survival". We then create a habit of looking for food, we get the reward after the hunt, rinse-repeat, and we survive.

The problem that we have in hand with consuming alcohol is that it's a manmade substance that when consumed, releases a large surge of dopamine. Our brain is now ever more alert to paying attention to the behavior of drinking because the reward is so HUGE. It's says, "Holy cow, I need this to survive!" But in reality, it doesn't. Our consistency of pouring the drink, consuming the drink, has become a habit that our brain wants to receive the high reward, and our brain has filed that habit away to be efficient.

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Another bit of Good News:

Your brain is working EXACTLY as it was designed to do.

Your brain seeks desire and pleasure to survive. The messages that it is receiving from the rewards you feed it are functioning properly.

You just have to stop feeding it a substance that is giving it *off the charts rewards*.

Our brain doesn't keep track of what is a good habit or a bad habit.

It just wants to be efficient. It files away the behavior of pouring the drink because it thinks it needs it to survive.

So how do we interrupt the behavior of pouring the drink?

1. Be COMPLETELY AWARE of your THOUGHTS.

Your primal brain is efficiently storing the habit that wants that drink. It's a screaming toddler wanting the treat. It's going to throw a tantrum until it gets what it wants. If it screams loud enough and long enough and you (your prefrontal cortex-the adult/parent) gives in, the toddler will learn that as long as it screams loud enough and long enough it will get what it wants. It will scream **"I WILL DIE IF I DON'T GET WHAT I WANT!"**

But you know as the adult, **IT WON'T DIE!**

WHO IS IN CHARGE? YOU!

2. How do you begin to not give in and interrupt this behavior?

You will collect 100 urges.

Understanding Urges

How?

You will listen to your thoughts when you have the urge. You will hear what you say to yourself. You might hear this:

"I deserve it"

"I had a hard day"

"I want to celebrate"

"I want to have just one"

"I don't want to be the only one not drinking"

"It's Friday, I had a rough week"

"The kids are driving me crazy, I want to get inside my bubble and turn off for a while"

When you hear these thoughts you **will not** give in.

You will sit still.

You will listen.

You will breathe.

You will say to yourself:

"I am the **ONLY** one that can make this change".

You will keep your resolve by revisiting the thoughts that you wrote down in yesterday's exercises about the costs and benefits of over drinking.

You will revisit the benefits of not over drinking.

You will fill out the 100 urges worksheet and not pour yourself a drink.

Every urge you collect you are creating a new habit (neural pathway) to lose your desire to over drink.

You will not die if you don't have the drink.

Understanding Urges

3. VERY IMPORTANT RULE:

If you go several days without pouring a drink and then have a drink by giving into the urge.

DO NOT BERATE YOURSELF.

That NEVER works.

It only exasperates the problem.

Be aware of the thoughts that you had when you gave in.

Be a detective.

You don't need to start back at square one.

You just keep going and collecting your 100 urges.

DIRECTIONS:

Start writing down every time you DO NOT give in to pouring yourself a drink.

Your urges are going to be unanswered.

Every time you collect an urge you are creating a new neural pathway to undo the desire/habit of over drinking.

Understanding Urges

THAT IS THE MAGIC!

This is the exact way to begin.

This is how I started.

When I started this practice, I didn't know this would be the work that would make me succeed.

I didn't know that every *thought* I hadve creates my *feelings*.

I didn't know that my *feelings* create my *actions*.

I didn't know that my *actions* create my *results*.

The result that I desperately wanted *was to not over drink*.

I worked backwards from the the result that I wanted to create.

I created the thoughts that would make me feel in control.

I just knew that I needed to try something different.

I needed to learn how to control my thoughts.

Saying negative thoughts about myself was **NOT** working any more. I just kept getting the same results. I felt like sh#t. When I said to myself, "There is something wrong with me" and I kept getting the same results. *AND*, guess what? I kept drinking!

There is *absolutely* no successful person that makes it to the top of their game by telling themselves there is something wrong with them.

GUARANTEED!

Collecting 100 Urges

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- 3
- 4
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Collecting 100 Urges

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Collecting 100 Urges

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Collecting 100 Urges

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Collecting 100 Urges

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