

# SO STOP OVERDRINKING

## THE COMPLETE PROGRAM

*With  
Master Coach Instructor  
Brooke Castillo*





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## Introduction

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### **Who Am I, and Why Should You Listen to Me About Overdrinking?**

Hello, I'm Brooke Castillo, Master Coach Instructor. I'm excited to invite you along on this journey with me.

My story starts with just wanting to cut back on my drinking.

I grew up in an alcoholic family. I had a father who was an alcoholic, and he really struggled with it tremendously. It literally ended up killing him—he died of cirrhosis of the liver.

I had a brother who was addicted to cocaine all through my childhood. I went to many AA and Al-Anon meetings with him and watched him suffer through rehab several times, eventually dying of an overdose himself.

I've had a lot of exposure to addiction and addiction therapy, and what I was struggling with was not *that*.

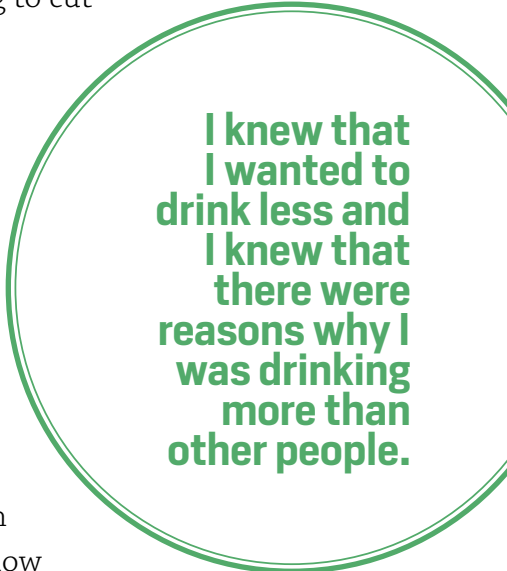
I knew that I wanted to drink less and I knew that there were reasons why I was drinking more than other people, but I couldn't reconcile the two thoughts.

I tried several remedies, many of them that helped, but I always felt a pull to drink more than I genuinely wanted. I had a challenging time trying to cut back. I looked for resources, but couldn't find any.

My solution was either to admit that I was an alcoholic, that I was completely out of control and completely powerless, and go to meetings three times a week, or just to identify as a normal drinker who had no problem. So, of course, my choice was to identify as a normal drinker who had no problem!

I was constantly feeling competing desires within me to drink more and also to drink less, which created a lot of anxiety and stress. I ended up getting fed up with the way I was feeling.

As I got older and my hormones changed, the alcohol in my system would wake me up in the middle of the night. It really affected how foggy I felt during the day, and it created a lot of cravings and desire for me to drink earlier and earlier in the day. Plus, it was annoying to have all that chatter going on in my brain.



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I was extremely frustrated with the lack of help. I had no interest in calling myself an alcoholic. I had no interest in recovery. I had no interest in sobriety. I had no interest in abstinence. I didn't see that as the solution to my very mild struggle, but the available programs all operated on that premise.

In my career as a coach, I don't work with people who have bulimia or anorexia or binge-eating disorder, but I do work with people who overeat emotionally. That's how I approach this work I do with people who overdrink. I don't work with alcoholics. I don't work with the twelve steps. I don't work with people who want to go into recovery. There are many solutions for those people out there. I want to work with people who just want to stop overdrinking.

They want to drink normally.

Or maybe they want to quit drinking, but not in a way where they have to say they're an alcoholic or have to go to meetings.

This program won't be for everyone. It's for you if you're like me, if you don't identify as an alcoholic, if you don't feel like you're non-functioning in the world, but you still struggle to drink less.

## **The Light Bulb Goes Off**

I introduced a course last year called the Stop Overeating Master Class. Many of the examples I used were about my fondness for Chardonnay. I had worked through my emotional eating issues several years before, and I didn't have a lot of current examples to share with them about that. So I applied all the same tools that I used in my Stop Overeating Master Class to my desire to overdrink Chardonnay. As I applied those tools to Chardonnay as my students were doing with food, *I completely lost my desire to drink*. And that is as miraculous as anything that has ever happened to me in my life—the same as my desire to stop overeating.

I completely lost my desire to overeat. I completely lost my desire to overdrink by *using the same method*. I was as astounded as I could be. I was mostly astounded that I had never thought to apply my own tools to alcohol. It seemed like a totally different beast.

I think part of it is the way we're conditioned. If you have any tiny problem with drinking, you *must* be an alcoholic. We go into a state of denial which, of course, perpetuates the problem we have—the *inability to bring to consciousness why we have the desire to drink in the first place*.

## **My Results with Stopping Overdrinking**

I have not had anything alcoholic to drink in several months.

I'm not counting days. I'm not counting sobriety, I don't even use the word "sobriety." If I want to drink in the future, I will, but I don't have any desire to drink. I go out to bars all the time with my friends, I go out to dinner all the time, and they're pouring wine all around me. *I have completely lost my desire to drink, which to me is a miracle.*

I used to say all the time, "I want to not want it," and now I *genuinely don't want it*. I have come to understand that my brain created my desire for alcohol, and my brain is what *uncreated* my desire for alcohol.

Alcohol is not powerful if it doesn't enter my brain—it just sits there. My brain has always been the most powerful thing, and there is absolutely nothing wrong with my brain. My brain and its desire for alcohol are very indicative of the healthy and natural process that happens in our brains and the way that we have evolved.

I never had to claim that there was something wrong with me, and I never had to do the twelve steps. Those programs are great for people who identify as alcoholics, *but this program is for a completely different audience.*

## **Stop Overdrinking Might Be for You If...**

This is for a group of people who are highly functioning while drinking alcohol, but want to drink less of it. You may decide never to drink again, which I will teach you how to do. Or you may just decide that you want to cut back, which I will also teach you how to do.

My story is not remarkable in the sense that once I understood the skill of mental management, it was simply a matter of practicing it until I changed my desire.

People will say to me, "I can't stop drinking. I can't cut back. There's something wrong with me." The only reason I couldn't cut back before is that I didn't know how. It was a skill set I didn't have.

I may not know how to ride a unicycle, but that doesn't mean I can't learn how. That's equally true when it comes to alcohol. You may not be able to cut back right now, but that's just because you haven't learned how. It's not because you have some spiritual, moral, or genetic problem. For most of us, it's simply understanding how the brain works.

When you have competing desires, and one is “You want to drink” and the other is “You don’t want to drink,” you’re always going to pick the drink because of the way your brain is designed and the way it was set up to evolve, and the nature of alcohol.

That’s why so many of us have this gentle struggle with it, which is how I felt about it. I didn’t feel like it was such a problem that I needed to identify myself as an alcoholic, but I did feel like it was an annoying problem I wanted to solve. If you feel that describes you, please pay attention to the rest of this booklet, where I’m going to talk about:

- Why we like alcohol
- Why it’s so difficult to quit
- How to actually quit

I’m excited that you are here, and I hope you’ll find the information in this booklet as informative and valuable as I did when I first discovered the keys to stop overdrinking.

PART ONE



WHY WE  
DESIRE  
TO DRINK

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## Why We Desire It

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### **So, Why Do We Drink?**

As a society, we drink.

- When you go to a restaurant, you're asked if you want a cocktail.
- When you watch TV, you see lots of beer and wine commercials.
- When you go to a wedding, people are going to be drinking out of glamorous wine glasses.
- There's wine tasting everywhere.
- There's alcohol at all the sporting events.

We drink as a culture. The question is, why? What is it about alcohol that we have come to embrace in our society and to enjoy as individuals? We have all grown up with the idea that alcohol is something we do. Kids go to parties and drink beer. It's just part of growing up.

*The question we have to ask is: why do we desire it?*

Before I begin to answer that question, I want to address the concept of desire in and of itself.

### **What Is Desire?**

*Desire is something that we learn.*

Most of us think desire is innate, that it isn't a choice, that it's either something we have or we don't, and there's nothing we can do about it. We either desire our husband or we don't. We don't have control over it.

Desire is one of those unconsciously programmed things that we seem to experience involuntarily because of the way the brain works.

When we learn something and repeat it many times, the brain recognizes that it's a pattern and takes it out of the prefrontal cortex, where it takes a lot of energy to think about it, and puts it back in the midbrain so it can be automatic.



**Desire is  
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Habits and things we do regularly don't require conscious thought. Picking up a glass, brushing your teeth, driving your car—in the beginning, it took effort to learn how to do these things. With practice, they became automatic, something that went on in the background.

Desire is the same thing. Desire is something that we learn and repeat.

We learn languages through repetition until we can speak that language without even thinking about what we're trying to say.

It's the same with desire. You practice it enough times and you get rewarded enough times that it becomes natural and habitual.

When you see a glass of wine, your desire for it feels like it's coming from your subconscious, as though it's involuntary. Just as if someone were to ask you a question in Spanish, you would automatically, if you knew Spanish, answer in Spanish instead of in English.

### **You're Not Out of Control—You're Just Programmed to Desire**

This knowledge in and of itself is life-altering—desire can be scary for someone like you and me who feels this kind of involuntary, unconscious type of craving for alcohol.

It can be frightening if we don't understand where it's coming from. We can wonder:

- “Oh, my gosh. Am I an alcoholic?”
- “Where is this coming from?”
- “Why do I feel so out of control?”
- “Why did I drink so much more than I wanted to?”
- “Why did I drink when I told myself I wasn't going to?”

It can feel like something's taking you over.

When you understand desire, you'll understand that nothing is taking you over. You have just unconsciously programmed your brain to desire automatically.

**You** are the one who trained your brain to do that.

If you are the one who created it, **you are the one who can “uncreate” it, even if it feels overwhelming.**

## Reward Is The Key to Desire

Your desire feels intense because of the reward associated with it.

Desire is about programming something until it becomes automatic, but it's not going to be an intense desire unless there's a reward.

Our desire to brush our teeth is something we've programmed. It's something we've practiced. It's something we've repeated often enough that we automatically do it, but we aren't compelled to do it because we don't have a strong enough reward associated with it. The reward hasn't perpetuated the desire.

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When you learn something, *if there's a reward associated with it*, the habit becomes even more intense as an involuntary desire.

There are two pieces to this. The first piece is that we desire something because we have practiced it with enough repetition to have it become automatic.

The second piece that I want to talk about is **what creates an emotion.**

If you've studied my work, you'll know that all of our emotions, all of our feelings, come from our thinking.

When we think about something, we create that emotion.

Let me repeat that: When we think about something, *we create that emotion.*

## How Your Thoughts Create Emotions, Which Create Desire

One of the most powerful thoughts we have is, "I want that."

- "I *want* a glass of Chardonnay."
- "I *want* a beer."
- "I *want* a cocktail."
- "I *want* a drink."

It seems like such an innocent little thought, but even just a little thought like that perpetuates a feeling of desire. Why? Because we've programmed it into our brains and repeated it so many times that it's going on underneath our conscious awareness, underneath the supervision of the prefrontal cortex.

## **The Human Brain vs. the Animal Brain**

The prefrontal cortex is the part of your brain that makes you human. I call it the “human brain.” It can think about what it’s thinking about. It can think about the future in relation to the past and in relation to the present. This is something animals can’t do.

But we like to use our lower brain, the same brain animals have, because it’s *efficient*, and our brain wants to be *efficient*.

The brain is like a factory. The prefrontal cortex is like R&D, or research and development. This is where we learn everything new, which can be intense, hard work. It can be slow, it can be time-consuming, and it can involve trial and error, thinking and planning.

The lower brain, on the other hand, is like the manufacturing department, which is very efficient. It doesn’t question anything. It doesn’t argue. It doesn’t think logically. All it does is produce a repeating program that you’ve programmed it to do, essentially, “I want to drink. Desire, drinking. I want to drink. Desire, drinking. I want to drink. Desire, drinking.”

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# Dopamine, the Neurotransmitter of Desire

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## **Programmed Thoughts & Rewards = the Perfect Storm**

We have many thoughts associated with drinking:

- It provides relief.
- It's relaxing.
- It's sophisticated.
- Normal people who are in control can drink.
- It's fun.
- It's celebratory.
- It relieves stress.
- It turns off my brain.

We've learned these thoughts from all the people around us, from our environment, and from the commercials we've seen. We're constantly thinking these thoughts and then drinking in a never-ending cycle that we created. On top of that, we've associated a huge brain reward with it, and that's what makes it so intense.

**We've associated a huge brain reward with it, and that's what makes it so intense.**

If you look at all the psychological research on learning, you'll see that *reward perpetuates the speed and the intensity of that activity*. That's the perfect storm when it comes to alcohol, and dopamine is the perfect reward.

## **Your Brain Is Functioning Just the Way It's Supposed To**

If you're walking down a hallway and your sibling jumps out and scares you, you're going to be scared. It's someone you know and they're laughing hysterically, but you're still filled with fear *because your brain is functioning normally*.

It's because of the way we've evolved.

All of the brain processes that have gotten us to this point *are the exact same brain processes that we're going to have to overcome to evolve to the next level*.

As primitive humans, being afraid all the time served us well. Now being afraid all the time, worried all the time, is killing us, so we need to evolve past those survival mechanisms that got us here. The same is true when it comes to desire.

## **Your Brain Is Rigged for Survival**

Our brains evolved to provide us with rewards when we did things that perpetuated our survival.

The things that keep us alive are:

- eating
- warmth
- sex
- accomplishment
- connection

Each time we did those things, we'd get a little dopamine in our brain. We'd get rewarded. Our brain used that as a feedback loop.

When we ate, that was good for us—it kept us alive.

When we had sex, that was good for us—it perpetuated our species.

When we were warm, that was good for us—we didn't freeze to death.

All those pleasures provided a little bit of dopamine to our brains. The whole motivation pathway for neural desire for reward kept us alive. When we don't do those things, our brains get a little upset with us and create a craving for that thing.

## **If a Little Dopamine Is Good, a Lot of Dopamine Is Better, Right?**

All those rewards that kept us alive have now become a problem because we've taken those little rewards and **concentrated** them.



**Our brains evolved to provide us with rewards when we did things that perpetuated our survival.**

Think about:

- cocaine
- heroin
- alcohol
- sugar
- porn
- shopping

All of those things that we have now in modern times involve taking the experiences that would have given us a subtle dopamine reward and *completely concentrating that pleasure*.

Instead of having sex with one person one time and getting a small dopamine release, now we can watch an hour's worth of porn and get a huge dopamine release. Or instead of eating something like a beet that has a little bit of sugar in it, or a berry, now we can have a spoonful of table sugar and get a *complete domination* of dopamine rewards. The brain now associates that reward with survival.

*If a little is good, a lot must be better.* The brain doesn't understand the difference between useful desire and harmful desire, and so every time we reward ourselves with that much intensity, the desire is intensified.

Your brain is healthy. It's responding to reward.

**What isn't healthy, what your brain hasn't evolved to accommodate yet, is the intense and concentrated dopamine release.**

When you drink a lot of alcohol, your brain starts trying to adapt so it doesn't get completely overloaded. It downregulates the dopamine receptors, but it doesn't downregulate the desire. It takes even more alcohol to get the same effect.

The more you drink, the stronger the desire gets until it becomes the only thing that matters. Your brain prioritizes that above everything else, and that's when you're into complete addiction.

## **Why You Give in to Your Lower Brain's Desire for Alcohol**

I want to remind you—the desire is *not* involuntary.

It's learned, and you taught yourself, maybe unknowingly, to repeat it until you've increased that desire so much that it *seems* involuntary.

You may be feeling a competing desire with your human brain. "I want to drink less. I

don't like feeling foggy. I don't like feeling hung over."

You also have a primitive desire. "We have to do this or we're going to die."

The prefrontal cortex is very good at planning and making decisions for the long term. But in that moment, when somebody places alcohol in front of you, **the lower brain will win every single time.**

You may have thought, "Oh, I don't think I'll drink this week," but then you are presented with alcohol. That desire will be so much stronger in the lower brain than it is in the prefrontal cortex that you will drink every single time.

That's what feels so out of control.

**The truth is, you're never out of control.**

You are always making the decision to pick up the alcohol. You are always making the decision to drink it, but you're doing it because that desire is so strong.

If you don't honor that desire, if you don't fulfill that loop, there will be some level of suffering.

There will be some level of deprivation. You don't want to experience that. You'd rather just have the glass of Chardonnay. It makes sense, but it's something you can "uncreate." I'm going to show you exactly how to do it.

## **Your Lower Brain Is Nothing Compared to Your Human Brain**

You have positive thoughts that are associated with wanting to drink. You also have thoughts about not wanting to stop drinking, which you may not even be aware of. They could include:

- "It's boring not to drink."
- "It'll be dull."
- "It's unsophisticated."
- "What am I going to order—a Diet Coke, cranberry juice?"

I used to think:

- "It's not as fun."
- "It's hard."

**That desire will be so much stronger in the lower brain than it is in the prefrontal cortex that you will drink every single time.**

- “It’s not fair that I don’t get to drink.”
- “It must mean I have a problem.”
- “It must mean I’m an alcoholic.”
- “It’s a struggle that requires willpower, and I just don’t have the energy to do it.”
- “It’s awkward, tedious, annoying, and embarrassing not to drink.”
- “Without it, I’ll feel deprived.”
- “I’ll be stigmatized and have to justify why I’m not drinking. I’ll always feel like I want it, and I’ll always have to fight against that desire.”

If you have any of these feelings, *you are absolutely normal*.

Don’t hide in shame—I completely understand where you’re coming from.

If we didn’t have those rewards, we might just sit around and not go get food, and not procreate, and not build a house, or not build a fire to keep us warm. Our motivation comes from the desire to seek pleasure and to avoid pain and to expend as little energy as possible in doing that.

That is the perfect combination for creating an illogical desire for substances that have become concentrated pleasures.

Scientists have done studies on rats where they stimulate the reward center of their brains, and those little rats will sit there and hit that lever at the expense of everything else in their lives.

They won’t take care of their babies. They won’t take care of their health. They won’t drink water and they won’t eat because that part of the brain has decided that dopamine is the most important thing to their survival.

If you feel this way toward alcohol, please know that it’s because of the way you’ve evolved, because of the way your brain is.

Here’s the magic—you have a prefrontal cortex. No matter how efficient your lower brain is, no matter how well it has practiced, it’s nothing compared to your human brain.

It’s powerless compared to your ability to change what you believe, what you think, and how you respond.

There’s nothing the lower brain can do without the consent of the prefrontal cortex. You may not have learned how to use the prefrontal cortex yet, but it doesn’t mean you can’t. I can teach you.

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## Summary

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In this segment, we covered the basics about desire and why our desire for alcohol seems to be so strong that we think it's controlling us.

We covered some important points:

### **Part 1: Why We Desire It**

#### **1. Desire is learned.**

- We are the ones who have trained our brains to desire.
- We have created the desire, and we can uncreate it.

#### **2. Learning requires repetition and reward.**

- Desire is something we learn and repeat.

#### **3. Repetition allows the learning to become unconscious.**

- Our brains evolved so that anything we repeat gets delegated to the lower brain, where our actions are programmed subconsciously.

#### **4. Thoughts create desire.**

- Our thoughts and emotions create the rewards, which create the desire.

### **The bottom line?**

Our desire for alcohol is perfectly normal. In fact, we've programmed ourselves to want it. But we can also un-program ourselves.

Armed with this knowledge, the keys to stop overdrinking are just within reach.

### **Part 2: Dopamine Is the Neurotransmitter of Desire**

#### **1. Concentrated pleasures (alcohol, drugs) create artificial dopamine responses.**

- Desire is intensified by rewards—dopamine released in our brains.
- Concentrated pleasures lead to bigger dopamine rewards, which lead to more intense desire.

#### **2. Our primitive brains prioritize activities that create dopamine responses.**

- Our brains evolved to believe dopamine rewards are tied to our survival.

#### **3. Our motivation triad is to seek pleasure, avoid pain, and conserve energy.**

- The lower brain is faster than our prefrontal cortex (human brain) and will always win the race to drink.
- Our human brain is more powerful than our lower brain.

PART TWO



WHY WE  
WANT TO CUT  
BACK AND  
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## WHY WE WANT TO CUT BACK AND CAN'T

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When we learn how to overcome our animal brain with our human brain, we will succeed. We will be able to stop overdrinking. But we can't succeed by doing the same things that didn't work for us in the past.

What has evolved us this far will not continue to evolve us...unless we change it and use the power of our brain to become more conscious in order to evolve to the next level.

We will cover a lot of concepts in this section:

We can't stop overdrinking using willpower alone.

We can't stop overdrinking by using resistance alone.

Deprivation and withdrawal will keep us stuck in the vicious cycle of deprivation and drinking not to feel deprived.

On top of this vicious cycle, many of us use alcohol to make our lives more "bearable" and more "fun," even though this is an illusion, and alcohol just makes life *seem* more bearable and fun.

But if you know how your brain works, you can stop overdrinking.

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## My Story...and Yours

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My story is probably very similar to yours.

I wanted to cut back because I felt like there was a part of me that was out of control.

I'm kind of a control freak, and so the idea of being *out* of control scared me. I never liked the point after three glasses where I genuinely didn't feel in control of myself.

As I previously mentioned, when I hit my forties and started having hormone changes, I started feeling terrible when I drank. I would wake up in the middle of the night and wasn't able to go back to sleep. What used to be a horrible hangover after lots of drinking and a night of partying became how I felt after two drinks. I felt foggy, and I just couldn't quite get back on my game.

Yet in the evenings, I found myself really looking forward to having a drink. These conflicting desires didn't make any sense to me.

I wanted to get to the bottom of it.

I also wanted to quit overdrinking because I had handled my own compulsive eating issues, and my overdrinking issue was starting to feel very similar to that.

I really wanted to reduce my drinking. I didn't *like* feeling drunk. I didn't *like* not being able to drive. I didn't *like* the feeling of regret. I didn't *like* having anxiety about what had happened the night before, about what I might have said that I wouldn't have said had I not been drinking.

I was also noticing my anxiety about drinking. I went to a restaurant, and the waiter was taking forever to come around for our drink orders. I remember thinking, "I'm just going to go to the bar and get a drink."

I couldn't wait, and that made me nervous. What was going on that I was in such a hurry to have a cocktail?

I heard myself saying more and more often, "Hey, let's go get a drink," and I was curious about why. That was one of the reasons why I decided that I wanted to stop overdrinking.

The other reason? **When I did try, I wasn't successful.**

I'm pretty successful at almost everything I do, so that was challenging for me.

I would make a plan to drink less or I'd make a plan not to drink at all...and I wasn't successful. It was like I had an override going on in my brain. That really is what I had going on, but I didn't realize it at the time. It made me feel like I was out of control.

## **The Vicious Cycle**

Many people who struggle with this go into a spiral where they start feeling like they can't cut back and they can't quit.

Then they make that mean something very negative about themselves, which of course perpetuates the idea of needing relief and feeling more anxiety and wanting more alcohol.

*It actually compounds the problem.*

## **Our Options Seem to Be Very Limited**

There are few options for people who are willing because they're afraid of being labeled—they're afraid of being *stigmatized*.

So many people hide this from each other, from their friends, and from their family. Or they glamorize it—they call it “Mommy juice” or “the pretty addiction.” There are lots of jokes about drinking—we've made it funny so we feel like we have camaraderie.

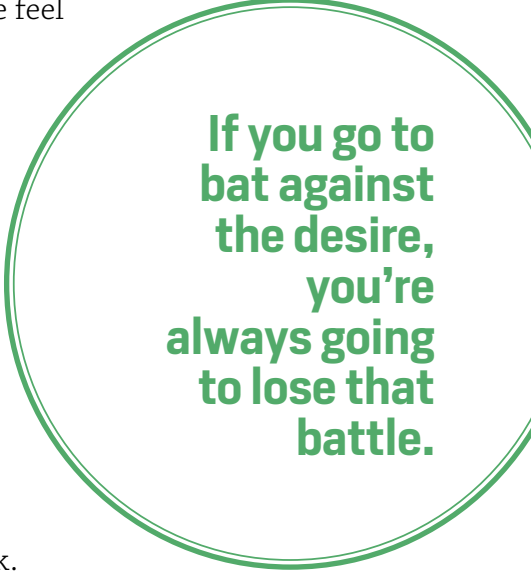
## **Resistance Leads to Anxiety Leads to Drinking**

Another reason why we attempt and then give up on trying to cut down is that we don't understand the difference between the struggle against that desire and the actual retraining and managing of that desire. If you go to bat against the desire, you're always going to lose that battle because it's your immediate brain over your long-term brain.

The immediate brain is always going to win in that moment *if you don't know how to manage it*. That struggle we feel against it creates anxiety, and it gives us even more reasons to want to drink. We see alcohol, we resist it for a moment, we use our willpower, we struggle against it, and that creates anxiety.

Most often, we then give in to that desire to drink and solve the anxiety we've created with alcohol. We've actually *created another neural pathway that's supporting our drinking*.

We already have the neural pathway that tells us that alcohol equals reward, and dopamine creates that desire and perpetuates it. In our attempt to quit, we actually create a second neural pathway, which creates an additional desire to drink.



**If you go to  
bat against  
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to lose that  
battle.**

It's so messed up.

In our attempt to quit, we're actually training our brains to want it more because we give in to that desire after the struggle...**and perpetuate the idea that alcohol provides relief.**

If you're one of those people who has tried to quit and you find yourself just drinking more, that's one of the reasons why. *You've created an additional neural pathway of desire.*

We do this inadvertently, and we intensify our own desire unknowingly, and then most of us believe that means something is wrong with us.

Really, we've just added desire to desire unknowingly.

### **When We Try to Stop, The Desire Intensifies**

The more we drink, the more those dopamine receptors downregulate so we require even more substance to feel the same effect. Here's what's interesting. *The desire intensifies.* When we resist, the deprivation intensifies. When we try to say no to our desire, the deprivation increases, which perpetuates the idea that we're unhappy and that we're uncomfortable and that we need alcohol.

- The thing that's creating the desire is the alcohol.
- The thing that's solving the desire is the alcohol.

It's creating a desire for itself. That's why people think it's so powerful.

But it's not.

It's not powerful at all *unless you add it to your brain.*

Once you do that, it creates a reaction that makes your brain think that it's more important than it is. Alcohol is not important at all. It's really not.

- It's not important for our survival.
- It's not important for our well-being.
- It's not important for our evolution.

It's only the brain's reaction that makes you believe it's important.

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## **Being Able to Drink Isn't Normal...and Not Being Able to Isn't Abnormal**

I find it utterly fascinating that in our society, the ability to drink alcohol without getting addicted is classified as *normal*, as if alcohol is part of our lives, and if you're unable to drink it without getting addicted, you somehow have a disease.

People who are able to drink alcohol and not get addicted or don't have a preference for it are amazing, but I don't think people who can't do it are abnormal.

We weren't meant to concentrate alcohol the way that we have and use in the way we have.

I certainly don't think people who can't tolerate it are diseased.

I've done a lot of research in this area. I don't think drinking alcohol is a normal part of life or should be considered something that we *should* be able to do, and that there's something terribly wrong with us if we *can't* do it.


That's just my opinion.

### **Back to the Vicious Cycle**

- We try to quit drinking.
- In the process, we create deprivation.
- We create anxiety.
- We create the idea that there's something wrong with us.
- We create the idea that we're completely out of control.
- Which, of course, leads us to drink more and more and more.
- Which perpetuates the idea that there's something wrong with us.
- Which leads us to seek more relief in alcohol.

You can see how this problem is perpetuated. That's true even just on the small scale, going from drinking two glasses of wine, to three, to maybe four. It can increase quickly, and it's the same with food. When we start depriving ourselves of sugar, we go through sugar withdrawal. Then we want it even more, and then we eat it even more, and then we want it even more.

It's the same with many of the drugs that we have taken and concentrated and created that we derive intense pleasure experience from.



**We weren't  
meant to  
concentrate  
alcohol the  
way that we  
have and use  
in the way  
we have.**

## **We Compound the Problem by Justifying It**

The smarter we are, the better we are at justifying, and we create thoughts that make drinking and overdrinking okay. We're providing even more evidence for the desire to drink.

We'll say:

- "Oh, it was just one."
- "It doesn't matter."
- "You're totally fine."
- "Everybody drinks."
- "Everyone gets hung over sometimes."
- "It's funny when you're hung over."

Justification makes it easier to perpetuate the cycle.

## **Willpower Is Not in Unlimited Supply**

The problem with trying to use *willpower* is that *willpower will deplete itself*.

We have a limited amount of willpower, and we decide to fight against this desire. We're trying to resist it. We're feeling deprived. We're feeling terrible. All we want is relief.

Now we feel worse than we did before, and once our willpower depletes, we give in and drink, and then we've perpetuated it again.

If you've tried to use willpower, if you've tried to talk yourself out of it, if you've justified yourself, *that has all made the desire to drink even stronger.*

*We don't even realize we're perpetuating this desire that's creating the problem in the first place. We're doing it unknowingly. We're doing it with the best of intentions. We're trying to take care of ourselves, but we're creating the exact opposite results.*

**The problem  
with trying  
to use  
willpower  
is that  
willpower  
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itself.**



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## **If You Can Train Yourself to Drink, You Can Untrain Yourself**

Training yourself to desire alcohol is something you've done unknowingly.

But knowing that you've trained yourself will help you recognize that *you can train yourself to undo it*.

The desire to drink is completely harmless.

When you don't recognize that's a desire you've trained yourself to obey, and you obey it, that's when it becomes harmful.

That's why you can turn this around so quickly—you can coexist with that desire as long you're not trying to resist it.

When you resist, that's when you create anxiety, which increases the desire for alcohol. You can *coexist* with that harmless desire without a problem.

## **Cognitive Dissonance = When You Disagree with Yourself**

Let's talk about this concept, which also perpetuates the desire to drink. You have what we call cognitive dissonance.

Cognitive dissonance is *when you disagree with yourself*.

You have a desire to stop drinking, and you have a desire to drink.

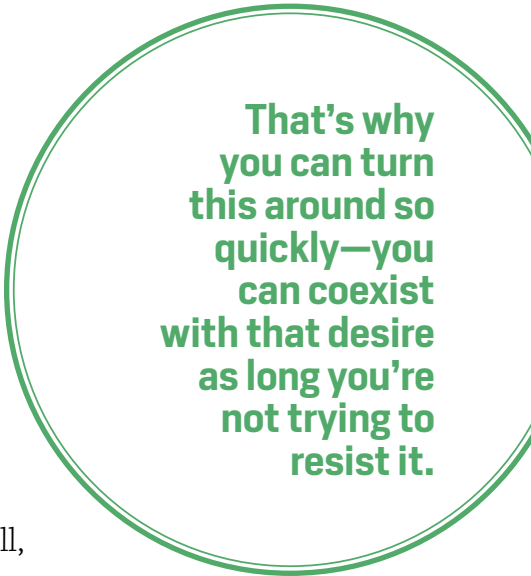
It's important to make room for both those desires, to understand where they're coming from, and to give them both their due.

## **We Are Just Like Pavlov's Dogs**

My undergraduate studies were in psychology, and we learned about Pavlov's dogs.

Physiologist Ivan Pavlov and his assistants did an experiment where every time they were about to feed the dogs, they rang a bell, and the dogs would start drooling. Initially, it wasn't even a bell—the women who fed them wore clogs, and when the dogs heard the clogs coming, they would drool. Then they began ringing a bell at mealtime and noticed the same thing.

The dogs had an association with the reward that was coming.



**That's why  
you can turn  
this around so  
quickly—you  
can coexist  
with that desire  
as long you're  
not trying to  
resist it.**

It's so important for you to understand that you're having an automatic Pavlovian response. If you try to extinguish it, you're not going to be able to do it.

It's kind of like putting the drool back in the dog's mouth. The more you try, the more they're going to want to eat.

In order to stop this response, you would have the women walk down the hall in their clogs, but then not feed the dogs. They will lose the expectation, and they will stop drooling in anticipation.

I'm going to teach you to do this with your own brain when it comes to alcohol.

## **Anxiety and Withdrawal**

When you have cognitive dissonance, you're creating your own anxiety because you're trying to let one of those thoughts win.

*I want to drink. I don't want to drink. I want to drink. I don't want to drink.*

They're at battle within you.

Remember, increased anxiety increases the desire to drink and to get relief from that anxiety. That cognitive dissonance, those conflicting thoughts, when played against each other, create a problem.

When you allow them to coexist with understanding, they are no longer a problem. You can unlearn the desire to drink just as easily as you have learned the desire to drink.

I promise you that.

Now, here's the other thing. When you stop drinking, you create **withdrawal**.

This is true even for those of us who only drink a couple glasses of wine a night.

We create an *emotional* withdrawal because we're not feeding our programming. We're not closing the loop on that neural pathway. We also go through withdrawal from the dopamine.

**Increased  
anxiety  
increases  
the desire to  
drink.**

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## **The Alcohol Is Causing the Withdrawal ... and Solving the Withdrawal**

There's no way out of that loop.

In order for you to feel normal and to avoid withdrawal, you have to consume the exact substance that is causing it.

*Can you see the perpetuation there?* That's why drinking feels so powerful to so many people ... because the very thing that causes the withdrawal solves it.

### **We Think Alcohol Makes Everything Better**

A lot of people don't want to quit drinking because *they think alcohol makes an experience better*. I've recognized that's not true.

Alcohol dulls your senses, and so it makes the experience *seem* better than it is.

I'm sure you've heard the old joke—the more you drink, the more attractive your date gets. They're not *actually* more attractive—they just *seem* more attractive. The experience isn't actually better. It just seems better. That distinction is everything.

When you think, "I don't want to go to this wedding because it won't be any fun without alcohol," what you're really saying is, "The wedding won't be fun. I need to buffer myself."

### **Are You Buffering Your Life with Alcohol?**

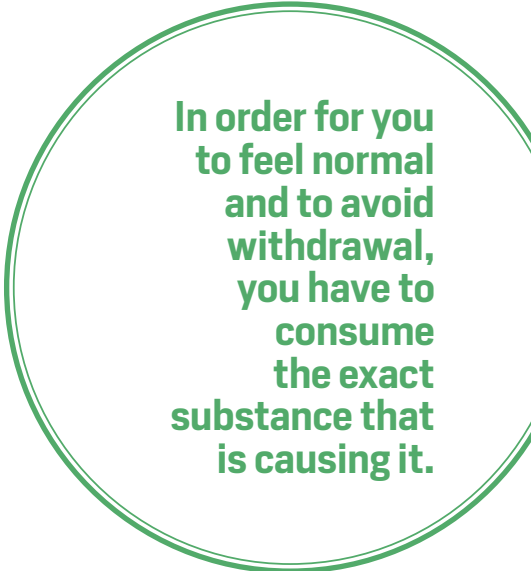
Many of the things I needed to change to make my life better weren't getting changed because I was *buffering* them with alcohol.

There were certain relationships, certain experiences that I was making *tolerable* by drinking wine. Otherwise, they would not have been tolerable, and I wouldn't have had them in my life.

The question becomes, "Do I want a life that's only sustainable if I'm drinking? Or do I want to change my life so I actually don't need to drink to make it sustainable?"

The key is that *you don't have to change your life first in order to stop drinking*.

If you stop drinking first, you'll really see what's true. It will reveal the truth about an experience for you.



**In order for you to feel normal and to avoid withdrawal, you have to consume the exact substance that is causing it.**

What makes an experience good? Is it food or is it alcohol? Or is it the experience itself and how you show up and interpret it?

Drinking made me think that friends, activities, parties, jobs, and relationships were much better than they were. Buffering with alcohol prevented me from changing what I needed to change in my life.

I'm so happy now to have the truth about my life so I can make conscious decisions about it.

### **Wouldn't It Be Better If Your Life Just Didn't Suck?**

Maybe you aren't feeling deprived because you aren't drinking. Maybe you're feeling deprived because the experience isn't what you desire.

People think their lives will be dull without drinking, but if your enjoyment of life comes from what you make of it and how you create it, you won't rely on alcohol to provide you with that enjoyment.

You may think, "Well, it doesn't matter that my life sucks because I have alcohol."

*Wouldn't it be better if your life just didn't suck?*

### **Figure out Why You Overdrink ... and It Will Be Easier to Stop**

Make a list of all the reasons why you overdrink.

What are you trying to solve with alcohol? Do you like these reasons? Are they worth it?

Question everything.

I'm *not* suggesting that you have to give up alcohol *completely*.

I'm suggesting that you look at the reasons why you're drinking.

Are you drinking because alcohol has perpetuated the desire for itself?

Are you drinking because of unconscious programming?

Are you drinking because you're trying to buffer a life that's unacceptable to you?

Many of the things I needed to change to make my life better weren't getting changed because I was buffering them with alcohol.

Knowing the truth about why you're drinking will make it much easier for you to cut back or quit.

You need to decide consciously what you believe. You need to decide consciously what you want to train your brain to do, what you want to train your brain to desire. You have done it unconsciously so far.

How do you want to feel about drinking less? Do you want to feel excited about it, or do you want to feel bummed about it? If you want to feel excited about it, you have to release that desire.

Here's what I want you to think about:

If you *really want something* and I tell you that you can't have it, you're going to be very bummed.

If you don't really want it and I tell you that you can't have it, you're not really going to care.


Our goal is to work on that piece of desire so it's not overriding your *other desire, which is to drink less.*

There's a way to reprogram your brain and to unlearn the Pavlovian response of wanting to drink. I'm going to introduce you to all the tools I used personally to completely reverse and unlearn my desire.

I absolutely have no desire for alcohol now.

I genuinely prefer not to drink it anymore.

If that's something you want, if you just want to prefer it less, stick around. You've already learned the key concepts about why it's usually so hard to quit. All you need now are the tools to succeed.



**Our goal is to  
work on that  
piece of desire  
so it's not  
overriding your  
other desire,  
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drink less.**

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## Summary

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In this segment, we discussed the basics of why we want to cut back on drinking and can't.

We covered some important points:

- 1. Trying on our own doesn't work because we don't understand our brains.**
  - Options for help are stigmatizing.
  - We try to use willpower and resistance, which undermines our self-esteem when it doesn't work.
- 2. We create a vicious cycle—alcohol-resist deprivation-struggle-drink-relief—which compounds the problem.**
- 3. Dopamine receptors downregulate, which lessens the pleasure of drinking and demands more alcohol to get the same pleasure.**
- 4. When we stop drinking, dopamine drops below baseline, and so we think we need alcohol just to feel normal.**
- 5. We're determined not to experience deprivation, so we justify drinking.**
  - The smarter we are, the better we are at it.
- 6. Willpower depletes.**
  - Willpower is required for resisting, but not for allowing emotion.
- 7. You have cognitive dissonance when you disagree with yourself about drinking.**
- 8. We create withdrawal when we stop drinking.**
  - When we understand this, we can manage it.
- 9. Alcohol makes us think experiences are more enjoyable than they are.**
- 10. We "buffer" with alcohol.**
  - If your life isn't sustainable without buffering, you need to work on your life.
- 11. Find out why you overdrink, and you can unlearn it.**

The bottom line?

The usual methods of quitting (using willpower, white-knuckling it, trying to resist the desire to drink) just perpetuate the desire.

In order to stop overdrinking, you will have to retrain your brain.

**It can be done. I can teach you how.**

PART THREE



HOW TO  
CONTROL  
YOUR  
DRINKING

## HOW TO CONTROL YOUR DRINKING

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Now I'm going to give you the tools you need to start changing your overdrinking from an automatic, conditioned response that leaves you feeling out of control to something you fully control.

I will teach you how to:

1. Allow the urge.
2. Get conscious about your thinking around alcohol.
3. Use your prefrontal cortex to make drinking conscious by planning ahead.

These tools will require practice. And more practice.

Until they become automatic.

Your lower brain will fight you, especially in the beginning. But if you use these tools and keep practicing them, you can stop overdrinking.



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## Revisiting Pavlov's Dogs

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If you recall, Pavlov's dogs drooled whenever they heard their dinner coming. The same thing has happened to us with desire—our thoughts have created a conditioned response.

Our triggers may be in the evenings, going to bars, or our thoughts about the end of the day. A lot of us don't have trouble drinking in the morning or during the day because we don't have those times associated with drinking. We have a lot of associations in the evenings.

### **How to Unlearn a Conditioned Response**

If you recall, Pavlov taught his dogs not to drool by withholding the reward. When he rang the bell and did not feed them, it reversed that conditioned response.

*Our desire is our conditioned response.* That's why it feels out of control.

The dogs couldn't think about their desire in that way, *but we can.*

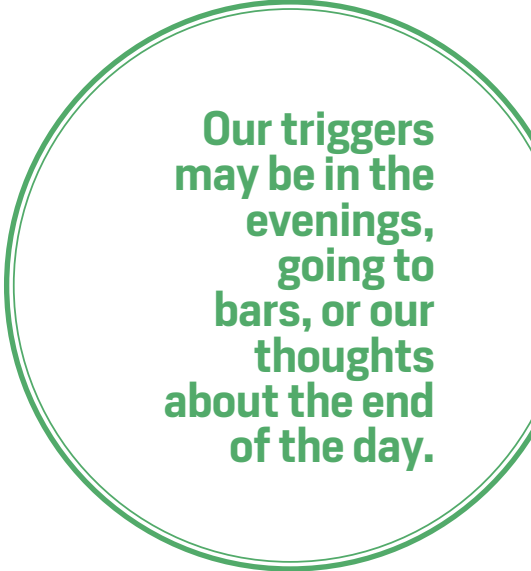
**The way that you unlearn anything on purpose is by using your prefrontal cortex.**

All the mental skills I'm going to teach in this booklet (and go into in greater depth in my membership) are about *using the higher part of your brain to manage the lower part of your brain.*

I like to call that lower part of our brain "the toddler with a knife." It's very innocent, but it can cause a lot of damage if it's not supervised, so you're going to supervise it.

### **How Quickly Can You Undo Desire?**

Teaching yourself not to desire is actually relatively easy. For many people, it's taken them twenty years to create this desire for overdrinking, but you can undo this desire *literally in the span of a few hours.*



**Our triggers  
may be in the  
evenings,  
going to  
bars, or our  
thoughts  
about the end  
of the day.**

## The Way to Interrupt a Neural Pathway

You're going to interrupt that neural pathway just as they did with Pavlov's dogs. What are your triggers for desire?

It might be the drive home from work, or it may be walking into a bar, going to a party, or seeing a certain friend. You experience a circumstantial trigger and you have a thought that might be as simple as, "I want a drink."

Once you trigger that desire, you will typically act on it, and that will perpetuate the desire. It's just like the clogs or the bell, the drool, the feeding. The alcohol, the thought, the desire, the drinking.

We're going to learn how to experience the trigger, to still have the desire, *but we're not going to drink.*

## Three Ways to Handle the Urge to Overdrink

There are **three things** you can do with the urge to drink.

The **first** thing you can do is drink, and you'll *satisfy that urge.*

The **second** thing you can do—and this is what most of you have been trying to do and failing—is *resist that urge.*

Push against it. Create a bunch of anxiety. Create problems for yourself. For most of you, that ends up with drinking because that ultimately relieves the urge.

The **third** option is to *allow that urge to be there.*

You do not engage with it. You do not negotiate with it. You do not try to make it go away.

That urge is the drool. That urge caused by the bell, which is your brain, is the drool.

You can't stop the drool with force. You can't stop that conditioned urge response with force. You have to allow it to be there.

The only way we make the drool go away, the only way we stop that conditioned response, is *by not rewarding it with the alcohol.* By not providing it with the dopamine rush that comes from drinking the alcohol.

**We're going to learn how to experience the trigger, to still have the desire, but we're not going to drink.**

By not putting the alcohol in our brain.

This won't be difficult if you'll approach it this way, if you approach it from the stance that you're going to *allow the urge to be there and you're not going to answer it.*

### **Practice Makes Perfect**

Being able to go through this process is a skill. You may tell yourself you can't do it, but that's because you don't know how, and you don't know how because you haven't practiced.

If you're having trouble not resisting the urge, you are conditioned to resist, but only because you haven't learned how not to.

If you find yourself reacting to that urge and constantly drinking every time you have it, you just haven't learned how to allow it to be there.

### **That is a skill you can learn.**

It's not intolerable, and when you learn how to allow an urge to be there, you'll realize it's completely harmless. The only time it become a problem is when you give in to it or you resist it.


### **The Skill of Being Able to Watch Yourself Think**

The skill of being able to watch yourself think, to watch yourself feel and not react, is only available to humans. When you associate with your prefrontal cortex, when you go into the space where you are witnessing yourself think, witnessing yourself feel, you'll find tremendous relief in doing that.

Instead being in your body, feeling like you're being affected by this urge, it's almost like you're the witness watching yourself have an urge.

You may not be able to do this the first time you try, but you *will learn how to do it*, maybe in just hours. It's a matter of practice.

Being able to practice yourself, watching yourself have an urge, watching yourself have desire and not acting on it is very different from resisting it, pushing against it and fighting it.



**The only way we make the drool go away, the only way we stop that conditioned response, is by not rewarding it with the alcohol.**

## **Tool #1: Allowing the Urge**

Here are three things you can do with the urge. You can drink, you can struggle against it, or you can allow it to be there.

**Allow the  
urge to  
be there  
without  
fighting  
with it and  
without  
reacting to it.**

Think about noticing, allowing, and paying attention to all the thoughts that are creating that desire.

Allow the urge to be there without fighting with it and without reacting to it. If you fail at it one hundred times, it doesn't matter—keep practicing. Keep trying.

It takes twelve hours to learn to ride a unicycle. Up until that moment where you actually riding it, all twelve hours is failure. That's what I want you to think about with this urge.

Then watch the thoughts that create the urge. Watch yourself think. Allow those thoughts to be there. You're not going to like them all. Some are going to be illogical. Some of them aren't going to make any sense.

It's totally fine.

Just allow them to be there.

Write them down and be the witness. Understand that you are having thought errors.

The more you're able to witness your thoughts, feel that urge, and not drink, the less and less that desire will show up in your life.

If you're able to do it twenty times, the desire will probably be down by half.

This is not the same as saying, "I'm not going to drink for twenty days" and then using sheer willpower.

That will have no effect on lessening your desire. In fact, it will probably increase it.

*Do not try to white-knuckle it. That's not the skill I'm teaching you.*

I'm teaching you how to allow that itch to be there without scratching it and to be at peace with it.

It's not difficult. but it does require practice.

## **Tool #2: Paying Close Attention to the Thoughts That Create the Desire**

Notice the sentences in your brain and how your brain comes up with more and more sentences trying to increase your desire to drink.

It's only doing this because it thinks it will die otherwise.

If you can observe it with your prefrontal cortex, you'll be able to do it from a place of peace, and interest, and curiosity, and fascination, and you won't get wrapped up in the drama.

When you allow these sentences to be there, this will create desire, but that desire is completely harmless.

*Desire is completely harmless unless you react to it or try and fight it.*

Practice allowing it.

Don't be alarmed, upset, annoyed, or frustrated by the sentences creating that desire.

Allow them to be there and witness them from a place of peace. Your brain is not trying to hurt you. In fact, it's trying to save you.

## **Tool #3: Planning Your Drinking Ahead of Time**

The **first** thing you're going to do is allow an urge to be there. Not fight it—not react to it.

The **second** thing is to pay close attention to all of those thoughts that are causing that desire. You're going to be a witness. You want to become conscious of those sentences in your mind.

Those sentences are powerful. Those sentences are the clogs coming down the hall. Those sentences are the bells ringing—you want to know what they are so you can expect them.

The **third** thing I want you to do is use the prefrontal cortex's ability for planning and making decisions ahead of time—humans are the only creatures with this ability.

Some of you may say, "I've tried to decide ahead of time that I wasn't going to drink, and it didn't work," but that's before you had Tool #1 and Tool #2.

Now you'll be able, with the tools that allow your urges to be there, to make your decisions ahead of time.

If you want to stop overdrinking, *under no circumstance should you ever take a drink that isn't planned.*

All drinking has to come from the prefrontal cortex.

You cannot let any of your drinking come from the sound of clogs or the bell ringing because that will perpetuate the unwanted desire.

First and foremost, I teach my students to plan their drinking. You can plan as much drinking as you want.

I am going to drink on Tuesday, and I'm going to drink two bottles of wine.

Fine. *Plan it ahead of time.*

I have a worksheet that I have my clients use. It asks, "What do I want to drink? Why do I want to drink it? What will be the consequences? What will be the obstacles?" Anticipate and plan in a really deliberate way what you're going to drink and why.

For example, you might be going to a wine tasting. Plan how many glasses of wine you want to have. Don't limit yourself. If you want to taste twenty glasses of wine, that's fine.

You just have to plan it.

## **Your Prefrontal Cortex Has to Be in Charge**

Your prefrontal is in charge—none of this "responding in the moment" or "reacting to that unconscious desire."

We don't ever want to have our conditioning driving our actions.

We always want to be driven by the prefrontal when it comes to anything that involves concentrated pleasure.

That includes shopping, achievement, gambling, pornography, alcohol, drugs, cigarettes—anything.

From now on, whenever you want to drink, *you have to plan it 24 hours in advance.*

Ask yourself those worksheet questions. You need to plan what you will drink. You need to plan how much you will drink.

Make that decision from a place of a clean mind. That decision has to be rock solid. You have to commit to it 100%.

Don't underestimate how much you want to drink. You don't want to get in a position where you're letting your lower brain take over because then you're creating more dröol.

You're creating more conditioned response.

You have to stay in charge. If you say three drinks, that's it. If you say fifteen drinks, that's it. You're the one managing that from your prefrontal cortex.

It's *always* 24 hours ahead of time, and it's always decided.

### **If It Isn't Planned, Don't Drink It**

If you have an urge to drink that isn't planned from your prefrontal cortex, *do not, under any circumstances, drink.*

Don't resist that urge. Just allow it to be there.

Your prefrontal cortex can help you with this even when your brain is inebriated.

You will come to the point where you will lose control. Figure out how many drinks you can have before that happens so you can always stay in prefrontal control. All decisions have to be made ahead of time, and then you must honor them.

This will be more successful than your other attempts because you're using your prefrontal cortex to allow those urges to be there without giving in to them.

Decide what you want your regular drinking life to be. How often do you want to drink? What do you want to drink and why?

Make those decisions from a belief that you do have control.

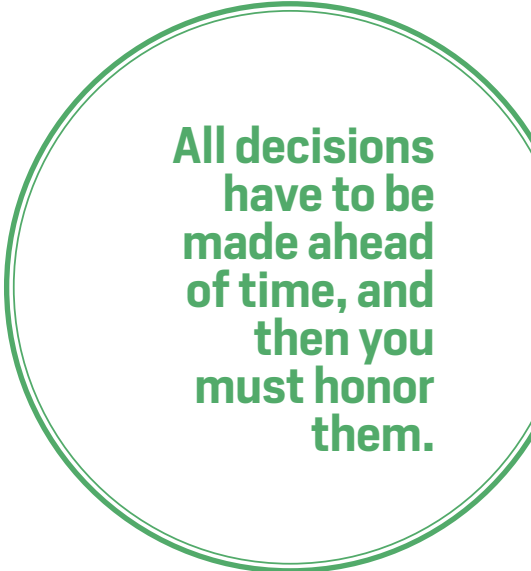
### **How to Have Those Conversations When You Don't Want to Drink**

I have another worksheet my clients use for challenging situations where they don't want to drink.

Let's say you've decided not to drink and you're going to an event. How will you handle all the conversations you're going to need to have?

I find it fascinating that we have to justify not drinking. It's the same with sugar.

If someone says, "Hey, do you want some champagne?" and you say "No," people ask, "Why not?"



**All decisions  
have to be  
made ahead  
of time, and  
then you  
must honor  
them.**

Nobody says that when they offer you water, but when you're not having alcohol, people want you to explain yourself.

My answer is simply, "I just prefer not to. Thanks."

It's really important to have plans for challenging situations. Decide ahead of time. Anticipate the obstacles you're going to face.

**I find it  
fascinating  
that we have  
to justify  
not drinking.**

### **Yes, This Is Going to Take A Little Work**

Some of you are thinking, "This is so tedious. This is going to take so much work."

That's part of the problem because the brain wants to be efficient. The last thing it wants to do is expend all this energy planning. It wants to delegate to the lower brain.

But you know what happens when you delegate. You get that automatic Pavlovian response of drinking, drinking, drinking that makes you feel completely out of control.

I want to acknowledge that yes, this will take effort, especially in the beginning.

*But once you unlearn the desire, it's effortless.*

I want to promise you that this practice is absolutely worth it.

There's no such thing as having to start all over again if you slip.

But I will say that in the beginning, the more you can deny that automatic response, the easier it is to unlearn. The only time you'll want a drink is when you've planned it ahead of time with the prefrontal cortex.

### **So, What Happens If You Make a Mistake?**

Any time you make a mistake, take deliberate time to study:

- Exactly what happened.
- How you can prevent that from happening next time.
- What went on with your brain.
- What went on with your prefrontal cortex versus your lower brain.

This is an amazing opportunity for you to learn.

A lot of people will say, "Oh, I just fell off the wagon. It's no big deal."



*Don't do that.*

Don't just blow it off because that's exactly what your lower brain wants you to do—not pay attention, not be conscious.

You want to use your prefrontal cortex to pay attention, to be conscious, to dissect every little second of every little thing that went on.

- What were the triggers that happened in the situation?
- What were the thoughts that happened in your brain?
- What was the desire?
- Why did you have a hard time allowing it?
- Why did you fight it, or why did you give in to it?

I have a whole worksheet on how you can unravel those thoughts. The more time you spend doing that, the more desire you're going to unlearn.

As you bring it to your conscious brain, you can evaluate it and change it and unlearn it and decide on purpose.

That's when you're going to feel in control.

The longer you leave it in the unconscious brain, the more it's going to feel like it's out of your control.

### **But Don't Beat Yourself Up**

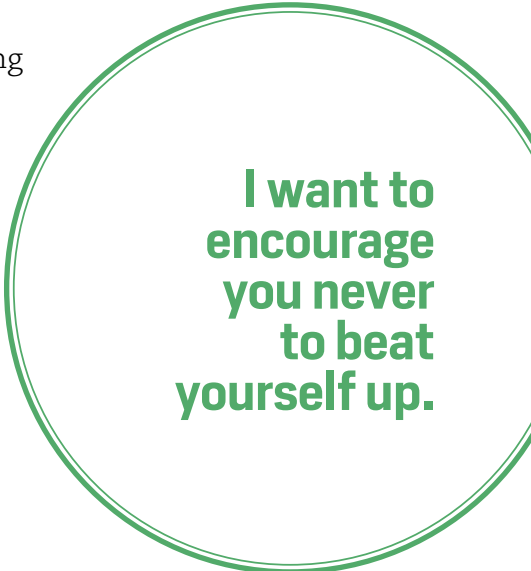
We're not ever going to do anything punitive.

I want to encourage you *never* to beat yourself up. Never bring up negative emotions. Never tell yourself you're out of control. Never say, "This was too good to be true." Don't hang around anyone who doubts your ability. You are not powerless over this. You are *completely* powerful.

You know why?

You have a prefrontal cortex.

Your primitive brain has no chance. This is a skill you need to learn, but once you learn it, it will be effortless.



**I want to  
encourage  
you never  
to beat  
yourself up.**

## **Once You've Learned, the Lack of Desire Becomes Automatic**

Ironically, once you unlearn desire, *you delegate that lack of desire to your lower brain.*

The very thing that was creating all of that desire will now create the opposite for you—just as efficiently, just as effortlessly as it currently creates desire.

It's just like driving a car. At first, you were trying to figure out how to drive. Now it's completely delegated to that lower brain and happens automatically.

That's how we do it.

- We bring up what's happening automatically in that lower brain area.
- We make it conscious.
- We change it by unlearning it, by allowing it, paying attention to it, “un-Pavlov-ing” it.
- And then we re-delegate the lack of desire for alcohol.

It doesn't mean we never drink. We can drink, but we only drink according to the prefrontal decision. We never drink as a reflex or as a reaction.

You can plan it ahead of time, as many drinks as you want, but you have to do it from a clean, sober mind. You have to do it from a place of deliberateness where you anticipate the obstacles, you anticipate any kind of negative response you're going to have, and then you officially decide you want to do it anyway.

**You can have it, but you have to wait 24 hours so your prefrontal brain is making the decision.**

You will never make a decision that will lead you into harm's way when you make those decisions from your prefrontal strategic brain.

Your lower brain will inadvertently make decisions that will harm you—not because it wants to harm you, but it literally believes that your survival depends on it.

### **How to Handle Your Lower Brain**

Picture a toddler who literally thinks they're going to die if they don't get a candy bar. They roll on the floor. They scream. You know they're not going to die. It's all going to be fine. So you allow the tantrum and don't make a big deal out of it.

That's what you have to do with your lower brain.

Let it have its fit. Let that urge be there, and then you move on.

If you find yourself in a situation where you have a tremendous urge to drink, all you have to tell yourself is, “You can have that in 24 hours.”

You *can* have it, but you have to wait 24 hours so your prefrontal brain is making the decision. We can't make any decisions based on our lower brain.

That's been a huge relief for people and prevented them from drinking in the moment.

Remember, desire is learned. You have taught yourself to desire alcohol, and you can teach yourself to desire it less or not at all.

I promise you, if you apply these tools and practice them, you can learn what I have learned.

You have a powerful brain. There is nothing that even comes close to it. You can utilize it if you apply this skill.

### **If You're Ready, There's an Amazing Membership Waiting For You**

I want to encourage you to join me in my membership, Self Coaching Scholars, at [www.thelifecoachschool.com/join/](http://www.thelifecoachschool.com/join/).

We go through the process of unlearning desire.

The membership includes a series of videos that go into detail about every single one of these tools.

The membership also includes the downloadable worksheets that you can then print off on your printer or keep on your computer. You fill them in to unlearn this process and manage how much you want to drink.

Every month, there will be calls where you will be able to be coached, ask questions, share what you're being challenged with, and discuss any situation bothering you.

I'll show you how to manage your brain. If you don't believe this is possible, if you have a lot of thoughts getting in your way, I'll help you with all of it.

Simply go to [www.thelifecoachschool.com/join/](http://www.thelifecoachschool.com/join/), sign up, and let's do this.

I believe in you.

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## Summary

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In this segment, we covered the basics about how we can control our drinking using the tools I've given you.

We covered some important points:

### 1. Unlearn desire.

#### a. Put the prefrontal in charge and interrupt the neural pathway:

- Allow the thought
- Allow the desire
- Don't drink
- Repeat

#### b. Three things you can do with an urge:

- Drink
- Struggle and resist, try and use willpower
- Allow, watch, don't react

### 2. Watch yourself think.

- Make all your drinking thoughts conscious.
- Notice the sentences in your brain that produce desire.
- Label them as "thought errors" and "neurological junk."
- Don't get frustrated with patterned thinking.

### 3. Prefrontal Planning: Make decisions ahead of time.

- NEVER drink unless you have made a decision ahead of time with your prefrontal.
- Your human brain can overcome your automatic brain, but only with forethought.
- You are able to follow through with plans when you write them down and learn the skill of allowing urges.

### 4. Stop beating yourself up for any reason.

- All mistakes need to be analyzed and understood.
- Use curiosity and fascination.
- Do not undermine your attempts by getting angry with yourself.
- Be patient.

The bottom line?

There are tools you can use to regain control of your drinking.

They work because your prefrontal cortex is stronger than your lower brain.

If you use the tools, you can train your brain so the lack of desire for alcohol becomes just as automatic as the overdrinking once was.

It can be done. I can teach you how.

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## Are You Ready to Stop Overdrinking?

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If you are someone who enjoys drinking but has tried to cut back, you are most likely frustrated and discouraged.

First, there's nothing wrong with you.

Overdrinking is caused by disordered learning. It becomes automatic to drink more, making it seem like it's out of our moment-by-moment control.

Once you understand how this repetitive reinforcement works, you will understand why you overdrink and how to learn the skills to change it.

You don't have to quit drinking to gain more control over it.

If you do want to quit, I can show you how with a four-step quick start process.

Either way, I will teach you HOW to do it. Join me.

### **Learn the Skill of Drinking Less**

When you join the membership at [www.thelifecoachschool.com/join/](http://www.thelifecoachschool.com/join/), you get immediate access to the Quick Start Skills.

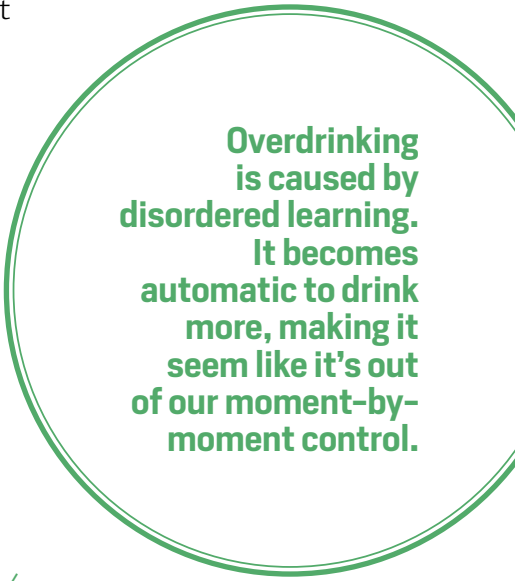
This is a series of four short videos teaching you how to:

1. Manage Urges
2. Use the Drink Plan
3. Evaluate Your Drinking Thinking
4. Change Judgment to Curiosity

You will get clear directions on how to APPLY these skills so you can start changing your life. It's not enough to understand what you need to do—you must actually do it and repeat it so drinking less becomes effortless.

You will also get access to the call schedule where you will be able to jump on the line and ask any questions.

You don't have to use your real name if you don't want, but you can if you do! All recordings will be available if you can't attend live.



**Overdrinking  
is caused by  
disordered learning.  
It becomes  
automatic to drink  
more, making it  
seem like it's out  
of our moment-by-  
moment control.**

It's as simple as that.

- You listen to the FOUR SKILLS and you start applying them right away.
- You practice them until you start to unlearn your desire to overdrink.
- Then you attend the monthly calls or listen to recordings, and you will literally want to drink less.

## **What Is Included in The Membership?**

I teach you how to drink less without subjecting you to a life of deprivation. The work in the beginning is challenging, but once you learn the skill, it becomes effortless.



You will also get access to additional resources that pertain to the neuroscience around overdrinking and the learned urges that make it so hard to quit.

## **Who This Membership Is Not For**

This membership is not for alcoholics.

If you define yourself as an alcoholic and believe you need medical assistance, please email us directly and we will offer you some very effective resources.



If You Feel You Are Ready to Be Free, Join Us

There is absolutely no reason why you should struggle over  
your drinking.

Once you learn these skills, you will be free from the struggle.

If you're ready, just go to [www.thelifecoachschool.com/join](http://www.thelifecoachschool.com/join)  
and click on the "Join Now" button.

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An amazing group of people—and an awesome future—are waiting  
for you there.

If you have any questions, email  
[Kim@TheLifeCoachSchool.com](mailto:Kim@TheLifeCoachSchool.com)



# SO STOP OVERDRINKING

