



Alcohol Explained

Dry January Calendar

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@alcoholexplained

‘DRINK RESPONSIBLY’ IS NONSENSE. IT’S NOT IRRESPONSIBILITY ON YOUR PART THAT CAUSES PROBLEM DRINKING, BUT THE FACT THAT ALCOHOL IS ADDICTIVE WHEN THE EFFECT OF ONE DRINK WEARS OFF, IT LEAVES AN UNPLEASANT FEELING THAT ANOTHER DRINK WILL DISPEL.

CHECK IN: HOW ARE YOU FEELING TODAY?



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Alcohol Explained

HANGXIETY IS ALCOHOL WITHDRAWAL
MY DEFINITION OF WITHDRAWAL IS:
- AN UNPLEASANT FEELING
- CAUSED BY A CHEMICAL IMBALANCE
- THAT IS, ITSELF, CAUSED BY THE PREVIOUS DOSE OF THE DRUG WEARING OFF
HANGXIETY IS THE CHEMICAL AFTEREFFECT OF DRINKING.

CHECK IN: WHAT BENEFITS ARE YOU FEELING?



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Alcohol Explained

ALCOHOL SPEEDS UP YOUR HEART RATES AND BLOOD PRESSURE WHICH REDUCES ENERGY LEVELS
WHEN YOUR HEART RATE AND BLOOD PRESSURE INCREASES YOUR BRAIN TELLS YOU TO SLOW
DOWN, TO STOP, TO REST. THIS IS WHY DRINKERS ARE LETHARGIC AND LACKING IN ENERGY.

CHECK IN: HAVE YOU NOTICED ANY CHANGES IN YOUR SLEEP?



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Alcohol Explained

BLAME THE SUBSTANCE, NOT THE VICTIM ALCOHOL IS ADDICTIVE. DRINK ENOUGH OF IT, AND YOU WILL STRUGGLE TO DO WITHOUT IT. YOU DON'T NEED A PERSONALITY DISORDER, A SPIRITUAL DISORDER, A CERTAIN GENETIC CODE, TRAUMA, OR MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES. THESE MAY CAUSE A PREPONDERANCE TO ALCOHOL DEPENDENCY, BUT THEY ARE NEVER A COMPLETE ANSWER.

CHECK IN: WHAT NEGATIVES MIGHT YOU BE FEELING TODAY?



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Alcohol Explained

NOT DRINKING IS BORING = I AM NO LONGER ABLE TO FULLY ENJOY MY LIFE WITHOUT A DRUGBECAUSE SO MANY PEOPLE IN OUR SOCIETY DRINK, RELIANCE ON ALCOHOL IS THE NORM. THIS DOESN'T MEAN IT'S NATURAL. WHEN SOMEONE SAYS 'NOT DRINKING IS BORING' WHAT THEY ARE REALLY SAYING IS "I CAN NO LONGER ENJOY MANY SITUATIONS WITHOUT A DRUG, THEY DRAG, AND
I INTERPRET THIS IS THEM BEING BORING.

CHECK IN: WHAT BENEFITS WOULD YOU LIKE TO TAKE ADVANTAGE FROM THIS MONTH?



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Alcohol Explained

DRINKING RUINS SLEEP, FOR ALL DRINKERS BECAUSE ALCOHOL IS A SEDATIVE, YOUR BRAIN IS PREVENTED FROM GOING INTO REM SLEEP,WHICH IS A CYCLE OF SLEEP WHERE YOUR BRAIN LIGHTS UP ALMOST AS IT YOU WERE FULLY AWAKE.THE BRAIN CANNOT FULLY LIGHT UP BECAUSE OF THE SEDATING EFFECTS OF THE ALCOHOL.

CHECK IN: HOW'S YOUR ENERGY LEVEL TODAY?



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Alcohol Explained

YOU DON’T NEED ALCOHOL TO ENJOY NIGHTS OUTWHEN HUMANS ARE RELAXED AND SOCIALISING, THEIR BRAIN RELEASES ENDORPHINS. BECAUSEWE OFTEN DRINK WHEN WE ARE SOCIALISING, WE OFTEN ASCRIBE THAT GOOD FEELING TO THE ALCOHOL, BUT IT ISN’T THE ALCOHOL.

CHECK IN: ARE YOU ENJOYING SOCIAL EVENTS OR FEELING UNCOMFORTABLE?



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Alcohol Explained

ALCOHOL PREVENTS YOU FROM REGULATING YOUR EMOTIONS.

ALCOHOL HAS A PARTICULARLY SEDATING EFFECT ON THAT PART OF OUR BRAIN THAT REGULATES OUR EMOTIONS, SO WHEN WE DRINK WE BECOME INCREASINGLY EMOTIONAL. MINOR THINGS BECOME MAJOR THINGS AS WE LOSE OUR ABILITY TO CONTROL OUR EMOTIONS.

CHECK IN: HOW ARE YOU MANAGING YOUR EMOTIONS? WHAT ARE YOU FEELING MORE OR LESS OF?



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Alcohol Explained

ALCOHOL SPEEDS UP YOUR HEART RATES AND INCREASES BLOOD PRESSURE WHICH REDUCES CARDIOVASCULAR HEALTH. IF YOU INCREASE YOUR HEART RATE WITHOUT THE ASSOCIATED PHYSICAL ACTIVITY, THERE IS A SURPLUS OF OXYGEN SO THE CONCENTRATION OF RED BLOOD CELLS DECREASES, THEREFORE YOUR HEART HAS TO WORK HARDER AL THE TIME TO SUPPLY YOUR MUSCLES WITH OXYGEN.

CHECK IN: WHAT DIFFERENCES HAVE YOU NOTICED PHYSICALLY? DO YOU FEEL MORE ENERGETIC?



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Alcohol Explained

WHY DON'T YOU DRINK = I CAN NO LONGER IMAGINE MY LIFE WITHOUT ALCOHOL
IF SOME ASKES YOU WHY YOU DON'T DRINK, WHAT THEY ARE REALLY SAYING IS 'I CANNOT IMAGINE MY LIFE WITHOUT THIS DRUG, AND I IMPUTE THAT INABILITY ONTO OTHERS'. TRYANSWERING THAT QUESTION WITH 'BECAUSE I NO LONGER NEED TO' AND SEE WHAT THE RESPONSE IS.

CHECK IN: WHY DON'T YOU DRINK? PRACTICE YOUR ANSWER



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Alcohol Explained

IT IS THE IDEA AND NOT THE REALITY OF DRINKING THAT LURES US IN.CHAMPAGNE ON CHRISTMAS MORNING, MULLED WINE BY THE FIRE, A COLD BEER ON A HOT SUMMERS DAY. THESE ARE THE THINGS THAT DRAW US IN. BUT THIS ISN'T THE REALITY OF DRINKING, THE REALITY IS THOSE 4AM WAKE UPS, FEELING HEAVY AND TIRED AND LETHARGIC, AND THAT HEADY MIX OF ANXIETY AND EXHAUSTION THAT ONLY DRINKING CAN PROVIDE.

CHECK IN: HOW DOES YOUR IDEA OF ALCOHOL COMPARE WITH THE REALITY?



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Alcohol Explained

THERE IS NO SAFE LEVEL OF ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION.
ALCOHOL IS A CLASS ONE CARCINOGEN, AS CLASSIFIED BY THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION. THIS PUTS IT IN THE SAME CATEGORY AS TOBACCO SMOKE, URANIUM, AND ASBESTOS.

CHECK IN: HOW ARE YOU FEELING NOW COMPARED TO DAY 1



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Alcohol Explained

THOSE 4AM WAKE UPS ARE ALCOHOL WITHDRAWAL. ALCOHOL HAS A HALF-LIFE OF 5 HOURS. THIS MEANS THAT AFTER 5 HOURS THE AMOUNT OF ALCOHOL IN YOUR SYSTEM HAS DROPPED BY HALF. THIS IS WHEN THE ANXIETY AND OVERSTIMULATION REALLY KICKS IN. IT'S SIMILAR TO DRINKING TOO MUCH CAFFEINE. THIS IS WHY DRINKER TEND TO SUFFER FROM INSOMNIA ABOUT 5 HOURS AFTER THEIR LAST DRINK.

CHECK IN:HOW HAS YOUR SLEEP IMPROVED?



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Alcohol Explained

SEE IT FOR WHAT IT REALLY IS
ALCOHOL FOUL-TASTING ADDICTIVE CARCINOGEN. IT MAKES YOU FEEL DULLED, BEFORE WEARING OFF LEAVING A CORRESPONDING FEELING OF ANXIETY. IT RUINS YOUR NATURAL SLEEPING PATTERN, AND LEAVES YOU FEELING HEAVY AND LETHARGIC.

CHECK IN: HOW HAS YOUR VIEW ON ALCOHOL CHANGED?



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Alcohol Explained

ALCOHOL HAS ZERO HEALTH BENEFITS. ALCOHOL HAS NOT ONE, SINGLE, HEALTH BENEFIT. ALL THE BENEFITS COME FROM THE FRUIT /VEGETABLE ELEMENTS OF THE DRINKS, NOT THE ALCOHOL. THE INTERNATIONAL AGENCY FOR RESEARCH ON CANCER (PART OF THE WORLD HEALTH ORGANISATION) CLASSIFIES ALCOHOL AS A CLASS ONE CARCINOGEN, ALONG WITH CIGARETTE SMOKING AND ASBESTOS.

CHECK IN: HOW DOES THE FACT ABOVE COMPARE TO YOUR PREVIOUS THOUGHTS ON ALCOHOL



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Alcohol Explained

ALCOHOL CAUSES PHYSICAL STRESS ON THE BODYALCOHOL MAY DULL THE BRAIN, BUT IT PUTS THE BODY INTO STRESS MODE AS IT RELEASES ADRENALINE AND CORTISOL (A STRESS HORMONE) TO COUNTER THE DEPRESSANT EFFECTS OF THE ALCOHOL.

CHECK IN: HOW HAVE YOUR STRESS LEVELS CHANGED?



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Alcohol Explained

ALCOHOL MAKES WEIGHT LOSS INCREDIBLY DIFFICULT. HOW? BECAUSE IT STIMULATES OUR APPETITE, BECAUSE IT DULLS RECEPTORS THAT TELL YOUR BRAINWHEN YOU ARE FULL, BECAUSE IT RUINS YOUR SLEEP AND INCREASES YOUR HEART RATE (WHICH MAKES EXERCISE HARDER), BECAUSE IT CONTAINS LOTS OF EMPTY CALORIES, DRINKING MAKES WEIGHTLOSS DRAMATICALLY HARDER.

CHECK IN: HOW HAS YOUR WEIGHT/APPETITE CHANGED?



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Alcohol Explained

DRINKING MAKES EXERCISE ROUTINES HARDER TO FOLLOW BECAUSE IT INCREASES OUR HEART RATE, EXERCISE BECOMES HARDER, MORE EFFORT, AND MORE UNCOMFORTABLE. EVERYONE HAS A MAXIMUM HEART RATE, THE HIGHER IT'S STARTING POINT,
THE LESS EXERCISE YOU CAN DO AND THE MORE UNPLEASANT IT IS.

CHECK IN: HOW HAS YOUR DESIRE TO EXERCISE CHANGED?



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Alcohol Explained

ALCOHOL DOESN’T HELP YOU DEAL WITH STRESS. ALCOHOL LEAVES A FEELING OF ANXIETY WHICH MAGNIFIES THE ORIGINAL STRESS AS THE SEDATING EFFFECTS WEAR OFF.] ALSO BECAUSE ALCOHOL RUINS SLEEP, YOU ARE REMOVING YOUR ABILITY TO GET A GOOD SLEEP WHICH IS YOUR BRAINSOPPORTUNITY TO DIGEST AND ASSIMILATE EXPERIENCE. WE OFTEN SEE SOLUTIONS TO PROBLEMSAFTER A GOOD NIGHT’S SLEEP.

CHECK IN: HOW ARE YOU COPING WITH EVERYDAY STRESSORS?



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Alcohol Explained

ALCOHOL NEVER IMPROVES ANY SITUATION OR EXPERIENCE.
ALCOHOL HAS NEVER ACTUALLY GIVEN ANYTHING, IT HAS ONLY REMOVED THEN PARTIALLY RESTORED, EITHER BY REMOVING THE WITHDRAWAL OR THE MENTAL CONUNDRUM.

CHECK IN: HOW HAS YOUR LIFE IMPROVED SINCE DAY 1?



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Alcohol Explained

THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS AN ‘ADDICTIVE PERSONALITY’ THERE ARE ONLY LEARNED COPING MECHANISMS. WHEN THE BAD TIMES COME, AND THEY WILL, HOW WILL YOU DEAL WITH THEM? GO FOR A RUN? READ A BOOK? TALK TO A FRIEND? MEDITATE?
DO SOME YOGA? HIT THE GYM? OR CONSUME SOMETHING TO CHANGE HOW YOU FEEL?
THIS IS LEARNED BEHAVIOUR, AND BEHAVIOURCAN BE CHANGED WITH PLANNING, KNOWLDGE ANDUNDERSTANDING.

CHECK IN: WHAT ARE SOME NEW COPING MECHANISMS YOU ARE TRYING?



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Alcohol Explained

ALCOHOL DOES NOT TASTE GOOD.
IF YOU ARE IN ANY DOUBT ABOUT THIS, GET SOME 100% PURE ALCOHOL, AND TASTE IT. IF YOU WERE TO TRY THIS, YOU'D BE LUCKY IF YOU COULD GET IT ANYWHERE NEAR YOUR MOUTH WITHOUT YOUR EYES WATERING, AND IF YOU WERE TO SIP IT YOU WOULD MOST CERTAINLY RETCH. ALCOHOL IS A POISON, AND YOUR BODY REACTS TO IT AS SUCH. WE HAVE TO WATER IT DOWN, SMOTHER IT WITH OTHER STRONG FLAVOURS, DROWN IT IN SUGAR, AND EVEN THEN IT TAKES YEARS TO 'ACQUIRE THE TASTE' FOR IT.

CHECK IN: HAVE YOU FOUND DRINKS THAT YOU ENJOY AND HELP YOU TO ABSTAIN MORE EASILY?



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Alcohol Explained

THE OCCASIONAL GLASS OF RED WINE IS NOT GOOD FOR YOU. EVEN IF YOU WERE TO HAVE IT WITH HANDFUL OF GRAPESOR SOME GRAPE JUICE (WHICH IS ESSENTIALLY WHAT WINE IS; SOMETHING GOOD FOR YOU[GRAPES] ALONG WITH SOMETHING BAD FOR YOU [ALCOHOL]. IN FACT THE FERMENTATION PROCESS ACTUALLY DESTROYS MANY OF THE NUTRIENTS IN THE GRAPE JUICE (FRESH GRAPE JUICEIS HIGH IN VITAMIN C, WINE HAS ZERO VITAMIN C).

CHECK IN: HOW MUCH MONEY HAVE YOU SAVED THIS MONTH BY NOT DRINKING?



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Alcohol Explained

MODERATING IS FAR HARDER THAN QUITTING MODERATING IS PUTTING YOURSELF I THE POSITION OF HAVING TO CONSIDER WHETHER TO DRINK, AND HAVING TO RESIST THE TEMPTATION TO DRINK, OVER AND OVER AND OVER AGAIN. YOU FIGHT THE BATTLE NUMEROUS TIMES A DAY, FOR DAYS, WEEK, MONTHS, YEARS, IN FACT HOWEVER LONGTHE SELF-IMPOSED PENANCE LASTS. QUITTING (IF YOU DO IT PROPERLY) IS ABOUT MAKING ONE SINGLE DECISION AND LIVING THE REST OF YOUR LIFE IN LINE WITH THAT DECISION.

CHECK IN: HOW WAS STOPPING TOTALLY COMPARED WITH TRYING TO MODERATE?



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Alcohol Explained

MODERATE DRINKERS DO NOT LIVE LONGER THAN ABSTAINERS BECAUSE ALCOHOL IS GOOD FOR YOU. THERE ARE STUDIES THAT SHOW THAT MODERATE DRINKERS LIVE LONGER THAN ABSTAINERS. THE (INCORRECT) CONCLUSION IS THAT MODERATE DRINKING IS GOOD FOR YOU. IN FACT THIS CONCLUSION IS WRONG. THIS TENDENCY FOR MODERATE DRINKERS TO LIVE LONGER THAN ABSTAINERS ISN'T EVIDENCE THAT MODERATE DRINKING IS GOOD FOR YOU, IT'S EVIDENCE OR OUR SOCIETIES WARPED RELIANCE ON THIS DRUG.

CHECK IN: WHAT ARE YOU LEARNING ABOUT YOUR RELATIONSHIP WITH ALCOHOL DURING THIS TIME?



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Alcohol Explained

DRINKING IS NOT THE ONLY METHOD OF STRESS RELIEF THERE ARE LOTS OF WAYS YOU CAN RELIEVE STRESS; EXERCISING, READING A BOOK, WATCHING TV, REDISCOVERING A HOBBY, WATCHING SPORTS. ANYTHING THAT TAKES YOUR MIND OF THINGS WILL PROVIDE STRESS RELIEF, JUST FIND SOMETHING THAT DOESN'T ALSO DESTROY YOU PHYSICALLY AND MENTALLY.

CHECK IN: HAVE YOU FOUND ALTERNATIVE ACTIVITIES THAT YOU ENJOY AND HELP YOU TO ABSTAIN MORE EASILY?



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Alcohol Explained

MODERATION ISN'T WHAT YOU THINK IT IS BECAUSE, OVERT TIME, THE DESIRE FOR THE NEXT DRINK KICKS IN AS THE EFFECT OF THE PREVIOUS DRINK WEARS OFF, MODERATION IS NEVER WHAT WE THINK IT WILL BE. WE IMAGINE EFFORTLESSLY DRINKING LESS, HAVING ONE OR TWO, ENJOYING THEM, THEN JUST NOT WANTING ANY MORE. THE REALITY IS DESPERATELY WANTING A DRINK, THEN DESPERATELY WANTING THE NEXT ONE AS SOON AS THE LAST ONE ENDS, AND BEING MISERABLE BECAUSE YOU CAN'T HAVE IT. EVEN IF YOU DO END UP STICKING TO YOUR MODERATION RULES,

CHECK IN: REFLECT ON TIMES YOU HAVE TRIED MODERATING - WHAT WAS YOUR EXPERIENCE OF IT?



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Alcohol Explained

THERE IS NO ‘RESET’ WHEN IT COMES TO DRINKING, OR INDEED ANY OTHER FORM OF DRUG ADDICTION. WHEN YOUR SUBCONSCIOUS LEARNS THAT THE UNPLEASANT FEELING THAT STARTS TO BUILD UPWHEN ONE DRINK FINISHES, CAN BE RELIEVED BY THE NEXT DRINK, THEN YOU CAN NEVER HAVE AN EASY RELATIONSHIP WITH ALCOHOL AGAIN. WHAT HAS BEEN LEARNED CAN NEVER BE UNLEARNED.

CHECK IN: WHO AROUND YOU BENEFITS FROM YOUR SOBRIETY AND HOW?



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Alcohol Explained

QUITTING DRINKING IS ABOUT RELEARNING SKILLS YOU INSTRUCTIVELY KNEW BEFORE YOU STARTED DRINKING.
BEFORE WE STARTED DRINKING WE DEALT WITH STRESS, SOCIALISED, ENJOY CHRISTMAS ANDHOLIDAYS AND VACATIONS. IT'S ONLY AFTER WE INTRODUCE ALCOHOL THAT WE SUDDENLY FIND THAT WE CAN'T QUITE ENJOY ALL THOSE SITUATIONS IN THE SAME WAY WITHOUT OUR LITTLE DRUG.

CHECK IN: HOW DO YOU DEAL WITH SOCIAL SITUATIONS WHERE ALCOHOL IS OFFERED?



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Alcohol Explained

IT'S NOT THAT ALCOHOL ISN'T ADDICTIVE, IT JUST TAKES A LONG TIME TO GET ADDICTED TOO. A MAJOR PART OF ADDICTION IS WHEN THE SUBCONSCIOUS MAKES THE CONNECTION BETWEEN THE UNPLEASANT FEELING THAT STARTS TO BUILD UP WHEN ONE DOSE OF THE DRUG WEARS OFF, WITH NEEDING ANOTHER DOSE TO ALLEVIATE THAT UNPLEASANT FEELING. THE SUBCONSCIOUS WORKS BY CAUSE AND EFFECT. WITH DRUGS, THE 'CAUSE' IS THE ACT OF CONSUMING THE DRUG, AND THE 'EFFECT' IS WHEN WE FEEL THE EFFECT OF THE DRUG,

CHECK IN: WHEN DID YOU FIRST REALIZE YOU NEEDED A BREAK FROM ALCOHOL?



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Alcohol Explained

THERE ARE NO NORMAL DRINKERS
THERE IS JUST A DRUG, AND YOU EITHER TAKE IT, OR YOU DON'T. IF YOU TAKE IT, IT SLOWLY TAKES OVER YOUR LIFE. FIRSTLY YOU TAKE IT FOR ENJOYMENT, BUT THAT SLOWLY MORPHS UNTIL YOU FIND YOU DON'T REALLY ENJOY THINGS WITHOUT IT. YOU BECOME RELIANT ON IT FOR MORE AND MORE SITUATIONS, AND IT BECOMES HARDER AND HARDER TO DO WITHOUT IT. THERE IS NOTHING NORMAL ABOUT DRINKING, AT WHATEVER LEVEL. WHAT SOCIETY THINKS OF AS 'NORMAL DRINKERS' ARE JUST PEOPLE WHO HAVE NOT YET BECOME FULLY RELIANT

CHECK IN: WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS NOW THAT DRY JANUARY IS OVER?



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Alcohol Explained