

GETTING SOBER IS NOT ABOUT LOSING YOUR DRINKING "PRIVILEGE"



]The biggest mindshift we need to make in order to move from an addiction mindset to one of sustained recovery is to stop associating sobriety with loss, and instead realize it is all about the deeply satisfying, fortifying, and life-enhancing ways *we gain everything we ever thought we were going to get from drinking but didn't*. What's more is the fact that, when we are trapped in the addiction loop, it is impossible to see past our immediate fears and anxiety around quitting the drug (alcohol is a drug). That's not your fault; it's just how addiction works.

The mind fixates on not just your drug of choice, but also, and even more disturbingly, on the obsessive, compulsive thoughts about obtaining it, ritualizing it, controlling it, romanticizing it, moderating it, and essentially doing whatever it takes to keep that drug in your life. Because addiction convinces us that we need to drink to "have a good life," the thought of not drinking anymore scares the daylights out of us.

In addiction and dependency, we believe we need alcohol to sleep, socialize, calm down, perk up, be confident, be cool, fit in, celebrate, commiserate, feel included (addiction is a disease of loneliness, after all), have fun, be adventurous, be romantic, be funny, be interesting, and relax, among so many more things we give alcohol way too much credit for "magically" doing for us without our having to exert much effort.

But how often has alcohol fulfilled any of these promises in the long run? If drinking really made your life better, wouldn't you be able to drink less over time, instead of more? This is the great lie of an alcohol-centric culture. We are sold alcohol as the answer to all the problems drinking causes us in the first place. (If you have ever drank to alleviate the pain of a hangover, you get it.) We are all being duped, big time.

But the truth of recovery is that, as we come to see that we are more than capable of being happy and even *thriving* without drinking, we realize the best truth of all: our lives without alcohol are not "almost as good as" or even "just as good as" they were with alcohol, not even close. In recovery, they get exponentially better and better by far.

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