

## Day 5: Challenging Events



**5 Day Reset**

**with**

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## Day 5: Challenging Events

Alright everybody, welcome back. It is day five of the five-day reset, and we are talking about how to handle challenging events. This tool is so important. No matter what you decide moving forward, how to handle challenging events is something that you need to know. You need to have this skill because so many people will get into this situation where they just feel like - they start isolating, and they start avoiding, and there's an event coming up, they don't want to drink, or they want to drink a lot less, and their temptation is just to hide and to avoid and to run away, and that is not sustainable.

I will tell you that, you know, this was actually a huge stumbling block for me as well. I felt like if I was left to my own devices and nobody was around and I didn't have to see anyone, then I was pretty good at not drinking. But as soon as I had to go out into the world and see my friends and see my family and go to different events, all of a sudden, it just was so difficult, and I often felt like this was never going to be easy.

And I don't want it to be that way for you. There really is an easy way to handle any challenging event that's coming up for you. You don't have to worry about weddings or hanging out with friends, travelling, getting on airplanes, dating, going to parties. You can figure out a way to handle it so that you can feel good afterwards.

Now, when I started this work, I'll tell you, at first, I had so many challenging events. It seemed kind of like everything was a challenging event for me at first because drinking was so inter rolled to so much of my social life, and it felt like, "Am I ever going to stop having challenging events?" But here's the thing: as I kept doing this work and I kept putting myself in these situations, and I would face these events head on, and I would teach my brain that, yes, I could survive, I didn't need to hide from the challenging event, my brain started to learn something incredibly important.

It started to learn that what I thought was going to be terrible, wasn't actually as bad as I anticipated. It learned that whatever the scenario was, it was totally survivable. Now, if you don't go to the challenging event, if you

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don't put yourself in the situation, what will happen is you'll never have the opportunity to teach yourself this. And let me tell you, if left to its own devices, your brain will just catastrophize and worst-case scenario, and think of every negative possibility. And there is a really good reason for this.

There's nothing wrong with your brain because it's catastrophizing or because it's doing worst case scenario yet again. Back in the day, it was an evolutionary advantage for our brain to be able to spot danger. It was an advantage to see the negative, because we were living in a world with a lot of danger. And so, it was important when we saw a bush, for our brain to think, "Hey, there could be a tiger in there. We don't know, better be careful." We were living in a much dangerous world, and so focusing on the negative was actually a benefit. It helped us survive.

Now, here's the thing: the world is much safer. But your brain hasn't caught up. Your brain is still caught in that cycle of spotting the negative and catastrophizing and thinking about worst case scenario, and you have to intervene. You cannot leave your brain to its own devices, to go down this path. You have to intervene and plan on purpose and point your brain, direct your brain in the direction you want it to go. Don't just let it do its thing, because it will imagine that the wedding, or the party, or the first date, that it will all be so horrible and awful if you're not drinking.

So this is really important. I love this exercise and we're actually going to spend the majority of the video just going through and talking through every single question. So when you are planning for a challenging event, the first thing you have to do is plan well in advance. You need to really spend some time thinking about the event ahead of time, planning for what is going to happen, planning for what you think the obstacles will be and how you will handle them.

Now, like everything I have talked to you about, please do not do this in your head. This is an exercise that you need to really be thoughtful about, you need to write down your answers and make this plan well in advance. So I'm going to give you a list of seven questions that you're

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going to go through when you are planning for any challenging event. And you can use this for anything.

Take your time with this, really go into it because I'm telling you that the last thing you want to do is feel like you're physically healthy, you like the results that you're getting, but you don't see people. You don't go out, you avoid situations, nobody wants that. That's not the life that you want, and so what you need to do then is figure out how to plan on purpose and direct your brain on purpose so that you can go to the challenging event and realize that it is survivable. That's what's really important.

The very first question, and you can do this all on a sheet of paper, is just name what is the event. Just write that at the top. What is the event? So it might be a wedding, or a birthday party, it might be meeting a friend for drinks. It doesn't have to be a big event. It doesn't have to be New Year's Eve. It just has to be an event that you think is going to be challenging.

The second question, what will be challenging about this event? Now, really think about this. Think about anything that you can foresee that might cause problems. Maybe you're going to be around a lot of cues, and so you're going to have a lot of urges. Maybe it's people's questions that you think will be really challenging. How do you answer other people's questions about whether or not you're drinking? Maybe it will be how you will feel when you're at this event. Or it could be what's happened in the past. Thinking about if you've gone to an event like this in the past, what happened then?

So just really think about this. Think about, and pinpoint why you think you will want to drink at this event. Be really specific, and there may be multiple reasons, but really make sure that you understand everything, every aspect of this event that you think will be challenging.

Question number two, what are you committing to when you go to the event? This one's really important. What are you committing to? Now, if you remember from the very first video, right before you started the challenge, I

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talked about the difference between commitment and trying. Commitment is the stance that you take when you are 100% all in. Trying, not so much. So really ask yourself, what am I committing to do at this event?

Now, part of that is the commitment that you are making to yourself about drinking, right? What is your commitment around drinking at this event? Will you be drinking? Will you not be drinking? How much will you be drinking? Really need to think this through, what is your commitment? And don't be fluffy. Don't list a range. You need to really be - it's really important that you're very specific, especially as you're taking a break. My commitment is to continue my break and to not have anything, but write down what your commitment is.

Now, you can also be committing to the practice. The practice of showing up even when it feels difficult, showing up even when you feel uncomfortable, and practicing doing something that is challenging. So you might want to think about that as well. I'm committing to putting myself in a difficult situation, or a challenging situation. I'm committing to taking a risk, even when it feels uncomfortable. So think about that. Think about what you are trying to teach your brain, if anything, because a lot of times, that in and of itself can be motivating.

Question number four, when you are at the event, how do you think you will justify or excuse not following your plan? Now, what this is really doing is asking your brain to go into the future. Think about being at the event, think about why you think it will be challenging. You're pinpointing the reasons, the obstacles that will prevent you from sticking with your plan.

And then here, it's really how are you going to justify or excuse not following your commitment? Because the thing that we know is that your brain will want to justify. It will want to make excuses. So what do you think those excuses are going to be? I want you to anticipate what your brain is going to say to you. "It doesn't matter, everyone else is, who cares, this is too hard, I'm so uncomfortable."

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Start to think about what your brain is going to say because the next question, number five, is how would the best version of yourself handle these obstacles and excuses? I love this question because there always is a best version of ourselves. It's always right there, and if we can think about ahead of time, "What would my best version of myself do? What would she do? How would she handle these obstacles? How would she handle these excuses? What would she say? What would she do?"

This is so important. You're essentially training your brain to think about the event before it's happened. You're kind of pre-planning, pre-walking through the scenarios, almost like you're giving your brain a test run before you get there. Rather than just saying, "This is going to be really hard, I don't know what's going to happen, let's see what happens", this is your test run. So how do you think the best version of yourself would handle these obstacles and excuses?

Question number six, if it gets really hard, what are you going to do to regroup yourself and regroup? If it gets really hard, what are you going to do to regroup yourself and regroup? This one's huge because the truth is, it may get hard. Now, it may turn out to be way easier than what you expect, and I will tell you that so many of the people that I talk to, that is their initial like, "I can't believe it, this was a lot easier than I expected", but if it does get really hard, what are you going to do?

Are you going to step outside so you can collect your thoughts? Are you going to head to the bathroom so you can look at this plan and remind yourself? Are you just going to take a couple deep breaths? What are you going to do to regroup yourself and regroup? This is really important. Again, you aren't just letting the event happen, you're planning ahead of time. You're pre-planning what your brain will do.

And then the last question, question seven. Write down a message to yourself. Just one sentence. Write down a message to yourself that you want to remember about who you want to be at the event. I love this one. So often we don't think about this. We don't think about, "What will I say to myself? How will I remind myself who I want to be?"

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If you have followed my work at all, then one of the things that you know is that one piece that I found incredibly compelling was the idea of just being proud of myself. I was so sick of feeling like waking up, having another night where I drank way more than I intended, where I had to worry about what I said, what I did, what happened the night before, and so the idea of just being proud of myself, being proud of putting myself in a really challenging situation, that was really something that motivated me. That felt really compelling. And so, having a sentence like, I just want to be proud of who I am, that was something that I was really able to connect with.

So what is your one sentence? What do you want to remember? Now, don't do this in your head. I want you to really write this down, and I want you to really think about it. Think about how you're going to handle. This is a way that your brain can kind of pre-experience everything that might happen, and also pre-experience the solutions. Too many times, we just walk into a challenging event and kind of have not done any preparation and like, well, we'll just see what happens.

This is the exact opposite. You're planning. You're allowing your brain to pre-experience the obstacles and excuses and pre-experience the solution. And this kind of practice ahead of time will make such a big difference. Now, right now, you might have a handful of challenging events, but every time you do this, every time you go to that challenging event and you check it off and your brain realizes it was survivable, it wasn't as bad as you thought, all the catastrophizing, all the worst-case scenario didn't exactly turn out that way, that will be huge for you.

Because right now for me, I don't have any challenging events anymore, and that's amazing. I was at a point where I thought previously, I'll only have challenging event. And now it's like, no, I got it, it's cool, doesn't matter. So going to challenging events is a way to teach your brain something new. If you always hide, your brain doesn't have the opportunity to learn new things, and that is what we are really focusing on here.

Now, you have gotten a lot of tools over the last five days. This is the final tool that you're getting in terms of how to really understand your habit

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and how to start to change your drinking, change your thinking, and also, how to take a break without feeling this kind of deprivation and missing out.

Now, it's the last day of the five-day reset, and tomorrow we are going to talk about where to go from here. So, congratulations on being on day five, I am so proud of you. I'm proud of each and every one of you for taking this challenge and committing yourself to learn something new, learn something new about the habit, learn something new about drinking and why it's so appealing, but also learning something new about yourself.

And I will tell you, you will never not have this awareness. This week will have really shifted and changed something for you. So, enjoy your last day of the challenge, and I will see you tomorrow where we talk about next steps.