

EPISODE 42

“KB: Culturally, it is such a socially acceptable drug. That that’s a really confusing thing. Even when you think you’ve had a breakthrough, you know that you need to change your drinking. The fact that it’s the one drug that you have seen your parents take and your friends take and the people take on TV, all of that stuff is so confusing especially when you are really thinking seriously about quitting.”

“Then why can’t I be a normal drinker? And I always say to people, well why don’t you look at these normal drinkers when they are going on holiday and catching an early morning flight and they’re at the bar at 7 AM because that’s okay because they’re on holiday, that’s okay so they guarantee that.”

[INTRO MESSAGE]

[00:00:51.0] AS: You know battling food and your body doesn’t work. You want to love and accept yourself. And because you’re insatiable, you want results too. And wouldn’t you know, you bring the same intensity to your life, wanting to maximize your time, potential, and experiences you have here on this beautiful and wondrous planet Earth.

Fair warning, it will be a rollercoaster. But for those insatiable, that’s your prime time to thrive. We’re here to say “YES!” to the hunger of wanting it all. I’m your co-host, Ali Shapiro, a health coach who helps people end the losing battle of dieting and find a truce with food.

[00:01:31.4] JB: And I’m Juliet Burgh, nutritionist, fitness expert, and a co-owner of Unite Fitness Studio Franchise.

[INTRODUCTION]

[00:01:40.5] JB: Welcome to episode 42 of the Insatiable Podcast, *Sober School* with Kate B. What if you were asked to go 90 days without alcohol? Does this sound scary to you? If so, then this episode is for you. You may not be a candidate for AA but it doesn’t mean that alcohol isn’t an issue. Kate B of the Sober School talks about the myths we tell ourselves to make drinking

acceptable. Do you use your booze for liquid courage or to make social outings more enjoyable? Or how about that long and stressful day and needing a glass of wine? Learn if alcohol is something you should cut back or completely out and why and some tips to get started.

[INTERVIEW]

[00:02:18.4] AS: Hello everybody. So today we are here with Kate B, the founder of Sober School and Juliet and I were getting a lot of inquiries about how to handle alcohol and the way that I come at alcohol, the way that I see it in my health coaching practice probably stems from the same complicated gooey ball of wax of tension that food does. However, Juliet and I were talking about our own experience with alcohol, Kate, before we got on the line with you.

And I always wanted to eat my calories. I felt like I was always dieting, so if I wasn't so obsessed with dieting and emotional eating for 18 years, I'd probably have to go to Sober School too. But we wanted to have you on because it's not a thing for us, I guess, all though Juliet, you said that you started to enjoy a drink once in while.

[00:03:01.3] JB: Yeah, more so in recent past. As I am getting older I find that a drink, it is a suppressant. So if I am really had a stressful week, I can see how people utilize alcohol in that sense of like, "All right, I'm on a 10 right now and I want to bring myself down to a five and just relax," and there's a lot of rituals, and I'm sure Kate you will talk about this more with alcohol that comes along with how lovely it is to have a glass of wine, to relax.

Everyone has a different stigmas that come along with alcohol. So I am really excited to hear about what you have to say and the Sober School and I think it would really be helpful for a lot of our listeners who are trying to navigate this place of am I drinking because I'm a social drinker, am I using alcohol for more than that? I think sometimes we're not really sure.

[00:03:50.1] KB: Yeah, I completely relate to that and thank you so much for having me on. It's really nice to speak to you guys because I think we have so much in common. I might be talking about alcohol, you're all about the food but the kind of root causes and a lot of the stuff that drives that behavior is all the same and actually something I hear from a lot of people and I

know for myself is that we start out with food and then some of us progress to alcohol, to the hardest stuff. Others stay with food so either way I think we're all coming from the same background really.

[00:04:25.2] AS: Yeah I found that with some of my clients, they are recovering alcoholics or they were addicted to prescription pills. Not all of them, but then food is the last straw because you have to eat.

[00:04:38.3] JB: Yeah, I definitely work with clients who were recovering alcoholics and food was always an issue for them even with alcoholism. In fact alcohol a lot of times would cause a binge but then once they got the alcoholism under control, the binging still was something that they had to continue to work through.

[00:04:56.4] AS: Well and what I thought was so interesting, Kate, and I would love for you to explain your story and how you created Sober School. But you were looking for something that wasn't for people who were self-identified, working the 12 steps. So tell us a little bit about your story and the genesis of the Sober School?

[00:05:12.5] KB: Yeah, well I suppose for me, I started drinking like many people do as a teenager because I was a really shy, nervous teenager. I was rubbish at talking to boys. I had no self-confidence whatsoever and alcohol was this magic thing that made me the person that I wanted to be. So I guess many people started drinking for those reasons but my problem was I just love this thing right from for me off.

We had this full on relationship that just got bigger and bigger and bigger as I went through university and my first few jobs and relationships and all of that and eventually, it just got to a point where I felt like alcohol was such a big part of my life but it was making me so miserable and I couldn't imagine living without it. But I couldn't seem to live with it either, and when I looked for help, I just couldn't find anything that resonated with me.

The two beams that I think I discovered was people would say, "Well you know you should really be able to cut down. You should be able to just cut back and moderate your drinking and as long as you are controlling it, that's okay. You don't need to worry, you're probably being overly

fearful about this.” And then there were the other people who were saying, “Well no, you know it sounds like you’re drinking far too much and you have a problem with it and if you do, then you need to stop forever.” Just a little heads up, that means like a lifetime of missing out, deprivation and having to rely on will power.

So those two options sounded absolutely awful and I suppose I was just in a bit of denial about it for ages and ages until I eventually discovered a way in which I could stop drinking and I could feel really good about it and feel like I was actually escaping a problem rather than trying to resist this magical elixir, I suppose.

[00:07:09.7] JB: Now did you label yourself as an alcoholic?

[00:07:12.9] KB: No. Well that was a really confusing thing. Because, like most people, I had a very fixed idea of what an alcoholic and I wasn’t that man living under the bridge drinking out of a bottle in a paper bag, I hadn’t lost everything. I hadn’t even being fired from my job, I hadn’t done any of the things that alcoholics are supposed to have done. So I had a really tough time identifying as that.

[00:07:36.4] JB: Because it’s a very black and white space is what you’re saying, there is no real grey area. So you find yourself in this gray space and then you’re like, “Then where do I go? What do I do?”

[00:07:46.3] AS: And I would probably say adding to the confusion Kate and I think we have clients that are very similar. My clients are so high functioning and part of the problem why they’re eating or drinking is because they’re over functioning. Like they’re almost too effective.

[00:08:00.3] JB: Well, like I said, the alcohol is very sedating. So they’re constantly being up and they’re always overly stimulated and alcohol is a depressant. It’s something that brings you doubt.

[00:08:13.3] KB: Yeah, some of the most motivated, driven people I know have alcohol problems because they are just full on and they’re intense people and they get things done and they go from naught to 60 in about 10 seconds when they wake up and they are full on all day

until they just can't cope anymore and then yeah, when you've wound yourself up so high, you need something quite extreme to wind that down again and that's where alcohol comes in.

[00:08:41.8] AS: So what are some of the symptoms for people who, or what did you discover was your turning point of like, "Wow this is more than just," — you wanted to get out of the bind that you are in. But for people listening, how do you know when it's something like, "I really got to take a deep dive look at this" versus "I just need some tips and tricks to as Juliet said, to not be so stimulated and that will help me" versus "well, I've got to really take a look at the root cause here"?

[00:09:05.5] JB: Well I am curious Ali before we get into that, just for Kate, what it was for her. Why did you feel that your relationship with alcohol was negatively, obviously, right? Negatively impacting your life that you were trying to find out how to stop or if you should stop.]What were your symptoms that you were saying, "This is not healthy"?

[00:09:24.8] KB: So I think I'd reached a point where my favorite way to drink was not with other people. It wasn't going out partying or going to the pub and being social about it. Actually my favorite way to drink towards the end of my drinking days was on my own and it had become this thing that I adapted my life around. I knew that at least two or three times a week, I was going to need to drink a large quantity of alcohol to just kind of feel okay.

And so I was building my life around this trying to fit these kind of binge drinking episodes into my week so it wouldn't negatively impact my work or all the other responsibilities. And I think it was the end of 2012, I thought, "Gosh this is really getting out of control. I feel so ill and so depressed." I used to feel so awful after I had been drinking.

And so in January of 2013, I decided, "Right, I am going to do dry January," which is a really big thing that we have here in the UK recently. You don't drink in January to compensate for all the drinking you have done in December and it's a big quite the cultural thing. Loads of people do it. So I went away, did a fitness boot camp for the first week of January, absolutely killed myself being shouted at by these ex-Army soldiers. So I came back...

[00:10:50.5] AS: Wanting to drink? No, I'm kidding.

[00:10:56.9] KB: No, I came back in fairly good shape like half a stone lighter. I just thought like, "Great, I've got the year off to such a brilliant start," and then within a couple of days of being back on my own, in my flat, in my kind of day to day routine, I just couldn't stick at it and it was so humiliating to have all of these people who were doing dry January and all right, so they were moaning about it, but they were doing it. Whereas I was having to pretend that I was still doing it when I just hadn't able to keep it up and I think that's the first time I thought, "Oh my God, my values don't match my behavior and I feel really bad about that," and it was in April that year that I finally stopped for good.

[00:11:38.9] JB: And with your behavior with your drinking, what was the connection that you made that you were using the alcohol for?

[00:11:45.6] KB: Well I think I didn't really know this at the time, but with the benefit of hindsight, I can see I was using it to kind of turn off. But also I felt very much like I wasn't achieving. So in my late 20's, a lot of my friends were settling down. They've got good jobs, nice houses, good marriages, starting to have kids and I felt that having always being quite a high achiever, I was suddenly not achieving and I didn't have any of those things.

I felt like life was leaving me behind a bit and not only that but I wasn't even thin enough or doing well enough at work. I just, all this time, it was a very negative sound track in my head with all the things that I wasn't doing and the best way to escape that was to drink so much that I couldn't think about it.

[00:12:32.8] JB: So it was a numbing for you that it was causing?

[00:12:36.7] KB: Absolutely, yeah and I think so much of this stuff comes back to that, doesn't it? Numbing, escaping, turning off, not feeling, it all means the same thing.

[00:12:45.6] AS: Yeah and I want to read a paragraph of, Kate I sent you the article, of this piece that went viral by Christy Coulter on medium and she titled the piece *In Jolly*, which apparently an 80's perfume but she talks about why people are numbing out and this was the

paragraph that was the most highlighted thousands of times and I just think that her wit was so funny but she talks about how she went sober because of what she calls “trying to soften”.

You guys were saying, it was numbing out or whatnot but I just want to read this paragraph that clearly resonated with a lot of people and I think Kate it reflects your story about these expectations of being a first world woman and she wrote:

“Is it really that hard being a first world woman? Is it really so tough to have the career and the spouse and the pets and the herb garden and the core strengthening and the “oh I just woke up like this” make up and the face injections and the uber driver who might possibly be a rapist? Is it so hard to work 10 hours for your rightful 77% of a salary.”

And I’m inserting that’s for white women, African American women and Latina women make even less on the dollar than men, kicking back up with her essay:

“Walk home past a drunk who invites you to suck his cock and turn on the TV to hear the men who run this country talk about protecting you from abortion, regret by forcing you to grow children inside your body. I mean what’s the big deal? Why would anyone want to soften the edges of this glorious reality?” and then she goes on to say, “The longer I am sober, the less patience I have with being a 24 hour woman.”

And I just think that so many people think that it’s, “I should be able to keep up. I should have the spouse,” I should have the house but why are we trying to soften? This reality is insane. So I just thought that that was a great paragraph that clearly resonated with thousands of people.

[00:14:32.2] KB: Yeah, I love that. I love that so much, I think it’s so true and the [inaudible] she refers to is absolutely ridiculous but we see those things in every day of our lives, all those expectations that we put upon ourselves and I quite often speak to a lot of people who say things like, “Well you know I don’t really understand why I drink because I haven’t experienced some great big trauma.” Or, “I Haven’t being abused as a child or suffered something horrible. I’m just living a normal life and so it’s hard to figure out why we have that urge to escape but when you think about all those issues, it makes a lot more sense. That’s a lot of pressures.

[00:15:10.5] JB: Having a “normal life” is traumatic.

[00:15:14.5] AS: I know.

[00:15:15.6] JB: If that’s a normal life, if that’s what we’re supposed to be aiming for.

[00:15:19.3] AS: Yeah and Kate, I hear the same thing with my clients like “I didn’t go through any trauma, why is this a thing?” She then ties this into food and body image and because this is food and body image podcast, she talks about how this then manifests in the food and body image. She goes, “The magazine is telling me strong is the new sexy and smart is the new beautiful, as though strong and smart is paths to hot.”

The Facebooks means, muscles are beautiful, no wait fat is beautiful, no wait thin is beautiful too as long as you don’t work for it. No wait, all women are beautiful as though we are toddlers who must be given exactly equal shares of princess dust or we’ll lose our shit and I just love that because I think what she’s describing is a schizophrenic normal right? I love how she talks about you need to be thin but you can’t try, right? It’s never good enough and yeah our world is diseased. Our culture is diseased in so many ways. So I just thought those paragraphs are so relevant to what we are talking about today.

[00:16:20.0] KB: Absolutely, absolutely.

[00:16:22.7] AS: So you see that people are numbing out. It’s to soften these edges of expectations. So what are some of the reasons people come to you, to the Sober School? Why do they decide to sign up? You talked about your story but what are the things that maybe they are not doing dry January, but what are their pain points?

[00:16:40.2] KB: I think a lot of people come to me because they can relate to my story and they feel a little bit lost I supposed as I did, that they don’t feel like they are bad enough to go to rehab or to go to AA or perhaps they have tried those and came away feeling reassured that actually they’ve got nothing to worry about. I mean I have experience with AA meetings. It just convinced me that I needed to get a lot worse before I needed to do something so drastic to stop drinking.

So yeah, I think people come because they are stuck in no man's land almost. I have even had people who've been to see their doctor and you have to be quite brave to go and see your doctor especially if you've got kids, other responsibilities and you're worried about those judgements. If you go and speak to your doctor and they then say, "Well why don't you just try cutting back?" that's very hard and that's very demoralizing especially if you've already been trying for ages and ages to control this thing that seems to be controlling you. We've got very confused messages about it and...

[00:17:51.8] JB: And they're not the experts on how to handle a situation like that. They might know that they might think that that's the right thing to say, right? That's the medical response, "Cut back and you will feel better."

[00:18:04.1] AS: But how, it's the "how", how?

[00:18:07.1] JB: When did you start the Sober School Kate?

[00:18:09.7] KB: I started it about 18 months ago, yeah.

[00:18:12.5] JB: Wow and tell us a little bit, and for our listeners, about what is the Sober School?

[00:18:18.1] KB: So the heart of the Sober School is an online coaching program that I run. It's six weeks long and it helps women to stop drinking and feel good about it. This isn't about deprivation or a big group hug to give you lots of will power so you can stop drinking. This is about changing the way you feel about alcohol so you can leave that toxic poison and leave it behind and feel happy about that. Because you can't miss something that you don't want anymore.

And so everything I do is about trying to change the way people think about alcohol and looking at their real reasons behind their drinking and in addition to running the course, try and blog as much as I can. I just have so much to say about alcohol and how ridiculous I think how I

approaches to it and culturally it's such a socially acceptable drug that that's a really confusing thing.

Even when you think you had a breakthrough, you know that you need to change your drinking. The fact that it's the one drug that you have seen your parents take and your friends take and the people take on TV, all of that stuff is so confusing, especially when you're really thinking seriously about that and quitting.

[00:19:34.3] AS: Well that brings up a good point because this is something that is so socially acceptable. Right? It's a drug that you don't get judged the same way for taking back a couple glasses of wine with the girls that you do if you were going into the bathroom to do cocaine.

[00:19:48.8] KB: Oh, alcohol is one of the few drugs, I was going to say the only drug but I think food falls into this category, one of the few things you have to justify not doing. It's the only drug people feel entitled to give you a hard time about when you abstain from it. It's absolutely bonkers.

[0:20:08.7] JB: Yes, a lot of pressure I remember, for me, because it wasn't until recently that I started enjoying alcohol a little bit and I used to always abstain from drinking and the pressure that people would put on me to have a drink. I recall in college, going into the bathroom at parties and dumping my drink out in the sink so that I would come out and look like I had drunk it so that people wouldn't give me a hard time, and I remember just feeling so bad about myself and I couldn't really enjoy the party at times. I felt so self-conscious about and drinking games, you're not willing to participate in those. It's definitely a really challenging thing to navigate.

[0:20:49.6] KB: That's so bad.

[0:20:49.6] AS: I know. Well and this reminds me of some of the research on addiction and again, addiction is a continuum, right? It's not like, Kate, to your point, it's like, "Oh my god, if I want to be an AA, I've got to get worse before I got to get better. But I'm also not like you know, we're on a scale of 100 AA, once I hit a hundred, I go to AA and zero is like you're really comfortable about this. Maybe I'm at 60, 70, or 80 and it's costing me."

But there's a psychologist in Vancouver named Bruce Alexander and he did this really interesting study with rats and he made them two different rat parks. I don't know if you're familiar with this study or whatever but he was really curious about addiction and so he put drugged water in both rat parks. One rat park was basically desolate, they were alone, it was like miserable and then he created a rat park where it had everything a rat would want, right?

Like lots of room to run, fuzzy things to play with and he put drugged water in both of the rat, both of the cages and what they discovered was both animals ran over there and tried the water bottles because they didn't know what was in them. But what he found out was that the isolated rats ended up becoming addicted to that. So the rats who were alone and unhappy became heavy users when none of the rats who were in the fun rat park had a really happy environment.

What he basically said is addiction is an adaptation. It's not you, it's your cage. When you talk about you get hooked for not participating in this drug, it's like your cage is reinforcing, your environment and your social circle is reinforcing this addictive habit and I think that's such an important understanding that it's really not us, it's our environment.

[0:22:32.8] JB: Well you talked about the social lubricant with alcohol and I think a lot of people associate not being able to let loose and have a good time unless they are liquored up.

[0:22:43.7] KB: Yeah, absolutely and I think it's all linked to this kind of sense of connection isn't it? What you were saying about the rat park stuff, I think a really interesting point that I think of from that is that when people do have problems with addiction, whether it be alcohol or other drugs, we treat them, as a society, we tend to shun this people and we treat them very harshly and there's a lot of kind of, "Well you know, if you don't do this, we're going to ignore you." That's the classic sort of intervention isn't it? "If you don't change your ways, we're going to remove all of this stuff from your life," where as actually we're just isolating people a bit more when we do that. I think that connection stuff is so important.

[0:23:30.2] JB: I think there's a way to be connected to somebody without enabling somebody and I think that's where that all stems from, right? When you're talking about, now mind you, I've had people in my family who have struggled with addiction and I also am a really big fan of that show intervention on A&E, but that's not necessarily what we're talking about. But that's so in

particular is all about people making threats, their family members saying, “We’re not going to support you in your addiction anymore, we’re not going to let you come over the house, we’re not going to pick up the phone, we’re not going to give you any more money and we’re cutting you off,” because they’ve been enabling that person. But I think there’s a way that, like you’re saying, the connection piece is so important to healing someone that you can do this without enabling. Do you find that?

[0:24:16.0] KB: Yeah, I know what you mean and I can see where that show is coming from. But ultimately, I think you can put people in a very vulnerable position then, when they just have nothing good in their life. So it makes that drug even more appealing I suppose.

[0:24:34.1] AS: Yeah, another study in Portugal, they had this huge drug problem and rather than spending all the money on intervention type of strategies, I’ve never seen this show but the traditional intervention, the put all that money into the support was let’s help them first of all detox off the drug, but let’s give them housing, let’s give them jobs, let’s make them feel part of the social fabric. And I think what happens is with alcohol, it’s not as — oh and the intravenous drug rate dropped by 50%.

Was it perfect? No. But when you look at the relative statistics compared to, it was much less expensive, it’s highly effective and I think my point in bringing up these studies is the cage for women especially that they’re in with all these expectations, not just to socially drink. The cage isn’t so much that they are really isolated, really cut off from their families but the inability to connect and when Kate, you and I were talking before we got in, you said to me, “The opposite of addiction isn’t sobriety, it’s connection.”

That you had read about someone who’s study had read it that way and I think we get so disconnected from sharing our struggles even with our friends and family because we’re in this cage, this exhaustive cage and I think it’s harder to identify because your family’s not cutting you off, in fact, they’re saying, “Drink with us.” Then you’re also, “Oh, but I feel so alone doing this.”

[0:26:02.3] KB: I think when you touched on there is a real kind of modern day problem, isn’t it? That we live in a society that’s all about those quick fixes and about kind of shirking the problem

and avoiding the true cause and you know, if you've had a bad day or stressful day, someone will say to you, "Oh, have a drink."

[0:26:22.1] AS: Let's meet for happy hour.

[0:26:23.8] KB: Yeah. "Let's not deal with the cause of our stress or anything like that, let's just flick a switch and change the way we feel, kind of instantly." So we're always after that kind of quick route out of things and especially here in the UK where we still have our stiff upper lip, firmly in place, we don't do talking about emotions, we don't do feelings, we just drink through them instead.

[0:26:48.7] AS: Then that becomes almost an identity, like we drink through them, right? What are some of the top myths that you see that keeps people, I don't know if addicted to alcohol but using alcohol rather than addressing those core issues? What do you see people tell themselves?

[0:27:04.3] KB: Well, there are so many. On the course I teach, we spend two weeks just looking at myths. So the myths that we tell ourselves about alcohol and also some of the kind of cultural things that, as we kind of discussed really, that come up around it and I think perhaps the biggest myth that we all are kind of guilty of thinking about is just these expectations that we put on alcohol.

How can it be that one pretty simple crude drug, ethanol, how can it be that on one day it can make you happy and upbeat and the life and soul of the party and on the next day, the exact same drug will make you relaxed and chilled out and de-stressed? But then on the next day, if you take it, it will actually make you more confident and brave and courageous.

It's just alcohol is not a smart bomb, it's not some sophisticated drug that's being developed by top scientist in a high tech lab. It cannot respond to your demands in that way. It's all about what we project on to alcohol. The only thing booze can really do for us is when we drink, it slows down our thinking and it kind of shocks our body so much that it makes it a bit harder to process those thoughts. So yes, if you've had a really bad day, it might distract you from some of the very bad thoughts and so in a funny way, that can make you feel better.

But it's not changing the situation, it's not making you feel happy and actually, I challenge anyone here to think about all the times when they've drunk to try and get a certain effect and it hasn't worked. How many times have you been to a bad party and you've drunk loads and it still hasn't become a good party or you've drunk to feel happy and actually it's made you feel really tiff or sad. Or you drank to chill out and you ended up having a huge round with your partner instead. That just doesn't make sense, does it? We don't dwell on that as society and I don't know why.

[0:29:08.7] AS: That's really interesting, we forget about the bad times or that it's not a consistent, whatever we're telling ourselves, that's not consistently true.

[0:29:17.2] JB: It doesn't have a consistent affect for people. Now, do you find that people, that there is a level of alcohol use that is, that people tell themselves, "This is acceptable versus this is unacceptable," right? One drink a night versus I have two to three cocktails a night versus I only drink on Friday night and Saturday but over the course of Friday and Saturday, I'm having 15 drinks. How do we, you know, I think a lot of our listeners, that's the questions they have around their alcohol uses, what's acceptable, what isn't? Should I just not drink? Is there a way that I can still include alcohol? I'm curious your thoughts on that.

[0:29:56.4] KB: Yeah, I think, I knew for me, identifying whether or not I had a problem was really tricky because you end up in a weird situation where you're at your computer late at night, glass of wine in one hand, filling out a questionnaire on the other hand. You just keep redoing it so you get the right answer. So nowadays I sort of urge people not to do the questionnaires. I think ultimately, it's really simple to know whether you're drinking too much.

If you are repeatedly drinking more than you intend to drink and it's making you feel miserable then that's all you need to know because that's not a good situation to be in. It doesn't really matter how much you drink, for some people, yeah, they can knock back a bottle of wine a night and it's just not a big deal, they're never going to worry about that but for other people, the fact that they have to come home and they have to have that glass of wine and that's causing them a lot of anxiety and worry about that dependence on that one glass, well that's enough to be a problem there. If it's just causing you all day stresses. So it's such a personal thing but I really

think if it's making you miserable and you can't contemplate life without it then those are some red flags to show.

[0:31:13.3] AS: What would you say to the person who doesn't drink all, like all the time? But they notice that some nights, one becomes two and a couple of nights a week, they're finishing off a bottle right? It's not, maybe they're like, "Well that's the only time." But they sense that they need to cut back. What would you — how would you work with that?

[0:31:31.5] KB: I would stop by trying to take a month off, I know expect about dry January earlier and lots of research has been done into that and the benefits of that and where for some people, whole month off can kind of reset them and it massively changes their approach to alcohol and they just feel a lot better about it. There are other people like me, I did manage to take a month off at one point but then when I started drinking again, boom, straight back to where I was before and that's another telltale sign.

It won't work for everyone, it won't be the same for everyone, I would definitely start thinking about taking a month off. In fact I've read other books that say if you really don't have a problem with drinking, you should be able to take 90 days off no problem. Most people who I deal with are absolutely horrified.

[0:32:23.2] JB: I think that one of the challenges with that, even if you don't — maybe they have a chemical dependency or you drink just socially, is again, this social aspect of being around other people in the social setting and they're all drinking and you're the one who is not drinking and just coming from my own personal experience, you don't really want to hang out with the people who are drinking when you're not drinking. You're not on the same level as them. It's different you know?

[0:32:49.7] AS: Yeah. Great point.

[0:32:51.1] JB: They're silly but it might not be in a good way, it's just they're altered, their state is altered and your state isn't altered so it's hard to be around people like that. So I think that's where it can be tricky for people. It sounds good to 30, 60, 90 days off and a lot of people would

say, "Well I could definitely do that," but I think having the right pieces in place would make that an easier process.

[0:33:15.2] KB: Yeah. I agree that that's what makes it really hard because then you get people who get into situations and they say, "Well, if I'm going to take 90 days off, I'll need to not go out for the whole of those 90 days because I can't bear to be in that kind of situation," and that's no fun for anyone. Then you wind up in a situation where you're kind of socially isolated, you're not mixing with your friends and you're...

[0:33:37.7] JB: You're in a cage all by yourself.

[0:33:40.4] KB: You're in a cage, exactly. So I appreciate, that's a hard place to be in if you're experimenting with sobriety. What I found, having been sober for nearly three and a half years now, is that my social life has really changed. Basically I don't really hang out with people who drink a lot anymore, I used to hang out with really big groups of very heavy drinkers.

Now, I've still got a lot of friends who drink but it's in a very sociable way and I like being around them, whether they're sober or a little bit tipsy, they're kind of good people to be with. But those are changes that I've made to my social life that I'm not sure I would have ever made if I was just experimenting, like having a month off here or 90 days here. So there are some really big adjustments that you need to make unless you are happy to be around people who are totally wasted and out until the early hours.

[0:34:39.5] AS: Are there any myths related to the social realm that people tell themselves that keep this cycle going and prevent them from finding new friendships or different ways to unwind? Are there are some of those myths that people tell themselves because Juliet eluded to earlier, and I want to give Carlos credit because it's not my word, but it's fascinating for me. I'm clearly extroverted and that's part of I think why I never turned alcohol. Social situations, I love them, I love people.

I could just like interrogate people. I don't mean to come up interrogating but I just love learning about people and my husband is an introvert. He jokes that he dresses up well as an extrovert and a lot of my clients are introverts. I've learned so much about social anxiety and Carlos calls

alcohol his social lubricant because he's like, "It's just easier to be out there." But is that a lie? Is that myth? I'm curious what you have to say about how do you start navigating social situations sober? Or at least starting to try?

[0:35:37.0] KB: Yeah. You have to be brave and you kind of have to just go for it. I think it is a myth that you need to be drinking in order to have fun.

[0:35:47.4] JB: Liquid courage.

[0:35:49.1] AS: Oh yeah.

[0:35:49.7] JB: That's what it is, liquid courage.

[0:35:51.4] KB: You think you need this liquid courage but actually, if you think about it, if you're with people that you like and you're relaxed because you're going out and you've decided already you're going to have a good time because it's Friday night or Saturday night or whatever. You shouldn't really need a mind altering drug in order to get into that great state.

I think a lot of the times, we give alcohol loads of credit for stuff that we actually supply ourselves, we supply the good jokes and we supply the good mood and we turn up like ready to have a good time because we think we're going to have a good time and therefore we do. Whereas you will know probably if you've been the driver for the night or you haven't been able to drink for another reason, if you go there thinking you're going to have a bad time then you quite often do. I think our thoughts are really powerful.

[0:36:43.3] JB: So we have to manage our expectations most often with this stuff?

[0:36:48.4] AS: What I'm thinking too, if you're going to practice being sober, practice being yourself, everyone else will not remember the next day. Go out with your drunk friends and practice your jokes without the alcohol. No one will remember and you can see how it goes. It's a great way to disprove your myth.

[0:37:04.1] JB: Can we talk about the health aspect around alcohol for a moment because I think that there are some — there's like good and evil to alcohol, right? You hear resveratrol, wine. "Oh it's really — red wine is still good for me. So a glass of red wine with dinner, I'm actually doing myself a favor, right?" But then there are all this negative aspects to alcohol as far as affecting your liver and your brain chemicals, putting you in a depressive state. So there's all these, like it's multifactorial, right? Could you talk on that? Can you speak on that a little bit Kate just the health on alcohol?

[0:37:44.6] KB: Yeah, definitely because I like to talk about this because a lot of the ladies that take my course are really health conscious and they're the kind of people who eat well, read the labels, buy organic, know everything that's in their food, cook from scratch, all of that kind of stuff. This is a big thing for them. What I've discovered from looking at the research and looking at those studies is that they are kind of two main themes. One, there's this idea that red wine is good for your heart, it can reduce the risk of heart attacks and the other one, there's another study that has been widely publicized about the fact that abstainers don't live as long as people who drink moderately.

Now, I think right from the very beginning, those studies were, there was a kind of a limit those studies because they were talking about very, very moderate drinking. But actually since then, those studies have been disproved and we've got people like the England's chief medical officer has said that the stuff about red wine and heart attacks is an old wives' tale. That's how she actually described it and you know, here in the UK, we're having this big debate about reducing the alcohol guidelines because new evidence has come forth that just makes alcohol perhaps even scarier and even more damaging than we thought it was.

So the stuff about red wine being good for you has been widely disproved. The same with the other study I talked about, more research has come forth that shows that those original studies, they included people who had stopped drinking for health reasons, maybe they'd be an alcoholic or maybe they've been told they had to stop drinking because it's having such a bad effect on their health. So yeah, of course those people might not live as long as people who are wealthy and just drinking a little bit.

So those studies, those two small studies have been so widely publicized where as all the hundreds and hundreds of other studies that show all the negative stuff, they just don't get the coverage. And I feel like I have a really good understanding of why that is, as a journalist myself, I can tell you that there is a pressure to write things that will get shared, that will make people feel good about themselves, you work for a newspaper, people love to read stuff that makes them feel happy about their life choices and so yeah, there's always an appetite for a story about alcohol being good for you.

[0:40:17.5] AS: I love that you brought that up because I was, you know, we're all business owners and learning about marketing and especially online marketing and I've had people read my posts and write back to me that they've cried, they've understood like they love them, right? I have a really high open rate on my email list, it's a very engaged list. But then on social media, I don't get the shares, right? I'm like, "Hmm, what is that?"

I get that people don't want to say, "Hey, I've got body image issues and Ali helped me figure out why I eat a bag of chips a night." I get that but I was just like curious and the psychology of social media is that we share stuff that reaffirms how we want to think about ourselves. We share studies of, "See my wine habit, I knew I was on to something," right? That makes so much sense now, it's not fun to share a study to be like, "Shit, I've got a problem."

[0:41:12.1] JB: We're sharing things that are better, happy, funny. People aren't sharing things that are super deep and introspective, that's too, social media, that's too heavy for social media. Granted, there are things that social media that are heavy but I think like you were saying, people don't want to display that aspect of their lives, they wanted to display just the idea that everything they're doing is hunky-dory. Like, "Everything's fine."

[0:41:39.9] AS: Even stuff that they don't do like I see people sharing all this green smoothies right? I'm like, "OH my god, yeah, my god, you want to be part of that because what you think it says that you're in the green smoothie world. There's an identity, it's a little bit.

[0:41:56.9] JB: It's all being about acceptance right? Feeling like people like people are accepting you. By posting about my wine habit is so great, see, look at this article or look I'm

drinking a green smoothie, aren't I amazing? It's all about people accepting you and clicking the like button or now you have the heart button.

[0:42:15.3] AS: Right but I think on a little bit of a deeper level, it says hey, I'm someone who is healthy. I'm someone who cares about this, especially as green smoothies have become some sort of moral stand. I eat my vegetables but wine, this gets back to Kate's earlier point like you're almost docked if a wine isn't in your food and jolly piece. The woman said that she had this like incredibly scenic vacation, it was like breath taking and people were like, "Where is the wine?" They were asking her and she was like, my god right, that's such an interesting point about studies.

[0:42:48.0] JB: I think where is the wine is like, "Where is the permission for you to let lose and enjoy life."

[0:42:52.3] AS: Yeah.

[0:42:53.4] JB: That's what alcohol is supposed to do, right? It's supposed to — it's supposed to be that magic button that just makes your life so much more enjoyable you know? The vacation in a cup.

[0:43:06.2] KB: I like that.

[0:43:08.2] AS: You wrote that down Kate? Juliet...

[0:43:10.8] JB: You know, I was thinking about this because somebody recently I was out and one of my coworkers showed me that a little bit of pineapple juice and rum and I tasted it I said, this is like vacation in a cup because the pineapple in the rum, it's like the tropical flavor and it was really hot out and it just — we associate alcohol a lot of times I think with being off and turning off. And vacation, there's a lot more drinking on vacation usually, right?

[0:43:41.3] AS: I think it depends, one of my really good friends has started to travel a lot more for work and she texted me and she's like, "I cannot believe how much people drink on these work trips." She's like, "They started at lunch then they all went together to the bar," and she

went home and got her presentation ready and the next day like nailed it and everyone was like, “How did you do that?” She was like, “Because I wasn’t drinking from noon until 9 at night.”

[0:44:05.4] JB: My gosh, yeah. My boyfriend, he travels for work and he was telling me the same thing with his coworkers, how absolutely crazy they get like at these conferences. Party! These men in their 40’s and 50’s just like turning up just letting loose. These people who are highly respected in their field and he’s supposed to look up to them and he’s like telling me the stories of what they’re doing and where they’re going and I’m like, “Oh my gosh, this is insane.”

[0:44:34.6] KB: Sorry, I was going to say, that’s so interesting what you say about those “respected” people who are like letting this because they’re in a situation where it’s okay to do that and one of the things that a lot of people bring up to me is this idea of these normal drinkers and, “Why can’t I be a normal drinker?”

And I always say to people, “Well, why don’t you look at these normal drinkers when they’re going on holiday and catching an early morning flight and they’re in the bar at 7 AM because that’s okay because they’re on holiday, that’s okay so they go and do that. Or when they’re in the conference and they’re allowed to get absolutely wasted because they’re away from home and all bets are off.” I think a lot of people are a lot bigger drinkers than we give them credit for, it’s just that normally they have these kind of constraints on their life.

[0:45:24.3] JB: So what is “normal” drinking? Is there any such thing?

[0:45:26.9] KB: Well, increasingly, I don’t think there is. I think it’s kind of insane that we assume that we should be able to consume this mind altering, brain bending, toxic liquid poison and control it, and just ingest it normally. This is the stuff that goes into the petrol that we fuel our cars with, paint strippers, all kind of chemical stuff and yet we feel that we should be able to ingest it easily and not get addicted. Like it’s okay to be addicted to smoking and heroin and other drugs, but my god you’re weak if you drink and you get addicted to that. Like just think I don’t really know what normal...

[0:46:15.4] JB: But Kate, it’s just fermented fruit. I’m saying all the things that I think that listeners and, you know, I’m someone who drinks, currently I’m drinking maybe one to two,

maybe three max glasses of wine a week and not even every week, it could be every month that happens, it's never regular for me. So I want to come from the perspective of a lot of Ali, of our clients and what they might be thinking and I think that's something like, "But what about wine? Wine is natural, it comes from the earth and beer comes from grain."

[0:46:54.2] KB: I didn't know. But how natural is it. I suspect that most of your clients are obsessed with checking the labels on their food, they probably think twice before taking a pain killer or any kind of drug, they buy the best quality food that they can do and yet even when you buy organic wine, you're still buying something that doesn't have the ingredients on the label and it's not all natural. There are chemicals and colorants and another kind of stuff that go into wine. So it's not quite as pure as we think it is.

[0:47:31.3] AS: There was just a study that they tested California organic wines and Glyphosate which is the pesticide that is sprayed on GMO crops was found in all of them.

[0:47:41.1] JB: Wow.

[0:47:42.6] AS: I think also another way to think of this is we're talking, I'm thinking you know, I think they have similar root causes of why people struggle with them. I definitely think it's these similar, you need connection, you need to change your cage and men too, what we're talking about this men on this trips. Men are in their own cage as well. We've all got it, but I'm thinking about how you said you know, it's socially acceptable for them, for men and women, to blow off steam.

Think about it, if like, from a social perspective, it's even so much different than food. If you were to have four or five drinks at the bar right? No one's really keeping track but if you were to have four or five pieces of cake, people would be like — and no one would do that in public, right? It's like drinking is even more socially acceptable. I think people should, if they're, like Juliet is saying, if they're listening and thinking — like if you don't have a problem and you want it, if you're thinking, if you're clearly looking at this from a health perspective. Look, have it maybe one or two nights a week. Don't do it the same back to back so you can recalibrate your sleep.

But yes, drinking interferes with your sleep, it deregulates your blood sugar. That can be okay once in a while. I think where Kate is coming from is when does that become a problem and I think a lot of people, I loved your suggestion of go without it for 30 days and then see if really 90 days and that will be the ultimate test of is this a problem for me beyond, I'm looking for justification that it has all these health benefits and all that stuff when it's an actual problem.

[0:49:09.2] KB: Yeah, I have no doubt that there are lots of people out there who drink wine and enjoy wine and it just isn't a problem for them. I mean I look at my own mom as an example. Someone who is a very light drinker because she doesn't like the sensation of being drunk. That makes her really different from me.

[0:49:29.1] AS: I was just going to say, isn't that the point? Okay.

[0:49:31.2] KB: Yeah.

[0:49:31.8] JB: Well, I was just going to say, confession to everybody here, I have a major confession right now, I've never been drunk before.

[0:49:40.1] AS: Really?

[0:49:41.4] KB: Wow.

[0:49:42.4] JB: Because I don't like the feeling once I start to get that. I would say I've probably been like tipsy or, you know, buzzed, whatever you want to call it where I feel like my brain is being altered, as soon as that happens, I'm done. I'm not going, I'm not doing anymore and honestly, that's why one drink for me is all I really need too is too much. I just have no desire and that was what I was saying.

Referring back to when I was back in school and I would go into the bathroom and dump my drink out, that was why I had not desire. Part of that is you know, probably stems from never wanting to be too out of control and you know, a little survivor mentality here, trying to always keep myself kind of like in a safe box but yeah.

[0:50:25.8] KB: So those are kind of natural things you have that I think are always going to stop you from becoming too dependent on it, the fact that you don't like being drunk. I suspect you also have other coping mechanisms and other ways of dealing with your feelings.

[0:50:41.5] JB: Well I was just going to say, I dealt with my feelings through food for a long, long time.

[0:50:44.9] KB: I'm not saying that you...

[0:50:46.0] JB: That doesn't change your state. That doesn't alter your state but there's — so you find other ways to cope.

[0:50:52.5] KB: Yeah, oh my god, one of the things that I remember really clearly from when I first started drinking was a very overweight friend of mine kind of looked at me with these big sad eyes and said, "I'm so sorry that you're going through this and you've had to give up alcohol because you know, you're like an alcoholic." I just looked at her and thought, "Well hello, you've clearly got your own problems, your own issues with the way you cope with life."

So we've all got our own things, some people, yeah, they're not big drinkers but they maybe exercise too much or they have other addictions. Do you know what I mean? I just think alcohol is just one unhealthy coping mechanism and we need more healthy coping mechanisms in our lives.

[0:51:40.5] JB: Yeah, you have to just think about how things are impacting you and I've said this many times on the podcast, is this thing positive in your life or is this negatively impacting you? You have to ask yourself and be very true, really not sugar coat the answer, know what the real answer is and not make excuses for yourself.

[0:52:02.2] AS: Or look at it through beer goggles.

[0:52:03.2] JB: Why don't you ask that question when you're not having a few glasses of wine.

[0:52:07.8] AS: Kate, we talked about some of the myths, I love your about, “Oh it makes me braver, it makes me more fun,” all these kind of things, what are some of the payoff been and what sides of yourself have you discovered and what changes are you grateful for, for becoming sober?

[0:52:26.9] KB: that’s a really good question, and so many things. I think stopping drinking forced me to confront the life that I was trying to make work and it just wasn’t working but I was trying to squish it into something manageable and then drinking loads to cope with it. So I changed careers, I got a different job, I started my own business, I got a lot clearer about the friendships that I did and didn’t want.

I let go of some old relationships and some really simple stuff like I used to live in a tiny, inner city flat that I hated because it was so noisy and I don’t like cities. It wasn’t until I stopped drinking that I thought, “You know what? Maybe I should go live in the country side.” And little in sights like that which seemed so stupid but have made such a big difference to my wellbeing. So it’s kind of being everything really.

[0:53:25.9] AS: Now, you said that you had basically failed at or had an in rotation to realize you had an alcohol problem when you couldn’t finish dry January and were sober by that April. You didn’t make all those realizations and changes and that...

[0:53:39.2] KB: No, no. I think a lot of that stuff had been happening for a good year, two years, maybe more? But I think that dry January experience was people often talk about my rock bottom. I was always concerned that I didn’t have a low enough bottom but that was kind of a bad time, by the end of January I was in a really bad place.

[0:54:03.5] JB: That was the turning point for you?

[0:54:05.4] KB: Definitely. Although probably on the outside it didn’t look like that because I carried on drinking loads and loads until April and then I remember one day, I was just Googling for probably something like, “Am I an alcoholic?” Which I’d like googled 10,000 times and then on this one day, I stumbled across a blog and it was written by someone who sounded just like me and it really stopped me in my tracks and I realize that not only had we actually been

drinking more or less the same and she sounded like me but she'd stopped drinking and she seemed to be having the time of her life like things seemed so much better.

So that's where it all started for me and I began writing a blog myself just because I like writing and I thought it would be a good idea to kind of make sense of my thoughts. But what I didn't realize when I started that blog was I was actually putting myself out there, in a weird way asking for some help because I got that in the form of readers and at the bloggers and that was one of the things that I'd never done before. I never asked for help, never really tried to reach out to other people and get that kind of group support so.

[00:55:17.1] AS: Do you think that was part of then the invisible path to staying sober was that connection? You said you never asked for help before.

[00:55:26.4] KB: Yeah. Because my previous attempts at connection going to AA meetings where I'd be made to feel like I wasn't really bad enough and connecting with health professionals and doctors and that kind of thing. All of those attempts have failed. But yeah, online in this kind of anonymous way I found real, genuine, wholehearted support from people who didn't know me at all and that was so transformative so I got that support and I also got some help and advice.

People said, "Oh my God, you need to read this book." Or, "You need to read this book and skip to chapter 10 because there's something amazing in there that you need to read." Or, "Try this blog or do this or do that." And prior to all of that, I just been stuck in my own head with all my old assumptions about being an alcoholic and what that meant and how my social life is going to die and how I'd never find a boyfriend if I didn't drink, all that kind of stuff.

[00:56:27.9] AS: Then did you just, because we want to wrap up here and I am thinking that the general theme here is you said, "Try to go sober for a month or 90 days and if that's a challenge then maybe you've got a problem." And then I am thinking, "You've got to examine the myths that you are telling yourself that are keeping you, and I'm going to say the cage. Because you even changed your location and it's like perfect for the metaphor.

And then test out, understand what the myths are that you are telling yourself and then see if they're really true. Did you find that a lot of what you thought was some of it true, was some of it not? I mean how is it dating and without drinking and I am curious of the, not that they are steps but the progression?

[00:57:08.9] KB: Yeah, definitely. I think dating is one of the hardest things.

[00:57:12.9] AS: Sober or not.

[00:57:14.4] JB: Will you date a drinker? Or for you, do you need to be someone who does not drink?

[00:57:20.6] KB: No, I don't mind if someone drinks. I think it would be hard for us to truly get along if they were a massive drinkers. If that was like a hobby of theirs. But yeah someone else who wants a drink or two I'm perfectly fine with. So I can't remember what the question is now.

[00:57:35.7] AS: Oh yeah, the question was because one of the things that I do with my clients is I just love this metaphor of the cage, it's to help them change the internal cage that they've put themselves in. I mean you need to acknowledge how society has made you crazy. There's huge healing in that but then you get to choose if you want to buy into that but the challenge is, sometimes our beliefs are true.

I think when you're meeting someone in a bar, if that's where you think you're going to meet someone. It probably given the context is easier at first to meet someone especially if you feel like you're not good at dating or to your point, everyone hates dating. So it takes a while until you've build up that muscle of, "Okay I'm sober and I can do this and I can handle the awkwardness." And then some dates go badly and was it because I wasn't drinking, was it because this person is drinking?

So I'm just curious about once you uncover the myths, I do testing with people. That's what I do, we're going to go out and test this to make sure that we're measuring the right stuff as we create these new beliefs but I'm curious of what you've found.

[00:58:35.0] KB: So I think one of the things that I've found is that if you go out for example and order an orange juice, so something that is very clearly a soft drink that really affects the night you have. I think it affects how self-conscious you feel and how other people react to you. You're definitely more inclined to get a kind of, "Oh you're not drinking then?" Which is a kind of, "Oh you're not like me then?" And, "Oh you're different".

Whereas my top tip for dating and all other social events is order tonic water or a sparkling water. If you put it in a nice glass with a slice of lime, it can pass for a gin and tonic really easily and you'll be amazed the difference in other people and then yourself when you're bought into this belief that you're just like everyone else. It is that acceptance of soberness.

[00:59:25.5] JB: Which is sad that we have to do that but that's the reality.

[00:59:30.5] AS: I think you do that until you get the confidence to be like, "It doesn't fucking matter." But those first, that's what I liked, those first couple of times often you can create that self-fulfilling prophecy because you're so nervous, because you're so awkward, because you're not used to it. And then you do something awkward because you're like, "Everyone thinks that I'm not drinking," and then it was like, "See I was right."

I love that tip of neutralizing the appearance that you are different and then see if you can still be who you would be and see how that goes. That's fantastic. Do you have any other nuggets like that before we wrap up?

[01:00:05.3] KB: I think the main thing I'd say is determine how your night is going to go before you go out, if that's a big thing for you. If you go out feeling good and believing that you are going to have a good night, your chances of having a good night are 10 times higher than if you arrive somewhere feeling awful about it and I know it's hard to draw on that self-confidence and make yourself better than you are.

But if you can just fake it for a bit, you might well find that you have a really good time. Act like you are the confident person that you wish you were and then before you know it, you're having a much better time than you ever thought you would and that in itself is such a confidence boost

to know that you went out, you had a great time, you totally nailed it out there and then like everyone else, you don't need to take a drug to do it.

[01:00:59.1] AS: Yeah and if you didn't have a good time, maybe it's the friends, maybe it's the bars aren't that fun.

[01:01:05.5] KB: Totally. That is something to be really clear on and everyone knows this when they think about it. We've all been to those terrible parties where it didn't matter how much you drank, you still didn't have a good time and that's because alcohol isn't this magic thing. It's just a factor in a night.

[01:01:23.8] JB: Yeah, I think for me scenery is so big. So bars, they're not scenic. There's nothing fun to me about a crowded, like a sports bar for example. I'm more of a wine bar with candlelight and it's a little calmer or going out or being outside. So if there is a bar that's outside and it's scenic, I can enjoy myself not drinking. Just being there versus I don't go to sport bars because they don't do anything for me. They just make me anxious and annoyed.

[01:01:55.2] KB: Yeah, me too. They're rubbish.

[01:01:58.8] AS: Well you know, as we're talking because I am thinking about like I don't really go to bars or anything because I just don't think they're fun. But do you think people worry, is it a myth that I am going to be boring? I know to the outside world, my life might look a little boring. Because Carlos and I laugh whenever we plan like we're going on a vacation and I'm like, "Will we end up reading and talking about what we're reading no matter where we are?"

[01:02:19.0] JB: But are you bored? You're not bored.

[01:02:20.6] AS: No but that's what I'm saying, I think people also have to realize that I think as you get healthier and as you heal a lot of the insecurities, you prefer simplicity and I think that's something that is really important as people start to, "Well am I going to have fun if I'm not drinking? What's going to be fun?" And different things become fun. They may look like to you right now that they're going to be boring or it's too simple but I find simplicity to be very elegant

and I love it. But I think that's an important kind of ease. As you probably uncover these myths and discover yourself sober, the things you want to do might change and be open to that.

[01:02:59.8] KB: Yeah, the things you want to do might change but you might also discover that the things you were doing were actually really boring. I mean we think that, "Oh it's so exciting and glamorous and crazy, these nights out." Where actually, what are we doing? We're with the same people but we're just telling bad jokes and we just think they're really funny. I just think we look at these things through beer goggles and we can make quite dull nights into quite amazing nights, do you know what I mean? When they really aren't.

[1:03:34.2] JB: I was just thinking for me that one of the reasons that I'd like to go out is just so that I can put on a costume because my normal outfit is, you know, I'm in fitness so it was just spandex, sneakers, a sports bra. So to put a real bra on, some high heels, that is really fun like playing dress up for me. So that's part of it.

[1:04:00.2] AS: It's funny you just say that because part of this vacation that we're doing, the last few days we're going to just come back to Pittsburgh and go to the fancy restaurants that we've heard about. Carlos is like, "You really want to go to a fancy restaurant?" I was like, "I need an excuse to shower and put on makeup."

[1:04:13.5] JB: it feels nice like that.

[1:04:15.7] AS: Yeah.

[1:04:16.0] KB: Yeah.

[1:04:18.7] JB: You don't need to drink. You don't need to dress up to go out to drink.

[1:04:21.1] AS: Right. I think that brings up, and god, we've got to wrap this up. Because I mean, it's been great but we're definitely like an hour and eight minutes. I think it brings up this question, "What do you want out of the night?" I don't know if people, they often you know, my favorite Swedish saying and I've shared it here on the podcast before is "only dead fish go with the flow". It's like, I think sometimes it's like that's what's everyone's doing or that's what the

invitation is rather than saying, “Hey, can we switch the venue? I don’t know, go to this or what if we just take this back to someone’s house and get take out and do muck tails or something. What you’re really looking for is the connection and the unwinding and that can happen through a great conversation.

[1:05:03.2] KB: Yeah, exactly, that’s sort of the heart of it, isn’t it? We want to spend time with people we like, have good friendships, laugh and feel good and we can, I don’t want to sound too preachy, but you can do that without alcohol. If you’re with the right people, if you’re with proper friends. For sure.

[1:05:22.4] AS: Yeah, and I can get those good friends to set you up with people so you’re not in the bar, so it’s not as awkward, right?

[1:05:29.1] JB: So Kate, where can people find you if they — I think a lot of people they’d be interested in the Sober School and maybe taking the course. How can people get in touch with you?

[1:05:37.8] KB: Yeah, the best place is come on over to my website which is the soberschool.com and I’ve got a three little guide on there if you need some help with kind of getting through that 5 o’clock to 7 o’clock part of the evening, wine o’clock and have a look at that. I got loads of kind of blogs and tips and advice.

[1:06:00.0] JB: Are you on social media as well?

[1:06:02.3] KB: Yup, I’m just @thesoberschool on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

[1:06:09.9] JB: Fantastic.

[1:06:10.5] AS: Just to plug for people to go get that freebie that Kate has, that transition time for people from five to seven is so difficult with food and alcohol and it’s because you’re worn out and then you know you have all this stuff to do in the evening or you know you’re going to be by yourself in the evening. I really think that is a really big time if you can — it’s a window into a lot of myths and beliefs too. So definitely grab that freebie for sure.

Thank you so much Kate for joining us, this has been so interesting and I've got to tell you, I just think I have this whole new awareness that in some ways alcohol is harder than food.

[1:06:49.3] KB: I don't know, I guess you always have to eat, don't you? I don't know. Thank you so much for having me. I love talking about this stuff. I think it's really interesting and we need to talk about it more. So it's been great being here.

[1:07:00.8] AS: Wonderful.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

[1:07:02.2] JB: Thank you so much for listening to the Insatiable Podcast. We hope you enjoyed today's episode. You can connect with us on social media. Follow me on Twitter and Instagram @julietunite and Ali @alimshapiro, M stand for Marie. Please feel free to also e-mail us any questions. We would love to hear from all of our listeners. You can reach us on ali@alishapiro.com and juliet@unitefitness.com.

We'll see you next time.

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