

**SOBRIETY ROCKS!**

**TOP TIPS  
FOR A  
SUCCESSFUL  
DRY  
JANUARY**

A collection of pivotal moments and inspiration from Sober Coaches

**JANEY LEE GRACE  
AND THE SOBER COACHES**



## **Sobriety Rocks! Top Tips for a Successful Dry January**

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#### **Foreword**

So you've decided to give Dry January a go? Maybe you have quit the booze, or cut down, some time ago, and want to keep the momentum or maybe you've been caning it, and know it's time to make a change, and Dry January is as good a time as any to start.

What makes a Successful Dry January? In my opinion, success is when it continues long after the month has ended, hopefully forever! Now that may feel like a bridge too far, and I don't recommend making a 'forever' commitment, it's too much too soon. But I recommend setting yourself the challenge of a minimum of 31 days...and being open to the possibility of continuing.

So that would make it 'successful' ie tick the 'no alcohol' box, but for those of us who have left the poison behind, we now realise that counting the days, and 'completing' your days, only to be looking forward to when the dry spell ends and you can drink again – isn't a success. That feels like deprivation, and as humans, we don't like to feel we are missing out!

You will notice that I asked each Sober Coach for their top tip for a 'Triumphant' Dry January, yes literally joyful. That's how we'd like you to feel at the end of this month as you start to recognise that life is SO much better without alcohol!

Let's not run before we can walk though!

You've grabbed this short ebook, I hope because you want some inspiration, some encouragement, and tips for making it stick. There is no better way than hearing it from people who have been there, done it, and got the T-shirt.

In this book we share, personal stories from Sober Coaches about their struggles with alcohol and the pivotal moments that led to their decision to embrace sobriety.

There are some insights and hindsight reflections on the things they wish they had known before starting their sober journey. They are honest about how tough it may have been in the first month, and long it took till the benefits kicked in, and importantly they offer some suggestions to help you navigate Dry January successfully which may empower you to consider the long-term benefits of sobriety for yourself.

The 'tips' are actionable, they are simple strategies that you can put in place, and we also share ideas for creating a Sober 'toolkit' to further ensure success.

## Want 1-1 Support?

Each of the Sober Club Accredited coaches in this collection has trained as part of our Sober 360 Coach training, accredited by IPHM and IGHT. We follow the Sober Code code of conduct, and each coach brings their unique experience and expertise. You can contact coaches directly via this directory. [www.thesoberclub.com/find-a-sober-coach](http://www.thesoberclub.com/find-a-sober-coach)

**Important Note:** All of the Accredited Sober Coaches were 'Grey area drinkers', a term coined by Jolene Park, to describe the 'spectrum' of drinking, which spans from rock bottom up to abstinence. These tips and suggestions are solely for 'Grey Area Drinkers', those who are functioning well, but drinking more than they want to. It's not, however, aimed at those who may be clinically dependent. If that's you, please seek medical support from your GP, and contact [www.alcoholchange.org.uk](http://www.alcoholchange.org.uk)

## Introduction

Welcome to the empowering journey towards a happy, healthy, and sober life with the Sober Club Coaches. In this transformative collection, we're thrilled to share insights, wisdom, and genuine experiences from our diverse team of coaches who have embraced and thrived in the world of sobriety.

The Sober Club is a community of people who believe in a holistic approach to wellness, recognizing that true health goes beyond abstaining from alcohol. It is the 'Sober 360' holistic approach, that brings a wealth of knowledge and personal journeys to guide you through the profound shift towards embracing sobriety not as a loss, but as a vibrant gain in every aspect of life.

Throughout this book, you can dip into the heartfelt narratives of our coaches, each recounting their unique turning points and pivotal moments that led them to the fulfilling path of sobriety. They'll candidly share what they wish they had known during their early days of transition, offering relatable insights that will resonate with anyone contemplating a similar journey.

What sets the Sober Club Coaches apart is their commitment to well-being through sobriety. It's not just about saying no to alcohol; it's about saying yes to a life filled with joy, vitality, and purpose.

You too can experience some of the incredible benefits they have unlocked – physically, mentally, and emotionally – as they shifted their focus from what was left behind to the boundless possibilities that lay ahead.

Whether you're determined to embark on 'just' a sober January or know it's time to commit to being alcohol free, you can benefit from these top tips for success, offering practical guidance inspiration and encouragement

Before we get started, why SHOULD you do Dry January?

## **Why Rethink Alcohol?**

Imagine if alcohol, with its well-established societal presence, emerged today—it might not get the green light for legalization. The Global Commission on Drug Policy didn't mince words, ranking alcohol alongside class-A drugs. Yet, when you factor in the harm to others, crime, family breakdowns, economic impact, and the strain on the health service, alcohol rises to claim the throne as the most harmful drug.

Liver disease is surging, affecting 29,000 individuals, while alcohol's rap sheet includes links to 200 illnesses and 7 cancers. The NHS bears the brunt, tallying a £3.5 billion expense. Now, you might be thinking, "*That's not me—I'm not that bad!*" But consider this: A Lifesearch study revealed that 24 million Britons admit to 'self-medicating' with alcohol and drugs for anxiety. The irony? Alcohol, a depressant, doesn't *cause* anxiety, but it certainly amplifies it.

Thankfully, the tide is turning. We're witnessing the dawn of a new era, where we are calling time on alcohol. The sober curious are on the rise, millennials are choosing moderation, and mindful drinking is gaining ground. The market is flooded with alcohol-free and low-alcohol options from major players to artisan producers, reflecting a shift in lifestyle choices.

Choosing to be alcohol-free unlocks a treasure trove of benefits: improved sleep, regulated weight, enhanced digestion, better sex, surprising boosts like improved eyesight and cognitive function, sober hair (who knew!), and a significant anxiety reduction. Many find increased happiness and a renewed sense of purpose - ready to tackle challenges, embark on adventures, or pursue long-dreamt-of projects. Truth be told, alcohol robs you of joy, and quitting makes you brave.

The question ahead of Dry January isn't 'Am I drinking too much?' Rather, ask yourself: 'Would my life be better, physically and emotionally, without alcohol?' It's a question we often ponder privately. My answer was a resounding 'Hell Yes,' even if I wasn't initially thrilled about it.

If you decide to quit the booze, rest assured you're in good company. A quick search for 'sober celebrities' might offer some unexpected inspiration (maybe that's their secret to looking fantastic!).

Remember: The opposite of Addiction is Connection. There are myriad ways to cut down or quit—find the support that suits you, whether it's through AA, Smart Recovery, online resources like The Sober Club, or connecting with like-minded

individuals at sober meet-ups, morning raves, and sober dating clubs. Dry bars and clubs are sprouting up in cities, and a wealth of 'Quit lit' books, podcasts, and social media communities await your exploration.

Challenge yourself to reassess your relationship with alcohol. Embrace a sober curious mindset. Discover your sober tools and bid farewell to booze for a month—stretch it to 90 days for even more significant benefits (the first 30 days are the toughest, but the rewards compound with time). Establish new healthy habits, carve out fresh neural pathways, and accept that there may be some challenges, but you can be ready for cravings and unwanted thoughts —ignore the wine witch beckoning you back to the bottle!

If I can do this, you can too. If you'd told me in early 2018 that I'd actually start to like myself, that I'd be full of energy, no longer glum about getting older, inspiring others to quit booze, and never desiring a glass of wine – I just wouldn't have believed you. I genuinely would not go back to drinking for all the money in the world. I'm rich! (in the currency of health happiness and authenticity.)

All of the coaches I have trained asked themselves that question, and all of them categorically believe that Yes, their life is SO much better physically and emotionally without alcohol. Yours can be too. Here's to a successful and yes – triumphant Dry January (and beyond.)

## **Sober Self-Care Toolkit: A Holistic Approach to Well-Being**

It is all about the preparation. Make this period easier for yourself by gathering the elements of a sober toolkit. These are just suggestions; discover what the best resources are for you.

### **Some components to consider:**

#### **Physical**

Great Alcohol-Free Drinks (Keep the ritual, change the ingredients) Healthy Snacks

A new notebook and pen (yes journaling is super helpful) Some form of physical activity (walking in nature is great)

A jar or vase to put the case in, that you would have spent on alcohol (v powerful visual representation)

#### **Inspiration / Motivation**

You need something to keep you inspired, podcasts, great music, movies, Quit lit books. An App to count the days and remind you how far you've come.

## **Spiritual / Mindset**

It's good to focus on the inner world, so try meditation, mindfulness, and stillness.

## **Connection**

Being connected with like-minded people is key; it adds another layer of accountability and support. Join us in The Sober Club; we become cheerleaders for each other.

## **TRY...**

**Podcast Power:** Tune into inspiring and motivational sober podcasts such as Alcohol-Free Life from The Sober Club for daily doses of inspiration from experts and sober heroes.

**Nutrient Nourishment:** Stock up on delicious and healthy snacks to satisfy cravings without compromising well-being. (Pop dates in the freezer, they taste like chocs!)

**Refreshing AF Drinks:** Discover a variety of alcohol-free drinks to keep your taste buds intrigued and your spirit uplifted. It doesn't have to be a 'replacement' drink, if you prefer try Kombucha or artisan tonics.

**Spiritual Connection:** Incorporate spiritual practices, meditation, mindfulness, guide hypnosis, or gratitude exercises, to nurture your inner self.

**Social Support:** Cultivate connections within the sober community or enlist the support of friends and family who understand your journey. Group connection is very powerful.

**Creative Expression:** Find a creative outlet, be it journaling, art, or music, to express your emotions and foster personal growth. You may find you have time to pursue a hobby you used to enjoy.

**Physical Well-Being:** Prioritize regular exercise and activities that bring joy to your body, supporting overall health. Walking is great, as is Yoga, Running, whatever works for you.

**Educational Empowerment:** Read Quit lit books, and articles, or attend workshops that empower you with knowledge about sobriety and holistic well-being.

**Positive Affirmations:** Create a list of affirmations to reinforce a positive mindset and combat moments of doubt or challenge. Write them on your phone, or keep them near your computer

**Gratitude Journal:** Daily reflections on gratitude can shift focus from what's lacking to appreciating the richness of life. Write down 5 'blessings' every day that come from being alcohol-free.

**Nature Connection:** Spend time outdoors to refresh your mind, breathe in fresh air, and connect with the healing power of nature. Sitting or standing with your back to a tree is very healing!

**Self-Reflection Space:** Designate a quiet space for self-reflection, where you can unwind, meditate, or simply be with your thoughts.

**Holistic Health Practices:** Explore alternative practices like yoga, acupuncture, or aromatherapy to enhance your holistic well-being.

**Goal Setting:** Set realistic and rewarding goals, both short-term and long-term, to create a sense of purpose and accomplishment.

**Laughter Therapy:** Incorporate humour into your routine, whether it's through comedy shows, funny movies, or laughter yoga.

**Digital Detox:** Schedule time away from screens to reduce digital overwhelm and create mental space for self-care.

**Quality Sleep:** Prioritize a consistent and restful sleep routine to recharge your body and mind, be aware that sleep isn't always great in the first few weeks!

**Expressing Emotions:** Develop healthy ways to express and manage emotions, aspiring for a balanced emotional well-being. Allow yourself to 'feel all the feels', and accept that you may be a bit of a rollercoaster.

**Mindful Moments:** Integrate mindfulness into your daily routine, savoring each moment and fostering a sense of presence. One benefit that comes with sobriety is being able to notice the beauty in ordinary experiences!

### **Insights and Tips from our Sober Coaches**

It's been amazing working with my 'Dream Team' of coaches, and to hear their unique transformational stories. We have all been where you might be now! Feeling unsure, nervous, not exactly looking forward to a month without the booze....but how things change!

I invited them to share some insights and a tip to help you make Dry January successful. I'll start...

## **Janey Lee Grace**

### **Share your unique story and turning point...**

I was queen of holistic living and cared deeply about my health and wellbeing, but it wasn't till the end of 2017 that I finally acknowledged the elephant in the room that was alcohol. I didn't know anyone else who was unhappy with their drinking; I thought I was the only one waking at 3 am berating myself. I knew it was time after reading a Quit Lit book by Clare Pooley, It was a relief to find someone just like me who was not at rock bottom, but definitely not ok. I stopped for Dry January, and never looked back! I have so much energy now to follow my passion and inspire others!

### **What benefits, however small did you notice in the first month - How has your life changed?**

I started to notice tiny changes even in the first month, sadly I didn't drop two stone or gain lots of energy straight away, but I did start to feel less anxious and as time went on, I got a sense of excitement about the future. It felt like the missing piece of the holistic jigsaw. My life has changed beyond measure. My only regret is not doing this sooner. If only someone had told me how freaking fantastic life without the booze really is!

### **Share one tip/piece of advice for a triumphant Dry Jan**

Get connected with like-minded people, I made the mistake of keeping it a secret in the early days, but once I was 'out' I realised there are so many people who feel the same. Find a group who will be your cheerleaders.

### **Janey Lee Grace is a coach, therapist author of Happy Healthy Sober, trains Sober 360 coaches, and runs The Sober Club**

You can contact coaches directly via the Find a Sober Coach directory.  
[www.thesoberclub.com/find-a-sober-coach](http://www.thesoberclub.com/find-a-sober-coach)

To find out more about Sober 360 Coach Training contact Janey directly.



## **Debs Davison**

### **Share your unique story and turning point...**

I am a wellness coach at a health retreat and had all my 'healthy habit' ducks in a row apart from one big thing – I was drinking wine every night. I'd be delivering health and well-being sessions, thinking "I can't wait to get home and open the wine". I had a great career but I felt like a complete fraud. I was anxious, moody (when I wasn't drinking) and just feeling stuck. There was no obvious rock bottom but many, small signs that things had to change. So, I embarked on dry January in 2021 and started to focus on what I might gain and not what I thought I was giving up.

### **What benefits, however small did you notice in the first month - How has your life changed?**

My energy soared in the first couple of weeks. I remember feeling just so happy – finally authentic. I was so proud of myself. My eyes and skin looked brighter, and I lost my bloated face. I felt as if I was finally living in the moment and I wasn't waiting anymore – waiting for 5 pm, or the waitress to take my wine order, or the bar to open, or holiday time where I could drink as much as I liked. I feel free.

### **Share one tip/piece of advice for a triumphant Dry Jan**

Spend time daily to keep inspired. Read quit lit, follow like-minded people, listen to podcasts with positive sobriety stories. Shift your mindset from FOMO to JOMO and extend Dry January to a 100-day challenge.

**Debs Davison is a Sober Club Accredited coach, hypnotherapist at a health retreat. [www.thesoberclub.com/find-a-sober-coach](http://www.thesoberclub.com/find-a-sober-coach)**

## **Anna Sudbury**

### **Share your unique story and turning point...**

I'd always be first to open a bottle of wine and last to leave the dancefloor. But in 2019, aged 39, juggling a hectic media job and raising two young boys with my husband, I realised I was using wine to relax when the boys were in bed, or necking a G & T to switch off. I was sick and tired of feeling sick and tired. After a particularly boozy bank holiday weekend facing the impending doom of the workweek and the guaranteed hangovers from schmoozing clients, I decided it was time for a break. I made a bold promise to myself: a booze-free week. Surprisingly, that stretched into a month, and before I knew it, I hit the milestone of 100 days without a drop. And I've never looked back.

### **What benefits, however small did you notice in the first month - How has your life changed?**

The first month was hard. Staying attuned to the benefits, no matter how small, was what got me through. I slept well for the first time in years - I felt rested and full of energy. My skin seemed brighter and I lost the grey bags under my eyes.

The game changer? My parenting transformed - I embraced baking cupcakes, constructing Lego skyscrapers, building epic forts, and having pillow fights. My default response shifted from "Not now, darling" to a resounding "Yes!" The extra attention I showered on my kids didn't just light them up from the inside; it improved their behaviour and filled my heart. No regrets, just fun, joy, and shared moments.

### **Share one tip /piece of advice for a triumphant Dry Jan**

Notice the positives. Quitting in January is like picking the most challenging level in a video game. It's cold, it's dark, and everyone is broke. But if you stay curious, you'll notice the huge benefits. The financial savings on the weekly shop, no more anxiety, less snapping at the kids, less snacking on greasy carbs, and actually turning up for the yoga class you booked. Watch a movie with the kids, go for dinner at a mate's house, or try a new restaurant in town. Embrace the sober adventure!

**Anna Sudbury is a Sober Club Accredited Coach.**

[www.thesoberclub.com/find-a-sober-coach](http://www.thesoberclub.com/find-a-sober-coach)

## **Tony Worsdall**

### **Share your unique story and turning point**

Having spent my entire adult life with alcohol as a close companion, I finally broke free in January 2020. My 40+ years working in public sector management had always been accompanied by alcohol as a stress reliever and 'social glue' when my teams needed to let off steam. Planning for my retirement at 65 I could see that with more time I was only going to end up in the wrong place. The impending lockdown provided a much-needed 'push' to do something.

Having had over 100 days alcohol-free in 2019, and some similar periods of sobriety over the previous 2 years I had my last alcoholic drink on 6<sup>th</sup> January 2020. I was so glad I took this decision as COVID approached, as many of my colleagues took the other path and increased their consumption.

### **What benefits, however small did you notice in the first month - How has your life changed?**

In the first month, I noticed that my anxiety was diminishing significantly. I didn't have to battle with the morning 'fuzz' as I focussed on the day's events, and by the end of the month, I began to regain some of the life energy that I had noticed slipping away. Now, nearly 4 years in, I have still not retired, as I have so many more things I want to do that I missed out on because I drank nearly every day of my adult life.

### **Share one tip/piece of advice for a triumphant Dry Jan**

Read and listen to as much as you can about the subject, both the personal journeys of others who have trodden the path and the science behind this drug. Find your tribe, like-minded people are important to maintain your resolve, and tell someone, be accountable with someone you trust.

**Tony Worsdall is a Sober Club Accredited Coach, and founder member of The Sober Guys. [www.thesoberclub.com/find-a-sober-coach](http://www.thesoberclub.com/find-a-sober-coach)**

## **Lucy Hall**

### **Share your unique story and turning point**

I reclaimed my headspace, time, and energy from alcohol on New Year's Day 2020, having known deep down for a long time that drinking daily after my children were in bed was dulling my shine. Two years of attempting moderation left me feeling guilty and ashamed that I could not keep my drinking under control. I went online to research whether I might count as clinically dependent, and discovered that there was a whole sober revolution going on! I read some quit-lit and all was revealed – moderation was never going to work because it works against our brain chemistry. I decided to make a clean break and my life has been transformed ever since.

### **What benefits, however small did you notice in the first month - How has your life changed?**

I noticed some benefits almost immediately. I had a clear head, the whites of my eyes were brighter, and I had much more energy thanks to better sleep. I started to notice that my shuffly jogging now brought me much more joy and felt way more fun, but that I was also getting faster over 5km. When I got injured from overdoing the running in my newfound enthusiasm for exercise, instead of enjoying some “legitimate” sofa-slobbering, I took up cycling and swimming and now participate in triathlons and have found a whole new social life at my triathlon club.

### **Share one tip/piece of advice for a triumphant Dry Jan**

Focus on your mental and physical well-being during January. Make it a priority to get up and move for at least ten minutes every day – take a walk at lunchtime, or walk the kids home from school. In the evening, try a new gym class, do a resistance training or yoga video at home, or meet a friend for an evening walk.

**Lucy Hall is a Sober Club Accredited Coach. [www.thesoberclub.com/find-a-sober-coach](http://www.thesoberclub.com/find-a-sober-coach)**

## **Lindsay Hennekey**

### **Share your unique story and turning point**

I was a daily drinker. I held onto shame around my drinking, I hid how much I was drinking from my husband and tormented myself because of this habit that controlled my life.

I had an amazing career, beautiful friendships, and loving marriage. I told myself myself that since I worked out and made a decent living it was ok to drink. In truth, I wasn't making progress with my health goals, didn't bring my A-Game to work, and was distancing myself from friends and my husband.

I realized that I had stalled in life. In November 2018 I took my first serious leap towards an alcohol-free life, one month before my 40th birthday. On August 10th, 2020 I finally had my last day one.

### **What benefits, however small did you notice in the first month - How has your life changed?**

The first few weeks were rough. Poor sleep and always irritable. 1 month in, I began to flourish. I was popping out of bed ready for my workout. At 3 months, I KNEW this was the new life for me. I had confidence and I was proud to say I didn't drink. I wore it like a badge and it felt like an accomplishment.

### **Share one tip/piece of advice for a triumphant Dry Jan**

Get vulnerable. I laid it all out to my husband and felt relief because it opened the door for him to know how to support me. If you're single, go to that one person you spend the most time with or respect the most.

**Lindsay Hennekey is a Sober Club Accredited coach**

[www.thesoberclub.com/find-a-sober-coach](http://www.thesoberclub.com/find-a-sober-coach)

## **Paul Briley**

### **Share your unique story and turning point.**

I stopped drinking in 2021 after a long period of quiet and private exploration. By the time I made the declaration, I was ready. I knew that I decided to end my relationship with alcohol for good - no moderation. I told others and got a lot of support. For me, making the decision to just quit made this so much easier for me. If there is ever a question, the answer is always the same - "no" - and I can move on with my life again in seconds. As a coach, I help people get off their comma (get unstuck) and moving again in their lives. I knew that alcohol was a huge weight that was keeping me from becoming the person I wanted to be.

### **What benefits, however small did you notice in the first month - How has your life changed?**

I experienced the things that other people talk about - I lost weight, had more free time in the evenings, didn't have to "plan" around my drinking or recovering, and importantly, I felt as though I had put down a huge, heavy bag that I no longer had to carry. My persistent, low-level sadness and shame simply left me, because I knew I was no longer that person anymore. I feel more empowered to talk openly about my drinking BECAUSE it's in the past!

### **Share one tip/piece of advice for a triumphant Dry Jan**

Acknowledge the different voices in your head and don't resist them. Remember that your inner Wisdom is the voice that whispers to you about possibility and the things you want to do, have, and be. It gives you hope. The inner Critic is the voice that keeps you thinking and talking about alcohol. Learn to identify and recognize these voices. It will be challenging, but. Remind yourself every day that when you say something mean to yourself, that is the alcohol talking! Your inner Wisdom always knows what's best for you.

**Paul Briley is a Sober Club Accredited Coach and consultant.**

[www.thesoberclub.com/find-a-sober-coach](http://www.thesoberclub.com/find-a-sober-coach)

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## **Donna Espin-Smith**

### **Share your unique story and turning point.**

I became sober in July 2021 after a 9-month stint of abstinence, then a failed attempt to moderate. It was my 40<sup>th</sup> birthday around that time and I didn't want to do it till the birthday celebrations had ended, but my eldest son told me I was drinking too much again. I felt the stab in the heart and knew he was right. I wanted to be the best Mum for my children and also wanted to be a healthier, fitter person with complete control and freedom in her life. That was the moment it started and here I am 17 months alcohol-free.

### **What benefits, however small did you notice in the first month - How has your life changed?**

I found a sense of freedom and gained back a bit of control in the first few weeks. I was clearer-headed and woke up feeling fresher. I walked a lot and kept myself busy. My sleep got better 2 weeks down the line. I recall having dream vivid dreams where I was drinking alcohol then would wake up with so much gratitude that it wasn't real. I listened to so many podcasts talking about sobriety which I loved. The first month had its challenging days but overall I found it liberating and my mental health improved vastly.

I've since come off my anti-depressants, stopped smoking, and have got into fitness. I have changed my life completely around found true freedom and peace. I am the best Mum, or very close (!) for my kids as I'm now fully present and engaged.

### **Share one tip/piece of advice for a triumphant Dry Jan**

Don't put it off! It's never too late to decide to go alcohol-free. If it is affecting your life you're the only one that can change it. Be brave make that decision, get the support, find the right resources, and take action.

**Donna Espin-Smith is a Sober Club Accredited Coach, and beauty business owner. [www.thesoberclub.com/find-a-sober-coach](http://www.thesoberclub.com/find-a-sober-coach)**

## **Vicky Larter**

### **Share your unique story and turning point.**

I always loved a few glasses of wine and more...Every year I told myself that if I could do Dry January then I didn't have a problem, but come 1<sup>st</sup> February I always had that glass of wine. In August 2019 I went on an All-Inclusive holiday and as I could drink as much as I wanted, I did. Returning home, I knew I needed to stop. I only told my husband, and the first few months were very hard. I had lots of 50<sup>th</sup> birthday parties to go to and the first half hour I was so anxious, especially at my best friend's surprise party, waiting for her to arrive was almost impossible without a drink - but I did it and danced all night and then drove home. I surprised myself that I was the same person without the booze, I honestly didn't think I would be!

### **What benefits, however small did you notice in the first month - How has your life changed?**

The benefits weren't immediate, my sleep took a few weeks to sort itself out and my appetite was all over the place. The first thing I noticed was that the whites of my eyes became brighter and although I didn't lose weight, I did lose some 'puffiness'. The benefits of not drinking keep on giving. Over 4 years on and my kids still tell me how much of a better Mum I am, so much more patient, always present, and a fantastic late-night taxi service! My only regret is that I didn't do it sooner.

### **Share one tip/piece of advice for a triumphant Dry Jan**

Take time for yourself, have a lovely bath with essential oils (you could play your favourite music or watch an episode of your current box set) it's the perfect way to provide a pause at the end of a busy day. It will give you time to think and leave you feeling calmer and relaxed.

**Vicky Larter is a Sober Club Accredited Coach [www.thesoberclub.com/find-a-sober-coach](http://www.thesoberclub.com/find-a-sober-coach)**



## **Christine Coulson**

### **Share your unique story and turning point.**

As the world re-opened after the pandemic, I found my drinking habits didn't really change back to socialising. I still tended to drink at home, alone. A glass of wine while I cooked myself dinner; and the rest of the bottle while I watched TV. It was private, it was unnoticed. I knew this was unhealthy, and if I was being honest, it felt it. Physically I was feeling bloated and lethargic, mentally I was anxious and feeling low. In December 2021 I decided that enough was enough. I took a hard look at my relationship with alcohol and after some soul-searching, decided to cut it out of my life for good. I set the date to quit – 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2022 – the day my life changed forever.

### **What benefits, however small did you notice in the first month - How has your life changed?**

I noticed the change in my skin and my eyes. My eyes gained a 'sparkle', and my skin was less blotchy, even after a month. After an initial dip, my sleep soon improved. My bank balance was healthier and I felt more energetic.

### **Share one tip/piece of advice for a triumphant Dry Jan**

Prepare! If, like me, you live alone, you only have yourself to consider when you stop drinking – so you need to be honest with yourself! Decide what you're going to drink instead – and stock up. If supermarkets draw you in with their aisles of temptation; get your groceries delivered. In the absence of someone to help stop you from reaching for that drink – plan your distractions to break that habit. Don't underestimate the power of a jigsaw, some knitting, or a long soak in the bath when it comes to keeping your hands busy and your brain entertained!

**Christine Coulson is a Sober Club Accredited Coach and wellbeing life coach** [www.thesoberclub.com/find-a-sober-coach](http://www.thesoberclub.com/find-a-sober-coach)

## **Clare Skelland**

### **Share your unique story and turning point.**

My sobriety journey started in October 2022. A self-proclaimed 'party girl' since my late teens, I simply didn't know how to socialise and have fun without alcohol.

A late 40's menopausal woman, I was trying to drink the same way I always had, but it wasn't working. Hangovers from hell, shame, self-loathing, and a desperate need to change my lifestyle and look after myself were all thoughts I was overwhelmed by. My turning point was seeing a best friend deciding to quit after a drunken mishap which resulted in a black eye and bucketloads of remorse and shame. I closely watched her journey with intrigue and envy, after all, we were very similar in our drinking habits. I soon decided that if she could do it so could I. All you need is that one person to show you that a booze-free life is possible.

### **What benefits, however small did you notice in the first month - How has your life changed?**

The first few weeks and months were hard but the sense of relief and clarity I felt outweighed the challenges. Sobriety was giving me back the control that the menopause was taking away. I was finally off the conveyor belt and free of the constant alcohol dialogue, it was and still is what I can only describe as 'freedom'.

### **Share one tip/piece of advice for a triumphant Dry Jan**

Make yourself priority number 1. You are going against societal norms and people may well try to stand in your way. Make sure you prioritise yourself and focus on what is right for you!

**Clare Skelland is a Sober Club Accredited Coach and Menopause Champion** [www.thesoberclub.com/find-a-sober-coach](http://www.thesoberclub.com/find-a-sober-coach)

## **Janet Hadley**

### **Share your unique story and turning point.**

As a woman entering the workforce in the 1990's, I believed that I could 'have it all'. Equal pay meant equal drinking rights, and the work-hard play-hard mentality of the corporate world suited me perfectly. I do not doubt that my ability to drink grown men under the table gave me a shunt up the corporate ladder. Fast forward 30 years to the day when my husband had a life-changing diagnosis. My happy-go-lucky drinking morphed into a much darker compulsion for obliteration. I drank to forget. My wakeup call? "Mummy, I wish you would be a better role model for us." I knew I had to make lasting changes if I was to have any chance of being the parent my daughters deserved.

### **What benefits, however small did you notice in the first month - How has your life changed?**

My first month without alcohol was tough, cravings hit me hard every wine o'clock! Before long, I started to appreciate the feeling of waking up feeling fresh. Within a couple of weeks, I became an early riser, bouncing out of bed and looking at the sky in wonderment. It's difficult to describe the joy I found in these moments. I'd have laughed in your face if you'd told me I'd become a morning person, but here I am almost 4 years later, regularly rising at dawn for a cold-water dip and appreciating what life is really about.

### **Share one tip/piece of advice for a triumphant Dry Jan**

For professional women, I'd recommend connecting with others in your workplace who don't drink alcohol. I set up a Sober Curious Society at work and found connection and support in the most unexpected corners of the business.

**Janet Hadley is a Sober Club Accredited coach and supports employers to create an Alcohol Safe Workplace. [www.thesoberclub.com/find-a-sober-coach](http://www.thesoberclub.com/find-a-sober-coach)**

## **Rana Khinda**

### **Share your unique story and turning point.**

I was the life and soul of the party and drinking was my main fun in life until the doctor told me to stop. I did not want to stop and I spent two years of my life trying to cut down and moderate my drinking and failing miserably. Every time I failed, I berated myself and felt real guilt and regret. After reading many quit alcohol books, and many sober restarts, I realised that alcohol was making my life miserable and that I could never be happy continuing to drink. I finally quit in 2022 and I wish I had done it sooner, as it would have saved me a lot of pain.

### **What benefits, however small did you notice in the first month - How has your life changed?**

I did notice changes straight away. The biggest thing for me was I felt good about myself again and there was no more guilt and regret. I was sleeping much better and I had a lot more time and energy, both for my professional work life and my family life. I also had a real sense of optimism for the future again. Quitting alcohol has transformed my life in so many ways. I genuinely don't desire it and enjoy life so much more without it. This is something I would not have believed during my drinking days!

### **Share one tip/piece of advice for a triumphant Dry Jan**

Write down your WHY. Why you are doing dry January and what you want to achieve from it, whether it's to improve health, weight loss, or just a sense of achievement. Read your WHY each day to remind yourself and keep you on track.

**Rana Khinda is a chartered accountant and Sober Club Accredited Coach**  
[www.thesoberclub.com/find-a-sober-coach](http://www.thesoberclub.com/find-a-sober-coach)

## **Karen Snushall**

### **Share your unique story and turning point.**

My alcohol journey started in January 2000. I wasn't a huge drinker and had no rock bottom. It was a bad habit that slowly grew and I realised I'd stopped enjoying. I did dry Jan then met Janey at the mindful drinking festival and also Laura Willoughby. It was then I decided to quit booze for good after also attending a retreat.

### **What benefits, however small did you notice in the first month - How has your life changed?**

I was going through a separation with my husband at the time and wanted to go through it without alcohol fuelling emotions; I needed it to be amicable and as kind as possible. Without booze, I had the mindset to stay calmer, step away from cruel words, and rows and restart conversations once the dust settled. I was aware I was more patient and mindful of his emotions, but my feelings were raw and painful too, and couldn't be numbed with booze. Since then I have moved to Cornwall. Life still throws problems at me but it's easier being alcohol free. I've become a master NLP practitioner and an accredited Sober Coach. Local clients love walking and talking along the cliff paths while I'm coaching. "It's easier to open up and talk freely outside" I'm told. Quitting booze leads to so much more. "Learning to Love Yourself is the Greatest Love of All" by Whitney Houston is my song for everyone who chooses this journey. It happens!

### **Share one tip/piece of advice for a triumphant Dry Jan**

Stock up on good AF alternatives so you don't feel deprived or that you are missing out. Read a quit-lit book and listen to podcasts whilst spending the extra time pampering yourself in the bath.

**Karen Snushall is a Sober Coach Accredited coach and hosts AF retreats in Cawsand Cornwall. [www.thesoberclub.com/find-a-sober-coach](http://www.thesoberclub.com/find-a-sober-coach)**

## **Zoe Godfrey**

### **Share your unique story and turning point.**

In my early 40s, I became increasingly conscious of my health. I had been a regular drinker for over 25 years, I felt lethargic and discontent even though I ate fairly well and exercised regularly. I knew I was not firing on all cylinders and wasn't living my best life – life is supposed to begin at 40 right? In 2019, I embarked on the Sober October challenge and immersed myself in understanding the impact of quitting alcohol. I joined several sober communities, delved into quitting literature, listened to audiobooks, engaged in live discussions on Facebook, tuned into sober podcasts, and quickly realised there was life beyond the booze. I discovered a whole community of like-minded individuals. This experience served as the catalyst I needed. I thought to myself, "If I can do a month, why not extend it to another month, and another... maybe even forever?"

### **What benefits, however small did you notice in the first month - How has your life changed?**

Wow, the improvement in how I felt, both physically and mentally was unbelievable! I noticed increased energy, a more positive outlook, reduced anxiety, and a heightened sense of happiness and proactivity. Even my husband remarked on my newfound calmness with the children. I felt confident and able to handle anything. I was frequently complimented on my improved appearance (I must have looked shocking before!) brighter eyes, clearer skin, and a smile.

### **Share one tip/piece of advice for a triumphant Dry Jan**

Do something else! In that first month I would often say to myself "just do not pour it' DO NOT put it in the glass" I would do whatever it took, be that an alcohol-free drink, maybe something to eat, text/call a friend, or sit down and watch something on telly to be out of the kitchen, anything but pour the wine. Commit to NOT drinking.

**Zoe Godfrey is a Sober Club Accredited Coach and Yoga Teacher**  
[www.thesoberclub.com/find-a-sober-coach](http://www.thesoberclub.com/find-a-sober-coach)

## **Geraldine Holmes**

### **Share your unique story and turning point.**

At 58 years old, my two daughters and four wonderful grandchildren were at the forefront of my mind when I decided to end my relationship with alcohol. In 2020 I joined the dry January challenge, and was determined to stick with it after a conversation with my daughter about my ability to look after my grandchildren whilst drinking alcohol, that made me sit up and think! I hadn't reached the bottom of the barrel, but I was nearer than I thought, and was getting to the point where I couldn't manage without my 'crutch'. If I chose not to do it, - I could lose everything.

For support, I joined the Sober Club to create connection and accountability for myself and started to enjoy the whole experience, the people, the challenges, and the knowledge I was gaining. In creating these connections. I became motivated and excited to continue this journey I had started, and even before the end of January, I made a decision to follow my curiosity and see how much further I could go with this.

### **What benefits, however small did you notice in the first month - How has your life changed?**

I became more focused; my menopause symptoms weren't as intense, and I started to look and feel 100%. I was sleeping so much better and felt so much more present in my life. I had a newfound freedom.

### **Share one tip/piece of advice for a triumphant Dry Jan**

Get connected with others. This is without a doubt the reason I carried on. Being in the company of like-minded people was my biggest encouragement and having the expertise and support from Janey was invaluable resulting in 4 years of sobriety.

**Geraldine Holmes is a Sober Club Accredited Coach.**

[www.thesoberclub.com/find-a-sober-coach](http://www.thesoberclub.com/find-a-sober-coach)

## **Gill McKay**

### **Share your unique story and turning point**

My drinking shifted from social boozing and party girl shots in my 20s and 30s to solo drinking and hidden swigging in my 40s and early 50s. I longed to stop lying to myself, stop pretending I was fully functioning, and finally take the 'Drinking Mask' off. It's a pretty low moment when you admit to yourself that you don't like the person you have become behind the mask. I needed that realisation to finally take action – and boy I am glad I did! I am nearly at 7 years sober, have reclaimed my life, and am now working with other women in their 50s, 60s, and beyond to do the same.

### **What benefits, however small did you notice in the first month - How has your life changed?**

What struck me in the first few days of quitting the booze was that I didn't know how to gauge whether I felt well or not. It had become so normal to deal with headaches, fuzzy mornings, and bruises on my legs from bumping into the furniture rushing to the loo in the night. In creating my new normal I quickly felt the joy of being in control and having more time. It was springtime so I enjoy longer evenings being outside and nature opening up. I discovered the joy of walking for miles and even took up jogging, I'm still regularly running 10k.

### **Share one tip/piece of advice for a triumphant Dry Jan**

Enjoy all the surprises that pop up and 'document' them. Whether you discover improved sleep, more confidence, a taste for green tea, or watching the world go by, pause and enjoy the moment. Write down all these surprises and revisit them regularly. You will soon see how your world is opening up. You are giving up nothing when quitting drinking, only gaining.

**Gill McKay is a Sober Club Accredited Coach, TEDx speaker, author of “STUCK” [www.thesoberclub.com/find-a-sober-coach](http://www.thesoberclub.com/find-a-sober-coach)**



## **Sally Magee Banks**

### **Share your unique story and turning point**

As a high-achieving Professional Engineer, leadership coach, and entrepreneur, I had a nightly red wine habit that was the perfect solution to unwind and destress. Until I learned this solution was fueling my stress and anxiety! I didn't set out to quit drinking when I started my sober-curious journey in 2021; I just knew I needed to do *something different*. I foolishly thought moderation might be an option back then! Although there are no DUIs or failed marriages in my story, my drinking was holding me back from being my best self in many areas of my life.

The pivotal moment understood the root of my drinking was due to stress, as a new business owner and my entire career in a male-dominated field. Simply put, I was using alcohol to self-medicate. I thought alcohol was helping me destress, but it was fuelling my anxiety like pouring gasoline on a fire, due to its impacts on brain chemistry.

### **What benefits, however small did you notice in the first month - How has your life changed?**

The biggest benefit was gaining knowledge! I did a 21-Day Challenge that had articles and videos to sink my teeth into. There is so much to learn about what alcohol does to your brain, body, mental health, and overall well-being. The learning was a key component of my journey (as someone with CliftonStrengths® Learner #1 talents).

### **Share one tip/piece of advice for a triumphant Dry Jan**

Learn something new while you're experiencing the month without alcohol. Whether it's through podcasts, books, or joining an Alcohol-Free Challenge. Get smart about the substance and figure out the reasons you're drinking it in the first place. So many amazing things can open up for you once you take alcohol out of your life's equation!

**Sally Magee Banks is a Sober Club Accredited Coach and offers strengths-based leadership coaching. [www.thesoberclub.com/find-a-sober-coach](http://www.thesoberclub.com/find-a-sober-coach)**

## **Gillian Cockburn**

### **Share your unique story and turning point**

In my mid-40s, I started to question my relationship with alcohol. From the outside, I had it all, yet the misery caused by my drinking was undeniable.. I felt lost and empty, longing for 'more' - a better life free from alcohol's grip. Yet, the fear of not drinking terrified me, and the shame consumed me for years. I believed others would judge me if I 'came out' as having a problem and I believed I'd have to struggle every day to stay "dry". It was overwhelming. In May 2020 I discovered a different path that shattered the stigma, blew-up my limiting beliefs and freed me from the alcohol trap, transforming every aspect of my life.

### **What benefits, however small did you notice in the first month - How has your life changed?**

The first month of sobriety, I noticed subtle but significant changes. Clarity replaced confusion; the weight of shame lifted. I started to re-discover and connect with my true self. There was hope! Life really was so much better without the booze than I ever imagined.

### **Share one tip/piece of advice for a triumphant Dry Jan**

Count **up** the days instead of counting **down**. Celebrating each day without alcohol as a milestone, helping reinforce your commitment and keep you motivated.

**Gillian Cockburn is a Sober Club Accredited Coach, Certified Passion Test & Mastery of Self-Love Facilitator.** [www.thesoberclub.com/find-a-sober-coach](http://www.thesoberclub.com/find-a-sober-coach)

## **Lucy Hemming**

### **Share your unique story, and turning point...**

When I hit 40 I started to experiment with sobriety, I always felt much better, mentally and physically. I came to realise that as much as I could tweak my diet and lifestyle during perimenopause, it was really the wine habit that was making me quite anxious and unhappy. I 'd get stuck in a vicious cycle. Every week I'd proclaim to myself that I'd only drink a few glasses, only on Friday, Wednesday would creep around and I'd be pouring a glass. It all changed when I worked on my mindset and realised I wasn't "giving anything up" I was gaining so much. I stopped drinking in June 2021 and haven't looked back; I just wish I'd stopped sooner!

### **What benefits, however small did you notice in the first month - How has your life changed?**

The biggest change in the first month was waking up with more energy and without the feeling of impending doom and regret. Quitting alcohol was the final piece of the jigsaw that needed to be put in place to lead a really fruitful and rich life. My relationship with my daughters is what fills me with most joy, rather than rushing the bedtime story to get to my glass of wine, I'm now happy to sit and read any book they choose,

### **Share one tip / piece of advice for a successful and triumphant Dry Jan**

Embrace not having a hangover on a Saturday or Sunday morning by planning something active, whether it's a run, walk, gym session, something that your hungover self wouldn't be contemplating! It really helped me to see the benefits. Also planning for weekends, if that's a time you'd normally be pouring a drink then find a few no alcohol alternatives.

**Lucy Hemming is a Sober Club Accredited Coach**

[www.thesoberclub.com/find-a-sober-coach](http://www.thesoberclub.com/find-a-sober-coach)

## **Dupe Witherick**

### **Share your unique story, and turning point...**

I spent many years drinking, a societal norm in the corporate world! However, after 20+ years of drinking, I realised I was no longer enjoying it, so my initial aim was to take a break from alcohol for 21 days. I never intended to remain alcohol free.

### **What benefits, however, small did you notice in the first month - How has your life changed?**

I found the first couple of weeks quite tiring. I was only drinking water, coffee, tea and going to bed early. Everything changed when I discovered a whole new community (The Sober Club) who were raving about all the benefits. I realised there were people who hadn't hit rock bottom, were "normal" drinkers, who were alcohol free out of choice

I listened to a couple of Ted Talks on Grey Area Drinking, a term that was new to me. My takeaway was that no matter how much you drink, if you no longer enjoyed it, then you were allowed to ditch alcohol. I discovered alcohol free alternatives to fizz and gin that actually tasted good, which changed the game for me. I also read Quit Lit books, through reading the first one, my eyes were opened, and I realized that not drinking was a positive thing and a pure joy!

Since then, my life has changed in ways I couldn't imagine. I've run a marathon, I practice yoga daily, I'm more present, personal growth is so important to me, I've written a book, launched and host a podcast!

### **Share one tip/piece of advice for a triumphant Dry January**

Listen to alcohol free podcasts. As I listened to more podcast episodes, I realised most of my beliefs around alcohol and what I thought were positives, simply weren't true. It helped give me a completely different perspective.

**Dupe Witherick is a Sober Club Accredited Coach, Author of A Cocktail of Clarity, Thrive Alcohol Free Podcast Host. [www.thesoberclub.com/find-a-sober-coach](http://www.thesoberclub.com/find-a-sober-coach)**

## **Conclusion: Embrace the Journey**

Congratulations on immersing yourself in the inspiring stories, valuable tips, and transformative experiences shared by our Sober Club coaches. As you navigate this holistic approach to well-being through sobriety, remember that the journey is uniquely yours.

Hopefully, we have unleashed some inspiration!

I hope some of the stories resonated with you, offering glimpses into the powerful transformations that can unfold when we embark on a sober journey.

We want to encourage you to embrace the challenge of Dry January—a month that opens the door to self-discovery, clarity, and renewed energy but also to become curious about what happens next. Beyond the initial weeks, the benefits of sobriety continue to unfold, and you could be on your way to improved physical health, mental clarity, and a profound sense of well-being.

Whether you decide to extend your sober journey beyond January, the power is in your hands. And it's at your own pace. Trust the process, celebrate your victories, and be compassionate with yourself during moments of challenge.

We hope you will join the thriving community of individuals prioritizing well-being through sobriety. Connect with others, share your experiences, and draw inspiration from the collective strength of those on a similar path. The Sober Club offers support, inspiration, accountability, and motivation.

[www.thesoberclub.com](http://www.thesoberclub.com)

As you close this book, remember that the real magic lies in applying these insights to your own life. Your unique journey is a canvas waiting to be painted with newfound joy, clarity, and fulfillment.

My only regret is not doing this sooner!

*'If only someone had told me how freaking fantastic life without the booze is!'*

If you want 1-1 Support, You can contact coaches directly via the Find a Sober Coach directory. <https://www.thesoberclub.com/find-a-sober-coach/>

## **Recommended Resources from The Sober Club**

Join us for inspiration, support, connection, and accountability

[www.thesoberclub.com](http://www.thesoberclub.com)

Immerse yourself in Quit Lit

**Happy Healthy Sober** – Ditch the Booze and Take Control of your life

By Janey Lee Grace McNidder & Grace <https://amzn.to/3GQ2dsP>

Listen to the **Alcohol-Free Life** podcast from **The Sober Club**

Check out our events online and in person

<https://www.thesoberclub.com/events/>

Buy our Sober Club journal, vests, and mini-courses.

<https://www.thesoberclub.com/the-shop/>

Watch Janey's TEDx talk Sobriety Rocks – Who Knew!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NktRXVUmQC8>

### **DISCLAIMER**

The role of Janey Lee Grace and The Sober Club Coaches' one to one coaching is not to provide medical services, or to diagnose, treat, or cure any disease, condition, or other physical or mental ailment. They can however support you as you reach your wellness goals and implement positive, sustainable lifestyle changes.

Janey Lee Grace and the other contributors to this book are not acting in the capacity of a medical doctor, psychologist, or any other licensed healthcare provider. Any suggestions given by Janey Lee Grace and the Sober Club Accredited coaches are not meant to take the place of your Doctor or healthcare provider. You understand that Janey Lee Grace does not suggest that you terminate any medical care. You understand that the decisions you make regarding your healthcare and mindset is your responsibility and that you will not hold Janey Lee Grace or any of the contributing authors of this work responsible for any consequences of your medical decisions.

If you are concerned about an addiction, your physical or mental health, or you're physically addicted to any drug, including alcohol, please contact your healthcare provider and always seek professional advice before making any significant diet and lifestyle changes.

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