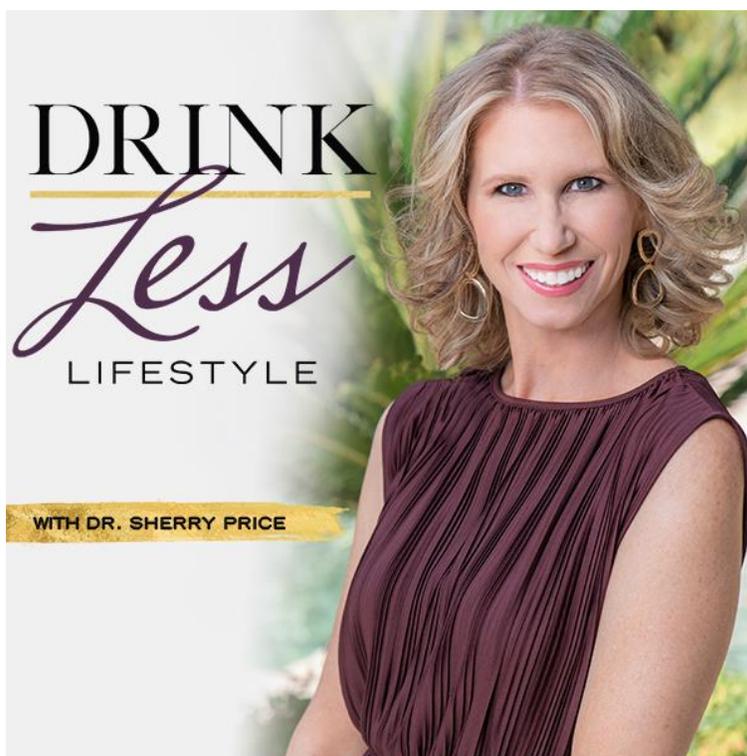


Ep #9: You Are Not Powerless



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Dr. Sherry Price

[Drink Less Lifestyle](#) with Dr. Sherry Price

Ep #9: You Are Not Powerless

You are listening to the *Drink Less Lifestyle Podcast* with Dr. Sherry Price, episode number 9.

Welcome to *Drink Less Lifestyle*, a podcast for successful women who want to change their relationship with alcohol. If you want to drink less, feel healthier and start loving life again you're in the right place. Please remember that the information in this podcast does not constitute medical advice. Now, here's your host, Dr. Sherry Price.

Well hello my friends. If you are living in The States, tomorrow is thanksgiving. And I hope all of you will enjoy it safely and happily, and even if it does look a little different this year during these Covid times.

And if you've been following along in my free Facebook group called Stop the Overdrinking Habit, you know that we have been focusing on a month long self-care challenge. And this week in particular, of course it's very appropriate to be focusing on what we are grateful for. So it's so fun to celebrate with the ladies and read all the comments about everything that we have in our lives that we are grateful for.

This whole month we have been taking care of ourselves physically, emotionally, mentally so we can show up more powerfully for us and so that we can give more powerfully to others. And it's been such a fun time with all the ladies in the group.

And before we dive into today's topic I am excited to announce our fourth and final winner of the \$100 Amazon gift card giveaway. It's so fun to be giving away a gift card during this season because it's the holidays and it's just the season of giving and I love it.

So our lucky winner today is Isabel from Australia. And the title of her review is 'A breath of fresh air in Aussie culture'. And she writes, "As a young Australian woman, drinking is central to my social life and I'm not a fan. I always feel silly when I don't drink or I feel like I'm boring. Sherry is giving me confidence and tools to reduce drinking even in a culture where it

[Drink Less Lifestyle](#) with Dr. Sherry Price

Ep #9: You Are Not Powerless

is the norm. I'm excited to start living a healthier, clearer life. Thank you for giving me permission to be different.”

Yes, Isabel, I think that culture is everywhere. I mean I see it when I travel to Europe, I've been to Australia and I felt it there. And it certainly is prevalent here in the United States. So I so understand that culture feeling, and especially when you're young, that's like the thing to do. You go out, you have drinks, you party and it's so indoctrinated in the culture. So I'm glad you're finding this podcast helpful for your journey to a drink less lifestyle.

And what I want to encourage every woman listening to this podcast is that I know we are thinking of alcohol as fun. But we can also learn to have fun without it. It's a skill set we can learn, because we don't really want to train our brains to rely on alcohol for fun. That's a skill set we could develop for ourselves and we don't have to be dependent on anything outside of us to generate or bring that fun.

Alright, so today we are going to dive into a topic that I feel very strongly about and it might be a bit controversial. It's the concept that I believe that you are not powerless. Now, I know in recovery groups like AA they have a different opinion on this. And I understand where they are coming from and I get the whole premise behind it. So if we look at the first step of the 12 steps of AA it states, 'we admittedly agree we are powerless over alcohol and that our lives had become unmanageable'.

Now, for me I get the premise and I understand what they're saying but it really didn't resonate to me and how I felt at all. So I want to break this down a little bit. First, I wouldn't describe my life when I was overdrinking as unmanageable. It was just that I was in this cycle of overdrinking and it made me feel disgust, and frustrated, and feeling defeated because I didn't want to be drinking that much but yet I found myself drinking that much. And then you get sick and tired of feeling sick and tired of your drinking.

Ep #9: You Are Not Powerless

And it would worsen my anxiety, it would worsen the way I felt. It would feel like it would bring on this low level subclinical depression for me. And it really had that effect, but yet I still wanted to do it. And the thing was my life wasn't unmanageable at all, actually I was having a grand old time in many parts of my life. My marriage was great, my business was great and I had all these things going on for me. So it really bothered me when I was like well, I don't feel that my life has become unmanageable, and yet I still don't feel that I'm powerless over alcohol.

I just needed to find out why I kept doing this habit on a nightly basis. I felt like I owed it to myself to really understand what is going on for me because I shouldn't be drinking this much, it doesn't really feel good. And I could see how it's not serving my lifelong term. And I know that for many people who drink excessively, I understand where they're at. It's just this habit that's gotten out of control. And they wouldn't describe their lives as they've become unmanageable. It's just that they desire alcohol way more than they want to.

And some level you think that the alcohol is helping you, at least in that moment, and that's why you keep choosing it. And I think for me, and I think many other women, we think it helps me relax, it helps me unwind, it helps take the stress away. This is how I have fun with others. This is how I connect with others, or it helps me sleep or whatever story we keep telling ourselves that alcohol helps us with. But the funny thing is that most people who over-drink, sleep worse, have more anxiety, have more depression and feel that their stress has gotten a bit out of control.

And the interesting thing to note is that the more stress we feel, the more anxiety we feel, the more we feel more depressed because of our drinking, that just serves as an excuse to want to escape it so we drink more. And we drink again, and again, and again. So we're looking for that quick fix, that quick hit, take me out of this because this doesn't feel good even though I know that it is this thing that I'm doing, this drinking thing that's causing all this to happen. So that's how it turns into the vicious cycle.

Ep #9: You Are Not Powerless

For me it was nearly every time I chose to drink that I over-drunk, I just consumed more than I really wanted to. So I just kept drinking, and it was almost like once I got started I couldn't stop. And truthfully, I have to tell you honestly, I didn't want to stop in the moment. I felt like wow, this is good, let's keep this buzz going, let's keep this good feeling going. Why stop a good thing?

But there is a point where you're drinking, and you're drinking, and you're drinking and it does stop feeling good. Maybe you don't notice because you blackout, maybe you just pass out. But there is a point where after so many drinks it doesn't feel good. And I got to that point where, yes, maybe the first glass or two would be fine. But the rest of it just felt kind of ick, and just wasn't fulfilling. But you get to that point when you're drinking all the time, you just kind of feel crappy about it.

You even feel crappy about it when you're doing it, maybe not that first glass or that second glass, but by the time the bottle's gone you're like, yeah, I don't feel so good. Why do I keep doing this? Why do I keep doing this to myself? And you're just over-feeling why do I keep doing this to myself? It's kind of like you want the answer, why does this keep happening?

So, to go back, my life wasn't unmanageable, it was just that this habit was taking more control of me than I wanted it to. But again I wasn't in financial ruin, my relationships weren't a wreck. I mean everything was fine except that I was drinking too much.

So the next point I want to make about this step is saying that we are admittedly powerless over alcohol and that our lives have become unmanageable is that I don't refute that there is a higher power, quite the opposite for me. I'm a Christian and I do believe in a higher power. And I know that God, my Creator has given me the gift of freewill. So when He gives us the gift of freewill, He doesn't require us to do anything with that. He doesn't even require us to love him or even believe in Him. He's given us that choice to make for ourselves. That is freewill.

[Drink Less Lifestyle](#) with Dr. Sherry Price

Ep #9: You Are Not Powerless

And that's where faith comes in, when you choose to believe, that means you're executing faith. It's not forced. It's not required. It's total freewill. So by giving me the power of freewill that means I have the ability to make my own choices. Freewill means we are given agency to govern ourselves. We're given the agency to take care of and govern ourselves. And how I decided to govern myself was that I was choosing to drink too much each time I decided to drink.

Now, I didn't really realize why I was doing that then, but now I fully understand it and I recognize where I was giving my power away. So saying that we are powerless means that we don't have the ability to make the decision. So it means we lose the decision-making capability, which I just think is not true. I think we all have the capability but we're either choosing to use it or not use it. We're choosing to execute our decision-making ability or not.

So I like to look at it this way. No one was holding a gun to my head and forcing me to drink, that was a decision that I was making. I just really wasn't conscious of why I was making that decision. And there was no peer pressure like sometimes you get in college like, "Chug, chug, chug", when I go out with my girlfriends nobody's chanting that. It's not like there was peer pressure at all to keep up with anybody or to stay drink per drink with anybody. There was none of that pressure.

The only thing I would hear from my friends would be like, "Do you want a drink?" And that's not peer pressure at all, that's just somebody being hospitable saying, "I'm ordering something, would you like something?" That's just culturally polite. So there's no peer pressure, there's no forcing of this action that we take. It is purely based on our freewill.

So since I knew that and since I knew I was choosing it, I had to kind of understand why and where it is in my brain that it made sense to keep choosing this, to keep overdrinking when I can see the effects of it were not benefitting my lifelong term. And again I can see how yes, it was serving me in the moment but like I said, it wasn't serving me long term. And so I

[Drink Less Lifestyle](#) with Dr. Sherry Price

Ep #9: You Are Not Powerless

really didn't understand why I was making the choice I was making at the time. And the reason I kept choosing to over-drink was because it turned into this well ingrained habit in my brain.

And I talked in previous episodes about how it becomes this habit and how our brain gets used to, and feels safe, and secure, and repeating what it knows to do on a daily or a frequent basis. And it's that primitive brain, that habit part of the brain that really starts driving all of this because it loves to seek pleasure, avoid pain. And it likes things to be easy. So of course I didn't understand all that until I was taught about the brain, until I was taught about habits, until I was taught that this is why you keep overdrinking.

So going back, if we're given this brain that's amazing, and our freewill then we always have the power to choose to do things or not do things which I think is a beautiful thing. Because if we have the power it also means that we can choose to give away our power, which is what I was doing all the time to the alcohol.

I was giving my power away to the drink and that's why it felt like it was controlling me rather than me controlling it. Not because I didn't have the power, it's because I wasn't using my power and I was giving it away. And that's what happens when we let things control us, we are just giving away our power. It's not because we are powerless, we're just giving away our authority. We're giving away our decision-making capabilities or just choosing not to make a decision for us. And we're choosing to make a decision that's really not in our best interest long term.

So if you believe in that concept that you feel powerless or you are powerless then that means you really can't help yourself. You can't learn new things, learn new skills to help yourself, so you can conquer the alcohol. So I get this silly visualization in my mind, and you know I was an avid drinker of chardonnay back in the day. And so I get this picture, if I was truly powerless, that's almost like alcohol has all the power.

Ep #9: You Are Not Powerless

So as soon as I walk into my kitchen, and that's usually when I would start drinking, right after work when I walked in my kitchen, started dinner. It was like the chardonnay bottle would jump out of the fridge, and it would walk over to the cabinets and it would pull down a glass of wine – a wine glass. And then it would pour itself and then the glass would magically float to my lips and I would just tilt my head back. And I was powerless because the wine would just magically come to my lips.

Now, I have to tell you, some nights it felt that way, it just sauntered over into my hand and it went up to my lips and I'm like, "How did this happen?" Because it was so automatic that I didn't always pay attention. But I just want to point out that if you're truly powerless then you're missing all the steps where you can execute your power.

Think of all the steps. So when we get home or whenever it is that you start drinking. For me it was like I said, walking into my kitchen and starting dinner. So there's the decision point, I have freewill, do I choose to drink that night or do I choose not to drink that night? Let's say I choose to drink that night, great, I uncork a bottle of wine. Another decision point, I get to check-in with myself. Do I really want to drink tonight? Okay, yes, let's continue to drink, so that could be another decision point. Then I'm pouring the drink.

So as I'm pouring wine into the glass, now the wine is in the glass I have another point that I can make a decision. I just poured the wine, do I still want it? Now, a lot of us we're just so automatic, we're not thinking that there's decision points along the way, we're just pouring, drinking. But there is a point where you can stop and say, "Do I really want this?"

Now, there are times, especially recently where I think I want a glass and I pour it and I'm like, what was I thinking? I don't desire a glass and I pour it down the sink. Back in the day that was like gold to me, I would never waste or pour alcohol down the sink. But now that I don't desire it so much, it's very easy for me to pour it down. It's very easy for me to stay in the

Ep #9: You Are Not Powerless

moment and see that I have freewill and that I can choose a different thing at any point in time.

Maybe I committed to it, maybe I committed to having a glass the second or two before that. And then after I poured it I'm like, no, I changed my mind, and that's okay. We change our mind all the time and we can. So now, if you didn't decide to change your mind and you still wanted to go on having that glass, you could take the first sip. And just because you take the first sip doesn't mean you have to take the next sip. But when I overdrank I was like, no, if I take the first sip that means I have the whole glass. I'm saying yes to the whole glass.

But I just want to show you, you have decision points all along the way with actually each sip, with each glass. It doesn't have to be like it was for me where it was just an automatic, if I open the bottle of wine, guess what? I had the entire bottle of wine in one sitting. So I like to look at this way because it just highlights how many times I could choose to make a different decision. But I'm just choosing not to. And again I have all the power in that.

So what used to be an automatic for me was like, hey, I'm choosing to drink and an open bottle of wine meant I finished the whole thing that night. I would even taste wine, maybe the brand that I usually like was out of stock, or I decided to try a new brand. And what would happen back in the day when I was overdrinking, that I would even choose to drink wine that didn't taste good. It was unpleasant and I'm like this doesn't taste good but I'm still going to finish the bottle anyway. I mean how crazy is that? That is how automatic and how the habit was just running the show.

And I wasn't even thinking that I had decision points to make along the way, it was like am I drinking tonight or not? That was the only time I thought I had power. It's like my brain didn't register that there were decision-making points all along the way. So I would often think to myself about my primitive brain, and I'd call it my Neanderthal brain where it would

Ep #9: You Are Not Powerless

just kind of grunt and just kind of say, “Huh, huh, there’s wine, it’s open, must finish.”

That’s how my habit brain just thought. So it’s like any open bottle of alcohol must finish. That’s how my primitive brain would think and that was leading that over-desire for alcohol even when it didn’t taste that good. So what I like about the concept of you keeping your power is knowing that you have the power to make a different choice at any point in the process of drinking, at any point. It’s that you just have to learn how to execute that power.

And I think when we over-drink and that becomes our ritual, that becomes our pattern, that becomes our habit, we lose the ability to execute how to keep our power. So when we lose the ability to execute how to keep our power, guess what we feel? We feel like we’re now powerless. But it’s just a feeling, it’s not actually the truth. So listen to me closely when I say this, you have the power, but maybe consider that you are just not aware right now on how to execute it. And consider that it has become a lost skill that you need to learn again. That’s it. That’s all it is.

So again I want you to realize that you do have the power and maybe you are just not aware on how to execute it because you haven’t done it in such a long time. And so it’s a skill that you need to relearn. I mean I don’t think you came into this world overdrinking. Overdrinking is a skill that you learn so you can unlearn the skill by learning other skills to keep it in check.

And so when you start executing your power and start keeping your power, you know what happens? You find that you really don’t want that much alcohol. Yes, you really don’t want that much alcohol, which means when you learn to keep your power what happens to your desire is it goes down. And when your desire goes down, amazing things happen. You might become somebody who can take it or leave it. You might not ever want it again. You may think wow, I wasn’t trying to be alcohol free, it just so happened that way.

Ep #9: You Are Not Powerless

Do you know how many women I work with and how many women experience this for themselves? It's like wow, if I don't have the desire then I truly can take it or leave it. Because I've learned the skill on how to execute my power.

And when you have your power back and you are executing it on your behalf, what is that? That is your agency is back, your freewill to make a choice is back. You don't feel stuck. You don't feel not in control of yourself. And that to me is pure freedom, you're acting, is you're governing yourself the way you would want to govern yourself.

That's congruent and consistent with your long term goals. And that's when alcohol has no pull over you. You can be around it, you can have friends that drink more than you, you can have friends that drink less than you, you can have friends that drink at different times than you. None of it matters because you are in charge of you.

And in the end that's really all that matters. That's really all that you can control is you. And you acting on your own behalf feels amazing. You're executing your power and your God given agency in your life because you are loved and free, always, my friend, always. So you can learn the skill to break those chains and walk in your freedom and get your power back. And I hope that you all find that place again because you can, it is in your power.

Okay, speaking of what else is in your power. You can use your freewill and hop on over to write a review of this podcast. I would so appreciate your comments. I have been loving reading your reviews, learning from you guys, learning what you like, what you want to see. So I appreciate all those comments.

And because I love giving gifts around the holidays, and I want to celebrate in a special way, in a meaningful way to me, is I'm going to be giving away a beautiful strength necklace that carries an incredibly powerful message for anyone on this journey living a drink less lifestyle. It is my passion to

[Drink Less Lifestyle](#) with Dr. Sherry Price

Ep #9: You Are Not Powerless

uplift, and teach, and encourage women on this path. And the meaning behind this necklace says it all to me. I'm a sentimental person and I really enjoy giving meaningful gifts.

And I love the message that comes with this necklace. So let me read it to you. 'Strength, sometimes life is just hard, but hard does not mean impossible. There will be times when you will break but it does not mean you are broken. Find your inner strength and let it light the fire in you. Remember that you do not need a giant flame to set a fire, all you need is a tiny spark, one spark of strength to lighten up the darkest of moments. Never underestimate your strength, you are stronger than you think.'

It will delight me to give this to a lucky winner who rates and writes a review on Apple Podcasts, Stitcher, Spotify or whatever app you use to listen to the show. Visit sherryprice.com/podcastlaunch to learn more about how to enter this contest for the necklace. I will be announcing the winner on an upcoming episode, so stay tuned. Talk to you next week.

Thanks for listening to *Drink Less Lifestyle*. If you're ready to change your relationship with drinking now check out the free guide, *How to Effectively Break the Overdrinking Habit* at sherryprice.com/startnow. See you next week.