

## Ep #50: Failing Better



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With Your Host

**Dr. Sherry Price**

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## Ep #50: Failing Better

You are listening to the *Drink Less Lifestyle Podcast* with Dr. Sherry Price, episode number 50.

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. Welcome to episode number big five zero. Super excited that you are here and joining me. And did you know for the month of September inside of Epic You we are discussing time management? Yes, how to better operate under the system of time and look at how to maximize getting more time and doing the things that we want to be doing. Such great conversations happening over there. And we realized how much we waste time just overdrinking and drinking too much.

And when you can see this concretely play out in your life it changes everything because life has so much to offer so why would we want to be spending it wasting it? Wasting the precious time that we have here on this planet. Wasting the experiences, we could be creating for our life. And so that's what we're focusing on in Epic You this month and I invite you to come join us.

But for today's episode I really want to focus in on talking about failure. Yes, failure. Do you know that there is a way you can use your failures to work for you? It's called failing better. And I think as a society, as a human we just focus a lot on so much success and succeeding that we really don't understand how to look at and handle our failures. And if you think about it, the people who are most successful in life, they have had also the most failures. So, failure is not necessarily a bad thing but our brain will want to tell us it's bad.

You know the old cliché, success is built on a pile of failures? That is so, so true. I mean if you think of all the great movies out there, you see the

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underdog and all the setbacks, and all the setbacks, and all the setbacks. And then there's that breakthrough. And then we all love that underdog that comes through and wins it all at the end, or gets the girl, or does the thing. But they failed so much along the way. So, knowing this it means that mistakes or failures are essential to learning something new to become successful at it.

So, you may be hearing this right now and yeah, that makes sense, yeah, I get it. But do you really embrace it? Do you really think that your failures are a part of the way to your success? Because knowing it intellectually does not mean necessarily you are buying into the concept. And here's how I know when people are using failure as a stepping stone towards success, because they're not complaining about it.

And I hear so many people beat themselves up, oh, I went off my drink plan again last night. And they take it and internalize it as I'm a failure. I'm not going to learn how to do this. But I want to tell you that the problem isn't that you went off your drink plan. The problem isn't the mistake. And here's the thing, the failure or the mistake teaches us more of what we need to learn, where we need to grow, what skills we still need to develop in order to succeed.

So, I want to just highlight three different examples of where our brains don't even see it as failure. So, think about when you type and you make a mistake, you hit the wrong key. Do you think of that as failure? How about when you talk to somebody and you're not selecting quite the right words to explain yourself. And so, the person misunderstands what you're saying because you didn't quite communicate it the way you wanted to. Do you consider that a mistake?

How about when you're eating and you miss your mouth, maybe the food lands on the table, or off the plate, or on your lap, or on your cheek. Do you consider that a mistake? Do you consider that a failure? How about when you're eating salad and there's lettuce hanging out of your mouth because

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you couldn't fit it all in on the bite. Do you consider that an error or a mistake?

So, when you're looking at these examples, looking at typing and you hit the wrong key, your brain doesn't automatically say, "You're such a failure, you're never going to learn to type." You keep going and the brain's like, "There's a solution over there, look, there is a backspace and a delete key, let's just press that and keep going."

Or how about when you choose the wrong word or maybe you're communicating with somebody and you used the wrong tone of voice when talking. And so, you don't get your point across the way you wanted it to come out, did your brain automatically say, "Oh, you're bad at this talking thing. Let's not try that again. Let's just go to silence." No, what you do is you choose different words or you apologize for how it came out. And you say, "I didn't mean it that way." It's no big deal.

Or how about when you're eating and something does fall off your plate, you either pick it up and say five second rule and put it in your mouth or you just keep going. Or you have lettuce hanging out of your mouth like a giraffe and you're like, "Wow, I should take smaller bites or maybe I should use a knife and cut my lettuce." It's that one bite didn't go as planned. Now since it didn't go as planned and I didn't get the result I want now I know what I need to do differently. See, your brain just doesn't interpret them as failures.

In these scenarios your brain sees it all as part of the process of learning to get better at typing, at talking, at communicating, at eating salad. So do you have the same attitude when you go over your drink plan? I bet not because I hear a lot of people consider it a failure. And I see it all the time on when people post, "I failed again. Last night was a doozy, I really had a bender. When will I ever figure this out? I'm a lost cause. I'll never learn this stuff. Why do I keep doing it? Why do I keep drinking? Why do I keep doing this to myself?" We hear all of that over and over again.

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And guess what happens when you do that, the more you think that way the more you will create more of that. So, the more times you think you failed the more you will create failure. It goes back to that think, feel, act cycle all the time. And here's what you're also assuming, that if you went over on your drink plan that it shouldn't have happened. And I would argue maybe it should have happened. Maybe you should have gone over because it's showing you there's still a skill that you have not learned.

But the downside is when your brain interprets it as failure because what if it's not? What is actually part of the learning process? And this is what I mean by using this to fail better. Now you can learn from what had happened to fail better. Because what I want you to know is failure is not the problem. Mistakes are not a problem. Mistakes that keep happening and we don't know why they keep happening, that's the problem. But that's not how we think.

Most of us, we will instead do the habitual thing which is label ourselves as a failure, or a loser, or someone who's never going to figure this out, or I just don't know why this just keeps happening. Or thinking there is something wrong with you when none of that is true. It's just this mental pattern that your brain reverts to each time you do the thing.

It's that mental feedback loop that needs to change because if it doesn't, I will tell you my friends that you will keep repeating the same pattern and staying in the habit and this will drain you. Why? Because you didn't learn anything new. And you're thinking that failure is a problem. And what I want to suggest is that failure is part of the solution if you learn to fail better.

So, here's what I recommend that you do so you can learn to fail better. And that is find out why you had the setback. Find out why you failed. Find out why you went off your drink plan. Find out why you overdrank. Like I'm always saying, we've got to get to the root cause of what's causing the action of drinking. And I'll tell you why people don't want to do this. It's because it feels so raw. It feels raw to failure. There is disappointment in it. There's defeat in it when we think failure is bad.

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And if we keep thinking this way, guess what? We develop contempt for ourselves and contempt for the process. I know it feels uncomfortable to look at what happened and revisiting that evening. But just think, it's our reaction to the setback that is preventing us from understanding it and grabbing the learning from it. It's just a reaction. But what if we had a different perception of it? What if we didn't run away from the rawness or the discomfort? And what if we were willing to look at it?

What if instead we just asked ourselves why we did it with no judgment and no contempt then what would happen? We could learn from it. We can learn to fail better. We can learn from the mistake so that next time potentially we won't make it. You begin to embrace the failure because it tells you what skills you still need to learn to master. And I'll tell you, this is the quickest way to turn your weaknesses into strengths. But how many of you really want to do this process?

And I'll tell you why you want to do it, because learning this is what gets you in control of alcohol which is just a skillset you need to learn. So, knowing what skills you still need to learn is vital to your growth to overcoming this as an issue in your life. Yes, you can overcome this as an issue in your life. It can become a non-issue. And that's what we all want. I love it that alcohol is no longer an issue for me in my life. The problem is most of us don't want to look at our failures because we have a negative connotation about our failures. We just don't want to do it.

Or here's what I find more commonly is we don't know how to do it. And this is what I teach my clients inside the Drink Less Lifestyle program, it's how to get there, to get the learning from the mistake because this is what gets at the root cause of what's causing the drinking. And there's a few things you need to know. You've got to learn to ask the right questions. You've got to peel away all of the story to get to the real issue because I find that a lot of people can't do this very well because we're not trained how to do it.

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All we do is tell stories but we don't understand how to pick out the key moment. So, this is what I help my clients do. When they start in my program they're telling me how the evening went, all the events, all how it went down, who was there, who wasn't there, why there was alcohol involved in the first place. They tell me all about it. There is so much detail there that is so unnecessary.

And then they think, they tell me that pivotal moment. They tell me that their husbands poured them a drink and that's why they drank. "Or it was such a long or stressful day at work and that's why they drank." Or, "That their marriage is crumbling and that's why they drink." Or, "That they went to this big social event and they just had too many drinks and they weren't paying attention and that's the problem." Or I'll hear, "My husband was out of town and I had the house to myself and that's why I overdrank."

And I will tell you my friends, after years of helping women, none of these are the reasons why you overdrank. So, I get it, it's very hard for you to identify why you overdrank and that's why you get a coach. That's why you get help, so they can help you see exactly why you overdrank. Because here's the thing, we get all caught up in the details of our life. And your mind loves to just recall all of the events and then pick something that it thinks is the problem. But I will tell you, other people are not the problem.

I will tell you, circumstances that are happening in your life, whether somebody's diagnosed with cancer, or there's a new ailment, or something, or your knee's out of whack and now you can't exercise, none of that is the cause of your drinking. Circumstances don't cause our drinking. And that is a key piece you learn inside Drink Less Lifestyle because we need to find out what that critical moment was, what that keystone was.

And you guys all know what I'm talking about when I say keystone. If you look at an archway you know that the keystone piece, that center piece at the top of the archway locks in all the stones into position allowing that archway to bear weight. It's that center key piece, it's called the keystone.

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And if we get that keystone piece from your story that's the root cause. That's the critical part.

We have to zoom in on that moment, not all the extraneous detail because without knowing that piece you won't learn, you'll just fail again. You won't have the ability to fail better. Because we will blame the circumstances for our drinking. We will blame the failed marriage, the cancer diagnosis, the long day, the bad day, not having a partner, not having a loving partner. These are not reasons why you drink. They are not the real issue. These are the lies your brain is telling you.

I see women do this all the time, they're blaming things outside of themselves. Look, if you blame the things outside of yourself that means you are powerless. Because if you're blaming the things outside of yourself, the things outside of yourself have to change for you to change and that is not true. You can change despite what's happening outside of you. That's where all your power is my friends. That's why we have to find the keystone moment. And that's how we learn to fail better.

And that's why I find this such a beauty in knowing why. That's why the rawness doesn't have to be there because we are looking to change it, fix it and learn the skills. Because now you can fail better next time. Now you know what you need to work on so you can trust yourself again around alcohol. And you can just keep practicing the skill every chance you get until you master the skill. And that's when you will stop failing better because you'll stop failing altogether.

So be careful how you interpret failure. It could be deadly to your success. If you think it shouldn't be there really question that. And here's how I like to define failure, it's only when we stop trying permanently, we give up, we throw in the towel. We're like, "This is as good as it gets. I'm just going to accept that I am this way." That is failure. That is a fixed mindset. That is giving up on your brain. That is giving up on your life, giving up on yourself. And I'm sorry, that is pure hopelessness. Nothing can be further than the truth. Maybe it just takes you a little bit longer.

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Maybe you haven't been failing better. Maybe you haven't been practicing the skills you need to practice. What if that's all it is? If you're calling failing, doing the same thing over and over again to get different results, that's just insanity. That's not failing. That's like I'm not learning. And if you're not learning you're not going to fail better. You're going to continue just failing. When you fail better there is learning involved. There's skills that you're going to practice.

Think about it, if you follow a cake recipe over and over again, and the cake doesn't turn out because it doesn't rise, each time that you do it and try it you get the same floppy cake. It's not working. Where is your learning? You just keep following the same recipe. Failing better means the next time you're like, "I have a floppy cake, what can I do differently?" And now you make the cake and you notice there's no baking soda, let me put in some baking soda. So, you make the cake, the next time you make it you throw in the baking soda and the cake rises.

Guess what? There was learning in the failure, this time the cake turned out differently. Maybe it's not up to spec, maybe you still want to improve it but you failed better. You did it differently. You had to insert something different into the equation to get a different answer. So, you can think of overdrinking as a mathematical problem. If you don't have the right skills and the right equation you won't get the right answer or the answer that you want. Failing better means you're not afraid to fail but that you're also learning.

And I like to think of failing forward as if it was a speed bump on the road to success. The speed bump causes me to slow down and notice my speed. It tells me, proceed with caution but it doesn't make my car stop on the road to success. It doesn't make me stop getting to my destination. It's just that now I have to navigate the road a little differently with a different speed, with different tools. I step on the brake instead of the gas pedal but I still get to my final destination. It just might take a little more time.

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And speed bumps are always on the path to success my friends, they are real, they will always be there. To think that they won't be there is perfectionistic thinking, it's not based in reality. They are always there. And speed bumps just signal that there is something we need to learn along the way. We need to do something differently. We need to adjust. We need to pivot. We need to change our driving skills. Speed bumps are unavoidable but there's learning that's required to handle them appropriately.

I don't walk up to a speed bump or see a speed bump on the road and go, "Oh my gosh, I don't know how to handle this, I'm going to fail." No, I'm not afraid of a speed bump just like I'm not afraid of alcohol. I could see any alcohol in front of me and think not a problem. I know how to handle this because I know how to handle myself. A failure, a mistake, a setback, a speed bump, it's not a stop sign my friends, unless your brain is trained to think that it is.

So, it's our choice if we decide that the speed bump means stop and change our goal, and we can't have the life that we want. And I say that's just erroneous thinking. I say to choose to fail better. And when you choose to fail better and grab the learning along the way it is the process to your goal of drinking less. So how are you going to interpret failure? What I would say friends, onward, let's go, we've got this.

And I know it's difficult to recognize what the root cause of your drinking is and really understand how to fail better. I needed help myself in this process. And if you want help I invite you to come work with me inside the Drink Less Lifestyle program. It's my program that will radically change your relationship with alcohol and where you'll begin to love your life again. You can make alcohol a non-issue.

Go to [sherryprice.com](http://sherryprice.com) and schedule a call with me to see if it's the right fit for you. Again that's [sherryprice.com](http://sherryprice.com). I look forward to helping you love your life and trust yourself around alcohol again. Alright my friends, I will see you next week.

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Thanks for listening to the *Drink Less Lifestyle*. If you're ready to change your relationship with alcohol, check out my free guide, How to Effectively Break the Overdrinking Habit at [sherryprice.com/startnow](http://sherryprice.com/startnow). That's [sherryprice.com/startnow](http://sherryprice.com/startnow). I'll see you next week.