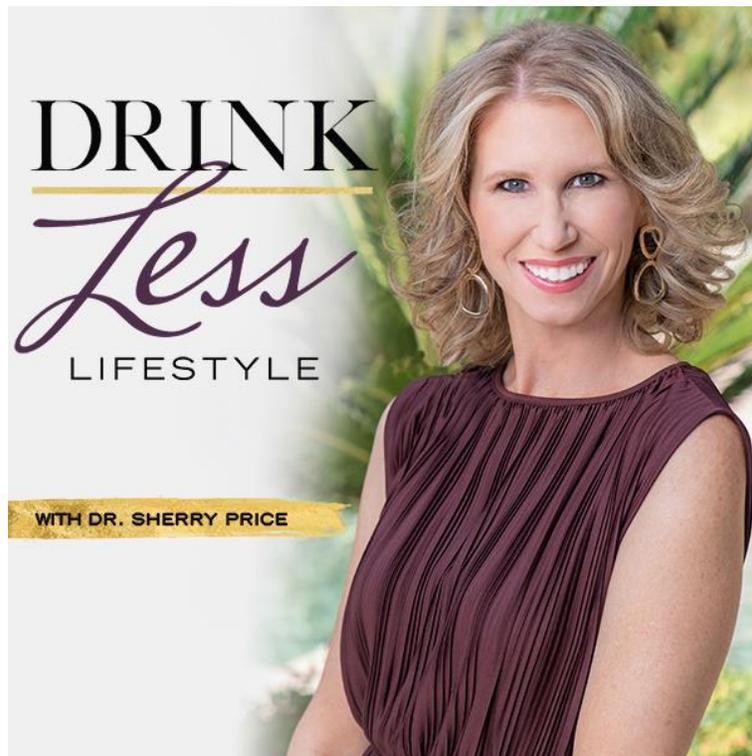


Ep #56: Becoming Your Future Self



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Dr. Sherry Price

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You are listening to the *Drink Less Lifestyle Podcast* with Dr. Sherry Price, episode number 56.

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. It is a lovely fall day here in San Diego. And I know fall is in full swing probably in many parts of the country like I remember the northeast just getting so beautiful in the early parts of October. But because of our weather it is a little delayed. So, our leaves start to change a little later in October and I think we see it mostly in full bloom the fall colors on our trees in November timeframe. It just feels so different, dramatic changes in the color of the leaves and they're reddish, and orange, and yellowish colors.

I can feel a little bit of that fall temperature difference, the colder mornings. It's a little bit more crisp of the air. It feels different on my face. It smells different a bit. It's got a bit of a different texture if you can feel it. And I just love that nature provides us such different seasons, and beauty, and joy in each season when we stop to take it all in. Taking walks now feels differently than the summertime and walking our dog. It's just like the difference.

Doesn't it feel good sometimes when you feel like you're getting out of a rut or when things are the same old, same old and you just welcome the change? You welcome the sweater wearing weather and the scarf wearing weather and the hot beverages just feels a little more comforting when it's a little bit brisk and chilly outside. And I love the expression that we use and have used about this time of year is like turning over a new leaf.

The leaves are changing, they're going to fall off the trees and that turning over a new leaf is a way to thinking about making a fresh start. And I love

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that, changing your attitude or your behaviors for the better to get into that fresh start. So where do you want to make a change for the better? And think about fall and be inspired by the trees that we see and turning over that new leaf.

And that's what I want to dig into on today's episode of the podcast. I think for many people going into this time of year, especially if you've got a lot of little kids and stuff, and a lot of stressors going on, this can feel like a bit of an overwhelming time of year. The holidays are coming, maybe we're traveling this year, maybe we're not given the conditions of the pandemic or family dynamics and all of that. It could feel like wow, the holidays are upon us. It's partly exciting, at least for me I get very excited about the holidays. I love the holidays. I love this time of year.

But I know for many people it could be all kinds of emotions that come in. It could be happiness. It could be sadness. It could be things aren't the way they used to be, or we have less members to celebrate with. Just lots of things going on. So, I love just sitting and thinking about what do we want to change? What areas of our life are not working that we're ready for change and that we're ready to turn over that new leaf? Because I think it's an innate human desire to want to do better. I don't know many people that sit around and say they want their life to get worse.

So, I think it's a great thing to want to do better in whatever area of life. And it's not to do better to become more worthy, that's not it. It's just the fact that it's fun to do something that creates better health, or creates better mental energy for you, or creates more financial wealth for you. Just to want to do better is a great thing. So, I love thinking about who I'm becoming. Who is it that I want to be in the next few months or in the next year, becoming your future self.

And I think we subconsciously do this as we're growing up, but I don't think we recognize it. We think about as little girls that we want to be married some day or maybe we want to have kids someday, or this is where we want to live, or this is the lifestyle we want to live. We get used to that

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thinking about our future. Or this is the career path I want to pursue. And it's very enticing. It's very alluring. It keeps us going. It keeps us striving. It keeps us gaining new skills, learning new skills and new tools so that we become that person someday.

But then I think we hit a rut. We stop advancing. And we stop thinking about things can change. And we get into this rut, this is the way it's going to be. And I know for me that this doesn't feel great. I'd rather think about okay, what do I want to accomplish next? What do I want to become next? What is an area of my life I want to improve just for the sake of accomplishing it and getting that goal and living that life that I define for me that I want to live?

And in the past, I know for me it was about becoming a woman who can take it or leave it with her drinking. Because I was at a point where I drank at every occasion, and it was just what I did and who I was. I bellied up to the bar every time there was a bar, every time we went out to dinner I was at the bar, or I ordered drinks from the bar. Alcohol was just part of my life and part of everything I did. And while I didn't hate every part of it, I know that being that woman and having that identity was blocking me from other important goals and visions I had for myself and my life.

It was that constant drinking pattern, that constant drinking habit that was preventing me from getting to other goals in my life. I would often skip out on the gym if I drank too much the night before because I just didn't feel like waking up and staying committed to that goal. Often when I overdrank, I would just eat crappy food because I stopped caring once I got a buzz going on. And I noticed when I overdrank, the next day my anxiety was higher.

I was annoyed with myself. And of course, I'm going to take out that annoyance with myself onto other people. So, I often took out that annoyance onto my husband and my daughter who really, they didn't deserve it. I began to see how much time, money, mental energy, physical energy I was using and wasting buying it, thinking about it and drinking

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alcohol. It consumed so much of my resources. I noticed that my face grew puffy. I noticed that my body got puffy.

I noticed that I was putting on a few pounds that I didn't want, and I didn't like how I felt in my clothes. So that was keeping me away from that goal. And oftentimes when I started drinking nothing else got done. I felt lazy and unmotivated as soon as I poured that first glass. It was like, yeah, nothing else is getting done or just the bare minimum. So, I really began to understand how much alcohol was preventing me from having a good relationship with myself, and with the others around me, and living fully the life I wanted to live.

So, alcohol was getting in the way of me being that better version, that future self-version of me that I desired. And as I mentioned, it was that woman who can take it or leave it with her drinking. And I would think about this future self-version of me, this middle aged woman who was learning to control her impulses for food and learning not to need it or desire it so much.

I remember thinking about her and saying, "I wanted myself to be someone who showed up at a party or some other get together and I can just have one glass and it was no big deal." I would just switch to water or something else after that one glass of alcohol. And I would still have an amazing time. And I'd still be comfortable in my own skin.

You know what's the funny thing as I'm recording this podcast? I'm just thinking back to last night. Last night I went out with a bunch of girls to celebrate one of the girl's birthday. And I'm realizing now I just did that. I just went to the birthday party. We met up at a beautiful restaurant on the waterfront here in San Diego. Everybody started off with a few cocktails and I was the only one that ordered water.

And I remember some of the girls saying, "You should get a cocktail, this one's really good. Do you want to try this?" And I said, "No, thank you, I'm delighted with my water, I'm fine with water, thank you." And I just stuck to

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water. And then when it came time to have dinner I ordered a drink, and I was done and then I switched back to water. It was not a problem. I didn't have desire for more. And I have to tell you, it feels amazing to think that years ago this is the future I wanted and now I have it. I became my future self.

And this work is so powerful. This is one of the tools that I used to break my habit of overdrinking. And it's one of the modules in the Drink Less Lifestyle program because I want to teach you these tools because it works. And it's a tool where you use it to visualize your future self, your next version of you, it doesn't have to match my version but it's your next version and your next evolution of you. And this future self-concept is not a new concept, but it works. And you see a lot of people using it.

In fact, Matthew McConaughey talks about it when he was accepting an Oscar, in his Oscar speech back in 2014. You can look at the clip on YouTube, it's got 25 million views. But he talks about who he chases. When he was asked, who is his hero he mentions how it's him 10 years from now. And I have to tell you, every time I watch this clip, I just shed some tears because he's so passionate. He's so authentic. And you can tell that this really truly motivates him to be the best version of him.

And I'll put a link to this video in the show notes in case you want to just go to my website and check it out. It is so good. And as you watch that video you see him just come alive. When you do this future self-work, it should motivate you. It should feel amazing. And here's the thing, it does for most people when you're doing it right. I find that when people are not motivated by this it's because they think so many other things like it's not attainable. What? Becoming a better version of yourself is always attainable.

Some people think, I can't drink less, or not at all, that just doesn't seem attainable. Or I can't drop the excess weight, that doesn't seem attainable. And thinking that it's not attainable is just arguing with the fact that things do change and can change, everything can change. So, if you're thinking that way, you're not actually doing the future self-work properly. And saying

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it's not attainable means you're not willing to go all in on yourself and you're not willing to see what's possible for you.

It could mean you're living in denial or you're just giving up. You're throwing in the towel. You're not ready to turn over a new leaf. And what I find most is that it's the past thinking, that's what you're thinking about. And that's preventing you from thinking about what's possible in the future. If your brain is always wrapped up in what you've done and what you haven't done in the past, it's going to prevent you from moving forward to creating a different future.

Now, here's the thing, if you want to create something that's not been created before, maybe you haven't been able to control your alcohol for decades. But if you want to create that version of you it's possible and attainable. But thinking it's not just means you're giving more power to your past rather than more power to your future. And actually, when you give any power to your past it makes you powerless because you can't change your past. There's no way in heck you can change the past.

So having your mind back there, thinking about it, and obsessing about it, and talking about it, and creating more of it, you're just going to rob your future or create more of your past in your future rather than being future focused. So, the past is only going to create more of itself in the present unless you move to I want to create a different future and how do I do that with the present moment?

So, you can either be using the present moment to move you closer to who you want to be in the future, or you can be using the present moment to keep you stuck in your past, whether that's past habits, past relationships, past ways of being that no longer serve you now and you actually want to move away from that. Because the fact is of life, you can change at any point you decide to change. Now, here is the kicker. A lot of people don't even realize they're creating more of their past.

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And I'll tell you one common thing that I hear all the time come up when I'm coaching is, "It's my habit brain that's taking over", or "It's just the habit, that's why I want to drink." And I'll tell you, you're creating yourself your own powerlessness because here's the thing. The habit may have been what made the drinking get to this place but it's not what's keeping the drinking the same going forward. It's your choice in the moment. Your habit can change at any point you decide to.

And the habit starts changing quickly when you start thinking about your future, and where you want to go, and the person, and the woman you want to become. Now if you're saying it's just the habit brain, or it's just the habit, you know what you're doing? You're actually deepening that habit. You're deepening the habit feedback loop in the brain because now you're telling yourself it's your identity, it's who you are, it's what you do, it's just my habit.

And I'll tell you my friends, that sentence repeated over and over will keep you so stuck because now you're seeing yourself as unchangeable. Now you're saying, "This is just who I am. This is just what I've done all these years in the past." So, you're getting your past and more credibility to come into your present moment.

So, you're recreating your past identity over and over again. And that's just not only behaviorally by picking up the drink and drinking, it's also mentally. And like I said, it leaves you completely powerless to change because your thought process is I can't change. I've been doing this for so long.

Now, I get it, I had a habit too, but you know what? I recognized it was just a habit. It was just a past programming that I was in and that I needed to move on from it. I stopped feeding the habit and I started to say, "Hey, I'm turning over a new leaf. I'm creating a new future version of me. I'm creating my future self." Because once I did that now my brain was like, I just need to learn and embrace new skills that breaks this habit, not only the behavior physically but also mentally. Because now I'm not identifying and telling myself that this is just who I am.

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I'm telling myself that I'm becoming a different version of me. And here's what she looks like. And here's how she acts. And here's how she shows up at parties and get togethers. I'm doing this and it's breaking that mental patterning in my brain. So, this is why willpower is limited. We know it's finite. And if we use willpower, we know it will change the behavior short term. It could get you to do a cleanse for 10 days. It could get you to take a break for 30 days.

Yes, you can use willpower, but willpower only works on the behavior, it only works on the action, it only works on not drinking. It does not work on the mental piece. It does not work at the neural root patterning programming going on in your brain. That's why when the 10 days ends or the juice cleanse ends, or the 30 days ends you go right back to the pattern. You go right back to the habit, the same amount you were consuming because you didn't do the neural reprogramming work that's required for permanent change.

And how you know you're using willpower is you will feel like you keep fighting yourself and the cognitive dissonance will keep coming. And you'll be like, "I want a drink, but I don't want a drink." And you'll be in that mental space, and it will be exhausting, so exhausting that you actually cave. But to change the behavior permanently you need to work on breaking the mental and the emotional piece.

That connection to alcohol that we all have if it's a habit, that wanting it, that desiring it, that feeling like I need it to cope or deal with some part of my life. That's the piece willpower can't touch, won't touch and doesn't know how to touch. It just doesn't work. That's why it leaves you feeling powerless. So, to get permanent change we have to rewire the thinking in the brain. And the beauty of all this is we actually know the science, we know the neural transmitters, we know the whole process to create change. And we know the process to create it quickly.

You can do this work for years little by little, dabbling in it here, dabbling in it there, not really taking it seriously, yeah, maybe I'll work on that on the

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weekend. No, you don't go to college just one day a week. You don't go to school one day a week. You don't go to your job one day a week generally speaking. If you want to learn something quickly, you're doing it all the time, you're immersing yourself.

If you want to learn a new language, what's the best way? Immerse yourself in the culture, you learn it so much quicker. And the reason is you gain momentum, you stay in that motivation. You gain that momentum. And guess what? That changes your neural programming very quickly. So, when you have one foot on your future self and one foot on your past self, that's going to feel like you're torn apart. That's going to be the struggle. That's when you're going to say, "This is hard."

So, think about the next time you pick up a drink, what are you saying to yourself? Are you saying, "This is how I end the workday, this is just what I do, this is just who I am. Here I go again, it's the habit." Because when you start noticing this you start noticing, hey, this is my past identity creeping into my present and this does not work for habit change. This actually strengthens the habit. What I'm doing here right now, not even just pouring the drink and having the drink but the conversation I'm having mentally about the drink is everything.

So, notice this conversation going on in your head because I'm guessing there's no future self-conversation part of that. Do you see that? This is just who I am. This is just the habit. This is just what I do. I order another drink, or I just pour myself another drink, or hey, I'm watching a movie and I need to have a glass of wine with that. There is just no future self-talk there at all. You're just saying and agreeing with your brain that this is what I've always done. This is the amount I always have, and this is how I drink. So, let's just deepen that neural programming even more.

And the funny thing, when you're in this kind of mental programming, you know what? You don't really even enjoy the drinks as much. There's kind of yes, I enjoy the drinks, but I know I'm not going to enjoy this long term or, but I really wish I can change, or tomorrow it's probably going to hurt. A

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couple of days ago I had posted on my Instagram that the language we use when we're drinking or talking about alcohol changes our relationship to it, creates our relationship to it actually.

Our language is everything. I even saw this last night at the birthday party. So, there were lots of ladies there and everybody's having a great time. We had this beautiful cake, chocolate, decadent, delicious, it was awesome. And so, we all get our piece of chocolate cake and we're eating it. And I love chocolate cake, sitting next to some ladies who love chocolate cake as well. And we're talking about how rich, delicious it is, decadent, all the things. And I had a few bites, and I was done, and I knew I was satisfied. I didn't need any more cake.

And I remember one of the ladies looking at me and saying, "Oh my gosh, that's all you're going to eat?" And I'm like, "Yeah, I'm satisfied. That was delicious." She's like, "Oh my gosh, I never leave cake behind on my plate. I always have to finish chocolate cake. It's my favorite. I can't wait to finish all this cake." And I said, "It is delicious." And then she goes, "It is delicious but I'm so full, but I have to keep eating more cake because that's what I do."

And it was just so interesting to me as I was preparing for this podcast, even reflecting on how people talk about their relationship with cake or their relationship with anything. And by the end of the night, she was saying how stuffed she was and how she didn't feel good because she ate so much cake. And she was just confirming in her mind that she is this version of her, this woman that loves cake, and has to finish the cake, and loves chocolate cake. And every time she sees chocolate cake, she's got to have chocolate cake. Just the wording she uses creates the behavior.

And just because you used to be that person doesn't mean you have to continue being that person. Now, I know we can all relate to that story. We all do this. But it's when you become aware of it and it's a pattern that maybe you want to break, then you have to know how to go about doing it. So, I hope from this story that we all see, hey, if I want to create new

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behaviors, I can't be walking around thinking about the past ones because that's going to keep creating more of the past.

And here's another thing I hear a lot too, it's like, "But it's so hard." But saying, "It's so hard", is what makes it partly so hard and so difficult. I want to consider a different example because I think we might see it clearly outside of the context of drinking.

So, let's take the example of somebody who's identified as a female or a girl for years. She was born with girl parts. She's always done girly things and she's always referred to herself as a she. Then one day she doesn't want to be a she anymore, she wants to be a he. She just decided that her future self is now a boy or a male. And what does she start doing? She starts using different pronouns. She starts referring to herself as a he. She may even change her behavior from this. She may start dressing differently because she no longer wants to be that old version of herself.

She has a new identity which is now a he. And think about that, that shift, that change can come in an instant, can happen overnight. So, becoming your future self, do you see if you do this work on your future self and you implement that strategy, that it can lead to change so quickly? Doing this future work shifts you out of your old self and into your new self. So, this work of doing your future self, you just leave the old identity behind, no big deal, it's a done deal.

And just bringing it back to my life, right now that I'm this woman who can take it or leave it with alcohol, I actually have no desire to go back to my old self. It's not even attractive to me. It's not alluring. When I see other people have the behavior of overdrinking I don't say, "Wow, I wish that was me." There's no part of me that wants that back which feels so delightful. It's not like I'm mourning or grieving. Now, there was a part and a time period where I did mourn the death of that identity and I did grieve a bit of wow, that's no longer the Sherry I show up as.

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But once I did that work, once I processed those feelings, they're gone. And now I have a completely different attitude. I see that how alcohol and overdrinking has robbed me of so much fun and so much joy in my life, it took away from my health goals and it drained me of my energy. I just felt so unmotivated to do anything else because alcohol was just so important. It's like everything else fell by the wayside.

I can look back and see all the lost times, particularly the weekend, where I was just lying in bed nursing a hangover, or regretting something I said, or being embarrassed for forgetting conversations. It just, it was just wasted time now I see it as. And here's the thing, what's so interesting is now I don't judge it in others. I actually have so much compassion because I'm like, "That used to be my past version of me. I so get where you're coming from." It's also a reminder that I'm glad I took the time to invest in the skills to be this version of me.

And it's not one or the other is better, it's just one fits the life that I want to have whereas the other one doesn't. And again, it's not about being perfect because perfect is not the goal. Now I am this future version of me. I am the woman who can take it or leave it, which feels amazing. But here's also the catch, it's not like the process stops. Just because I achieved this future version of me in the drinking area, guess what? I also have future versions of me in other areas of my life.

So, I keep doing this work. And I keep practicing these tools. And you know what? My life just gets better and better because I'm going after the future versions of me that light me up, that excite me, I don't feel stuck in a rut. And it feels good. And doing this work, and I call it bettering myself to become a future version of me that I'm going to be proud of is not about obtaining more worthiness, it's not that at all. We are all inherently worthy. We don't become more or less worthy.

But doing this work for me, bettering myself, wanting to become a better version of myself is me living my life on my terms and not by other people's rules. I was living a lot by society's rules, it's happy hour, we drink. That

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was the rule I had in my head, I'm like, "Where did I pick up that rule?" It must have been marketed to me or I must have picked it up in college or somewhere along the way. It's like now I could go to happy hour, and I don't even need to order alcohol. That was a foreign concept for my brain for so many years.

And bettering myself is not about measuring up to what other people expect of me. It's not meeting other people's expectations or other people's standards of me. It's just the standard I get to set for myself and that feels amazing because I think it's so fun to grow and evolve, and do new things, and accomplish new things. I mean think about it, when you're a kid growing up you do this. You're always growing, and evolving, and learning new things and you're celebrating along the way.

Think about all the graduations you have, you have preschool, kindergarten. I had a sixth grade graduation, a middle school graduation, a high school graduation, a college graduation, an MBA graduation. We're always setting out to learn new things, evolve, learn new skills, celebrate. You're learning about yourself, and the world, and how you fit in, and do you want to get married? Do you not want to get married? Do you want children? Do you not want children? And many of us try several jobs before we find the one that we really like.

Or even as we go through life, it's like we can change jobs in any time. But I see so many people just stall out around 30, 35, it's like, I have achieved the top of the ladder, I'm at the summit of the mountain, now what? They don't know if they should be pursuing other things. Or they don't think they can change. Or they have that fixed mindset mentality. They stop believing that other things are possible for their life. But here's the truth, people go on to start second and third careers. I'm in my second career. People go on to start second and third marriages, and relationships.

People go on to have more kids as part of their family, whether that's biologically through the foster care system, adoption system or blended families. Change happens all the time just like the leaves change every fall,

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they turn colors and then they die and fall off the trees but guess what? They grow new leaves, and they evolve. Notice the tree never moved locations but they still change. Anything living changes. And I say if we're going to change, I want to change with intention. I want to direct that change.

I want a say in that change. I want to be that version of me that I want to go after, and I get a stake in it. I get to say, "Hey, this is who I want to become", and I go after it. And I love thinking about this time of year as a time to turn over a new leaf. A lot of us wait till January. A lot of us wait till the change of the calendar year. But we don't have to wait, we can create that change in our lives now. We can become our future self starting today.

What's one area in your life that you want to turn over a new leaf? You have my full support in doing so my friends. Alright, that's what I have for you this week and I will see you next week.

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. That's sherryprice.com/startnow. I'll see you next week.