

Ep #85: Approach vs. Avoid



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Dr. Sherry Price

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

Ep #85: Approach vs. Avoid

You are listening to the *Drink Less Lifestyle Podcast* with Dr. Sherry Price, episode number 85.

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. How are you today? I hope everybody is having a great week and for me I'm super excited. I have been preparing for my upcoming retreat which is at the end of September in San Diego and I cannot wait.

So, as I'm putting together the agenda, the workbooks for this awesome, intimate and epic event for the ladies I am diving deeper into research on what drives human behavior. Because that's essentially what overdrinking, or overeating, or doing anything that we don't want to be doing, any action that we're taking that we don't want to be taking, we want to change our behavior. So, taking different action means we just want to change that behavior whether it's drinking less, eating better, eating healthier, exercising, whether it's to lose weight or just to tone up or to get in shape.

We know that one thing about human behavior is that it's not just about setting a goal. Setting a goal in and of itself doesn't cut it. Think of the things that you've had goals, and you've set a goal and you didn't accomplish it. And I'm sure you have plenty of examples in your life where you have set a goal and you've achieved it. So, it's not just the fact of setting a goal. And I think for a lot of people they think that's where it stops, I'm just going to lose 10 pounds. I'm just going to drink less. I'm just going to drink four drinks a week, they set a goal.

But we know just setting goal isn't the thing that actually transforms human behavior. What I think setting a goal does, it puts a stake in the ground, it says I want this which is great. It tells you what you want, what you desire, where you're going but it doesn't necessarily tell you the path to get there.

Ep #85: Approach vs. Avoid

And so, what's more important is not just setting the goal but actually creating the path to get there and a path that actually leads to the desired human behavior change that you want. So, I think we can all agree that setting the goal is not actually what gets it done. It's putting a stake in the ground of saying, I want to go here but it's not the thing that's going to get you there. So, as I talked about in last week's episode is that resilience is one of the keys needed in the process of getting to the goal. So, it's a key strategy to have when you're in the process of getting to the goal.

And so, we're talking about the three steps to growing your resilience this month inside of Epic You as I mentioned. And we're practicing that inside of Epic You now. Because without resilience I will tell you there's no game to be played. You can set the goal, set the goal, set the goal, keep saying, "I want to lose 10 pounds", keep saying, "I want to lose 50 pounds", keep saying you want to drink less but you're not doing anything about it.

And my guess is your brain's just beating yourself up saying, "When am I going to take the action? When am I going to actually do this?" Instead of just saying it over and over again, month after month, year after year. Now, when you develop resilience, you're developing part of that pathway, part of that process that's going to get you the change that you desire. So, we know that resilience is integral in the path towards changing human behavior.

And what we know about progress, and we can all attest to this in different areas of our life, progress is not a linear line. Means it's not just this direct straight line up because you know of any goal you've had there's always times when you're not constantly progressing forward. That's why they have the saying, two steps forward, one step back. One day you make extensive progress, maybe the next day you don't make any progress.

But over the course of time, you can see the trajectory of the line is going in a forward motion. It's going upward, you are changing, you are getting progress. And this happens in any area, in any context of life. If we think about who won the Superbowl last year, we know the LA Rams won. And they got to their goal because all NFL teams want to win the Superbowl. It

Ep #85: Approach vs. Avoid

is a goal of any NFL team. However, if you look at their record you will see that they didn't have to win every single game to go on to the Superbowl and to win the Superbowl.

It's not this perfect record. If you look at how they finished the season, they finished at 12 and 5, 12 wins, 5 losses. So, they had setbacks and they still reached their goal. So, we can see that even in football it's very reflective of human growth and transformation, exactly the same. In fact, it's never perfect. And we talked about that on a previous episode, it's not ever about perfection. It's not this straight line and a linear process. There are times when you are charging ahead, getting huge gains and wins. And there are times that you're not.

And we talked about how it could be a loss, a setback, an injury. People that go on to win a gold medal at the Olympics, it's not that they go to and attend each and every practice nailing it and killing it, and upleveling every single time. No, they fail, they fall. Ice skaters fall, they crash. They learn that it's not perfect. So, winners know that they have to shake off when things don't go right, they get up, they shake it off and they're back in the game. But when you stop failing to get up, when you stop thinking like a winner you become hard on yourself, you start beating yourself up.

And when you start beating yourself up more and more it's going to prevent you from taking forward action. And this is what causes people not to be a winner and to be a loser, not get their goal and to stay stuck or to regress and keep regressing. And many people have setbacks in their life and actually that's one of the reasons they turn to alcohol, they drink to cover it up. They drink because it's painful to have a setback especially if they're beating themselves up over it.

And so, they want to cover up their feelings of disappointment with alcohol or just have another drink, or it'll feel much better if I have another, and I have another, and I have another. Because if I'm hard on myself I want to escape that. I want to numb out from that. Now, some people might tell you, "That's normal. That's expected. You're grieving. You're going through

Ep #85: Approach vs. Avoid

loss. You had a hard day, or you have a difficult period of your life. It's okay you're drinking, it's okay."

And I say, really? Because that kind of encouragement to keep doing things you don't want to be doing is not going to be very helpful. And now we're normalizing it. So, any time we want to uplevel, that means go towards human growth, that means go towards transformation, that means I want to be behaving in a different way than what I'm currently doing. We know that we set a goal and then we know that we have to follow a path to get there and we also know that there are going to be setbacks along the way.

Now, here's the thing I want to say about setbacks. They may happen with more frequency in the beginning but if they keep happening that means we're not learning and growing. So, I have heard women say, "I've conquered the drinking thing Monday through Thursday but what happens on Friday and Saturday, I still have blackouts, or I still overdrink. Or I still have hangovers and I'm still missing the workouts, or I'm still missing family things that are going on. And I'm forgetting conversations. I'm still overdoing it."

Now, if that keeps happening weekend after weekend or it's some type of periodic regularity, we know that your growth has been stunted. We know you've plateaued. We can see this with weight loss. We could see this with exercise. And that means when you've plateaued you are not going further. It means you're not continuing to get the growth that you want, to continue to get the human transformation that you want, to continue to change your behavior.

Contrary to that, if your overdoing it episodes with drinking lessen over time, they become less frequent, they are not predictable. Meaning it just doesn't happen every weekend with the same regularity, then you know if they're lessening that you are acquiring skills that make this behavior permanent. So, we know slipups will happen and we know that they are more frequent in the beginning. Now, if they keep happening over time we

Ep #85: Approach vs. Avoid

have to consider that there's more growth or more learning that needs to occur and we just don't have the skills.

So, in my life it's rare that I overdrink. Now, the first year I was learning these skills it wasn't so rare. I had more frequent slipups. But now it's very rare because I realized I wasn't just drinking for fun and pleasure I was drinking for problems. And I wasn't willing and knowing how to look at the problems and I didn't know how to solve them and then I learned how to.

And so, because I'm living what I consider my best life means I'm able to keep it in check. And if I'm not able to keep it in check and for those of you that are not able to keep this in check then it gets chucked. If you can't keep it in check, chuck it. Because I'll tell you, any addiction, anything that prevents you from having the life you want, why would you keep it around?

So, one of the concepts I'll be discussing at the retreat is more an advanced concept of really looking at why people unconsciously stunt their own progress in life. So, they make good progress, they get some change but they just can't seem to bust out to the next level. And as I mentioned, the thing that really prevents you from getting to that next level is when you are beating up on yourself. Another thing that will stunt your growth is not acquiring skills to help you get to the next level.

You followed a path and that path got you here but now you need a new path to get there. So, what got you here may not be the same thing that gets you to the next level. So, we look at an example. Say you want to tone your arms and you haven't been lifting any weights or really exercising, you've been pretty sedentary. So, to start toning your arms you pick up five pound weights and you do the weight exercises with these five pound weights for a few weeks or a few months. And you're liking how the effect is taking shape in your arms.

Your arms aren't as flabby, and wiggly, and jiggy, there's a little more definition to it. However, you would like now more tone and more definition. Well, if you continue to use the five pound weights you're not going to get to your goal very fast if at all. If you want different results then you pick up a

Ep #85: Approach vs. Avoid

different strategy and the strategy becomes pick up 10 pound weights or 15 pound weights. You move on. So obviously that makes sense in this scenario.

So, you want to take this to other areas of your life but what I see a lot of people do is to continue to rely on what got them to where they are now yet they want different results. And I talked about this in my story. My first coach helped me reduce my drinking by 50 to 70%. I had a 50 to 70% reduction, it was wonderful. And I felt amazing. And then guess what, my body got used to that amount and it was like, wait a second, now this feels like too much and I want to change my goal. I want to drink even less.

And now I had other goals that surfaced. I was following a drink plan, a written drink plan for months. I wanted freedom from that drink plan. I wanted to be able to take it or leave it. I wanted to think about alcohol so much less than what my brain was doing. So, I noticed I wanted even more freedom from alcohol with my thoughts, with writing it down, I wanted more freedom from that. Well, guess what? I needed different tools to get there. And the tools and skills that my first coach offered didn't help me get there.

So, I learned from other coaches. And by doing this I'm able to bring those tools and skills into my practice. So, as I get better the people I help get better. They have a more plethora of the tools that they can use. Now, I talk about a few of the tools here like the think, feel, act cycle, the drink plan. But we use so many other tools in the program depending on the results that you want. And now I'm working with a coach and learning how to become a world class coach where you get the life that you want.

And since I started working with her it's really upleveled my skill. It's really upleveling the results I'm getting in my own life because I want to lead my heroic life and there's nothing stopping me from getting those goals. And so, I am literally programming my subconscious mind these days to see possibilities and solutions to follow my dreams instead of seeing obstacles and being weighed down by my past.

Ep #85: Approach vs. Avoid

Clearing that emotional clutter that I've talked about on previous episodes in addition to doing other exercises that are really helping me solidify to change my subconscious programming. And here's the thing. I've been doing so much work in these past couple of weeks that I'm noticing more setbacks because as I level up and I move my set point to what I'm willing to tolerate and I move my standards and I'm morphing into this new state of being. Guess what's going to happen? There's going to be changes that I'm making and then I'm going to slide back.

And I'm going to institute more change and I'm going to slide back. And while I see growth, I'm sliding back. I was just sharing with the ladies in my membership of the new standards I now have that I didn't have prior. And in working with these new tools and upleveling my life I'm noticing the humans in my household are also upleveling. And we were joking about that on the call, my goodness, when you uplevel and you raise your standards the people around you, feel it, sense it and that gets them moving to uplevel for themselves.

And I'm noticing the shifts it's causing in them because of the work I'm doing on me. Now, I am upleveling but I will tell you, I am noticing way more setbacks and this is exactly what happens in growth and transformation. And if my brain was to look at two points on a curve, if it was to look at what I'm doing now in certain areas of my life versus even four months ago, just those two datasets, it might look like I'm regressing. My brain might interpret this as, Sherry, you are failing.

But when you look at it as a continuum, when you connect all the dots in between I can see that there's growth and the curve is going up. So, I wanted to share those stories with you and those examples to highlight what drives human behavior and particularly what changes human behavior. And one of the ways you can get faster change in behavior is by having an approach based mentality versus an avoidance based mentality.

So, when you are living in a way where you are approaching your goals, you are looking at what you want to achieve and you are going after it, so you have this approaching your goals, approaching the life you want to live,

Ep #85: Approach vs. Avoid

you know what the byproduct of that is? Not only is it more likely that you're going to achieve your goals, it's that along the way you feel happiness, contentment and joy. And what the data shows for most people once they hit their adulthood, beyond 30, 35 years of age, is that we tend to start living towards an avoidance attitude or avoidance motivation.

We become more motivated to avoid things than to go after things. And this is how many people are subconsciously living their life. They want to avoid feeling the stress of work. So, for example, if you want to avoid feeling overwhelmed or avoid feeling the stress of work you run to alcohol. To avoid feeling the disappointment in your life you run towards alcohol. So, this avoidance attitude leads us to more pain and doing things that give us immediate pleasure like drugs, alcohol, sugar, all the things because we want to avoid the real problems in life.

And so, when you overdrink, or overeat, or overdo social media, or Netflix, or whatever, you're only actually making the problem worse because you're continuing to avoid the real issue. So, you know my story, case in point, where I couldn't face the real problem of my child's diagnosis and how to deal with it and how to manage it. I took her to all the experts and I tried to outsource that as much as possible.

Now, I'm not saying outside experts and pulling in people isn't appropriate, it is. But I was reluctant to change my ways in order to better help her and adapt partly because I didn't even know I was doing it. And partly because I didn't think I had that much of a role but boy, was I wrong. So, if you're drinking to tolerate something in your life and not make it better, essentially you're avoiding it. You're in that avoidance mindset.

And many people drink to push the real problems away, when you find your spouse annoying or when you find your child annoying, or most of your children annoying, if not all. Maybe they have a personality disorder, or a diagnosis that you just haven't helped them best navigate the world and you to navigate your relationship with that person.

Ep #85: Approach vs. Avoid

Or maybe you haven't launched the kids successfully from your home and they're still in your house and you feel it's beyond time. This just happened with one of my clients where we had to work on empowering her so she can launch her son at the age of 30 to move on and live his heroic life. Instead of avoiding it, you approach it. You're eager and you're driven to go after your goals when you're living in that approach mentality. Now, you know there'll be setbacks but that's part of the game.

You're not actively involved in numbing out with meaningless activities that don't get you towards your goal, they just take you further away from your goal. Overdrinking just chips away at our life little by little, sometimes in big chunks by big chunks. And ultimately it prevents you from living the life you want and getting the life you want.

So many women come to me not really wanting to give up the alcohol but they are like, "Yeah, I have to give it up because it's getting in the way of me losing weight." So, their real goal is to lose weight and a secondary goal is to control their drinking. Great, let's do that because as you age it's hard to be a chronic drinker and have a slim body unless you pick up another destructive habit like an eating disorder. So, I want you to see that avoidance of your problems will only cause more problems and particularly more preventable problems.

They don't have to be problems, we don't need an overdrinking problem. We don't need an overeating problem. These things can be solved. And here's what's so powerful. When you are in that approach mindset you go after you want, you get it faster and it drives you to keep going. Not only that, your mind is focused more on solutions than what's not working. And when your mind can see more solutions it starts to see the world differently and it starts to implement those solutions so your mind expands. And you begin to seek to understand instead of seeking to avoid.

Overdrinking is a classic avoidance activity. And when you avoid your feelings and you avoid your problems you are not making space to open up yourself to solutions. You're becoming more narrowminded. And your brain just becomes more and more focused on alcohol and just give me more

Ep #85: Approach vs. Avoid

drinks. So, what are you avoiding in your own life? And what if you flipped the script and focused on what you wanted and you had that approach mentality, that approach attitude, that approach mindset.

Because the truth is nobody wants to be an over-drinker. It's not attractive, it's not healthy. And quite frankly, it's ugly when people drink too much. Ugly things come out of their mouth. Their behavior is not pretty. It could be pretty disastrous. Now, flip it to the approach mindset, now you start seeing the good and how it will change your life for the better, whether it's losing weight or drinking less so that you can have and live the life that you really want, one that you don't need to avoid or escape from.

Now, you know my philosophy, drinking is just one part that needs to be changed. There are other changes that need to happen that I help my clients get because drinking less means that the problems will start to surface. And so, we need to rid your life of those problems. And the beautiful thing is when you have the approach mentality you want to remove what's not working, you want to get rid of what's holding you back. You want to get rid of anything that's in the way of you getting your dream life.

Just like with that one client, she wanted her son out of the house living fully independent, gainfully employed, able to make a rent payment and living on his own. Of course, he's an adult, that's what any mother would want for their child. And she wanted peace around this. And so, we got it for her. He's got a great job, great salary, living on his own. And it came from that approach mindset, going after what you truly want because it gives you the heroic life that you want. And you get to stop playing the crappy game of avoiding.

Because when you live your life focusing on what you want to avoid the byproducts from that style of living are resentment, sorrow, bitterness and pain. And my friends, I will tell you, that's living a life that's squandered and of course it doesn't feel good, it can't. And you wind up wasting time, and money, and potentially sucking down more booze because it's not

Ep #85: Approach vs. Avoid

anybody's definition of a heroic life. And this is exactly what happens when you're living with the avoidance mindset.

So, what you need to do is to drop the avoidance mindset and now work only in the approach mindset. That makes you feel alive. Not only that, you start getting your goals and you start killing it and crushing it. And it brings a new energy into your body. It brings an energy into your life. And this is what I want for my life. This is what I want for your life. And I'm teaching these advanced tools at my retreat as well as in my coaching practice and I want you to try it for yourself. Live in that approach mindset and watch your life get better and better.

Alright my beautiful friends, have a delightful week and I will see you in the next episode.

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.