



FREE FROM WINE WITH EASE & JOY!

PART III/I: Let's get to know ourselves and find the root causes behind the alcohol problem



In order to solve a problem,
we need to identify its root causes



Recovery begins when we face the things we escaped with the help of alcohol

- Addiction is often a disorder of the emotional life, in which oppressive feelings, life and traumas are suppressed with a substance or activity that temporarily relieves the pain.
- However, difficult feelings and traumas do not disappear anywhere, but surface as soon as they get the chance.
- When you stop drinking and start to recover from addiction, you have the space and strength to start working on your emotions and life experiences.
- In the recovery process, you begin to process, for example, your own childhood experiences or some trauma or loss that happened a long time ago.





Everyone has some kind of emotional blocks that manifest themselves...

...as strong emotions that feel too big for the situation

...as a difficulty in regulating one's own emotions

...as difficulty recognizing one's own feelings

...as a difficulty to act in such a way that it would feel good

...as harmful behavior

...as recurring difficulties in some relationships.



As we recover, we begin to develop our emotional skills

- Emotional skills mean e.g. recognizing, verbalizing, expressing and regulating emotions. Emotional skills are one of the most important mental health skills.
- You understand yourself and your actions better when you recognize your feelings and dare to face them.
- Emotional skills help you to recognize your needs, act firmly when your limits are about to be crossed, to create functioning human relationships that contribute to your well-being and to build a life that suits you.
- If you lack emotional skills and emotions guide your life, you should make awareness about which direction you want to go
- Emotional skills are **skills**. You can learn them, even though their foundation is created in childhood.
- All feelings must be accepted, and no feelings must be suppressed, because then they can get stuck inside us, eat energy and cause psychological discomfort.



Emotional blocks are formed in childhood or adolescence

Most, if not all, of us have experienced situations in our childhood and youth where our own emotional needs were not met.

You may have experienced any of the following from your parents:

You have not become loved, accepted, appreciated or noticed in the way you would have hoped

You have been hurt, belittled or ignored

You haven't got your own space to do your own things

You have had to adapt and be too much for others and their feelings





Strengthen your emotional skills

- Pay attention to your feelings. Can you recognize and describe them? If it is difficult to identify emotions, use the emotion map (the link can be found on the course page).
- Do you have forbidden feelings that you don't want and don't allow yourself to experience? These are precisely the ones you need to confront in order to dismantle the root cause.
- It may be that as a child you were forbidden to express certain emotions and they became forbidden. Now give yourself permission to express "nasty" feelings as well. Think about how you can do it without harming yourself or others.
- It is not always possible or desirable to freely express one's feelings. Then you should do like Scarlett O'hara in the *Gone with the Wind* and register the feeling and postpone its processing (I'll think about it tomorrow). You deal with it when it's a better time (you're alone or in the company of a trusted person).
- Treat yourself like your best friend and pay attention to your inner speech.
- Treat emotions as messengers. Feelings have always something important to tell you, and they try to guide you in the right direction in life.



The Soberistis emotional lock removal method: "self-pity day"

- Try a self-pity day where you let yourself wallow in some emotion you used to run away from. Wallow in the feeling, milk it until there's nothing left to milk.
- Cry if you cry, shout if you feel angry, let your emotions flow.
- When the work is done, the feeling is easier and often even laughable. The next day you usually feel great and energetic.
- Self-pity day should be done when you are alone at home.



Forgiving and asking for forgiveness is liberating

- Forgiveness for yourself and to others
- It does not mean that you accept a wrong act/event or deny a loss and reject them in your mind.
- You don't have to accept and forgive the evil act but forgive the *person*.
- Forgiving and asking for forgiveness makes you feel better and frees you to let go of the events of the past and move on.



Task

- Start listening to yourself and your feelings. You can write the thoughts and feelings down in the notebook.
- When a weak moment hits you and you crave alcohol, listen to yourself. Try to identify the feeling you want to escape at that moment.
- Little by little you start to find the root causes of your emotional blocks, and then you can start to forgive and let go of the past.
- Forgive yourself and forgive the person who caused your emotional blocks.
- Ask for forgiveness if you yourself have mistreated someone.





In the next section, learn how to set boundaries without drama.

