



## The 30-Day Sobriety Solution: How to Cut Back or Quit Drinking in the Privacy of Your Own Home

By Jack Canfield, Dave Andrews

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Jack Canfield, the #1 *New York Times* bestselling author of the Chicken Soup for the Soul® franchise and coauthor of *The Success Principles*, and Dave Andrews, a recovery expert, join forces to present a revolutionary program to help you cut back or quit drinking entirely—in the privacy of your own home.

Alcohol kills one person every ten seconds worldwide, according to the World Health Organization. Thankfully, now, for anyone who feels that alcohol has become a problem—and for the 23.5 million Americans living in recovery and looking to be re-inspired—this new program introduces a groundbreaking model for sobriety that you can achieve in your own home.

*The 30-Day Sobriety Solution* grew out of Jack Canfield's decades-long work in self-esteem and success training. Its principles were carefully developed into a program by Dave Andrews and tested by thousands whose amazing stories of recovery are shared throughout the book. Organized into five phases that span 30-day periods, this book guides you through each day with practical exercises that, over time, allow you to more easily make positive choices again and again. "The Sobriety System" is an empowerment program that moves systematically from beliefs (including limiting ones) to feelings and emotions to concrete actions and behaviors that promote better outcomes.

Integrating neuroscience, cognitive therapy, proven tools, and teachings, *The 30-Day Sobriety Solution* is a clear, practical daily program that will help you achieve your goals—whether that's getting sober or just cutting back—and create positive, permanent change in your life.

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### Editorial Review

#### Review

"The 30-Day Sobriety Solution is a great book. It combines the best techniques of the human potential (EFT Tapping, neurolinguistic programming, life-purpose exercises, goal setting, meditation, guided visualization, affirmations, journaling), with the best approaches from recovery counseling and coaching in a comprehensive approach that works to overcome alcohol abuse and addiction." (John Gray, #1 New York Times bestselling author of *Men Are from Mars, Women are from Venus*, *What You Feel You Can Heal*, and *Staying Focused in a Hyper World*)

"This is a wonderful, thoughtful book that will guide you and inspire you to get complete control over your drinking problem once and for all." (Brian Tracy, bestselling author of *No Excuses*, *Maximum Achievement*, and *Change Your Life*)

"Not everyone wants to join a support group to deal with their drinking problems. With that in mind...Canfield and Andrews carefully guide readers through a series of daily "solutions," which include psychological insights, personal accounts (some from celebrities), and honest appraisal.... The overall tone is nonthreatening and compassionate....Anyone who needs to be kept on track or inspired will find genuine help in this honest, insightful book." (*Booklist*)

"Geared toward problem drinkers struggling to cut back or quit drinking as well as those who want to be re-inspired in recovery, this volume proposes a five-phase plan using success principles, goal setting, visualizations, neuroscience, and cognitive therapies to assist readers in identifying the reasons for drinking, defeating the dread of quitting, cultivating gratitude, and taking pleasure in confidence-building activities.... For readers who sincerely want to stop drinking the lessons in this book will pave the way." (*Library Journal*)

"A day-by-day path to sobriety that combines research-based, practical techniques with principles tested over eight years and thousands of hours with program participants... Sensitively written yet no-nonsense guide." (*Publishers Weekly* (starred review))

"*The 30-Day Sobriety Solution* brings the power of positive psychology to recovery, and by integrating it with other proven techniques and tools for life change, Jack and Dave have created the new standard for achieving sobriety." (Shawn Achor, happiness researcher and bestselling author of *The Happiness Advantage*)

"Using positive psychology and systematic instructions ...inspirational reports from folks who have beaten alcoholism..., Canfield and Andrews's focus... is on empowering people to overcome it." (*Bookpage*)

"The 30-Day Sobriety Solution is an amazing step-by-step program for getting your drinking (or any addiction) under control. It uses the latest and greatest methods for overcoming addictions. Even if you're not ready to quit alcohol entirely, this book will help you avoid the problems associated with abusing alcohol--or any other substance. I highly recommend it." (Jonathan Robinson, M.A., M.F.T., author of "The Technology of Joy," and former clinical director of the National Council of Alcohol and Drug Abuse)

#### About the Author

Jack Canfield is co-creator of the Chicken Soup for the Soul® series, which includes forty *New York*

*Times* bestsellers, and coauthor of *The Success Principles: How to Get from Where You Are to Where You Want to Be*. He is a leader in the field of personal transformation and peak performance and is currently CEO of the Canfield Training Group and Founder and Chairman of the Board of The Foundation for Self-Esteem. An internationally renowned corporate trainer and keynote speaker, he lives in Santa Barbara, California.

Dave Andrews has been a featured “sobriety expert” on more than fifty national and international talk shows. As “America’s #1 Sobriety Coach,” he is the leading expert in helping others recover, reclaim, and reinvent their lives without alcohol, and serves on the Board of Directors of the nonprofit organizations Young People in Recovery and Advocates for Recovery. CEO of The 30-Day Solution, LLC, he resides outside Denver, Colorado, with his family, and has been sober for over eight years.

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The 30-Day Sobriety Solution

## **Day 1**

### **The 100% Solution**

#### **Building Your Foundation for Thriving in Sobriety**

Take the first step in faith. You don’t have to see the whole staircase. Just the first step.<sup>1</sup>

—DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. (1929–1968)

Clergyman and civil rights leader

As the above quotation from Martin Luther King Jr. says, all you have to do is take the first step. And congratulations—you have already taken the first step by picking up this book and starting to read it. Don’t worry about how far you have to go or what you have to do. You have just opened the door to a life full of unlimited potential and possibility, and we invite you to walk through that door with us now.

#### **The Golden Buddha**

We would like to start by having you read this story by Jack that appeared in the first *Chicken Soup for the Soul*<sup>2</sup> book:

In the fall of 1988, my wife and I were invited to give a presentation on self-esteem and peak performance at a conference in Hong Kong. Since we had never been to Asia, we decided to extend our trip and visit Thailand.

When we arrived in Bangkok, we decided to take a tour of the city’s most famous Buddhist temples. Along with our interpreter and driver, my wife and I visited numerous Buddhist temples that day, but after a while, they began to blur in our memory.

However, one temple left an indelible impression in our hearts and minds. It is called the Temple of the Golden Buddha. The temple itself is very small, probably no larger than thirty feet by thirty feet. However, as we entered, we were stunned by the presence of a ten-and-a-half-foot-tall solid gold Buddha. The statue

weighs more than two and a half tons and is valued at approximately \$196 million. It was an awesome sight—the kindly and gentle yet imposing solid gold Buddha smiling down at us.

As we immersed ourselves in normal sightseeing tasks (taking pictures while oohing and ahing over the statue), I walked over to a glass case that contained a large piece of clay about eight inches thick and twelve inches wide. Next to the glass case was a typewritten page describing the history of this magnificent piece of art.

Back in 1957, a group of monks from a monastery had to relocate a large clay Buddha from their temple to a new location. The monastery was to be relocated to make room for the development of a highway through Bangkok. When the crane began to lift the giant statue, the weight of it was so tremendous that it began to crack. Rain also began to fall. The head monk, who was concerned about possible damage to the sacred Buddha, decided to lower the statue back to the ground and cover it with a large canvas tarp to protect it from the rain.

Later that evening, the head monk went to check on the Buddha. He shined his flashlight under the tarp to see if the Buddha was staying dry. As the light reached the crack, he noticed a little gleam of light shining back and found that strange. As he took a closer look at this gleam of light, he wondered if something was underneath the clay. He fetched a chisel and hammer from the monastery and began to chip away at the clay. As he knocked off shards of clay, the little gleam grew brighter and bigger. After many hours of labor, the monk stood face-to-face with the extraordinary solid gold Buddha.

Historians believe that several hundred years before the head monk's discovery, the Burmese army was about to invade Thailand (then called Siam). The Siamese monks realized that their country was about to be attacked and covered their precious golden Buddha with an outer layer of clay to keep their treasure from being looted by the Burmese. Unfortunately, the Burmese apparently slaughtered all of the Siamese monks, and the well-kept secret of the golden Buddha remained intact until that day in 1957.

As we flew back to Los Angeles on Cathay Pacific Airways, I began to think to myself, Just like the clay Buddha, we are all covered with a shell of hardness created out of fear, anger, resignation, and self-doubt, and yet underneath that outer layer, each of us is really a “golden Buddha,” a “golden Christ,” or a “golden essence,” which is our real self. Somewhere along the way, between the ages of two and nine, we begin to cover up our “golden essence”—our natural self. Much like the monk with the hammer and the chisel, our task now is to discover our true essence once again.

What about you? What have you been using drinking to cover up or hide from? What “golden” parts of yourself have you let alcohol conceal? Today we will start to uncover the answers to these two important questions and help you get back in touch with the parts of you that may have become lost due to your problem drinking.

## **The 30/60/90 Day Plan**

In the early eighties, Maine's legislature enacted a returnable bottle-and-can law. Instead of going into the trash, my sixteen-ounce cans of Miller Lite started going into a plastic container in the garage. One Thursday night, I went out there to toss in a few dead soldiers and saw that this container, which had been empty on Monday night, was now almost full. And since I was the only one in the house who drank Miller Lite—Holy shit, I'm an alcoholic, I thought, and there was no dissenting opinion from inside my head—I was, after all, the guy who had written *The Shining* without even realizing (at least until that night) that I was writing about myself. My reaction to this idea wasn't denial or disagreement; it was what I'd call frightened determination.

—STEPHEN KING

Author of over fifty novels selling more than 350 million copies<sup>3</sup>

As we mentioned in “Getting Started,” this book was designed for you to read and implement over 30 days. We have repeatedly found that people who are serious about cutting back or quitting drinking will experience the greatest likelihood of success by completing one solution a day for 30 consecutive days.

Mike, a graduate of The 30-Day Sobriety Solution, discovered how effective it was for him to have a solution a day to turn to. He would come home every day from work and have the urge to drink, but instead of giving in to that urge, he would dive into that day’s solution. So instead of going to happy hour, he replaced that with doing the program.

We have also found that a couple of alternatives can work just as well, including completing a solution every two or three days. The key to being successful is to decide the frequency that works best for you, and then hold yourself accountable for following through with that discipline. In fact, research has shown that you are more likely to follow through with something if you have set up a structured plan of action.<sup>4</sup>

For example, if you plan to complete this program in 30 days, you need to set aside approximately forty-five minutes to an hour each day, which at first might sound like a lot of time. However, put it into perspective by thinking about the amount of time that you used to spend drinking every week. Often, the time you spent thinking about drinking, planning the next drinking event, doing the actual drinking, and then recovering from your drinking adds up to far more than an hour a day. Some of our graduates have shared that simply cutting out or cutting down their time spent on social media websites was more than enough to free up the necessary time to complete the program.

To help you succeed, we have created three email lists that you can join for free and that will help you complete The 30-Day Sobriety Solution in either 30, 60, or 90 days. For example, if you sign up for the 30-day list, you will receive an email every day for 30 days that briefly outlines that day’s content and provides links to optional online resources. If you select the 60- or 90-day option, you will receive an email every second day or every third day. You can even track your progress and what you completed each day. We strongly recommend you use this free support system to keep you on track. To sign up for one of these email support systems, simply go to <http://Day1.Solutions>.

## **Can You Ever Drink Again?**

I found myself drinking two bottles of wine on the couch and said, “Jada, I think we’ve got a problem here.” From that day on, I went cold turkey. I haven’t had a drink in eight years.

—JADA PINKETT SMITH

Actor and singer-songwriter<sup>5</sup>

We are always asked two questions when working with people in The 30-Day Sobriety Solution: “Can I ever drink again?” and “Do I need to quit drinking right now?”

Cutting back is a viable option for some people, as proven by past graduates who were able to achieve a take-it-or-leave-it attitude toward alcohol; in addition, numerous studies have confirmed that cutting back works for some people.<sup>6</sup>



Nonetheless, in order for you to become a social drinker, you will need to abstain from alcohol for at least 30 days. In a minute, we will discuss the magic of 30 days and why this minimum period of time is necessary for making any profound change in your life.

But you do not have to stop drinking completely today. In fact, we often tell people we work with to pick a time during the first week when they will stop drinking. However, the caveat is that you must not be under the influence of alcohol while reading this book and completing the exercises. For example, during the first week, many clients complete the program during the day, before having anything to drink.

Most importantly, depending on how much you drink, we must remind you that quitting drinking abruptly can be dangerous. Daily excessive drinkers, such as those who drink around a fifth or a liter of hard liquor a day, can experience life-threatening seizures when they quit drinking all of a sudden. So please be sure to consult a doctor before you quit.

If you decide to quit later in the first week, do not “go all out” in the days leading up to that moment. For instance, do not suddenly decide to drink twice as much as you usually do by making the excuse that you want to “make the most” of the last time that you drink. Anytime that you increase your use of a mind-altering substance, bad things can happen. You make poor decisions, drive when you should not, or drink so much that you pass out (and if you pass out lying on your back, you risk asphyxiation). Because no one knows your drinking habit like you do, be smart about how you go about quitting.

Also, our experience has shown us that cutting back works for only a very small percentage of problem drinkers. Don’t worry today about whether or not you are in this minority because, right now, you cannot know. On Day 30 we will address this question in far more detail, but for now, simply understand that you need to quit drinking completely for at least 30 days, even if only cutting back is your goal. If you are doing this program to be reinspired in your recovery, you may find the mention of a cutting-back option upsetting. We understand and respect this point of view and ask only that you don’t let your belief about this hold you back from moving forward with this program. The 30-Day Sobriety Solution can help you enrich your life in recovery and ensure your continuing success.

Last, we want to share with you a definition of sobriety: “moderation in or abstinence from consumption of alcoholic liquor or use of drugs.”<sup>7</sup> We use the word sobriety throughout this program; however, we want to be clear that the use of this word does not exclude those who desire to only cut back. Although some dictionaries define sobriety as complete abstinence, we prefer this definition because it isn’t important if you drink or abstain, as long as alcohol no longer has a negative impact on your life and you can drink responsibly.

## **The 30-Day Reboot**

I haven’t gone back to drinking, and the thought of ever having another hangover gives me chills. I feel great, and I can’t believe that I wasted a lot of my life trying to avoid life.

—MATT

30-Day Graduate from Kansas City, Missouri

At this point, you may be wondering what is so special about 30 days. In their book *The Answer: Your Guide to Achieving Financial Freedom and Living an Extraordinary Life*, John Assaraf and Murray Smith describe an experiment conducted by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration that demonstrates

why it takes 25 to 30 days to successfully reprogram the brain.<sup>8</sup> NASA was preparing to send astronauts into space and wanted to determine the mental and physical long-term effects of disorientation that the human brain and body experienced in zero gravity. It created goggles with convex lenses that turned everything upside down. Then it picked several subjects, who wore the goggles twenty-four hours a day for several weeks and attempted to function as normally as possible during this time, including eating, reading, and working, all while seeing the world upside down.

After 25 to 30 days, an amazing thing happened. One by one, the subjects started to see things right side up while still wearing the goggles. Effectively, their brains formed enough new neural connections to re-create reality in a more useful way.

The results of this experiment really are astonishing. The brain, after a few short weeks, “rewired” itself to ensure that one could not only survive but even thrive in a new environment. So, how long do you have to do something new to really change how you think—but not just to change how you think, but to actually change the neural connections in your brain to facilitate such a change in thinking? This study shows that such a change can occur in as little as three to four weeks.

Why does this matter? The bottom line is that you take daily action. We have outlined daily actions for you throughout The 30-Day Sobriety Solution, so that you can truly change the way you think and act for the long term. However, if you don’t take regular, repeated action to implement the solutions in this book, you will greatly reduce your chance to succeed.

We call this concept the 30-Day Reboot. By taking the positive action laid out in this program, including 30 days of abstinence, you are essentially “rebooting” your system. Whether your goal is to cut back or quit drinking or simply to get reinspired in your recovery, this 30-Day Reboot will provide you with the foundation you need for sobriety.

## **Your Destiny Is the Consequences of Your Daily Decisions**

It is in your moments of decision that your destiny is shaped.

—TONY ROBBINS

World-renowned speaker and author of *Awaken the Giant Within*

Our goal for this program and our promise to you is to provide you with all of the information, inspiration, tools, and techniques that you need to recover, reclaim, and reinvent your life without alcohol, or, as we like to say, to thrive in sobriety.

We want sobriety to become second nature to you, so that the idea of taking a drink rarely enters your mind. And even when the thought of drinking does occur, it will seem more like an echo from an old habit and time rather than a serious consideration. We also want to be clear: we cannot help you achieve this goal without your commitment and desire. We are here today asking to be your role models, coaches, and mentors on your road to reclaiming your life from alcohol. We are asking you to make the decision today to change your life and your self-destructive relationship with alcohol. Give yourself a gift today: the gift of making a clear decision to get and stay sober—the gift of committing to work for as long as it takes to learn how to thrive in sobriety.

This clarity in your decision making will give you the power to produce the results that you really want.

Here's a little secret. When you fully commit to thriving in sobriety, the answers you seek come a lot more quickly than you could ever expect. Some of the greatest moments in life come when we make very clear, committed decisions. This is one of those moments.

Your destiny is the consequences of your daily decisions. Read this sentence a few times and make sure it really sinks in. Remember, even when you do not make a decision, you just made a decision. You decided not to decide. So why not make a decision that empowers you? Today, make that choice to move toward your new future—one in which alcohol no longer defines who you are.

## **The 100% Solution**

Ninety-nine percent commitment is not possible. We are either 100% or not committed at all. I was amazed to discover this, because I had made a lifestyle out of tepid commitments that turned out to be noncommitments. I was just conning myself that I was partly committed. I had adapted to the pain of early rejection with the decision “Don’t play.” If I didn’t play, I wouldn’t have to face losing. And if I were forced to play, I could always play halfheartedly. If I lost, I could say it didn’t matter, because I wasn’t trying. It took me many years to realize that I wasn’t even in the game if I was not committed. My body might have been out on the field, but my soul was on the bench. Soulless play is worse than no play at all.

—GAY HENDRICKS

Author of *Conscious Living: Finding Joy in the Real World*

If you want to cut back or quit drinking, and if you truly want to thrive in sobriety and life, you must choose to take 100% responsibility for all your life experiences, including the quality of your relationships, your health, your accomplishments, your failures, your debts, your physical state, your feelings, and, most importantly, your drinking habits.

This is not easy! No one really wants to do it. It’s easier and more convenient to blame someone else—the weather, your horoscope, your friends, your husband or wife, your parents, your children, your lack of finances, your boss, your colleagues, the economy, or even the people who make, serve, and sell alcohol. We are afraid to acknowledge the real source of our problem—ourselves.

The truth is that you, and only you, are responsible for the quality of your life. This is the core idea on which this book is built.

Many years ago, Dr. Robert Resnick, a psychotherapist in Los Angeles, taught us a very simple but very important formula that has had a profound effect on our lives and work. It is a core principle we have taught to hundreds of thousands of people around the world that clarifies what 100% responsibility really means:

**E (Event) + R (Response) = O (Outcome)**

Every outcome you experience in life—sobriety or alcoholism, excessive drinking or “normal” drinking, financial success or poverty, health or sickness, happiness or dissatisfaction—is the result of how you have responded to an earlier event or events in your life. The formula states that if you don’t like the outcomes you are experiencing in your life today, you have two options:

1. You can blame the event (E) for your lack of results (O). In other words, you can blame anything and

everything else: the presence of a liquor store and bar on every corner, your lack of education, racism, not having enough money, your friends, your family's drinking history, your past failed attempts at quitting drinking, the death of a loved one, losing your job, and so on. Without a doubt, these factors exist. But if any one of them was so absolute in deciding how your life would unfold, nobody would ever succeed. Actor Robert Downey Jr. would never have finally gotten sober to star in the Iron Man movies, Jackie Robinson would never have become the first African American to play major league baseball, and Samuel L. Jackson would not have become one of the top-ten-grossing actors of all time after the age of forty (after he went to rehab and got sober).

For every difficult circumstance in which someone ended up failing, thousands of other people faced the same circumstance and succeeded. The external conditions and circumstances are not stopping you—you are stopping yourself!

2. Or you can change your responses (R) to the events (E)—the way things are—until you get the outcomes (O) you want. You can't change the past, but you can change how you respond to the past. To do this, you must regain control of your thoughts, your beliefs, your desires, and, ultimately, your actions. You need to stop responding to events by drinking, whether it is drinking to celebrate, drinking to forget, or drinking to socialize, and respond with thoughts and actions that are aligned with your values, goals, and purpose. Don't worry. We know this is easier said than done. We will give you the tools and techniques you need to regain control of your thoughts and choose more effective actions.

## **You Have to Give Up All Blaming**

All blame is a waste of time. No matter how much fault you find with another, and regardless of how much you blame him, it will not change you.

—WAYNE DYER

Author of *Your Erroneous Zones*

As long as you continue to blame something or someone else for your lack of accomplishments in any area of your life, you will never become successful. This concept is particularly critical to your drinking. It is easy to outsource the blame to someone or something else because change is scary. It is far easier to place blame instead of taking responsibility and risking the uncertainty and discomfort of facing the unknown. Most importantly, blaming others takes away your power to make any lasting change.

If you are going to cut back or quit drinking for good and continue to stay inspired once you are sober, you have to acknowledge the truth—that you are the one who thought the thoughts, created the feelings, made the choices, and took the actions that got you to where you are now.

## **You Have to Stop All Your Complaining**

The man who complains about the way the ball bounces is likely the one who dropped it.

—LOU HOLTZ

Legendary college football coach

Everyone complains, but why? If you complain about someone or something, you must believe that there is someone or something better. If you didn't actually believe that something better was possible in your life—more friends, more money, a larger house, a more fulfilling job or career, more joy, a more loving spouse—you wouldn't complain. In your mind, you have a picture or an image of what you prefer because it's better. And you know you would prefer that something better, but you aren't willing to take the risks that are required to create it.

Let this really sink in. Every circumstance you complain about is something that you can change but have chosen not to. Problem drinking is a perfect example of this. You have the ability to cut back or quit drinking; however, you have to accept that doing this requires you to change.

So why haven't you changed yet? It's because it involves risks—you run the risk of being bored, not being liked, being ridiculed and judged by other "normal drinkers," or not being able to deal easily with stress or the uncomfortable feelings that might come up. You also run the risk of failure, and of disappointing (yet again) your parents, your friends, your spouse, or your children if you fail.

Making a change might be a struggle and take extra effort, time, and money that you don't think you have. Making a change might be distressing, unnerving, and unpleasant. So, instead of experiencing any of these uncomfortable feelings, you avoid taking any risks and stay put and complain about your situation. And, of course, you drink. You drink and complain to anyone that will listen. You drink to numb out your uncomfortable feelings.

In order to grow, you need to make the decision to stop complaining and to stop spending time with complainers, and get on with creating the life of your dreams.

## **99% Is a Bitch, 100% Is a Breeze**

There is a difference between interest and commitment. When you're interested in doing something, you do it only when it's convenient. When you're committed to something, you accept no excuses, only results.

—KEN BLANCHARD

Coauthor of *The One Minute Manager*

One of the most important components of the 100% Solution is the No-Exceptions Rule. This rule means that once you are 100% committed, there are no exceptions and no renegotiating. Not only does this rule make life easier and simpler, it frees you from inner conflict. Instead of internally debating over and over about whether you will or won't do something, like drinking, your decision is already made. The real power and value from this come from all the energy you can now redirect to focus on what you actually want to create and accomplish in your life.

However, the moment your commitment drops to 99%, you open the door for the internal debate to begin, and when it comes to alcohol, this is a debate that usually ends in a rationalization to drink again.

Think about this from another perspective. Have you ever been somewhere where you knew there was absolutely no way you could drink? For example, you went somewhere where no one was drinking and no alcohol was available, and the option was 100% closed off to sneak in any alcohol or even have a single drink. What was your reaction? Most likely, leading up to the event, you were annoyed; but when you got there, you accepted it and found that you were not obsessing about drinking. Why? Because you knew

without question the option didn't exist, so you didn't even start down the "what-if" path of whether you should drink. When you commit 100%, you create "the-option-doesn't-exist" event in your life every day. But when you are less than 100% committed and times get tough, you end up giving in to your cravings.

Here's Dave's story of his last drink and how this led him to apply the 100% Solution to his life:

I remember the last time I drank as if it happened yesterday. It was a warm and humid day just outside of Seattle. I had just flown in from Denver for a week of technical training for my job. I had forty-two days of sobriety, was going to Alcoholics Anonymous, and even had a sponsor. As soon as I got into my rental car, I felt this overwhelming shift inside, and all of a sudden my craving for alcohol reached an all-time high.

I called my sponsor and was able to refrain from drinking that first night, but the obsession was growing. The moment I stepped out of that first day of training, I knew that I was going to find the nearest liquor store and start drinking. With a liter of Captain Morgan rum and a liter of Absolut vodka in hand, I planned to drink that night, without question, and likely every night that week. What I did not know was how life-threatening that week would end up being for me.

My first night of drinking was uneventful, and I made it to my training session the next day. But all I could think about during the training was my next drink. Once I returned to my hotel room, I immediately started drinking again. Because of my previous stint with sobriety, and the fact that I was drinking more than usual because I wanted to "make the most of my drinking freedom," I woke up with a severe hangover and puked—something that I rarely did. I skipped the training that day, and by noon, I was feeling better and started drinking again. The previous two days seemed to be just a warm-up, because from noon to nine that night, I drank excessively. The last thing I remember from that evening was watching the television show *So You Think You Can Dance* while lying in bed, slightly propped up on my back.

The next morning, I awoke with vomit all over my clothes, the floor, and the bathroom. At that moment, I knew I was lucky to be alive. I suddenly recalled all the stories that I had heard about people who'd asphyxiated while intoxicated. I remember looking at myself in the mirror and barely recognizing the person staring back at me—overweight, face bloated, and puffy-eyed. I knew that if I did not commit 100% to getting sober at that moment, I might not have another chance.

The evening of August 15, 2007, was the last time I ever drank. That moment also marked the culmination of almost eighteen years of excessive drinking. This story represents the importance of the 100% Solution. Not until this last experience did I truly become committed to getting sober. I was finally ready to stop blaming and complaining about why I could not get sober, and I owned up to the truth—that I had complete control over my life and my decisions. It was also the first time in my life when I committed 100% instead of 99%. If I had been 100% committed to staying sober when I arrived in Seattle, the thought of drinking might still have entered my mind, and the craving might not have instantly disappeared, but the internal debate in my head never would have started because my decision would have already been made. That is the power of 100% commitment—while it might be challenging, it makes life far less complicated.

Today drinking represents to me total and complete pain, and sobriety represents absolute pleasure. The thought of drinking is the equivalent of causing great physical and mental harm to myself. I know that you might find this difficult to believe, depending on the stage you are at, but this program will show you, step by step, exactly how I and others got sober and went on to be truly happy and successful.

## **The Myth of “Rock Bottom”**

I was lost. Emotionally lost, physically lost, mentally lost. I didn’t know where to turn or what to do. Part of my problem, although I didn’t know it yet, was denial.

—JOSH HAMILTON

American League Baseball MVP, author of *Beyond Belief: Finding the Strength to Come Back*, and in recovery from alcohol and drugs<sup>10</sup>

You often hear about an alcoholic needing to hit “rock bottom” before getting sober. In reality, the rock bottom that everyone envisions—the homeless drunk begging for money on the street—is not close to the real meaning of hitting rock bottom. Have you wondered why some people can drink normally, but you don’t seem to be able to? One reason is because others define their rock bottom very differently than you do. For example, “normal” drinkers might go out once every six months, drink too much, feel miserable, and say, “I will never do that again.” That was their rock bottom, and they simply chose not to allow alcohol to play a more significant role in their lives.

By embracing the 100% Solution, you are acknowledging that you have reached your rock bottom and that you will no longer allow alcohol to play a controlling role in your life—you will no longer live in denial. Because “rock bottom” is whatever you decide to make it, you can decide now that you have suffered all of the negative consequences that you are ever willing to suffer from drinking—that today you have hit your rock bottom.

There is a great analogy we love to share. We often ask the people we work with if they shoplift. The answer is almost always no. We then follow up with the question “Do you have a debate with yourself about shoplifting when you are in a store and you see the perfect opportunity to get away with it?” Of course, the answer is still no, and the reason is simple. If you are 100% opposed to stealing, then you never engage in a debate on whether or not to steal. But if you did have a history of shoplifting and you had never committed 100% never to steal again, when the opportunity presented itself, the internal debate of whether or not to steal could start. And once the debate has started, especially when it’s related to an addictive behavior, the ability to say no is much more difficult.

So when you decide that you have hit your rock bottom, you will have reached that empowered 100% attitude, and you will stop wasting time and energy debating about when, where, and how much you will be drinking. Instead, when the thought to drink enters your mind, you won’t even entertain the debate because you are now 100% committed to not drinking.

## **Why Do You Drink?**

No matter how many negative consequences I suffered or how many times I promised to quit drinking, I always returned back to my drink of choice—wine. The 30-Day Sobriety Solution finally changed all of that. Every solution seemed to bring me more clarity and wisdom about why I was drinking, and as I worked through the exercises, I was able to solve what was really driving me to drink.

—NATHALIE

30-Day Graduate from Winnipeg, Canada

We have some great news for you! Contrary to what you might believe, you do not have a problem with alcohol, which is exactly why we don't like to use the words alcoholism and alcoholic.

We use "problem drinker," "excessive drinker," and other terminology rather than alcoholic because this word has negative connotations for most people. Given what we know about the brain and self-actualization, labeling yourself an alcoholic can ultimately be counterproductive to thriving in sobriety.

So if your problem is not with alcohol, what is your problem? Simply put, drinking alcohol is the symptom of a deeper problem, or what is often referred to as a symptomatic behavior. The real problem is why you use. The deceased actor Patrick Swayze discussed this in his book *The Time of My Life*: "In all my life, I never drank for the sake of drinking; it was always a response to some kind of emotional difficulty I was going through. Drinking for me was a symptom of a problem, not the problem itself."<sup>11</sup>

Drinking alcohol is the symptom, and the real problem lies elsewhere. Although various programs and therapists discuss this point, they often do not state it as clearly as it should be stated. Alcohol abuse, drug addiction, overeating, and other compulsive negative behaviors are responses to one of a variety of factors in your life.

For example, the average American watches almost five hours of TV a day.<sup>12</sup> If you're watching too much TV, what is the real problem? The TV itself is not the problem; the reason you watch TV is the problem. You watch too much TV because you are bored, you want to live the lives of the people on the shows rather than your own life, or you believe it helps reduce your stress or distract you from your feelings. The same is true for your drinking. The alcohol itself is not the problem—the reason you drink is the problem.

Part of the challenge with cutting back or quitting drinking is that people often become too focused on stopping their drinking instead of understanding and identifying why they drink, and then changing that reason. Addressing the underlying causes of why you drink is a critical component to stopping your desire to drink in the first place or, equally important, your desire to switch your problem drinking to some other addictive behavior. If you simply attempt to cut back or quit drinking without addressing your why, you will only go down the path of manifesting other addictive behaviors. Even if you do manage to stop your addictive behavior but fail to work on the "why," you will likely not be very fulfilled in life.

## **"You Can't Hire Someone Else to Do Your Push-ups for You!"**



If you want to see the benefits from doing anything of value in life, you have to do it yourself. As Jim Rohn, pioneering success coach and motivational expert, states, "You can't hire someone else to do your push-ups for you." No one else can do it for you. We can show you the way, but you will have to do the work. You can choose to embrace the solutions and the action steps, even if you have some doubt, or you can choose to always look for reasons and rationalizations for why what we are teaching won't work for you.

We are not saying that every single solution will be a perfect fit for you, and you may choose to disregard some of them; however, as one 30-Day Graduate shares below, you will find some solutions that will work wonders for you:

What I love about The 30-Day Sobriety Solution is that it gives dozens, if not hundreds, of tools and techniques you can use to help you get sober. In Day 1 it acknowledges that everyone is unique, and that is why some solutions result in incredible breakthroughs for one person but not for another. I found this



statement refreshingly honest, and logical, and experienced that most of the solutions really helped me to “thrive in sobriety.” And the few that I didn’t get as much value from, I simply didn’t integrate into my life beyond the program.

Another 30-Day Graduate said that she felt like she opened up a “supercharged Craftsman tool kit of things to use for sobriety,” and as a result, she started seeing amazing shifts happen within only the first two weeks. For the first time in her life, she was able to say, “I don’t see myself drinking. I don’t see choosing feeling the way I felt before when I know I can feel like this.” The solutions that do work for you will change your relationship with drinking for the rest of your life, as long as you embrace them with passion, purpose, and a positive expectation.

## **A Vote for Living**

The thing I really like about The 30-Day Sobriety Solution is that it’s focused on getting you to thrive in sobriety and getting you really excited about it. Up until I found The 30-Day Sobriety Solution, it always seemed like to conquer alcohol I needed to have a boring and somewhat painful life that would not involve much with social activities. And that I probably would be committing myself to life with not much fun. But The 30-Day Sobriety Solution actually got me excited about being sober.

—ANN

30-Day Graduate from New York City

You are now ready for your first exercise, which we refer to as an action step. Assuming you’ve already gotten approval from your health care professional to quit drinking, this first one is optional, especially if you already have some extended sobriety. But don’t get used to action steps being optional. We recommend that you schedule an appointment with your qualified health professional to get your standard blood work, weight, blood pressure, and other vital signs measured.

This is important for two reasons. First, the people we have helped often have two things in common: they are great at rationalizing that they do not have a problem with drinking—at least most of the time. Second, health-related consequences of excessive drinking are some of the most common and the most difficult to hide from because your blood work does not lie.

Dave’s blood work tests showed the typical bad numbers for his liver, the fats known as triglycerides, and other indicators that go hand in hand with a drinking problem. Every time Dave got his blood work done, the doctor asked him the same question: “How much do you drink?” His temporary solution was to lie to the doctor about how much he was actually drinking, and then to eventually switch doctors—or to simply not go at all. He rationalized that drinking was okay, but ultimately he could not overcome his fears about his alcohol abuse cutting his life short, and particularly how that would affect his two young daughters.

Another reason for getting a physical is that by going to the doctor, you are taking a stand and telling the world that you want to survive and that you are making an effort in that direction, which is a vote for living. And this is one vote you don’t want to miss. So as soon as you stop reading this, pick up the phone and schedule an appointment with your doctor or qualified health professional to get a complete physical and blood panel.

The photos of Dave below show him before and after sobriety, and indicate what is possible by completing The 30-Day Sobriety Solution. Our graduates consistently report very similar results, and these dramatic

outer physical changes are a manifestation of the inner changes that also occur as a result of the program.



Dave Andrews in 2006 and Dave Andrews after getting sober and completing the Denver Marathon with Bill Phillips (bestselling author of *Body for Life: 12 Weeks to Mental and Physical Strength*).

## **The Heart of The 30-Day Sobriety Solution**

Through the 30-Day solutions and action steps, I was able to deal with and overcome many issues in my life that in the past I had to mask with alcohol. Fully grasping the concept of being excited about life and having the gratitude for it propelled me into areas of my life I had never been to or even knew were possible to reach within myself.

—DESIREE

30-Day Graduate from Harare, Zimbabwe

The heart of The 30-Day Sobriety Solution can be summed up in one word: action.

When you read the solutions, we would love to be able to say to you, “Just think about the answer, and you will be on your way to thriving in sobriety.” However, the reality is that you have likely spent years “strengthening” your dependence on alcohol. To reverse this, you must take the time to actually complete the action steps at the end of each day’s solution, and, most importantly, this includes writing down your answers. Something happens when the ink (whether real ink or “electronic ink,” if you are using a computer, smartphone, or tablet) hits the “paper.”

Believe us when we tell you that our clients have tried to prove us wrong on this. However, once we convinced them to start journaling and writing down the answers to the action steps and their notes on the content covered, they began to see real change happen. Several powerful things happen when you put your thoughts on paper.

First, you remove ambiguity and gain clarity. Your thoughts can be unorganized and unclear, but putting them on paper forces you—in many ways—to get clearer, and clarity is incredibly powerful. Second, writing things down removes the thoughts from your head, essentially freeing your mind and reducing your inner conflict and clutter. Your brain knows it can now release some of those thoughts because you have written them down. Third, writing things down engages more of your senses, which is extremely powerful. When you write things down, you are physically taking action, and you experience visually what you have written. Simply, writing is the doing part of thinking.

You might be asking, “What if someone reads my personal thoughts without my permission?” Trust us, we understand your fears related to writing down the details of your personal thoughts and feelings, and how violated, ashamed, or embarrassed you might feel if someone discovered and read them. Our recommendation is to find a safe place to record and store your writing. For example, you can use Google or Hotmail documents, which allows you to create and store Word documents online that are protected by your user name and password. You can even set up a new account just for your writing activity. Alternatively, if you really like the touch and feel of a physical journal, you can get one just for this program and keep it hidden and locked. On the companion website,<sup>13</sup> we provide these various journaling solutions, as well as

the results of a research study that proves the incredible value of journaling.

To further understand the importance of writing in your journal (and completing each day's action steps), look at the Cone of Learning, developed by American educationist Edgar Dale. The Cone of Learning shows the effects of different kinds of learning on human memory. Simply stated, the more you engage actively in the learning process, the more you will retain. If you only read the solutions but don't do the exercises and don't experience any of the material in any other way, you will end up remembering only about 10 percent of it two weeks later. That will not make a huge impact on your cutting back or quitting drinking.

## **The Cone of Learning**

I see and I forget.

I hear and I remember.

I do and I Understand.

—Confucius



We have therefore created a companion website for each solution that will help make sure the solutions work for you by involving you in written exercises, guided visualizations, supplemental audio content, and more. The bottom line is that the more fully you engage in this program with all of the exercises and resources, the more fully you will experience the transformations you are seeking. The impact will be much more powerful than if you only read the material. And here is the best part: it doesn't take a lot of time to do the writing exercises and other activities that are in the book and on the website. You can do all of this work in the same amount of time that you might have spent at happy hour or while partying over a weekend.

## **Day 1 Action Steps**

The money I saved from not drinking well exceeded the cost of The 30-Day Sobriety Solution, but the changes it helped me make in my life were priceless.

—ROBERT

30-Day Graduate from Vienna, Austria

At the end of every day's solution, we will summarize the action steps that we covered. You can choose to do them as you go or wait until the end of the chapter. We recommend that you do them at a time when you will most likely follow through. For example, you may feel that stopping and doing the first action step when it is first presented for the day propels you forward to complete the other ones, or you might feel that you need to read the entire chapter before doing any of the action steps. Unless we mention that an action step is optional, it is required because it is essential for your success in this program. You may need to access the free companion website for some of these action steps; however, reading the additional content and resources on the site is optional. They are just there for additional support if you want to go deeper.

One of the benefits of the companion website is that it allows us to give you a wide range of content, such as

new breakthrough research, additional success stories, specially recorded videos from experts, online tools and resources, and multimedia content that we otherwise could not deliver.

If you prefer listening over reading, we highly recommend purchasing the audio version of the book, which is integrated seamlessly with the companion website for ease of use. Many of our graduates have told us that listening to the material was effective and enjoyable for them because they could take notes easily and be more engaged in the content. If you are interested in finding out more about this, simply visit the companion website for today's solution at <http://Day1.Solutions>.

Now let's review today's action steps:

- Start a journal. Whether you keep an online journal using Google Docs or Hotmail SkyDrive or a physical journal, start one right now. In your journal, write down your answers to the exercises, your thoughts on the content for the day, and your progress and setbacks along your path to thriving in sobriety. Remember, you don't need to worry about grammar or spelling in your journal, but you do want to write in it every day, even when there isn't an action step that tells you specifically to do so. If you have chosen to do this in 60 or 90 days, you still need to write in your journal daily. The same is true for all "daily" action steps in future solutions.
- Decide your time frame. Choose whether you will finish this program in 30, 60, or 90 days and then sign up for a free email reminder on the companion website to help keep you accountable. Then decide the day during the first week of this program on which you will quit drinking for at least 30 days. Write this date in your new journal. And decide right now that you are 100% committed to this plan and write it down in your journal.
- Begin to use the equation  $E + R = O$  in your life. Simply begin to pay attention to moments when you are complaining about or blaming an event rather than focusing on creating a new response that can change the outcome.
- Capture the "before you." Take a photo of yourself, or find a good recent "before" photo of yourself, and then schedule a visit to the doctor or health professional's office to get your blood work done (this last part is optional). You will be amazed at the end of 30 days how much sobriety can make your face look years younger and bring back the sparkle in your eyes.
- Listen to the Time Travel Technique. Through all of the coaching we have done and the feedback we have received, this guided exercise, which can be found on the companion website, has proven to create incredible leverage, clarity, and purpose. It is critical you do this exercise. One 30-Day Graduate shared with us, "In Day 1 of The 30-Day Sobriety Solution, I did the Time Travel Technique, which was life changing. This process gave me a level of clarity around my drinking that I had never experienced before. I finally knew, and accepted, that continuing to drink was going to keep me from everything I wanted in life, and sobriety was going to lead to true happiness and fulfillment." Immediately after you finish listening to the Time Travel Technique, write about your experience in your new journal.

Congratulations! You have just finished the longest chapter in the book. We promise the remaining solutions are much shorter. Be sure to access the companion website for the Time Travel Technique, to sign up for your free email reminders, and to find out more about this program, at <http://Day1.Solutions>.

## **Users Review**

### **From reader reviews:**

#### **Maribel Davenport:**

The book *The 30-Day Sobriety Solution: How to Cut Back or Quit Drinking in the Privacy of Your Own Home* make you feel enjoy for your spare time. You can use to make your capable considerably more increase. Book can for being your best friend when you getting anxiety or having big problem with your subject. If you can make reading through a book *The 30-Day Sobriety Solution: How to Cut Back or Quit Drinking in the Privacy of Your Own Home* being your habit, you can get much more advantages, like add your own personal capable, increase your knowledge about a number of or all subjects. You could know everything if you like open up and read a guide *The 30-Day Sobriety Solution: How to Cut Back or Quit Drinking in the Privacy of Your Own Home*. Kinds of book are several. It means that, science guide or encyclopedia or other individuals. So , how do you think about this book?

#### **Douglas Dossett:**

Book is to be different for every grade. Book for children until adult are different content. As you may know that book is very important for people. The book *The 30-Day Sobriety Solution: How to Cut Back or Quit Drinking in the Privacy of Your Own Home* ended up being making you to know about other know-how and of course you can take more information. It is quite advantages for you. The guide *The 30-Day Sobriety Solution: How to Cut Back or Quit Drinking in the Privacy of Your Own Home* is not only giving you a lot more new information but also to become your friend when you really feel bored. You can spend your own personal spend time to read your reserve. Try to make relationship while using book *The 30-Day Sobriety Solution: How to Cut Back or Quit Drinking in the Privacy of Your Own Home*. You never really feel lose out for everything when you read some books.

#### **Rachel Leadbetter:**

People live in this new time of lifestyle always try and and must have the spare time or they will get lot of stress from both way of life and work. So , when we ask do people have spare time, we will say absolutely yes. People is human not just a robot. Then we consult again, what kind of activity are you experiencing when the spare time coming to an individual of course your answer will probably unlimited right. Then ever try this one, reading textbooks. It can be your alternative within spending your spare time, the actual book you have read is actually *The 30-Day Sobriety Solution: How to Cut Back or Quit Drinking in the Privacy of Your Own Home*.

#### **John Gravatt:**

A lot of publication has printed but it is unique. You can get it by web on social media. You can choose the most beneficial book for you, science, witty, novel, or whatever through searching from it. It is referred to as of book *The 30-Day Sobriety Solution: How to Cut Back or Quit Drinking in the Privacy of Your Own Home*. You can contribute your knowledge by it. Without causing the printed book, it can add your knowledge and make you happier to read. It is most critical that, you must aware about e-book. It can bring

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