

73. The Fun Five Series - Alcohol



5 Reasons to Quit Alcohol After Stroke is Part 5 and the final interview in a series of 5 interviews recorded with Stacey and Matty Turner from www.TheChiefLife.com about the 5 foods to avoid after stroke.

Stacey is a qualified Nutritionist and Matty is a Personal Trainer. Together we discuss how decreasing alcohol consumption can support healing for all people whether they are recovering from stroke or not.

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Stacey 0:00

How your friends respond tells you a lot about whether they're actually your friends. You know, we try to surround ourselves with people who bring out the best in us and lift us up the same way that we want to lift them up.

Stacey 0:10

So if you do find that people aren't really supporting these decisions then maybe they're not the people you should be spending your time with and that can be again another like punch in the face with some people to go all these are people I've known for years. Like I can't remove myself from the social group. But you can.

Intro 0:29

This is recovery after stroke with Bill Gasiamis, helping you go from where you are to where you'd rather be.

Bill 0:38

Bill from recoveryafterstroke.com This is Episode 73. And part five of the fun five series with MattyTurner, who is a performance coach and Stacey Turner, who is a nutritionist. In this episode we'll be talking about alcohol and why stroke survivors should avoid alcohol to help heal their brain after stroke here's a little fun fact about the word alcohol and where it comes from.

Al-kuhl

Bill 1:08

If you type in the word alcohol into Google and you ask Google, where does the term originate from or where does it come from? Apparently, Al-kuhl is the Arabic word from which alcohol is derived in its Arabic translation. Al-kuhl means body eating spirit.

Bill 1:29

Now that's interesting that that's what it means in Arabic, and that the word alcohol is something that we use every day. If it's a body eating spirit, then imagine what it's doing to our brain.

Bill 1:42

We've already spoken about sugar. We've already spoken about gluten, we've already spoken about caffeine, and we've already spoken about dairy. And today we're going to speak about alcohol and this is one of the real big ones I feel.

Bill 1:59

And the reason I feel is that when somebody experiences a stroke in Australia, and I'm sure it's the same around the world, but the National Stroke Foundation, if they managed to bump into that person in the process of going through getting help in hospital or rehabilitation, they'll offer them a flyer.

Bill 2:20

And that flyer says one of the things you should not consume, while recovering from a brain injury is alcohol. And I kind of realized that before I heard the official response from someone like the Stroke Foundation, and went ahead and did that.

Bill 2:40

And when I looked into it and researched it shared the information that I learned with other stroke survivors, and you wouldn't believe it. That really pissed them off, because what I seem to do was tap into some kind of a further, deeper, more emotional kind of connection to this thing called alcohol.

Bill 3:08

Which up until then may have been their friend. But now it really isn't. So I know that alcohol affects the brain, but let's just talk generally, about how does alcohol affect the body?

Stacey 3:22

Yeah, well, Bill, I think you've hit the nail on the head there because it's almost like talking to somebody about nutrition in general or even religion, you know, or politics.

Stacey 3:31

It's a very controversial topic when you start to especially in Australia, and I think growing up in the UK, I saw it there there's a big alcohol culture. And if you, you

know, start to explain why it might not be such a good idea for people to have these things. It's almost like you're taking away their gift, or their baby

Matty 3:51

I think the craze in these is built in to the cultures from a young age like you talk about religion, depending on what religion you followed typically, they talk a lot about bread and wine. And so from a young age, people are saying that wine is a drink and the drink that we should be having often based on what say the Bible says, which is kind of crazy in that aspect of itself.

Stacey 4:12

So I guess in terms of how (inaudible) the body, I mean, inflammation has been a buzzword for us throughout this series. And alcohol is another one of those foods or drinks that can highly affect the body in terms of an inflammatory response.

Stacey 4:27

And that can be in any of our systems. So whether that's, you know, our digestive system within our gut, whether that's, in our blood, in our cells, in our brain, it can cause that swelling of the cells, which is not ideal for anyone.

Stacey 4:45

And if people are drinking for many, many years, which most people would be, and sometimes it becomes, I guess, what people would consider alcohol abuse where it's a lot of alcohol.

Chronic Inflammation

Stacey 4:57

And we can define those terms in environment, but you know, it can really lead to chronic inflammation in the body, which can cause a number of awful diseases further down track.

Matty 5:08

It's interesting, like we've got all of these different tracks within our system. So we've got our bones, we've got our digestion system, like the way that our nervous system works.

Stacey 5:18

(inaudible) like all your hormones and everything

Matty 5:20

Like your skin system and all different parts and alcohol actually affects every single one of those. So every single part within the body gets affected. Now, not only that, but it can stay in the body, it is found in the body for up to 90 days.

Matty 5:34

So 90 days within your hair definitely if they're to do tests, on a on a basic level, like breath can stay up to like 12 to 24 hours. Some depending on the cases, sometimes even up to 48 hours within your blood it can stay there.

Matty 5:48

I think about the same sort of time is breath, but it's just kind of crazy to see like it staying in your body for up to 90 days from just having a one drink. Like what's that going to be doing on a cellular level and realistically we know that's not a great thing because it can go in and we talk a lot about the mitochondria, which is like your battery pack.

Matty 6:07

Or the battery of each cell. So the thing that gives you the most energy and it can really affect the way that your cell and your mitochondria actually respond. So it means that pretty much you're not functioning at a top level when you've got alcohol and potentially not for the next 90 days once you've had alcohol as well.

Stacey 6:24

And alcohol can dehydrate the body so not only is it a depressant, most people are aware of they kind of brings things down and slows everything down and relaxes you. That'd be maybe considered some of the things that people think are good thing about alcohol.

Stacey 6:40

But it can be hydrate the body, which is how it affects the mitochondria in that way shriveling them up and stopping them from functioning properly. But then on top of that, it's also toxic, so it's affecting your liver and it's stopping your liver from being able to remove the toxins.

Stacey 6:55

It's slowing down your metabolism and making you store fat rather than burn fat like there's just so many cascade domino effects that happen from drinking alcohol, like kinda seems like this is not really a win.

But it helps me sleep



Bill 7:09

But it helps me sleep doesn't it?

Stacey 7:13

Yeah.

Matty 7:14

Yeah, you would think that so it's actually quite crazy. A lot of the stuff that we think about alcohol is that it actually does a great deal for a mindset. And it's really doing good for us. But what you actually like, if it's a look at your body on a cellular level, it pretty much creates like stress and destruction within the body, which is crazy.

Matty 7:32

So people might say, hey, if I have four drinks, I seem to be able to fall asleep easy. And that's cool because you're able to maybe switch off the mental side.

Matty 7:41

But what happens within your body is that you're creating things like cortisol, which is a stress hormone, so it increases your cortisol, all of a sudden your body is alert, even though you're mentally not alert, you crash out, your body stays in a state where it can never actually fully get into like good deep level of sleep.

Matty 7:58

So once again, you might be sleeping but it's not a well rested sleep, it might just be the thing that actually crashes your brain out from the day but I'd say that at the end there's definitely better methods around that.

Matty 8:11

You can definitely work with other things. Like facing your problems dealing your situations dealing with life to life things without having the alcohol to do it for you.

Stacey 8:20

Yeah, absolutely. And I think also adding on to that being that it's a depressant, it can slow every system down in your body so it will slow your breathing, which means that you're not getting as much oxygen to the brain.

Increase the risk of having osteoporosis

Stacey 8:32

It can increase your risk of osteoporosis. It's just a plethora of crap that can happen to you. (inaudible) I was gonna say it causes a pretty much a shit storm in your body from drinking alcohol. So it's just really something that people should start to educate themselves about a bit more because there are so many factors that you know, it does increase risk of stroke and I guess if you're recovering from stroke.

Stacey 9:04

Then it could increase your risk of repercussions or prevent you from healing properly and fully. So there's just so many reasons why it would be worth you steering clear or decreasing the amount that you're having, depending on where you're at in life.

Bill 9:21

Now if you or someone you know, has experienced a stroke, and are in recovery, you'll know what a scary and confusing time it can be, you're likely to have a lot of questions going through your mind like how long will it take to recover? Will I actually recover?

Bill 9:39

What things should I avoid in case I make matters worse, doctors will explain these things to you. But obviously, because you've never had a stroke before, you might not know what question to ask. If this is you, you may be missing out on doing the things that could help speed up your recovery.

Bill 9:56

If you're finding yourself in that situation. Stop worrying. and head to

recoveryafterstroke.com where you can download a guide that will help you it's called seven questions to ask your doctor about your stroke, they'll not only help you better understand your condition, they'll help you take a more active role in your recovery. Head to the website now recoveryafterstroke.com and download the guide. It's free.

The purpose of sleep

Bill 10:28

So I asked cheeky questions about you know whether it's good for sleeping because I know it's not. And there's a book called why we sleep by Matthew Walker. And that book explains the purpose of sleep and why we need sleep and sleep actually creates an opportunity for the cells to flush toxins out of the brain.

Bill 10:50

That's exactly what sleep does and it does it in certain parts of the sleep cycle. And it does it in you know the part that we do deep sleep in and if we drink alcohol, we're not actually sleeping we're sedating ourselves to, appear like we're sleeping but what we're actually doing is the same thing that anesthetic does when we go into surgery, it's not really a sleep, it's just somehow like it's a it's a suspense of your system to allow you to be awake, it actually just sedate you, it knocks you out.

Bill 11:22

So it's not really restful and interferes with that part of sleep that actually does that part of the flushing of the toxins from the cells out of the brain. As far as the blood vessels are concerned, it causes long term alcohol consumption, as well as abuse causes atherosclerosis.

Bill 11:42

So, if you've had a stroke because the blood vessel burst in your brain, then that is what atherosclerosis causes, it causes the hardening of the blood vessels that become less flexible. And as a result of that, when you have a high blood pressure episode, they're more likely to crack And then have a bleed. So it interferes with so many different parts of the body and it chips away at all those things that make your blood vessels flexible.

Bill 12:14

Like the proteins that we find in collagen, look the proteins that we find in collagen. So it interferes with all those things. It doesn't make you sleep better. In fact, it makes you feel worse when you wake up in the morning, because you have a hangover, you have a headache.

Bill 12:33

There's nothing about it that actually supports healing and recovery. And I know that from myself, because even though we're talking about all these things that people should avoid, I have consumed since my stroke all of these things, but never in the quantities that I did previously.

Bill 12:49

And right now when I have a drink of alcohol, I'll literally have, maybe a quarter of a glass of something. And maybe that'll happen once a month or once every two months, and even when I do drink that, much that small amount, I still feel like I'm having another stroke.

Bill 13:08

Because it impacts the deficits that I have. And it makes them feel worse. And it makes me feel like I'm having a stroke. And, I'm not, but that's what it makes me feel like, I don't see the point in putting myself in that space.

Bill 13:23

And I'll get back to the note that if you're using alcohol, drugs or anything to help you deal with emotional challenges. I know it can be difficult, but the healing is in the emotional challenge work, that's where the healing is.

Bill 13:39

And when you do that, and you're not relying on alcohol to help you sleep, then you're doing proper sleep, which is properly healing your brain and properly dealing with all the inflammation in your head and supporting ongoing recovery.

Matty 13:56

Yeah, that's the hardest person to face up to is always yourself but the easiest person to lie to is also always yourself. So there's a lot of work that can be done just there and there's a lot of help and a lot of different places you can go to and I mean, if you are someone in that need you do need some help then please reach out like we're happy to help I'm sure bill you'd be a definitely good hearing board for that.

Matty 14:17

Because we've gone through this stuff we've gone through the the healing work ourselves, as I know you have based on the podcast that we got to talk about, but it really is a, big space. And I kind of say like the future of people, if we don't deal with that stuff now that the future is not going to be too great because there is an epidemic of like depression coming on.

Matty 14:28

And we really need to sort this out from within because we're always looking for these external things to help us like drugs and alcohol, but instant gratification, but that's the issue is that we're searching elsewhere and really we need to look inside,

Stacey 14:55

And maybe also even excuses we pass the blame to other people or other things. rather than taking responsibility, and when we acknowledge that we are responsible for our choices and the lives we lead, we're lucky to live in an era where we have so much free will and freedom of choice.

Stacey 15:11

And in countries where we do, taking responsibility for our personal development and our own growth and healing is so important. Yeah, as you say, for the development of our human race and for our kids.

Bill 15:23

Yeah, absolutely. So we (inaudible) Sorry,

Stacey 15:30

We lost you for a sec.

Bill 15:32

Someone's got a poor connection. Go again, Matty.

Matty 15:35

I was gonna say I just want to read this little snippet from an article that we pulled based on what you were talking about before. So alcohol begins affecting a person's brain as soon as it enters the bloodstream.

Matty 15:46

In a healthy person, the liver quickly filters alcohol, helping the body to get rid of the drug. However, when a person drinks to excess, the liver cannot filter the alcohol fast enough and this triggers immediate changes in the brain. So that's kind of what you were talking about on a stroke level.

Matty 16:06

When we talk about like, a lot of people say, Oh, I'm just going to go drink, I'm going to drink I'm gonna kill a few brain cells like that's how it gets said a lot in Australia. What actually happens is that you don't kill your brain cells.

Alcohol damages dendrites



Matty 16:18

But heavy consumption it actually what it does is it damages the end of your neurons called, your dendrites. Which makes it difficult for neurons to relay the messages from one another. Now, the issue is that once you've damaged them, you can't heal them.

Matty 16:36

You can create new pathways and new patterns within your brain, but you can't actually heal those dendrites once they've been damaged. So it's kind of crazy.

Bill 16:44

I love that you said that. And then how that is important in stroke recovery is we're actually trying to create new dendrites all the time. And when we start new behaviors, okay, you woke up from surgery, you can't walk.

Bill 16:58

You need to learn how to walk again. The first time you try and walk a new neuron is formed new dendrites are created. And they're trying to reach out to other new dendrites to connect to strengthen that new walking pathway in your brain.

Bill 17:16

So you're interfering with the dendrites. And those new neurons are not able to connect with each other. The ability to learn how to walk again takes longer. And the amount of time you need in rehab takes longer and the amount of time you're going to be off your feet is going to be longer.

Bill 17:31

So that's a really important thing for people to understand of like what the actual serious impact of drinking alcohol after a stroke does.

Stacey 17:41

Yeah. I definitely agree. I think coming back to you know, whether they want to heal because once you know that information, then it comes down to do I care about myself enough or do I care about my family enough?

Stacey 17:55

Like what's your why really and to give you the motivation to go Okay, well feel sorry for myself, I've been through a lot. Do I choose to drink alcohol? But then that's going to send my recovery backwards? Or do I choose to step up and avoid alcohol?

Stacey 18:09

Because I know that that's going to help with my recovery. So I guess education is the first step. And then once you have the knowledge, then you get to choose what you do with that knowledge.

Matty 18:17

Yeah, I think another thing to add back to what we were talking about with the like going inside, alcohol is gonna generally make you more depressed and more anxious, as well. So leaning on that product is not going to help you like to start with it's going to be a big step to just get over the fact that you don't want to have it.

Matty 18:33

So admitting that as a first phase and then stepping away from it is going to be tough, but it's going to in the long term, and probably even short term be a lot of a better step for yourself because you are going to start to step away from that depression and anxiety because you're starting to think clear, you're not constantly with that heavy head the next morning or all day long or just craving that next drink, which is crazy.

Stacey 18:55

I think a lot of people don't feel like they have a problem in inverted commas. Alcohol because it's part of the culture. And it's how, you know, we were all brought up. And I mean, I don't know about you guys, but I was definitely an underaged drinker.

Stacey 19:08

It was just like what you did as a teenager. And there was a lot of evidence to show how adolescents and young adults, it can affect us even more negatively, because we did start so young. So anything we can do now to reverse that will prevent further breakdown of our bodies from that perspective, is really important.

Stacey 19:30

But yeah, I think just drawing people's attention to it and going okay, well, what actually is binge drinking? Like what defines that and technically anything more than the standard drinks? Yeah, like three standard drinks for a guy think it's even two for a female?

Stacey 19:46

And most people would have more than 10 drinks without even thinking about it every day after they finish work depending on what work you're in or what trade you're in. Some people would just do that without even thinking about it.

Stacey 19:59

And they don't think they have a problem but they do. That's that's alcohol dependence. That's alcohol abuse. And there's a lot of negatives that can come out of that kind of a lifestyle. But then we also hear about oh, you know, well, I just have one drink tonight. Surely that's good for me. I hear there's lots of benefits to that. And that's a whole nother can of worms.

Bill 20:19

Part of the Mediterranean diet, which talks about a lot of amazing things is, you know, a little bit of red wine at dinner. And I'm not against the red wine at dinner, my parents did it and all that kind of stuff. My parents don't drink excessively, no issues there.

Bill 20:35

But what those things do is they kind of allow for other excuses to make it all right. Well, if it's all right for dinner, and if it's good for my heart, well, then, you know, maybe I'll have one after dinner and then maybe I'll have one before dinner and then before you know it, too much of a good thing is not necessarily a good thing.

Bill 20:55

So there is a bit of a reason why people sort of expect that having a little bit of wine is ok for you what starts at religion when you go on a Sunday, for example, then it's okay to have it at dinner, then it's okay to have it anywhere and everywhere.

Bill 21:13

If it's okay dinner and it's okay during, you know prayer then why isn't it okay anywhere else You know? So are there any real benefits to drinking alcohol at all other than it gets you closer to God.

Matty 21:29

It's a funny one is kinda like for every benefit they've proven in science they've also shown twice to be as bad for you. So it's, it's always been debunked so many times over that they almost try to pull it on a string like well, we saw this one good thing in the study. So we're going to use that to our benefit.

Stacey 21:45

And I guess the other side to that is for whatever benefit they come up with, you can actually receive that benefit from elsewhere. So, you know, like all the antioxidants that they talk about is the reason that it's good for your heart. Well Hang on a second. You can get all those antioxidants from fruit and vegetables. You don't have to get it from red wine.

Bill 22:04

Polyphenols is another one.

Stacey 22:07

Polyphenols from yeah, berries and things like that. So, you know, there's other places that you can get these good things from that. We don't have to cling to a reason to have alcohol. And I love what you were saying before because, you know, you give people your finger and they take your whole arm.

Stacey 22:24

So you say like one glass of wine is okay. And then it does turn into okay, well, I'll just finish this bottle or let's open another one. And you know, it doesn't stop at one.

Moderation



Stacey 22:33

Most people don't have that. I don't know self control is the right word or awareness around the fact that it is just meant to be a little bit and moderation is small, not you know, whatever you define moderation to be.

Bill 22:47

That's a thing, isn't it? moderation is a very loose term and what's moderation for me might not be moderation for you. Moderation for me might be once a month with friends. A specific event to make me feel like I'm fitting in moderation for you might be, you know, once in the morning and once an evening and then once in between.

Stacey 23:05

I think if people think they're doing less, then it's moderation. Like, you know, if I was drinking all day, every day, and I've gone down to one bottle, that's good, but it's still excess compared to the standards. And then the other side of it all is, what else are you doing?

Stacey 23:20

So, you know, if somebody is just having one glass of wine a day, okay, that might be all right. But if they're abusing their body with the other four of the fun five that we've talked about, or they're not sleeping, right, or they're not caring for their stress levels, and they're not taking care of the other parts of their life, and those things are going to start to impact them. Yeah, it's just that one glass.

Bill 23:43

Yeah. And it's interesting with alcohol dependence reminds me of something that I heard Russell Brand say about marijuana, and that people call marijuana a gateway drug to other drugs. And he's talking about what he's saying is that marijuana is not the gateway drug.

Bill 24:00

That the gateway drug is bad emotions or feeling bad about something or have been emotionally affected, or having some kind of emotional turmoil that wasn't dealt with or overcome or supported. So if if the I raised that because the analogy, you know, sort of suits that alcohol thing, if I'm drinking and access to forget my problems or to distress after a long day, or to help me straight sleep, because I've got too much on my mind.

Bill 24:29

You probably got there because you're dealing with something that is causing you some emotional discomfort that you haven't dealt with. So it's just a good opportunity for us to throw these things out there in a way that hopefully doesn't make you feel bad about what you're hearing but just makes you curious about what you're hearing.

Bill 24:46

And then you can make a decision in your own pace at your own time as to whether or not you need to continue consuming alcohol at the level that you are if if at all.

Stacey 24:57

Yeah, and then seeking support. If you do realize that you want to change and that you want to grow from this, we used to have a lot of people because obviously, these are the things that we encourage people to swap out when we run nutrition programs and help people with their meal plans and things like that.

Stacey 25:12

And one of the kickbacks we always get would be like, you're not a parent, you don't understand what it's like, we need a glass of wine at the end of the day. And I like I get it I'm not a parent yet and maybe things will change but (inaudible) with this amount of self educating we do, but it would make me really sad like to hear people say that their children drove them to drink.

Stacey 25:35

It's like let's find you some other stress outlets. Let's find some other ways of caring for yourself that don't drive you to drink.

Maybe it's you



Bill 25:42

Yeah, absolutely. And if you're in that situation where your children are driving you to drink, maybe it's your children, but maybe it's you.

Stacey 25:54

I love that yes.

Bill 25:55

There's two people in that relationship. It's either you or the children. It might be

both might be just one of them. But nonetheless, you need to take the opportunity when you become a parent to be responsible for growth. That's what kids actually force you to do.

Bill 26:10

They force you to grow in ways that you don't necessarily want to or you prepared for. And all you've got to do is start to continue to evolve. And don't be the same person that you were when you were 19, 25, without kids, because that person doesn't have the resources to deal with the child.

Bill 26:28

The new version of yourself is going to have the resources to deal with that child. So this is a interesting, deep conversation about why we drink and we've kind of touched on it a little bit. Sometimes it's emotional, but other times it's I went to a party when I was 14, and all my mates were drinking. So I had about five beers and threw up all over the place.

Stacey 26:51

Sounds very similar to my first drinking story.

Bill 26:55

And that's interesting that I started drinking alcohol when I was probably a lot younger than that. And it was in the home environment with my parents and my parents theory was, if they have a little bit of a taste of it now, it's not going to be something that they crave later as a teenager, and it won't be a big deal when they come across alcohol and they'll start to understand how it affects them and what it can do.

Bill 27:22

So I might have started with a sip out of dad's glass, and then that sip might have become two or three sips. And by the time I was 15, or 16, I might have been able to have a couple of swigs of a beer or something like that.

Bill 27:35

And then if dad wasn't watching, of course, I would have you know, half his beer, and then he would go, Hey, what are you done? So that kind of works for me, but I know that I know now that that interferes a lot with the adolescent brain.

Bill 27:51

And the ability for that brain to develop properly, especially in the teenage years and even younger, right but especially in the teenage years, when the brain is still coming to terms with finalizing the way that it's developed and giving that teenager, a brain that helps them be responsible adult later.

Stacey 28:11

Yeah, we're almost traveling down a conscious parenting path now with this conversation because I love the strategy that your parents had, because it does kind of make sense to introduce it. You know, I know a lot of parents will actually encourage their kids to have a cigarette at a younger age to hate it and then never do it again.

Stacey 28:30

And like it does work for some people to do that. But now I feel like with, you know, looking into growth versus fixed mindset and the work that Carol Dweck has done, I feel like conscious communication with your kids. And again, I'm yet to experience all this. So I could be in for a bit of a shock.

Stacey 28:49

But when you educate your children as they're growing up, and you have these conversations, and rather than being like, don't do this be like, Hey, is this something you're interested in and why? Let me give you my opinion on this too, and give you some of the facts and help them to understand. And then they can still make their own decision with your guidance.

Stacey 29:08

But at least they know how it will affect them and how it could, affect them long term. And I think that has to start from a young age because if you try and put it on them, once they're a teenager, and they want to do what all their peers are doing, it's a lot harder to undo that. Whereas if you've been having those conversations with them as they growing up, and it's on their mind, and it's in their awareness,

Bill 29:28

So that's why that's why European children drink or from a Greek background, why we drink or started to drink. But my friends being from Anglo background, ancestry from say, Germany, maybe even or from the UK, or from countries like that they had a completely different reason why they drink, they drank for

everything in anything, and they drank to the point of getting completely annihilated.

Bill 30:00

I mean is that something that you guys have seen as well from you know how you guys have grown up and what your friends did?

Stacey 30:08

Yeah, absolutely

Stacey 30:12

Like you know we're not angels we've got a history in the past and yeah I saw drinking from the age of 13 it was a new years eve party and I drank I don't know like five cans of Foster's because we were cool tommies and wanted to do what the aussies were doing you guys don't even drink fosters so I don't know why all that ads were encouraging us to drink what the aussies drink.

Bill 30:34

We hate it.

Stacey 30:35

You hate it. And yeah, and I was really sick. And I think I actually continued to binge drink every weekend, much to my parents dismay and disappointment because they had thought they'd raised quite a conscious child, but um, I quit drinking at 17 when I got my driver's license and became designated driver for all the other party animals who wanted to keep getting smashed.

Stacey 31:00

And you know, It is something that I would like to avoid with my children. I haven't been there and knowing what I did, I would like to discourage my kids from doing that. So now I guess the lesson here for us is figuring out how to do that.

Matty 31:16

I come from a different background where I was in the in a band and so we tour and we've gone tours and a lot of the tours we've spent drunk so literally alcohol I don't know it's always seen within Australia is like Stace was saying earlier part of the culture and it's almost a cool thing to go out and get that wasted like you have a laugh about the next day.

Matty 31:35

It wasn't really until I kind of educated myself around what it was doing to my body and how much it actually affected my body and my thoughts and my actual decision making, not only for a day, but potentially for that whole next week, you could slow down my production as an individual that was kind of like okay, there's something to this.

Matty 31:54

Whenever I don't drink I definitely feel better. Then if I do drink now, it's only on special occasions like you were saying before. Only on special occasion every once in a while, is when I'll drink compared to someone who used to binge drinking used to like I used to love partying It was one of the biggest things I used to go and do.

Matty 32:10

But it's like now that i've educated myself around it and that I have a bit more of a care about where I end up as an individual and what legacy or whatever I get to carry on as an individual. And now that we're starting a family, it's kind of really made me dive deeper into me as an individual and how I can be a stronger individual for not only Stace but the baby to be.

Matty 32:31

So it's almost like not, not only just recently that I've stopped drinking alcohol, but this is all kind of reasons as to why I got to the stage where I'm not drinking alcohol as much as I ever used to.

Bill 32:42

Yeah, like you know what's interesting, I used to go out and have drinks, and then I'll get drunk and then I'll be really unwell. And then you know, after that really unwell phase, most people get i'm off it for, i'm off it. That's it i'm off it and you might be off it. For two or three weeks, or four weeks or whatever.

Bill 33:02

And notice that you go to the party and you can kind of feel a little bit left out. And I noticed that during those times when I was at my peak of going out and partying, and then I noticed that again after I had the stroke, and I decided that, of course, I'm going to stop drinking now.

Can't you have one drink

Bill 33:21

And every time we went somewhere, people wouldn't stop harassing me about why aren't you drinking. Come on, man, can't you have one drink? I'm not going to drink if you don't drink. Like there was some really strange thing that was happening.

Bill 33:34

And it was like peer pressure. Like I was a child. But it was happening when I was 40. It's the most bizarre thing. What do we do in those situations. How do we handle the peer pressure in those situations?

Matty 33:46

It gives them social anxiety, right?

Stacey 33:51

Absolutely. I think there's a few ways around this and it is something that comes up a lot when we chat to our community because it is like we're trying to take something away from them. Think the difference with you after your stroke was that you had made a conscious decision not to for very good reasons.

Stacey 34:09

And so you were very responsible and owned that decision. And so I mean, you can probably speak to this a bit more. But when they harassed you, you were probably able to say, No, I'm good. And you were very short your answer. And hopefully, if they care about you, they eventually got off your case,

Bill 34:24

I did have to say, like, it makes me feel like I'm having a stroke, like, I can't drink. I've had a stroke. I've had a bleed the brain, I've had surgery, I had to learn how to walk again. Like, I cannot drink.

Stacey 34:36

Yeah, and you were very comfortable and confident in that decision. So hopefully, that education for them, then make some alarm bells ringing. They're like, Oh, I'll get off your case. Whereas what we tend to see is people like, Oh, no, I'm not allowed to drink because, you know, my nutritionist told me I'm not allowed and they're not choosing that.

Stacey 34:52

They're saying it as though they've been told to like the teachers telling them what to do. And so then that's where I find that the peer pressure becomes worse because They're kind of coercing them to be like, Oh, no, come on, do the thing, come over here with the bad kids.

Stacey 35:04

And then the person kind of wants to so they're not standing their ground and they're not owning that decision. So that's a conversation we have with people is like, Look, if you want to do this, it's not because Matty and Stace are telling you to do it. It's because now you understand the why. And you're choosing to do it. And that's much more empowering for people. And then strategies around what to drink instead.

Matty 35:23

Yeah, I think having that understanding of why you're not doing it is the biggest thing to start with. Because it makes it a lot easier when your mates are all poking and prodding you to just say, No, I don't need it. Like I'm fine. So like Stace is saying, sometimes it's just about what do you drink instead, when you're out and the best one we find is just soda water and lime.

Matty 35:42

Like you can tell people until the cows come home that's just vodka soda and lime if you want because it looks exactly the same and it puts them at ease. So even though it's lying, It's got a silver lining to it. So I think that's definitely probably one of the easiest ones and I think It all comes from your perspective and your focus and how you're going into that situation.

Matty 36:05

If you're going in saying poor me, I can't drink, you're going to go out and you have a terrible night. Like, it's not gonna be a fun night because you're not, you don't have the perspective to make it a fun night. Whereas if you just switch that you can go in and be like, Look, I don't need alcohol to be up and Adam, I'm just going to go and make that not a heap of fun.

Matty 36:21

And I'm going to do that with my own accord not because the alcohol is making me a fun person. You're still a fun person if you want to be but you just need to

change your perspective a little bit.

Stacey 36:30

yeah. And that can come back to that emotional stuff that we were talking to you before about finding yourself and knowing that you are a cool person without the need for for an artificial depressant or, in some cases, it can lift you up. If it's small enough dose that can still be a stimulant.

How your friends respond

Stacey 36:47

You can also use the strategy of being the designated driver. So that really helps like oh, no, sorry, I can't I'm driving. And then people just leave you alone because they don't want to encourage you to drink and drive that's just discussing and if they do sort of say like how your friends respond tells you a lot about whether they're actually your friends.

Stacey 37:05

You know, we try to surround ourselves with people who bring out the best in us and lift us up the same way that we want to lift them up. So if you do find that people aren't really supporting these decisions, and maybe they're not the people you should be spending your time with. And that can be again another, like punch in the face for some people to go.

Stacey 37:21

All these are people I've known for years, like I can't remove myself from this social group. But you can. And again, it comes back to what you're looking for. And I think when we were talking about underage drinking, like you know, being we kind of started young when we were doing the binge thing.

Stacey 37:39

We were both lucky enough to find groups of friends that were actually straight edge. So once I did get my driver's license and around the age of 17, Your vibe attracts your tribe, right? So I started to make friends who would go and hang out at the pub, there was a group of about 10 of us that actually didn't drink at all, and we were the ones having the best time.

Stacey 38:00

We had the best and we were dancing on the dance floor, not a drop of alcohol, no

drugs just high on life. And we feed off each other because we're all in that same headspace, I guess. And then I continued that once it turned 18 and traveled around the world trip for nine months once I finish school.

Stacey 38:18

Not a drop of alcohol. And everyone was like asking me what I was on because I was just having such a good time, which I'm like, nothing water. I'm drinking water. And you can learn to find that joy without relying on stimulants or depressants.

Straight edge



Bill 38:33

Yeah, it's interesting what you said about straight edge. If people are interested in what straight edge is basically it's a group of people that decide that they are going to avoid any artificial stimulants, to give them whatever a boost or to be to take regularly so basically, it just allows them to be regular normal human beings and go about having normal experiences without artificial stimulants.

Bill 38:59

And some people add other things to that some people add food choices and veganism into that some people add other things. So depending on who you are, and my son at 16, made that decision to my oldest son decided to be straight edge.

Bill 39:16

And then drop that at around 22 and cut stuck into all the stuff that he didn't do from 16 to 22. And he started to do that later. The difference was, he did it on a smaller scale, because he's now responsible person has to go to work, he has to

turn up for this and he has to turn up for that.

Bill 39:37

So he doesn't get to be as ridiculous as I was at that age. Because he made that decision to be straight edge at 16 and it served him really well. And as parents, we didn't even know this thing existed. And we were just so wrapped that he decided that that's what he was going to be.

Bill 39:56

So he's got it out of his system now at 23. But he really had that best time in his life where he was able to really allow his brain to fully develop, allow his brain to be clear, allowed his brain to not be influenced, and it didn't affect him in a negative way.

Bill 40:14

So when he had bad emotional experiences and he felt negative, about certain things that he went through as a teenager, we were able to go to counseling, take him there, and he was able to deal with that emotion rather than deal with the drinking before he had to deal with the emotion, which was a far longer journey to go through to get to a resolution that made him feel good about himself.

Stacey 40:39

And has now served him for the rest of his life,

Bill 40:41

Yeah it served him you know, and they, the most amazing thing was they were all able 10 of them or so, again, were able to say you know what we don't drink that's it. And though he used to go to pubs and they used to play in bands and they used to be there all the time.

Bill 40:55

But that's it. They never used a drink place to buy ginger beer or have a have a lemonade or something else, you know? So really amazing that that you mentioned that.

Stacey 41:09

I guess that's just luck sometimes isn't it? Well, friendship group they find.

Bill 41:13

Yeah, it's luck. Absolutely, and that's the thing that we want to do with these episodes. We just want to jog the memory of people as to how they got into drinking, why did they begin? And what has it become? has it become something more than just having a drink of alcohol from time to time?

Bill 41:28

Has it become something they dependent on? all these questions, all these things that we're doing and throwing out there, it should just be creating questions in your mind and should just be asking you to just check in with yourself and see where you're at.

Bill 41:40

And if some of these issues about, telling your friends, you're not drinking anymore, create an emotional response. It's a good time to maybe explore that, that's all it is. And, you know, have a look inwards and maybe start just wondering, you know, like, what could it be like if I made my own decision around this from now on instead of have other people decide for me.

Stacey 42:04

And I guess there was some alarm bells that or signs and symptoms that you can also become aware of so if you signed to take that time to reflect on why you're making these decisions and how you do feel when you drink you know things that can be quite apparent for especially those in relationships is like.

Stacey 42:21

What's your sexual drive lack? You know like even it can affect you on a relationship level because it lowers your libido you know some families if they're trying to conceive it can cause infertility in both male and female.

Matty 42:35

All the time the women get looked at but not necessarily the men. When it comes to the infertility side it's like all the female like oh we can't conceive there must be something get with her eggs. Whereas realistically, typically, if the guys are still drinking heavy amounts, then it can be their sperm count as well. It drops the sperm count down a lot. Yeah, which is crazy sorry go on.

Bill 42:58

I was gonna say I have a friend of mine who's marriage ended because of intimacy issues, because I would have said to you easily that a 25 he was an alcoholic, you

can imagine by 35. You know how dependent he was, and I hadn't seen him for about 10 years.

Bill 43:13

I knew that, his marriage broke down. I hadn't seen him for 10 years. And it was a Friday night after work. And it was really early afterwork because about 5:30. We finish work at what, 3:30 maybe, or four o'clock, and he was wasted by 5:30. And it was really early on in the night.

Bill 43:32

And this was the guy at 40. He was behaving exactly like we did when we were 25 or younger. And I just couldn't believe it that so much time had evolved and elapsed. This guy was still doing that. And I know that he was going through some emotional difficult times, you know.

Bill 43:48

So when I found out that his marriage broke down, and then you hear from everybody, that one of the reasons was because he couldn't have children. You know, that's a really devastating thing and. And I don't wish that on anybody you know.

Bill 44:04

And if you're struggling in that area, that could be some improvement that you could create simply by considering some of the things that you need to stop doing like drinking alcohol, perhaps.

Stacey 44:13

Yeah, I think when people go to see doctors and they get told that there's an issue, that they just go, Oh, well, let's just go down the medical route, and do IVF or Oh, I can't afford that so we can't have kids.

Stacey 44:24

But there is so much that you can do on your own day to day level to improve your health to improve your chances that the doctors aren't going to assist you with because it's not what they're specializing in.

Bill 44:36

Yeah. So it's interesting with alcohol similar to other substances has a really massive effect on us. right but other substances that are legal, and drinking is

legal. Now, I'm not saying whether drinking should be legal or illegal.

Bill 44:53

I don't think it should be illegal. Absolutely not. I don't think marijuana should be legal. I don't think any of those types of drugs should be legal, but I understand why they are. And that's okay. I'm okay with that.

Bill 45:05

But that kind of makes it okay for people to do as well, doesn't it? Because everyone says it's okay. I can drink. The law doesn't tell me I can't drink. So it should be right.

Matty 45:19

Yeah, it's one of those things isn't it's like, well, it's there it's ready for us. But so is smoking and we know now, like years ago, smoking was great for us yet. Now we know there's definitely (inaudible)

Stacey 45:33

They we're advertised as a healthy option, right when smoking first started.

Bill 45:37

Doctors used to advertise it.

Matty 45:40

Yeah, it's crazy. It's kind of the same thing for alcohol. And we're seeing more and more studies coming out on it now. And really if anyone wants to check out any of this stuff we've talked about. It's all on pubmed. Like, it's all there you go pubmed.com and just type in the things we've been talking about.

Matty 45:54

And there's all of the different studies relating to the things we've talked about. So there's more and more coming out about It does come down to educating yourself. What I was just thinking of is actually last year when we're over in Europe, we went through Denmark and we literally caught the the train across to Sweden.

Matty 46:12

Which was like a 30 minute drive. And we got around to this part where we could see Denmark from where Sweden was. And it was is like 4k distance between the

two. So we're looking at Denmark in Sweden on a Sunday, and no one around us is drinking at all.

Matty 46:26

Or we just left Denmark where everyone around us was drinking. And it's purely around some of the regulations that they had in Sweden, and Sweden is one of the like top leading health countries, sorry, within the world company as well, probably countries within the world where they've got regulations around you can only buy alcohol within the week.

Matty 46:47

If you're going to buy something on the weekend, you can only buy a six pack from like a convenience store, but it's only like beer is the only thing and so a lot of people on the weekends actually just don't even drink which is crazy because it was like the perfect Australian day, like summer's day out there was unheard of.

Matty 47:05

And so it was a sunny day and they were actually just all out enjoying the weather rather than having to be drinking out the weather. But realistically, it comes back to even though it's legal, it doesn't mean it's good for us.

Stacey 47:16

Yeah, definitely. And also, there are some laws around, you're not allowed to be drunk in a pub, like I used to work in bars, and you're technically not allowed to be drunk if you're drunk. This stuff don't have to serve you anymore, they can cut you off now, that again is very subjective and I don't actually see it getting practice as often as it should be.

Stacey 47:37

Because it can cause quite a stink and people you know, kick up a fuss ones that had some alcohol in the system, it can cause people to become quite aggressive. But that said, it's almost like the government has tried to put some things in place to try and decrease what, can happen.

Stacey 47:54

But it's not going to help people once they're already kind of in that emotional roller coaster and feeling A bit lost and headed down that avenue. It can get quite political with this conversation because like just because something's legal doesn't mean that it's okay we, you know, we mentioned smoking.

Stacey 48:10

But sugar is another massive one that's highly addictive and causing a massive health epidemic and putting a big strain on everyone's health, but then the finance of this country here in Australia and in the states like it's, it's a massive thing. So just because something is legal doesn't mean that it's okay for us to do.

Matty 48:31

I think like you, you've seen a lot of changes within the Australian Government and the different lockout times in bits and pieces in pubs and clubs and all that jam, but something that we do need to realize is that the attacks on alcohol so right now, it's a big income provider for the government.

Matty 48:47

So they're not going to get rid of alcohol anytime soon, because each alcoholic drink that we buy is taxed and tax quite heavily. So they're getting a lot of revenue from us going and drinking.

Bill 48:57

And the same thing goes with cigarettes, they tax quite heavily in Australia, I'm pretty sure half the cost of a pack of cigarettes is, tax if not more. So they're technically doing this weird thing where the discouraging people to do to smoke through the quit campaigns and all that kind of stuff and studies are coming out.

Bill 49:18

But then what happens when people stop smoking where they're going to get that revenue from? It's a really weird, strange, bizarre thing. So there's other things at play that influence whether or not we, you know, make the decision to quit drinking alcohol or continue to drink alcohol.

Bill 49:34

And I think just like me and my caffeine, I'm going to be with some friends from time to time and they're going to go, let's go for a coffee. And I'm going to say, let's go for a coffee. Absolutely. I'm definitely having that coffee but it's not going to be first thing in the morning to wake me up and it's not going to be in the evening to affect my sleep.

Bill 49:53

And the same thing with dairy. If I've got to have a coffee, I'm definitely going to have dairy because I don't like drinking black. Coffee, I'm going to have a latte.

And if somebody says to me, come over for dinner, and I forget to tell them that I'm gluten free, and I've got a whole bunch of, you know, breads and pastas and all that kind of stuff.

Bill 50:11

And because I'm not gluten sensitive to the point of a celiac, I'm not going to make that person feel bad, I'm going to eat a piece of their pasta, or the bread that they made for me, you know what I mean? So, we're talking about these things as if we don't want people to misunderstand.

Bill 50:27

We've talked about all these foods as if they're things that we should never consider consuming. But what we're really saying is, we should never consume them on a scale that's going to be detrimental to our bodies, and everybody is different.

Bill 50:41

And everybody is going to have a different response to different amounts of these foods, and everybody should make an individual decision.

Less consumption

Bill 50:48

And if you're somebody that was completely unaware of this stuff, hopefully what we've done is educated you on why you should do less consumption of sugar, less consumption of gluten less consumption of alcohol, less consumption of dairy, and less consumption of caffeine.

Matty 51:10

Yeah, definitely. It's very interesting. Like typically, with the nutrition coaching clients that we have, what we do is we'll try and set up some parameters for them when they are in the social situations like, hey, if you are in the situation where it is unfortunate that you haven't prepped yourself in the stage of, Hey, I went to my friend's place and they cooked me a gluten filled meal.

Matty 51:29

And you have that gluten, maybe just have some things in place, like you're saying, like maybe you will have a little bit of it, but really start to notice what it's doing to you. And I've got a client at the moment who owns a cafe down in

Melbourne. And so his cafe has a lot of gluten has a lot of dairy. And he removed both of those foods just for 30 days just to see how it responded.

Matty 51:48

And now he's able to make an educated decision on how those foods actually respond within his body. So he had a coffee no he had a protein shake that was made on whey and he just realized how much of a difference it made him as an individual, he felt bloated, he got diarrhea the next day, straight up, he was like, this is not agreeing with me as my body.

Matty 52:08

So I feel like it is awesome to say like, hey, freedom to the people, but realistically go out and try to remove it for 30 days, 30 days is a snippet of your life is nothing, remove it, reduce it and see how it actually responds and make your own educated decision around these things

Stacey 52:23

And an honest assessment because often times people will do the program or the challenge because, you know, it's they want to try and win the gym challenge or whatever. Again, not sure that's for the right reasons for participating in a health program, but that's a whole nother podcast.

Stacey 52:37

And then they'll get straight back on to what they were doing before because they've done the diet rather than going okay, I did this, I feel really good, honest assessment of how I feel now, like Matty said with his client, he was actually evaluating that.

Stacey 52:52

Whereas I feel like some people just go back to turning a blind eye and not realizing how much of a factor it is that You know, if you have some dairy and you do start snoring or you get sinusy, that that is having an impact on you and so to acknowledge that and go okay if I do this every now and then it's probably not that big a deal.

Stacey 53:13

But if I start doing this again every day or every week, then it's going to start to become an issue for my health.

Bill 53:20

So in the last episode, when we spoke about dairy Matty said that and we might not have spoken about it a lot. But he said something about dairy and then sinus issues in the evening sleeping. I picked up on it and I paid attention to what happens when I don't have a tea with dairy in it before I go to bed and you wouldn't believe it Matty 100% exactly.

Bill 53:45

The thing that I experienced was clear nasal passages and able to sleep through the night with my mouth closed for the first time in a really long time. And I had never associated drinking that cup of tea with we're talking about a splash of milk.

Matty 54:00

Yeah, exactly.

Bill 54:01

And that was enough to set off that whole feeling of I can't breathe at night and sleeping with my mouth open, which means then my mouth gets dry, which means then I wake up in the middle of the night to get a drink. Since I'm up, I might as well go to the loo.

Bill 54:14

By the time I get back to bed, I might not actually fall back asleep. So that interferes with my sleep. So I'm glad you reminded me of that, Stacey that's definitely something that I experienced,

Stacey 54:25

It's profound and I think people think we're weirdos, when we say like, you know, I will stay 100% gluten free, and try to be as dairy free as possible. And that is like a choice because of all of these positive benefits. It's not because I'm trying to deprive myself, I actually see it as a massive blessing.

Matty 54:45

I was gonna say the influence that we've had just on you, it's been enough to be able to do this series, which is awesome. And hopefully, people are hearing the things that we're saying and they're taking away the bits and pieces that you're taking away as well because it's been really cool to say like probably been four months or something we've been talking about this stuff together.

Matty 55:00

And just to see the little parts you've been implementing, and being able to see and hopefully the listeners, hearing those things as well and then taking away those little snippets for themselves. Like, that's, the biggest thing. It comes down to educating yourself and putting in the effort putting the emphasis on to your health.

Stacey 55:15

And just trying it right. Give it a go, see how you feel. And when you do start to feel better than you do. It's easier to have more self worth self respect, because you're feeling better anyway. Rather than having this pity party where you feel like crap because of the food and drink you're at is making you feel like crap and it's self perpetuating. spiral of destruction. Once you start to make these little changes and feel better, it's a lot easier to keep going.

Little changes

Bill 55:39

Yeah, and that's a really important thing as well and to emphasize little changes, I haven't done massive changes, you know, I've done little changes, choosing what I'm going to drink my caffeine and it's maybe once a week or twice and when I want a caffeinated type drink, I'll drink it with decaf a really good swiss water decaf if i can find it. I'll definitely do that.

Bill 56:00

So, I'm not stimulating my body artificially, you know, I'm not consuming gluten because gluten makes my belly inflamed and feel bloated. You know. So if you've got a bloated belly or you got a beer belly or anything like that, it's, it is actually directly related to you drinking beer or having alcohol or having sugar or having weight.

Bill 56:23

It's definitely related to something like that, you know. So the other thing with regards to, you know, small steps, you know, with dairy, I'm still going to eat my cheese because I enjoy eating with dinner, and I'm great, I'm going to a great feta, you know, it's impossible not to a great feta with dinner, you know.

Bill 56:41

So I still don't miss out completely on all these things. But I really am finding that I'm cutting down on those things a lot. And as a result, I'm replacing with other things that I love eating, like I love eating the coleslaw salad or I love eating that's that steak or an extra piece of fish or whatever it is.

Bill 56:59

That's going to make me feel full and fill my belly. And what's really beautiful. Thanks, guys is that these conversations have continued to occur at home with me and my family. And I've had these conversations for a long time anyway with my kids.

Bill 57:14

And just the other day, my youngest son sent me a video of a guy talking about how we should remove some foods that are inflammatory. So he's not doing that yet, but at least he's thinking about that, and he's talking about that. And that's what I want to say to people.

Bill 57:28

You might have listened to all these episodes, you might not have done anything about it yet. But that's okay. That doesn't mean that you're doing anything wrong. What it means is that you're not ready yet. And when you are ready, do one of those things that we spoke about first drop one of the fun five first, don't drop them all at the same time.

Bill 57:44

And if you want some support, go to Matty and Stacey by TheChiefLife.com, ask for some support, ask for some nutritional advice and go down that path because I don't do that I'm just the motivator I'm just the guy that says you can do this, you know, go for it.

Stacey 57:59

Cheerleader.

Matty 58:00

Guy in the corner.

Bill 58:01

That's it. So guys, thank you so much for being involved in this five part series of the fun five. I really appreciate your time. I really appreciate the time that you put

into knowing this stuff. Let alone the time that you put into teaching other people's stuff it's important.

Bill 58:20

And before people like you, we didn't have any information about how to heal our brain, and how to get better after stroke. So I'm so glad that you guys are doing what you're doing and I really appreciate you.

Stacey 58:30

Thank you. We're so grateful for you to the fact that you're telling your tale and sharing what you've been through is going to help so many people so thank you so much Bill for the opportunity.

Matty 58:40

Yeah, definitely man. I really really appreciate it. It's a it's been a great great, I guess it's awesome just getting to meet you at an event and then to see what like relationships are built off of that its been really.

Bill 58:55

I have a lot of time for Matty and a lot of time for you Stacey and it's because you guys talk your talk and walk your walk are really, it's very rare to find people like that.

Matty and Stacy 59:06

Thank you.

Outro 59:07

Discover how to support your recovery after stroke. Go to recoveryafterstroke.com