Twitter Thread by Jeremy Fisher



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2020, the year I found sobriety.

Just before midnight on December 31, 2019, alone on my couch with a free pour of Jameson in hand, I made a decision to quit drinking. Just until our second baby was born, she was due in February.

What if I had to, you know, drive my partner to the hospital in the middle of the night and couldn't because I was a little drunk? I was at least a little drunk every single day.

There were logistics to figure out this time, I would have to get our then 3 year old to a friend's house. Someone to look after the dog. Go over the checklist. Make sure everything was in the hospital bags. Don't forget the infant car seat.

I couldn't just stop by saying so, I'd tried that before and couldn't make it stick. I needed a plan, a script to follow.

I replaced my nightly ritual of drinking with learning fiddle tunes on the mandolin. Watching Netflix and scrolling through my phone were things to accompany my drinking. In about a week I was able to do things on the mandolin that I'd wished I could do for years. That felt good.

If we went somewhere, like to a friend's house, bar or restaurant where I would be offered a drink, I had a script for that as well: soda water. No matter how I was asked the question or what was on offer, the answer was just, soda water.

You can feel like a real jerk going to someone's house and asking for "sparkling water", so I insist on calling it soda water. It's the same thing as far as I can tell. If I'm in the mood for fun, I'll call it "Club Soda".

Whisper it to yourself with flirtatious eyes. Try it. There, now we're having a good time!

My habit was formed on the road, alcohol just seemed to be every single place I went. For many years there was no transaction required for me to drink. Everywhere I went somebody had gotten cans and bottles of booze and put it on a table next to hummus and baby carrots.

In the early days I spent 6-10 months on the road each year. It was Saturday night every night. That was pretty fun for a while. Mostly I have toured all by myself though, and I grew pretty lonesome.

Last January I went to LA. Out for dinners and working lunches with my business partners. Meetings at bars. I had a great time. As I enjoyed my soda water, one thing I did notice was how they were drinking.

“He hasn’t touched that beer in 10 minutes.”

“Aren’t they going to order another round?”

“Is nobody going to drink that last drop of sake?!”

Why did I care? What was my problem? Oh.

When our baby arrived on February 5th, I held off a bit longer as we adjusted. It’s not easy to drink 3 fingers of whisky while an infant sleeps on you, wiping down the kitchen counter and using one clean, dry pinky to poke texts back and forth to your partner who is 10 feet away

We don’t talk anymore, but we text all the time. I like to pretend we’re dating.

Me: Miss you heart emoji

Her: get lundry frm basement

Me: Hot

Her: no cold delicate hang dry plz

Me: dance emoji

Her: quietly!!!!

Around the time I might have started up drinking again, our family went into pandemic lockdown. All my work was cancelled and without childcare I had absolutely zero minutes of solitude for writing and recording.

I’d also started to notice how much money I was saving by not drinking. In the face of an empty calendar and no income, I thought I better hold off until this whole thing passed in a month to six weeks. Hardy har har.

I was a mess. Uncontrollable fits of crying, expressing grief for the loss of my job that I love so much. I felt angry and isolated, depression sunk in.

I started thinking about how that 2pm, maybe even noon, happy hour would take the edge off. I looked forward to it. Even planned it a little bit in my mind, but I reluctantly kept kicking the can down the road.

We all have high hopes for this new year of 2021. In its early hours I'm taking some time for reflection and introspection. I've just realized that the first resolution I ever kept was a resolution I didn't exactly mean to make.

I feel better, in general, than I did a year ago, despite the fact that so much remains uncertain. I'm in better physical shape. My singing voice, which was becoming increasingly hard to keep in tune, has returned. I don't give up as easily.

I can also be more irritable, reactionary and less patient. I'm working on it. I'm working on a more enduring solution than the 5pm 'screw it' and feeling numb to my problems for a few hours.

I'm gonna keep kicking the can. It's dented and scratched and the tab has fallen off. If I kick long enough, maybe one day there will be nothing left to kick. What then? Club Soda!


Bai
MENU
SPARKLING
WATER