

*"First we make our habits,  
then our habits make us."*

Charles C. Noble

Volume 1  
Fall 2014

# Day Thirty One



## The Newsletter of Moderation Management

### Welcome from our Executive Director

Hello fellow Moderation Management members and those who are curious about moderation,

Moderation Management (MM) was founded in 1993 and has grown significantly from its initial beginnings. Thousands of people read posts on our ever popular email list serve, actively participate in a wide range of forums and rosters, or chat and meet in face-to-face and virtual meetings designed to help individuals develop their own personal paths of identifying and overcoming their drinking concerns.

Our membership is rich in its diversity and is made up of people both younger and older, men and women, those who have recognized unhealthy drinking patterns after a relatively short time and those who are now making changes after drinking for a decade or more, and those from diverse countries, faiths, and socio-economic backgrounds. MM now has face-to-face meetings in a wide range of cities, from New York to Berlin to Bangkok and many parts in between. The goals most MM'ers come in with vary as much as the people themselves. Some focus on quantity and consider three or four glasses of wine, beer, or bourbon excessive. Others focus on drinking frequency, and consider more consistent or daily consumption to be excessive. Generally our participants find themselves drinking less regardless of individual goals.

I joined MM in 2006 with more or less typical drinking concerns. I was successfully running a large company with over 200 employees. In this I consider myself fairly average. Most MM'ers are in their middle years and are functioning well in society. Even with the outer trappings of success, many still have concerns about their drinking, drink what they consider excessive, and still go to work every day.

I sat squarely in the middle of that group, quite functional, but I considered my enjoyment of wine to be more than healthy. After joining MM, I utilized the various tools and techniques they offered to control my drinking in order to

*Continued on Back Page*



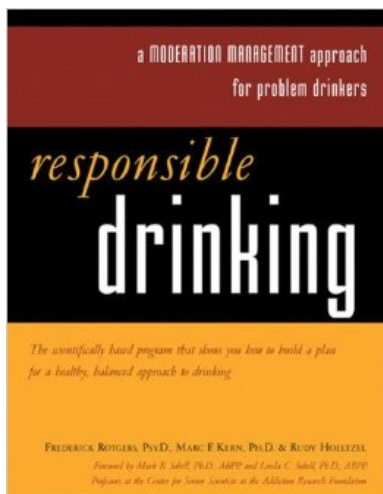
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### Our First Newsletter

Make this your newsletter; let  
us know what you need it to say:

**[editor@moderation.org](mailto:editor@moderation.org)**



## Mocktails Make Their Mark

**Fallen Yellowjacket. Grapefruit Superstar. Green Eyed Monster.**

At first glance, these might sound like code names for secret spy missions, but they're actually the names of non-alcoholic drinks, made with as much care in bars and restaurants around the world as their alcohol infused counterparts.

As alcohol acts as a numbing agent, it's much more likely that imperfectly combined flavors will be forgiven. This is less likely to be the case with non-alcoholic beverages, and self-proclaimed mixologists go to extraordinary lengths with ingredients that rival the tinctures of many an alchemist in order to create award winning concoctions.

Gone are the days of feeling like an eight year old because your non-alcoholic options were limited to Sprite or a Shirley Temple. Now there are as many bars that whip up NA nirvana as there are websites and books with recipes so you can make them at home. Here are a few of our favorite websites:

<http://mybestcocktails.com/non-alcoholic-cocktails.php>

<http://www.fabulousfoods.com/articles/28570/10-top-mocktail-recipes>

<http://www.hgtv.com/entertaining/10-mocktail-recipes/pictures/index.html>

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*"MM empowers individuals to accept personal responsibility for choosing and maintaining their own path, whether moderation or abstinence."*

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### Moderation Management Relies on Your Support

Moderation Management is a registered 501(c)3 non-profit corporation. We charge nothing for our services, and receive little outside funding. We rely on our participants and supporters for nearly all of our operating income. Your support for Moderation Management can be expressed as a donation to help us carry our program forward.

[www.moderation.org/donate.shtml](http://www.moderation.org/donate.shtml)

Contributions should be fully tax deductible; please consult with your tax professional.

### Our Newsletter Needs Sponsors

As we seek to expand our ability to deliver our programs and message, your help will be essential.

Please consider sponsoring our next issue. Write to:

[sponsors@moderation.org](mailto:sponsors@moderation.org)

### Consider How We Support You

If the programs, precepts, and services of Moderation Management have had an influence in your life, consider supporting us. Allow others to make the same discovery and to have similar life choices. With your support, what exists today is a promise of a new tomorrow...

## Values of Moderation Management

Moderation Management (MM) is a behavioral change program and national support group network for people who are concerned about their drinking and who desire to make positive lifestyle changes. MM empowers individuals to accept personal responsibility for choosing and maintaining their own path, whether moderation or abstinence. MM promotes early self-recognition of risky drinking behavior, when moderate drinking is a more easily achievable goal.

**MM is run by lay members who came to the organization to resolve personal issues and stayed to help others.**

- Members take personal responsibility for their own recovery from a drinking problem.
- People helping people is the strength of the organization.
- People who help others to recover also help themselves.
- Self-esteem and self-management are essential to recovery.
- Members treat each other with respect and dignity.



National Institute on Alcohol Abuse & Alcoholism (NIAAA) "Rethinking Drinking"  
<http://rethinkingdrinking.niaaa.nih.gov/>

## Late Is Infinitely Better than Never

### *Reflections on finding MM*

*"Shame corrodes the very part of us that believes we are capable of change."  
 Brené Brown*

There's a quote from FlyLady on my desk. I read it when my heart starts pounding for no good reason, when I feel like whatever it is that I'm about to begin is already way too late and is, therefore, hopeless:

*"You are not behind! I don't want you to try to catch up. I just want you to jump in where are. O.K.?"*

I read it with a sense of wonder and comfort and ask myself why I get myself into these weird panic-inducing places where I feel a heavy sense of shame and a strong desire to hide under my bed. Where I tell myself that it's too late to start taking kickboxing and Jiu Jitsu lessons, to stop drinking red wine every evening at 5:00 like clockwork, to drink 8 glasses of water a day, to write a newsletter article, to forgive myself for anything.

In that inch of mind and heart space the FlyLady's words accord me, I'm reminded of another quote, this time from Gretchen Rubin. *"Pay special attention to any habit that we try to hide."* Our habits aren't always necessarily bad or detrimental to our lives, health, or relationships. Habits can begin as innocently as eating Green & Black white chocolate bars, buying clothing online, drinking a glass of wine with a lovely dinner, or exercising until the day you realize you've been hiding them because they have become somehow unhealthy or shameful. And something that was once healthy no longer feels like a small but enjoyable part of your life. It feels darkly important and a little bit wrong.

#### **What do you do?**

For me, depending on the hidden habit, days, months, even years have flown by while I'm busy hiding its existence. Years spent shredding receipts, stashing full and empty bottles in various cabinets, creating vague entries for increasingly frequent blocks of time in Outlook or iCal spent in an upscale bar or brewpub, lying. Until the day it felt worse to continue than it did to do something about it. The day I realized that I was hanging off a ladder in our garage while keeping a precarious hold on a dangerously sharp box cutter as I tried to open a storage box that held an incredibly expensive bottle of 1978 Chateaufort du Pape Vieux Telegraph just because I did not want to go a night without having a glass of wine while I made dinner, made me think that my wine cravings and consumption patterns might not be healthy or normal.

There are a bazillion places to go if your issue is drinking. Who knew? Places for women and men, places for abstinence and moderation, for veterans, for people of faith. The world does not suffer for a lack of options. For me, I wasn't religious, didn't want to think I was powerless over anything, didn't think I had a disease, and didn't know if I wanted to abstain for the rest of my life. I Googled 'healthy, alcohol, moderate, problem' and was introduced to Moderation Management. What I found was extraordinary.

For those new to Moderation Management (MM), there is a lot of lingo to learn (Trikes, F'Abs, Trains, and other mechanized metaphors), but honestly, whether you read anonymously or choose to introduce yourself, people will fall all over themselves to welcome and explain everything to you. I chose to introduce myself, although I cannot for the life of me remember how I phrased my fears, and

#### **Who We Are**

##### **Moderation Management Network, Inc.**

2795 East Bidwell Street  
 Suite 100-244  
 Folsom, California 95630-6480  
 Email: [mm@moderation.org](mailto:mm@moderation.org)  
 Website: [www.moderation.org](http://www.moderation.org)

##### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Marc F. Kern, Ph.D., Chairman  
 Michael Benibgui, Ph.D.  
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 John Pasagiannis, Ph.D.  
 Frederick Rotgers, Psy.D.  
 Andrew Tatarsky, Ph.D.

##### **STAFF**

Jim Mergens  
 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR  
[mm@moderation.org](mailto:mm@moderation.org)  
  
 Eric Walther, Ph.D.  
 PROGRAM DIRECTOR  
[eric@moderation.org](mailto:eric@moderation.org)  
  
 Donna Dierker  
 DIRECTOR OF RESEARCH  
 & AWARENESS PROJECTS (RAP)  
[donna@moderation.org](mailto:donna@moderation.org)  
  
 Heidi McCloskey  
 NEWSLETTER  
 EDITOR & SUBMISSIONS  
[editor@moderation.org](mailto:editor@moderation.org)  
  
**SELECTED SERVICES**  
 Find or Start an MM Meeting  
[live@moderation.org](mailto:live@moderation.org)  
  
 The MM Main List Listserv  
[admin@moderation.org](mailto:admin@moderation.org)  
  
 The MM Forum  
[forum@moderation.org](mailto:forum@moderation.org)  
  
 The MM Chatroom  
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[abstar@moderation.org](mailto:abstar@moderation.org)  
  
 Sponsorship at moderation.org  
[sponsors@moderation.org](mailto:sponsors@moderation.org)  
  
 Media Contacts  
[media@moderation.org](mailto:media@moderation.org)

##### **VISIT OUR WEBSITE**

<http://www.moderation.org>

## Support our Research Program

MM has a long and important history of supporting research on issues with alcohol. Research is a core part of our mission. This has created a number of important projects, which are listed at: [http://www.moderation.org/about\\_mm/research.shtml](http://www.moderation.org/about_mm/research.shtml)  
<http://tinyurl.com/koqo5nx>

Your support of MM continuing this research can include a willingness to be considered as a participant. We have a private Listserv service (low volume) where individuals can volunteer to receive appeals to participate in research programs. Read about this: <http://www.moderation.org/research/>

(Note you have no obligation to respond to these appeals, only to agree to receive the messages.)

I was welcomed into a quirky, supportive, funny, wise, and knowledgeable community who helped me realize that I wasn't alone or abnormal or evil. That I wasn't so special that I, out of everyone else on the planet, couldn't be helped. And when I was eventually able to form my own guidelines and goals and state them publicly, these people held me accountable without being judgmental, even if I failed spectacularly in the trying. Many people lurk on the lists, just reading, not posting, and there's a tremendous amount of learning that also happens in that space.

*"Sometimes we fall down, sometimes we tend to the fallen."*  
Heather P.

An unhealthy relationship with alcohol, with anything actually, often starts out as something so small, so seemingly insignificant that it's almost missed. The five minutes of intense conversation you had Friday night with a friend that you don't remember having. The mysterious cut on your right knee, but you have no memory of falling. The Facebook or Twitter entries you posted at various clubs or bars with photos no less, and the people with whom you look so friendly but who are actually foreign to you. The empty bottles you find crammed in the storage cube by your desk while on a search for copier paper, and you don't recall drinking or hiding anything. But since your job is secure (for now) and no one has said anything to you (yet), you ignore it.

A healthy relationship also starts out very much the same. Something small, like an article in a far away newsletter or a reference in a Martha Grimes novel catches your interest, and you research it online. You read some of the posts in the Keepers and Testimonials files, and you feel like you might not be the only one in the world who doesn't have the happy, perfect life that everyone around you seems to have, that there might be someone like you with the same kind of secrets who is doing something healthier about it. So you join the email list and lurk, and you decide to start. Maybe a month or six down the road you realize that all great things started somewhere, including you. And even if you're late to the recovery party, late is infinitely better than never.

**Heidi McCloskey**

*"I Googled 'healthy, alcohol, moderate, problem' and was introduced to Moderation Management. What I found was extraordinary."*

## Spotlight: Moderation Management's Board of Directors

With addiction, it can be easy to get lost in the science of it. The 'whats' and 'whys' and 'hows' of unhealthy and healthy behaviors and what does or doesn't happen in the brain, body, and blood of a person before, during, and after they drink can overshadow the fact that there are hundreds and thousands of individual human beings with their own histories and stories who make mental and emotional choices during every minute of every day. Marrying the subjective aspects of being wonderfully and sometimes frustratingly complex human beings with the science that is the backbone of our health and wellbeing is something we consciously choose to embrace in our guiding principles and in our Board of Directors. In many ways our Board members and MM Staff mirror our members. We are doctors, lawyers, nurses, administrators, innovators, mothers, fathers, and artists, and we've become aware of an unhealthy pattern of behavior as it relates to alcohol, but it's applicable to many other areas of life.

This month, we will be introducing you to three of our MM Board of Directors members with the others to follow. While their credentials are certainly varied and lengthy, it is their passion for helping people make healthier choices that are appropriate for each individual that is most impressive.

### **Tom Horvath, Ph.D., ABPP (Clinical), President, *Practical Recovery***

"I grew up in a self-reliant way. I realized early in my psychology career that although some wanted to use a powerlessness approach to recovery, there were enough people like me that a self-empowering approach was needed. I've dealt with my own addictive behavior (we all have some) in a self-empowering way. As I now realize, half or more of those needing recovery would prefer and benefit from a self-empowering approach."

Dr. Horvath earned a B.A. in Liberal Arts from St. John's College, Annapolis, Maryland (1975) and a Ph.D. from the California School of Professional Psychology at San Diego (1981). In 1985 he founded the *Practical Recovery* treatment system, which offers self-

empowering, fully personalized addiction treatment in four locations (outpatient, two residential facilities, and a sober living home).

He is Past President (1990) and Fellow (1993) of the *San Diego Psychological Association* and Past President (1988-1990) of the *San Diego Phobia Foundation*. From 1992-93 he served on the *California Controlled Substances Prescription Advisory Council*. He is also Past President (1999-2000) of the *American Psychological*

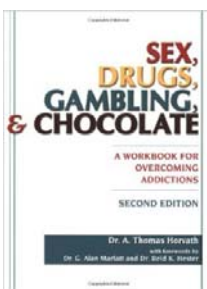




*“The importance of choice in recovery from addiction problems cannot be overstated.”*

Association's Society of Addiction Psychology (Division 50), the world's largest organization of addiction psychologists. He is President of SMART Recovery (1995-2008, 2009 to present), an international non-profit offering free, self-empowering, science-based support groups for those people seeking to abstain from any addictive behavior. He is a member (2009 to present) of the Board of Directors of Moderation Management, an international non-profit offering free, science-based support groups for moderating or abstaining from alcohol. He was the Pacific Southwest Regional Representative (2013-14) to the Board of Directors of *Faces and Voices of Recovery*, a non-profit advocacy group for individuals in addiction recovery or needing recovery.

From 2000-2010 Dr. Horvath was adjunct faculty at the *Leadership Studies Program*, School of Education, University of San Diego. Since 2010 Dr. Horvath has been adjunct faculty at *Alliant International University* in San Diego, teaching substance abuse treatment courses. He wrote *Sex, Drugs, Gambling & Chocolate: A Workbook for Overcoming Addictions* (2nd ed.; Impact, 2003), recognized in 2010 by the Association of Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies as a Self-Help Book of Merit. Dr. Horvath's publications, media interviews, and presentations to professionals are helping to change how individuals, professionals, and societies understand addictive behavior.



*“Sex, Drugs, Gambling & Chocolate: A Workbook”*

“Years ago I realized that I had as much rationale for telling someone to abstain or moderate as I had telling a couple whether they should stay together or split up. For decades I have not make a recommendation on either issue. I also realized that each of us is fully capable of making the decisions we need to make about our own lives. I can support the decision making process, but the decision is not mine.

“The importance of choice in recovery from addiction problems cannot be overstated. MM has a crucial role in letting the world know that moderation is a common and viable outcome for overcoming drinking problems. MM supports moderation without denigrating abstinence. I am honored to support MM, and its support for choice in recovery.”

#### **Michael Benibgui, Ph.D., Clinical Psychologist**

Dr. Michael Benibgui is a clinical psychologist and research scientist in the fields of substance abuse and the bio-psycho-social impacts of stress on mental and physical health. He holds a doctorate in psychology from *Concordia University* in Montreal and completed his clinical training at *McGill University*.

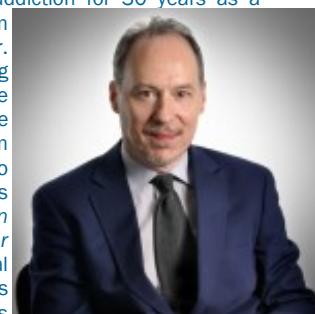


Dr. Benibgui has directed drug treatment programs federally funded by the *Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration* (SAMHSA) within New York City harm-reduction agencies (SUS and GMHC). He has also served as assistant project director of a federally funded (*National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism*) clinical trial testing evidence-based practices to achieve moderate drinking at *Columbia University Medical Center*. He has special interests in applying the principles of integrative harm reduction psychotherapy towards the specific life stressors of professionals / executives, cultural minorities, young adults, and people of the LGBT spectrum.

His clinical approach weaves together psychodynamic, motivational, mindfulness, cognitive-behavioral, and positive psychology techniques to empower people to achieve measurable life-changes. As a native Montrealer, having also spent some time living and working in Amsterdam, Dr. Benibgui, experienced moderation and harm reduction as dominant cultural paradigms throughout his formative years, which contributed to his interest in advocating for alternative approaches to resolve alcohol and substance misuse.

#### **Dr. Andrew Tatarsky, Ph.D., Director of the Center for Optimal Living**

Andrew Tatarsky is an internationally recognized leader in the treatment of substance misuse and other potentially risky behaviors. He has specialized in the treatment of addiction for 30 years as a counselor, psychologist, program director, trainer, advocate and author. He has devoted his career to developing a comprehensive understanding of the broad spectrum of substance use problems and an integrative harm reduction psychotherapy approach to treating this spectrum. This treatment is described in his book, *Harm Reduction Psychotherapy: A New Treatment for Drug and Alcohol Problems*, and several professional papers and book chapters that extend the approach. The book has been released in paperback and Kindle, published in Poland by the Polish Office of Drug Prevention and is currently being translated into Spanish and Russian. He trains professionals nationally and internationally.



Dr. Tatarsky is Founder and Director of the Center for Optimal Living, where treatment and professional training is based on *Integrative Harm Reduction Therapy* (IHRP). He earned his doctorate in clinical psychology from the City University of New York. He is a Clinical Advisor to the Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services of New York State, Founding board member and President-elect of the *Division on Addiction of New York State Psychological Association*, Board Member of Moderation Management Network, founding board member of Association for Harm Reduction Therapy and Chairman of Mental Health Professionals in Harm Reduction and Faculty, *Advanced Specialization in Family and Couple Therapy*, The Postdoctoral Program in Psychotherapy and Psychoanalysis, New York University.



*“Harm Reduction Psychotherapy”*

**Moderation Management** has expressed our sincere gratitude to our former Board of Directors chairman, Dr. Andrew Tatarsky. Dr. Tatarsky guided the Moderation Management Board of Directors for over a decade, and continues as an active board member.

**Worried About Your Drinking?**



## MM's Online Communities

### Moderation-Friendly Therapists

For the benefit of our participants we maintain a listing of moderation-friendly therapists available in most states in the US, Canada, Australia, and the UK.

(<http://tinyurl.com/4u6em>)

If you have found therapy beneficial in the past or have considered partnering with someone for a coaching experience, our moderation-friendly listing may be a good place to start.

Each therapist must be approved by Moderation Management in a vetting process before they are listed.

If you believe your therapist is moderation-friendly, and they would like to be listed, please send a request to:

[therapists@moderation.org](mailto:therapists@moderation.org)

#### Visit our Therapist Finder page:

[http://www.moderation.org/therapist\\_finder.shtml](http://www.moderation.org/therapist_finder.shtml)

<http://tinyurl.com/4u6em>



MM has a robust online community that people most commonly access through the email list serve or the forums. Everything, including basic information about the organization and a wide range of resources, can be found at <http://www.moderation.org>. Visitors can use pull down menus to access tools, publications, the online community, and the forums, among other services. As with many virtual communities, you may find tremendous support and wisdom shared on what feels like an hourly basis. The general consensus is that Gmail accounts make it easier to group and manage conversations, but it's up to your personal preference. Once you join, you should notice very quickly that the MM community can be quite vocal, very diverse, and incredibly supportive.

#### About Moderation Management

Here, you can better understand MM's approach, guiding tenets, history, and thoughts for the future and assess whether MM is the right approach and organization for you: <http://www.moderation.org/whatisMM.shtml>

#### "The Roster Roster"

A self-referential roster of the various MM rosters. Current roster leader is Alex: [alexr.3125@gmail.com](mailto:alexr.3125@gmail.com). MM has multiple rosters that many find a useful aid in maintaining their commitment to moderation or abstinence. The Roster Roster is a semi-weekly (Monday/Friday) listing of ongoing MM rosters, their purpose, and the current roster leader for each. A link to a listing of common terms and acronyms is given at the bottom of the Roster Roster email. (If you're interested in a particular roster, just contact the Roster leader off-list.)

#### And now for the various Rosters:

##### Trike:

A listing of people who have committed to abstaining three times ("Triking") in the upcoming week (Sun-Sat).

##### F'Abs:

A listing of people who have committed to abstaining four times ("F'Absing") in the upcoming week (Sun-Sat).

##### The Sticky:

A virtual post-it note on Hazel's fridge. A listing of people who have committed to abstaining on a given day.

##### By the Book (BTB) Streakers:

The BTB Streakers let it all hang out as they run for a streak of by-the-book (BTB) moderation. The book in question is called *Responsible Drinking* and can be found on Amazon.com at: <http://amzn.to/1s4g7Yk>.

##### The Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) Train:

Riders of the CBT Train are committed to moderation in the form of a daily personal maximum, and a commitment to drink no more than two days in a row. Riders will also try to change their thinking by applying CBT techniques (Cognitive Behavioral Therapy). Conductor: [pierre.pierrec@moderation.org](mailto:pierre.pierrec@moderation.org)

##### Forums

There are a number of forums for very specific kinds of conversations and groups. For example, there is a forum for people who have chosen to permanently abstain from drinking alcohol and another for those reading and wanting to talk about the book, *Responsible Drinking* by Rotgers, Frederick; Kern, Marc F.; Hoeltzel, Rudy. (<http://amzn.to/1s4g7Yk>) Aside from our Public sections "Keepers" and "Testimonials", access to the Forum messages requires a login.

The MM Forum is at <http://forum.moderation.org>.

Forums provide a different focus for people who are working on one or more aspects of moderation or abstinence. The forums are also much more manageable from a message volume perspective.

For the "Secret Name" required to complete a registration, write to [forum@moderation.org](mailto:forum@moderation.org).

##### Tools

There is a growing menu of tools that can be found and downloaded online, from questionnaires that help you assess your current relationship with alcohol to Blood Alcohol Content (BAC) calculators to publications that introduce you to systems that support you in making alcohol a small but enjoyable part of your life. These tools are constantly being reviewed and added to so that what is offered is really what's most valuable to the community. A quick link to the tools section can be found by clicking on the Tools pull-down menu on the MM main site at: <http://www.moderation.org>



Tools	Help Us Grow	Search..
* ABSTAR * Online Drink Counts & Support		
Count Your Drinks!		
Drinker's Checkup		
Blood Alcohol Content (BAC) Tables		
MM Literature and Publications		
Suggested Reading List		
Reviews by our Members		
Alcohol Dependence Questionnaire		
Other Published Guidelines		
Find a Moderation Friendly Therapist		

## Down for the Count



When new folks show up at a Moderation Management (MM) meeting, they will occasionally express surprise at our conversation: “I didn’t realize there would be so much... counting.”

Yes, we’re quite fond of our counting in MM. Along with abstinence days, our weekly drink count is a vitally important metric of our struggles and successes in reconciling our previously problematic relationships with alcohol. Participants are encouraged to begin counting even before they tackle moderation in earnest- establishing the baseline of our daily and weekly intake can be a humbling wakeup call and a compelling motivator. This is especially true for the chronic habitual drinker, but even the monthly binger can benefit from the practical mindfulness of the count. Many problem drinkers have been living in denial, having previously only paid attention to how many bottles remained in the cooler. Knowing what you’re up against is an essential element of the program, and the smartest place to begin.

Keeping an accurate count also helps us to tailor our Plans- the contracts we keep with ourselves detailing when, what, where, how, and with whom we’ll allow ourselves to drink. The Plan is the single most important component of successful moderation; well-meaning but vague intentions rarely suffice. There are, of course, the MM guidelines for low-risk consumption that we strive to maintain. But each of us will bring our own personal histories, patterns, preferences, and concerns to the table. There is no one-size-fits-all guide to establishing healthier habits- successful moderation hinges on forging an individual Plan that goes with, not against, the grain of our lives.

Yet all this counting can be somewhat off-putting to newcomers: “Isn’t drinking supposed to be relaxing? Supposed to be... well, fun? Where’s the fun in all this counting?”

In short: you get used to it. Like the calorie counting in Weight Watchers, monitoring our consumption becomes an integral, natural part of our daily lives. Moreover, it can be a gratifying exercise in personal stewardship. Whether it’s hatch marks on a calendar, poker chips in a jar, or one of the many new drink tracker smartphone apps available, the count is more than a mere record of the drinks we enjoy. It becomes an important motivational tool, firmly prompting us toward our healthy goals - the ‘count’ in Accountability. And the Big Fat Zero we employ to track an abstaining day is like a 24 karat gold star- recording what we’re not drinking is probably the most satisfying of all.

As we review our weekly tallies, an instructive metaphor emerges. For men, the recommended upper consumption limits are four standard drinks per occasion, fourteen per week; for women, three and nine respectively. Well, what if each week was a round of golf? Like moderation, it’s one of the few pursuits to celebrate a low score.

As new golfers, we’re often a mess on the links. Despite our best intentions, we cannot seem to control where the ball is going. Sloppiness and lack of preparation lead to added strokes on the score card. And for reasons we cannot fully explain, we get drawn back to the same bunkers, sand traps, and rough patches again and again, racking up embarrassingly high scores. The challenge seems insurmountable. Why not just throw in the towel?

We recognize that golf is a silly game and a time waster, but for whatever reason, we still enjoy it. And as we diligently work on our game, we notice improvements. Our swing becomes more confident, more mature, less wild and erratic. Our footing becomes more solid, and we gradually learn to avoid the hazards that plagued us in the past. Noting key weaknesses, we begin making small but necessary corrections. Where we used to slaughter a Par 4 hole with five or six misguided whacks, we soon find that we’re coming in consistently under.

Gravitating towards golfers better than ourselves, we see less and less of the clubhouse rowdies. We’re shaving strokes off each successive round. And eventually, our hard work pays off with golf’s holy grail: the Hole in One - a single swing that gets us exactly where we’d hoped to be, with no extra effort or wasted energy. Clarity, focus, and control have replaced the tension, confusion and chaos of our earlier game.

Like golf, moderated drinking is not for everyone. Some will find the counting intolerable, and the constant attention it requires can become emotionally draining to the best of us. Many prefer pure abstinence for its grace and simplicity. But for those who’ve struggled with bad habits, wrestling them back under control is about so much more than “getting to drink.” It’s an exercise in self-control, an affirmation of our sovereignty over ourselves, and it can exert a profoundly positive influence on seemingly unrelated areas of our lives. And just like golf, we eventually discover that our reduced numbers actually bring us more pleasure and satisfaction than our previous consumption patterns ever did. For those willing to accept the task, the count becomes a record of achievement, marking the path away from the mechanical habits of the past and towards a mindful, responsible, and healthier future.

### Swelle

Reprinted courtesy of **TheFix.com**  
<http://www.thefix.com/content/down-count-discipline-moderation>

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*“...the count is more than a mere record of the drinks we enjoy. It becomes an important motivational tool, firmly prompting us toward our healthy goals - the count in Accountability.”*

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## Read on the List

Many MM members find that moderation and abstinence more often than not free up what feels like a shocking amount of time to do other, healthier things. No hangovers, clear headed evenings, and an absence, or at least reduction, of guilt and shame have contributed to many an MM member's ability to focus on family, work, health, education, and fun.

We have many avid readers on MMLIST, the Moderation Management Main List Listserv, and they read about everything from cognitive behavioral therapy to mystery. Here are a sampling of books on changing habits and behaviors that folks reading in support of changing their lives for good.

### Change

*Changing for Good: A Revolutionary Six-Stage Program for Overcoming Bad Habits and Moving Your Life Positively Forward* by James O. Prochaska, John Norcross, and Carlo DiClemente

### Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

*Mind over Mood* by Dennis Greenberger, PhD and Christine A. Padesky, PhD.

*Cognitive Behavioral Therapy for Dummies* by Rob Willson and Rhena Branch

*Mindfulness for Dummies* by Shamash Alidina

Interested in joining the  
MMLIST community?

Subscribe here:  
<http://tinyurl.com/mdjdsyq>

Subscriptions are free.

### Moderation Management Network, Inc.

2795 East Bidwell Street  
Suite 100-244  
Folsom, California 95630-6480  
Email: [mm@moderation.org](mailto:mm@moderation.org)  
Website: [www.moderation.org](http://www.moderation.org)

## Welcome from our Executive Director, Continued from Cover Page

bring my consumption down to the limits recommended by what we call "The Book", *Responsible Drinking: A Moderation Management Approach for Problem Drinkers* by Rotgers, Frederick; Kern, Marc F.; Hoeltzel, Rudy (September 2002). (<http://amzn.to/1s4g7Yk>) The research that formed the basis for the book and our overall approach to moderation can be easily accessed on the Moderation Management website at:

[http://www.moderation.org/about\\_mm/research.shtml](http://www.moderation.org/about_mm/research.shtml)

Learning how to identify, develop, and maintain healthy habits with alcohol or any addictive behavior is for most a lifelong process that most certainly has its ups and downs. For many, the time spent quite actively in MM, whether as part of the email list serve or with more face-to-face or voice contact, is an average of nine months, which is often the time needed to deal with over-drinking, using tools like delayed drinking, planned time between drinks, and a minimum of two days off from drinking each week. MM offers many rosters (ways to participate with other people in abstaining from drinking for different lengths of time during the week or for set time periods) and tools with which to measure your progress. At some point, as *Responsible Drinking* points out, it's important to quickly determine whether moderate drinking is for you. If at this time or another point of your choosing you determine that permanent or indefinite abstinence is for you, we have numerous forums and even MM-affiliated lists that offer safe, non-judgmental support in helping you achieve your goals.

We invite you to explore our organization and its publications, read the anecdotes, stories, and information on our website, and enjoy your travels with MM!

Warm Regards,

### Jim Mergens

Executive Director, Moderation Management

*"Excess in all things is the undoing of men." - Aristotle*

