

Breaking the Bottles

Sandra Parker, a sober coach and founder of Just The Tonic Coaching, is changing the conversation around alcohol for high-achieving professionals in the UK. By offering a fresh approach to sobriety, she's helping career-driven individuals reclaim control of their lives - without the stigma.

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Just the Tonic Coaching

Sandra Parker, sober coach and founder

For many high-achieving professionals in the UK, alcohol isn't just a drink - it's a coping mechanism, a way to relieve the stress that comes with juggling careers, family, and life's endless pressures. But as the world has adapted to a new reality, so have the ways in which we approach alcohol. Enter Sandra Parker, sober coach and founder of [Just The Tonic Coaching](#), whose innovative approach to sobriety is flipping the script on traditional recovery methods.

Parker works with a very specific group of individuals: high-functioning professionals, many aged 40 and older, who are drinking far more than they want to, but who would never identify as "alcoholics." These are the business owners, senior executives, and successful professionals who may be downing 3-14 bottles of wine a week, often using alcohol to deal with the constant pressures of their careers. For them, the idea of AA or any traditional support group feels out of place, because, well, they're still functioning. They're still *performing*. But the toll alcohol takes on their well-being is undeniable.

"I work with people who are incredibly successful, yet alcohol has become a coping mechanism. They're not alcoholics - they're intelligent professionals who need a different kind of help," she explains. For Parker, the timing couldn't be more critical. With the global pandemic shifting so much of professional life online, the lines between work and home became increasingly blurred. In a world where people were already stressed, suddenly having unlimited access to alcohol at home transformed what had been a manageable habit into an entrenched, nearly unconscious one.

"COVID was a key factor for many. People who had natural limits - like commuting, office environments - suddenly found themselves working from home, with constant access to alcohol. What started as pandemic coping became entrenched habits." Parker's method is refreshingly different. She doesn't approach her clients as people who've "failed," but as high-functioning individuals who need a better, more sustainable way to handle the pressures of their lives. Her mission? To empower them with the knowledge and support to make informed decisions about their relationship with alcohol, instead of falling victim to it.

Her unique angle - treating alcohol dependency with education and a tailored approach rather than the traditional "one-size-fits-all" model - has produced transformational results. But Parker isn't just in the business of helping people quit drinking; she's helping them rediscover their full potential.

"I've seen professionals who've been drinking 15-20 bottles of wine a week, like a hospital GP, completely transform. This GP went on national media to share his story of becoming alcohol-free - and that kind of public commitment is what gets others to recognize the power of this approach," she says. These testimonials speak volumes: when successful professionals - who once believed their drinking was under control - share their struggles and successes with leading media outlets like The Telegraph and Marie Claire, it removes the shame and secrecy around alcohol consumption for others. And that visibility is leading more professionals to seek out change.

As for adapting to the current UK climate, Parker is seeing firsthand how the economic pressures of the day are pushing people to re-evaluate their drinking habits.

"Professionals are starting to realize that alcohol actually amplifies stress, rather than solving it. Beyond saving thousands a year, the real benefits come from sharper focus, better decisions, and a stronger leadership presence," she explains. For business owners, the stakes are even higher. "The ability to truly switch off, to clear away that foggy middle ground, is a competitive advantage in uncertain times." This insight into the broader benefits of sobriety is shifting the way high-performing individuals view alcohol. It's no longer about abstinence - it's about gaining a competitive edge and improving the quality of life.

The power of small groups

When it comes to getting real results, Parker highlights the power of community. She's seen firsthand how small group cohorts can make a massive impact. A lawyer, an entrepreneur, and an NHS consultant - all dealing with the same issue - coming together to support one another. The shared accountability, the lack of shame, the group dynamic: it all creates an environment that's ripe for transformation. "When a lawyer sees an entrepreneur and NHS consultant facing the same challenges, it eliminates shame and isolation. The group dynamic is key to accountability and success," Parker explains.

But it's not just about the clients. It's also about how Parker markets her services. For any new founder, she has one piece of advice: Vulnerability works. "People buy transformation, not information. They need to see themselves in your story." Parker has found that her most effective marketing content comes from sharing her own struggles with alcohol. By being transparent about her personal journey, she connects with people on a deeper level - making it easier for them to envision their own transformation through her program. And what excites her most about the future in the UK? The changing cultural conversations about alcohol.

"The UK is having honest conversations about alcohol now, something that would have been impossible five years ago. The stigma is lifting. Professionals now see addressing alcohol dependency as a strength, not a weakness," she says.

Parker's mission goes beyond merely helping people quit drinking; it's about preventing crisis-level addiction before it takes hold - ensuring that families stay intact, careers thrive, and individuals regain control over their lives before they hit rock bottom. Her work is undeniably shifting the narrative around alcohol. In a culture that often normalizes heavy drinking, she is providing a refreshing, human-centered alternative, where the focus is on empowerment, performance, and a life well-lived - without the need for the bottle.