

I dutifully had two glasses of wine last weekend as part of the exploration. ^^;;; It was a lovely warm sunny day and I was out for a long walk.

Immediate effects noticed:

1. Amplification of current mood: I was feeling more relaxed and pleasant. The mindset/mood I am in is a crucial factor when choosing to drink. In the past, drink to “wind down” after work often led to drinking more frequently than my usual a few times per month. So I try avoiding alcohol during stressful period. And I simply don’t like feeling tired the day after.
2. Less alert in senses and rational mind
3. Less inhibition & better function of specific part of mind (this probably is related to the second point): I communicated more/better and less self-conscious. This is to a point; my English & communication do suffer if I had more than my usual limit.

After effects noticed:

A few days later, I had an urge to have a drink on the way home, possibly triggered by a similar setting, a warm and sunny evening. I paused then to think about the previous occasions when I drank to “wind down”. In comparison, results are similar in that associations made at the time of drinking trigger an urge to have same experience. Differences mainly lie in my ability to make a choice to drink or not.

In this sense, I think ‘winding down’ to drink is similar to ‘switching off’ mind by other activities. Personally the combination of being stressed and alcohol dulls senses and reduces ‘volume’ of mind, very effectively. When I had alcohol again soon after because of a stressful day, it was harder to pause and decided against it. Even the choice of drinks, I didn’t care too much. None of “merlot, shiraz or pinot?”, I would just go “red or white?” ^^ In this, I have found alcohol to be intoxicating. Not so much about effects during the consumption but a cycle it can produce via a strong mental association, which requires less of an ability to decide clearly for myself what would address my needs best. (I still look out for ‘switching off’ mind, intoxication and addiction but nothing to report yet ...)

Body remembers. When I had the urge to drink a few days ago, I noticed how quickly my body anticipated and remembered the previous experience. I was quite surprised by the speed and strength of the response while observing. Alcohol is powerful stuff for me. My mind for a short while was busy with thoughts on if I can arrange something similar next weekend. Yep, I was for a moment meticulously planning my next fix! “Yeah ... that gastropub in Chiswick ...” ^^;;; I take my comforts from the fact that I don’t think about alcohol often and when I do I am not ‘grumpy’ for not being able to satisfy. I know this well because I used to smoke; that easily irritable state when dying for a smoke. I’m not sure of the best approach to alcohol yet. I do enjoy having it occasionally. At any rate, I’d like to treat it with caution.