

*This is not a word-for-word transcript*

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**Rob**

*Hello and welcome to 6 Minute English – the show that brings you an interesting topic, authentic listening practice and vocabulary to help you improve your language skills. I'm Rob...*

**Catherine**

*And I'm Catherine. In this programme we'll be discussing **quitting** drinking and staying dry.*

**Rob**

*Right, so when you say 'quitting', you mean 'giving up' – and when you say 'drinking', you're particularly referring to 'the activity of drinking alcohol'.*

**Catherine**

*Exactly Rob.*

**Rob**

*But, what about staying dry? It's nothing to do with the weather?*

**Catherine**

*No that's true. The adjective 'dry' here means 'no alcohol'. And I, Rob, am currently having a dry January.*

**Rob**

*Ah yes, your New Year's **resolution** is to give up alcohol for one month. Any reason?*

**Catherine**

*Yes. I'm doing it in order to improve my health and save some money. And a resolution, by the way, is a promise to yourself to do something or not to do something.*

**Rob**

*Well they seem like good reasons. And for now, we must keep up our resolution to always start the programme with a question, so are you ready for it, Catherine?*

**Catherine**

*I am, crack on, Rob!*

**Rob**

*According to data from the World Health Organisation in 2015, which country consumed the most alcohol per person? Was it...*

- a) Australia*
- b) Finland*
- c) The Czech Republic*

**Catherine**

*Well they're sound quite likely, but I did visit Prague once and I had a lovely time, so I'm going to say c) the Czech Republic.*

**Rob**

*OK, well as always, we'll find out the answer later on. But let's continue our discussion about drinking – or informally known as boozing – and trying to give it up. We all know that too much drinking can be bad for us and that's why you Catherine, have decided to quit – but only for a month.*

**Catherine**

*Yes just a month but it's a start and I might continue into February. But I'm seeing the benefits already. I've managed **to shed** some weight – most of which I actually put on over Christmas!*

**Rob**

*I can see. So **to shed** here simply means 'lose'. And I bet your **sobriety** is helping you sleep better. Sobriety, by the way, means 'the state of not being drunk'.*

**Catherine**

*It is actually. And I'm not alone: A study of 857 British adults by Dr Richard de Visser from the University of Sussex found that after going for a month without alcohol, 62% of the people in the study said they had better sleep. So Rob, does that tempt you to become teetotal and stop drinking?*

**Rob**

*Not me Catherine. I need a drink to help me relax and be more sociable – you know how shy I am!*

**Catherine**

*Yes of course Rob! Well, maybe you should listen to Catherine Gray. She's the author of a book called *The Unexpected Joy of Being Sober*, which she wrote after she discovered the negative effects of going to too many work-related parties where she was just drinking too much. Here she is speaking on BBC Radio 4's *Woman's Hour* programme...*

**Catherine Gray, author of *The Unexpected Joy of Being Sober***

*I had a lot of social anxiety and when I quit I had to deal with that. I think I used drinking as a*

**crutch**, a confidence crutch - it eased the way to go to big glittering parties and stuff like that and when I quit I had to learn real confidence in a way.

### **Catherine**

So Catherine worked in the magazine business which involved going to lots of boozy parties. Drinking, she says, helped her deal with a nervous and worried feeling that she had when she met new people - she called it social anxiety.

### **Rob**

Yes, and she used drinking as a **crutch**. A crutch here is something you depend on for support – and sometimes you rely on it too much.

### **Catherine**

Yes and eventually she decided to **abstain** from drinking – in other words stop doing something that is enjoyable but bad for you – and she feels much better for it. So come on Rob, haven't you got the willpower to just quit drinking for just 30 days?

### **Rob**

Well according to Catherine Gray, that wouldn't be long enough...

### **Catherine Gray, author of The Unexpected Joy of Being Sober**

Experts say that it takes 66 days for a new habit to **bed in**, so I would always recommend trying it for 90 days. 30 days is the hard bit before you get to the rewards. Because after 66 days it starts getting a lot easier and you start feeling better in yourself.

### **Catherine**

Right, so it takes 66 days for doing a regular activity - a habit - to **bed in**. And 'bed in' means to 'become normal and start working properly'.

### **Rob**

Now, earlier I asked you, according to data from the World Health Organisation in 2015, which country consumed the most alcohol per person? Was it...

- a) Australia
- b) Finland
- c) The Czech Republic

### **Catherine**

And I said the Czech Republic. Was I right?

### **Rob**

You were Catherine. Spot on, well done. Apparently, 14.1 litres of pure alcohol is consumed per person each year.

### **Catherine**

Well like I said, they do make good beer in the Czech Republic – but people, be careful, only drink it in moderation. Now Rob, shall we take a look at the vocabulary we've mentioned today?

**Rob**

Indeed. The first word we had was **resolution** – that's a promise to yourself to do or not do something. 'Catherine's New Year's resolution was to give up drinking alcohol for a whole month.'

**Catherine**

Yes, and I'm still doing it Rob – the plan is **to shed** a few kilos and get fit. So for example, 'Rob shed lots of weight when he went on a cake-free diet!'

**Rob**

Really? I'd never give up cake Catherine, but I could be tempted to give up booze as I know **sobriety** is good for my health – that's the noun word to mean 'the state of not being drunk'.

**Catherine**

Now our next word was **abstain**. That means 'not do something that is enjoyable but bad for you'. 'Rob needs to abstain from eating cakes if he wants to wear his skinny jeans.'

**Rob**

Are you dropping a hint there, Catherine? Now, our final word is actually two words – **bed in**. It means 'to become normal and start working properly'. 'It took a while for the new computer system to bed in but now it's working perfectly.'

**Catherine**

That's brilliant because now we can go online and find more BBC Learning English programmes at [bbclearningenglish.com](http://bbclearningenglish.com). That's all for today's 6 Minute English. We hope you enjoyed it. Bye for now.

**Rob**

Bye.