



The Sweet Spot: Developing Alcohol Refusal Strategies

LESSON PLANS

YEAR 11

LESSON 1

Lesson One

Learning Objectives:

- *To raise my awareness of “The Sweet Spot” and how to stay within it.*
- *To understand how my values can help me manage social situations that involve alcohol.*

Success Criteria:

- *I understand what the Sweet Spot is.*
- *I can understand and suggest why young people may choose not to drink or to drink in moderation.*
- *I can name positive experiences that make me feel good without alcohol.*
- *I can suggest strategies that would help me to feel good in my body, feel like I belong and feel like I can be who I am.*
- *I have mapped out my own “Sweet Spot” and started to think about how my values relate to this.*

Oral/Mental Starter (10 mins)

Give students the Quiz “Knowledge and Beliefs About Young People’s Alcohol Use” (Resource 1). The learning objective of this quiz is to encourage critical thinking around what is required to manage social situations involving alcohol, address social norms, and to elicit knowledge and understanding of why people may drink in excess. Play this with the teacher acting as a game show host e.g. “Family Fortunes”, having divided the class into two teams. Allocate points for correct answers (use True/False flashcards on Resource 1 if desired). Note any common misconceptions. Discuss answers and address misconceptions.

Main Activities (35 mins)

1 Mind Map

- Provide students with mind-map activity sheet requiring them to list all the things that make them feel good and positive in social situations that do not involve alcohol use (Resource 2).

2 Video

- Show video *The Sweet Spot* (video 1) to students. Encourage them to make notes of key points if they find this useful. (They will be encouraged to access the video any time at www.sweetspot.ac.uk).

3 Sweet Spot strategy identification

- Ask students to consider what it is that may enable an individual to find and stay in their own “Sweet Spot” (Resource 3) – group discussion. Share thoughts as a whole class discussion with teacher facilitating. What strategies can they identify in the video that they can relate to/try out for themselves?

- Share the “Sweet Spot” diagram (Resource 3) with students, talking through the 3 themes presented in video 1: feeling good in my body, feeling like I belong and feeling like I can be who I am. What strategies did they note in the video that demonstrated the young people achieving these themes? What ideas did they get for themselves?
- Students complete the Sweet Spot diagram for the above 3 themes only, relating it to themselves (Resource 4). Students then work in pairs to compare and contrast their responses. If group dynamics permit, the whole class comes together to share their perspectives. Students, the teacher or a TA scribes.

4 Case studies

- Provide a case study on the board of a public figure who appears to have had success in finding and maintaining the Sweet Spot. We have suggested Fearne Cotton, Samuel L Jackson, Daniel Radcliffe and Johnny Wilkinson (Resource 5), as examples, but if you are aware of other people your students relate to, look up to, or identify strongly with, use him or her. Encourage the students to come up with their own ideas of appropriate case studies. This could even be someone within their social circle, such as a mutual friend or community member. Students should have internet access during this activity.
- Explore elements of the Sweet Spot diagram that appeared to be present and/or missing for that person (refer to Resource 4 for case studies and template).

Plenary (10 mins)

- Reflect on “Your Values – What do YOU Stand For?” (Resource 6) hand out and how their values help them to find their own Sweet Spot and stay within it.
- Discuss the strategies that they may find useful to enable them to manage drinking situations effectively.
- Self-assess whether they have achieved none, some or all of the success criteria.



The Sweet Spot: Developing Alcohol Refusal Strategies

Resource Bundle

LESSON 1

Knowledge and Beliefs About Young People's Alcohol Use QUIZ

In two teams (use TRUE/FALSE flashcards if desired), answer true or false to the below questions:

1. Alcohol has only positive effects on your mood
2. The effects that alcohol has on your mind and body vary from person to person
3. These days, young people are drinking more often and drinking more alcohol
4. If your best friend drinks, you are more likely to start drinking
5. One of the best ways to avoid drinking heavily is feeling confident that you will be able to do so successfully
6. The number of young people who do not drink alcohol is increasing
7. Young people are more likely to drink a lot if there are few fun, affordable social activities for them
8. If a friend gets so drunk that they pass out, it is OK to put them in bed and go back to the party
9. Most young people who don't drink see alcohol as definitely a bad thing, and don't drink for moral reasons
10. Heavy drinking during teenage years increases the risk of alcohol related problems later in life

Answers

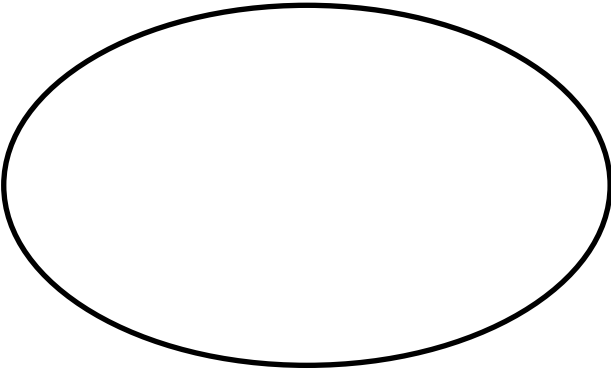
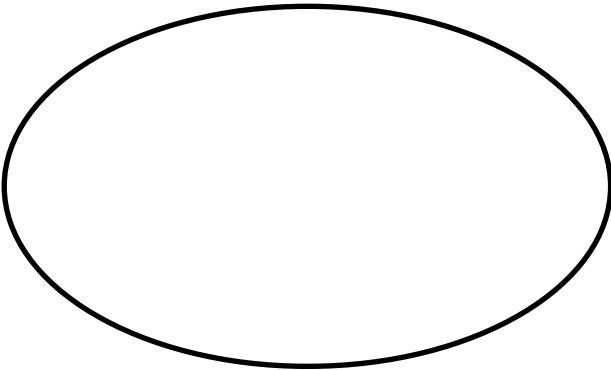
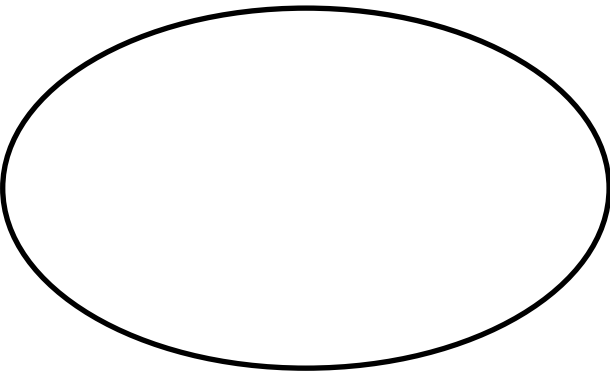
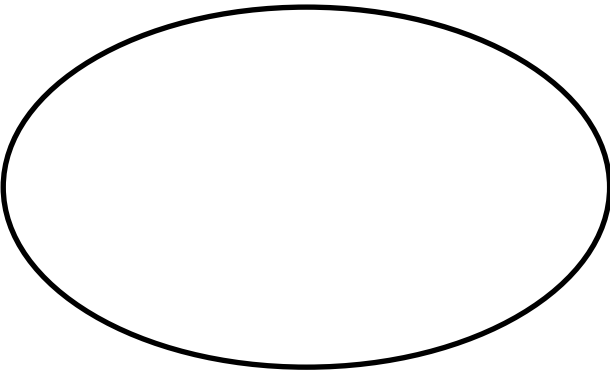
- | | | | |
|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 1. False | 2. True | 3. False | 4. True |
| 5. True | 6. True | 7. True | 8. False |
| 9. False | 10. True | | |

TRUE

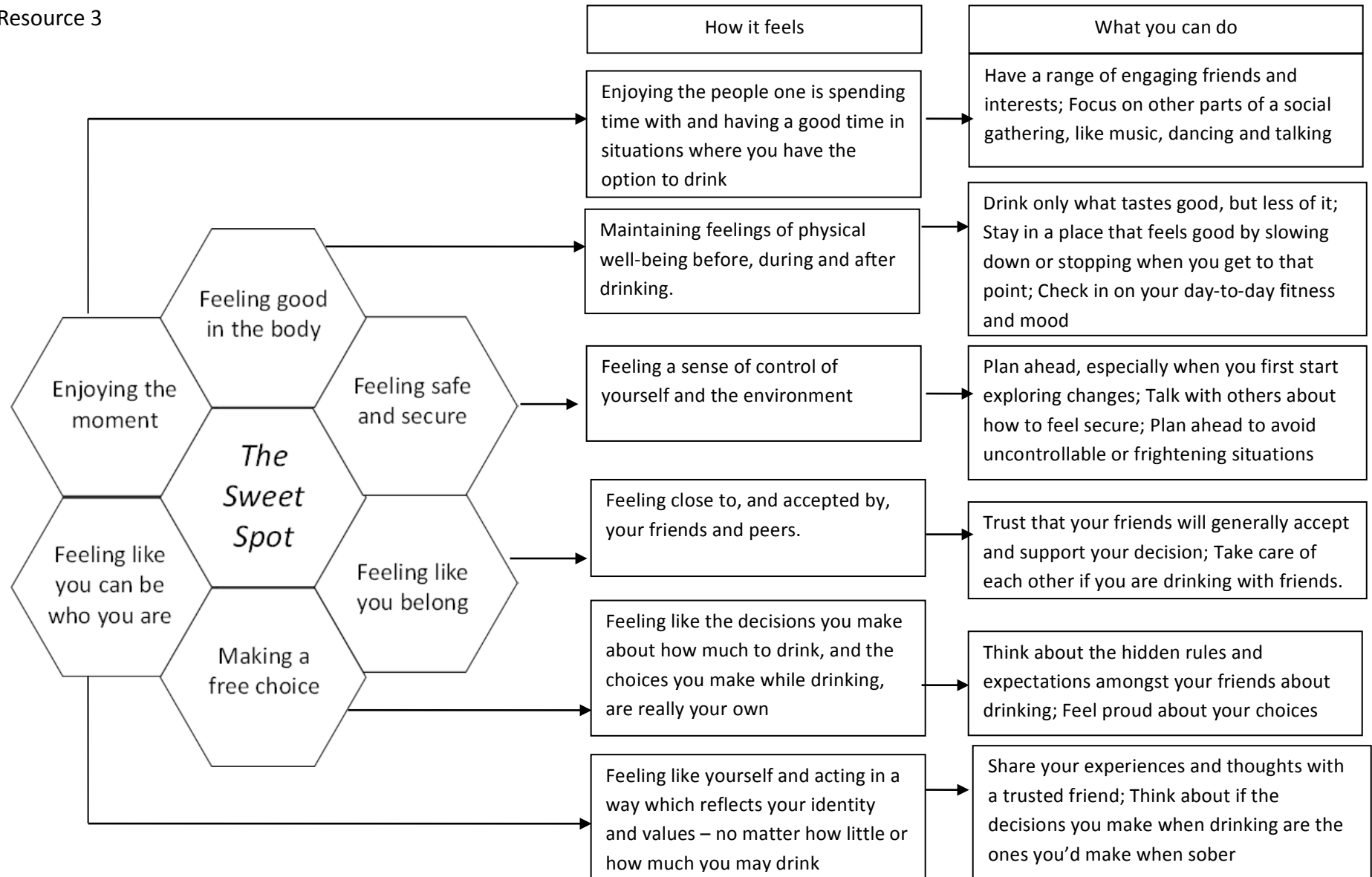
FALSE

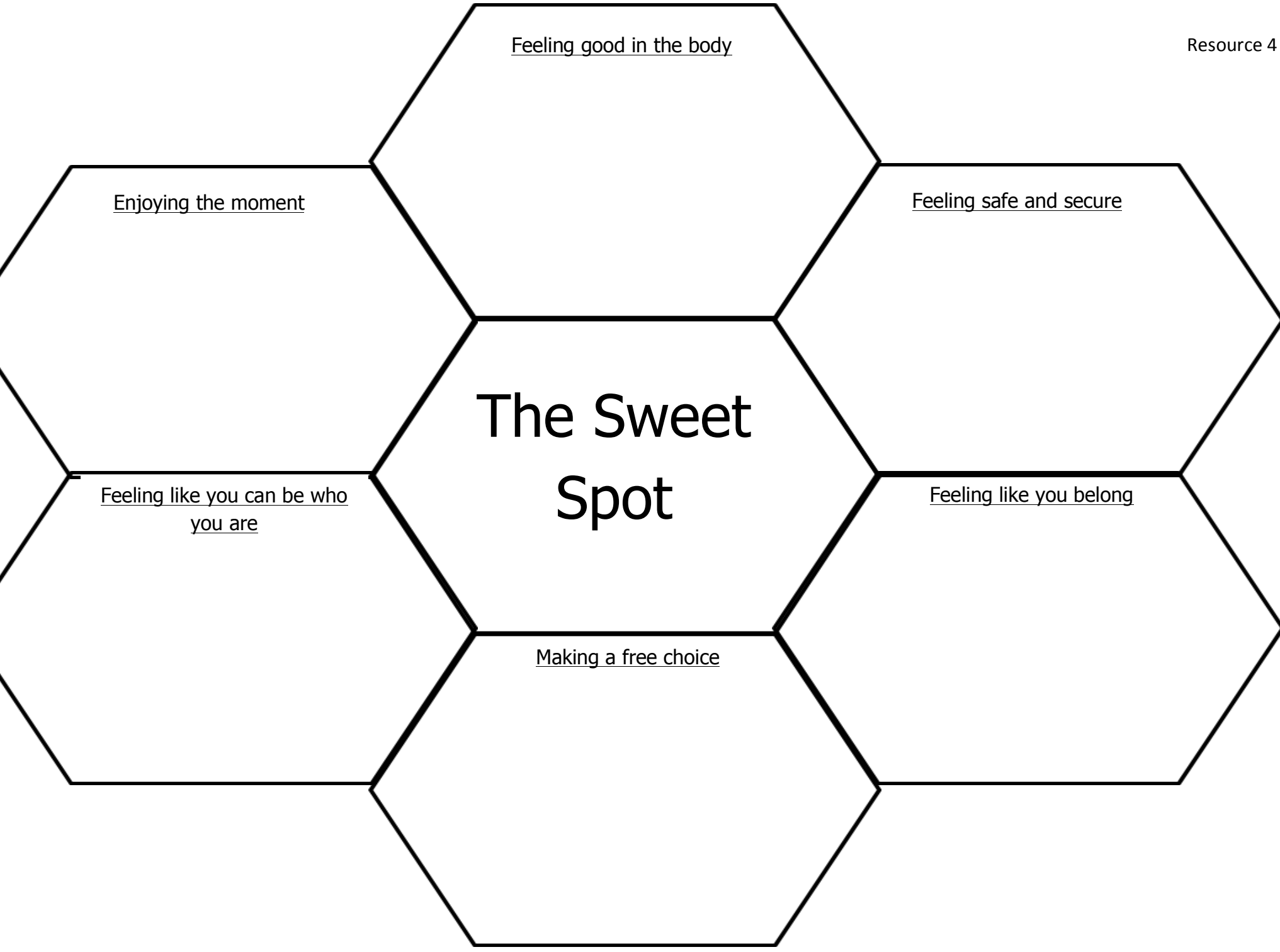
Mind Map Activity Sheet

List all the things that make you feel good and positive in social situations that do not involve alcohol use.



Resource 3





Feeling good in the body

Enjoying the moment

Feeling safe and secure

The Sweet Spot

Feeling like you can be who
you are

Feeling like you belong

Making a free choice



Name: **Samuel L Jackson**

Biography (short notes): Born 1948. Raised in Washington, an only child. His father died of alcoholism. Actor and film producer, rose to acclaim in 1990s. Married with a daughter. Didn't know his father well, raised primarily by his grandmother. Attended several segregated schools. Discovered his talent for acting in College. Involved in the American Civil Rights and then the Black Panther Movements. During the early stage of his acting career (1970's), Jackson developed an addiction to alcohol and cocaine. In the 90's, his family entered him into rehab. He came out of rehab and continued a successful acting career – relating to the character he played in “Jungle Fever” (a man who smokes crack). Jackson attributes the support of Spike Lee and Morgan Freeman as life changing for him. He enjoys playing golf and watching basketball and British football. He is now a vegan for health reasons and supports awareness of men's testicular cancer.

Evidence of using Sweet Spot strategies successfully:

- Accepting support from friends and family
- Having friends he can rely on and turn to
- Having an outside interest
- Discovering and building on a talent
- Looking after his body (becoming vegan)

Evidence of not finding the sweet spot:

- Denying to his wife that he had a problem for years
- Harming his physical well being
- Justifying alcohol and drug use as “part of the trade”
- His alcohol and drug use having a negative impact on his acting

From what you have read, what else may have helped him? e.g. support network, accessing hobbies...

Accepting the insight and concern of others earlier. Being open to considering what impact alcohol and drugs WERE having on his life realistically. Keeping himself safe and focusing on activities he found relaxing instead e.g. golf, enjoying watching basketball games with friends and family.



Name: Daniel Radcliffe

He has a close friendship with his Harry Potter co-stars Tom Felton and Emma Watson, and is tight-knit with his family, whom he credits for keeping him grounded. Radcliffe suffers from a mild form of developmental coordination disorder which sometimes gets so bad that he has trouble doing simple activities, such as writing or tying his shoelaces. He has contributed to many charities, including a Children's Hospice and The Trevor Project.

In August 2010, he stopped drinking after finding himself becoming too reliant on it. He sometimes turned up to shoot Harry Potter films still drunk from the night before, and that he turned to alcohol to cope with the pressures of fame and potential failure. "I would have benefited from not drinking," he said in the *Mirror*. "It was not making me as happy as I wanted it to." In an interview with *Shortlist* in 2012, he said drinking had been "unhealthy and damaging to my body and my social life". Radcliffe added: "I was living in constant fear of who I'd meet, what I might have said to them, what I might have done with them, so I'd stay in my apartment for days and drink alone. I was a recluse at 20. It was pathetic – it wasn't me. I'm a fun, polite person, and it turned me into a rude bore."

Evidence of using Sweet Spot strategies successfully:

- Likes to go out for dinner with friends or stay home and read
- Recognised impact of his drinking on relationships with others
- Recognised he was becoming reliant on alcohol socially
- Recognised it was unhealthy to be drinking at the level that he was
- Successful career, focusing on his talent

Evidence of not finding the Sweet Spot strategies:

- Drinking was impacting on his relationship with his girlfriend
- "Paranoid" in social situations about how he had behaved with people previously
- Used alcohol as a "social crutch"
- Making him a social "bore"

From what you have read, what else may have helped him? E.g. support network, accessing hobbies...

Using strategies to find his Sweet Spot earlier without having to rely on alcohol to help his confidence socially. He could have tried:

- Having self-control
- Being more in the company of people he felt comfortable with
- Relying on others for social support and trusting their opinions
- Access a wider range of hobbies and interests
- Considered earlier what he stood for, and how he wanted to appear to others



Name: Johnny Wilkinson

Biography (short notes): Former rugby union player for England and the British and Irish Lions. Wilkinson helped England win the 2003 Rugby World Cup and was acknowledged as one of the world's best rugby union players. He has come back from several injuries to lead England to the final of the 2007 World Cup. Wilkinson is widely known as a teetotaler, but broke that habit after England lost to South Africa in the 2007 Rugby World Cup Final. Wilkinson has been following Buddhist principles and teachings. He likes to imagine he lives his life in front of a 24-hour camera (ironic, considering his desire for privacy). "It's a set of standards that you live by. And it's having the pride not to drop below them, regardless of what outside pressures creep in. To say this is the way I am, this is the way I want to be, and to try to stand strong through whatever else happens. There are certain vows you make and you stick to them."

Normally an abstainer from alcohol, Wilkinson drank to "avoid the pain" of England's World Cup final defeat to South Africa in 2007. He said he wanted to join in with his team-mates as they unwound after a hard tournament. He told the *Times*: "I broke the habit of pretty much a lifetime after the game on Saturday night and had a bit of a blow-out. It was the first time in years and simply seemed the right time and the right thing to do." He said a huge bond had formed in the national rugby squad over the past few weeks, which he did not want to break: "after the final on Saturday, it seemed right to remain as a group, all as close and tight as we have become. I am proud to have been in this team and in this squad and I wanted to show that. It also helped to be together like that, to get back to the hotel and then go straight out again. Anything, I felt, rather than stop and ruminate on what had just gone before". He added, "We actually managed to have a lot of fun, but I tell you, I certainly felt rank as a result of it ... So it is back home for me now, recover properly and get myself into a position where I can start taking my rugby forward again".

Evidence of using Sweet Spot strategies successfully:

- Acknowledging time bonding with his team mates while commiserating their loss
- Making a conscious decision when not/to drink
- Having a sport that he is committed to (rugby)
- Spending time with his brother doing other activities
- Drinking with people he trusted
- Strong values and moral code
- Aside from after 2007 World Cup loss, has not drunk alcohol

Evidence of not finding the Sweet Spot strategies:

- Drinking excessively until he felt "rank as a result" – not looking after his body

From what you have read, what else may have helped him?

Little! He has chosen to abstain for the majority of his life and has made an informed decision when he hasn't.



Name: Fearne Cotton

Biography (short notes): Born 1981. Fearne Cotton (nee Wood) is an English television and radio presenter best known for presenting a number of popular television programmes such as Top of the Pops and the Red Nose Day telethons. In 2007, she became the first regular

female presenter of the Radio One chart show. Cotton but is today best known for her role as a mainstream television and radio presenter and fashion designer. In 2011, Cotton stated she had not had a drink for three years, saying to the *Daily Mail*, "I wasn't a big drinker before so I found it quite easy to give up completely - and now I feel bloody brilliant". And she would love to give troubled star Britney Spears some help cleaning up her act. "I feel sorry for her!" Cotton said. "I do want her to get better. She could come and live with me and be sober forever. She needs Mama Cotton to look after her." While she has given up the alcohol, she won't be changing what she eats. "I've seen pop stars on really strict diets and you can't help but wonder how they do it. I find it so sad. I'd rather be happy," she said.

Evidence of using Sweet Spot strategies successfully:

- Wanting to help others hit their Sweet Spot
- Not being judgemental of others drinking
- Staying true to her values
- Feeling good in her body, exercises regularly
- Successful career with other interests
- Did not have difficulty finding her Sweet Spot, but chose not to drink as an alternative to drinking

Evidence of not finding the Sweet Spot strategies:

- Not looking after her body – having limited sleep due to partying in the past

From what you have read, what else may have helped her?

Little, she didn't drink heavily to start with and chose to abstain from drinking alcohol.

Name:

Biography (short notes):

Evidence of using Sweet Spot strategies successfully (list them):

-
-
-
-

Evidence of not finding the sweet spot (list them):

-
-
-
-

From what you have read, what else may have helped him/her? e.g. support network, accessing hobbies...

Other Well Known People who have Successfully Managed Alcohol in Their Lives

Some of these well-known people abstain from alcohol entirely, and some sometimes drink a moderate amount. This list gives you some ideas about who you may like to research (or you may choose to write about someone you know personally ANONYMOUSLY), if you are stuck or unsure where to start when accessing information for your case study. (A Google search and Wikipedia are good starting points):

- Macklemore (rapper)
- Jessie J (singer)
- Sarah Hardin (Girls Aloud singer)
- Kristin Davis (Sex in the City actor)
- Anthony Hopkins (actor)
- Slash (Guns 'n' Roses guitarist)
- Naomi Campbell (model)
- Tony Adams (footballer)
- Anil Ambani (businessman)
- Che Guevara (revolutionary)

Your Values – What do YOU Stand for?

Key Points to Think About and Remember

Feeling good in your body	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Look after your body, whether you are drinking or not ▪ Check in with your day-to-day fitness and mood ▪ Drink only what tastes good – but drink less of it
Feeling safe and secure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Plan ahead to avoid uncontrollable or frightening situations ▪ Talk with others about how to feel secure ▪ Plan ahead, especially at first ▪ Have an “exit strategy”
Feeling like you belong	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Your friends will generally accept and support your decision ▪ Take care of your friends ▪ Have quick, easy responses for drink offers ▪ Consider whether your drinking is requiring your friends to take care of you ▪ Have a non-alcoholic drink in your hand
Making a free choice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Feel proud about your choices – the small difficulties are worth it ▪ Think about the “done thing” or hidden rules and expectations about drinking ▪ Stay sober a few times and see what a difference it makes
Feeling like you can be who you are	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ask yourself, would I want to meet “drunk me”? ▪ Know that you’re not alone: lots of people question drinking but don’t talk about it ▪ Share your thoughts with a trusted friend ▪ See whether you would have more money, time and energy to pursue your other interests if you changed the way you drink
Enjoying the moment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Choose social activities that don’t involve alcohol ▪ Have a range of friends and interests ▪ Just get on with having a good time!