



SOBER S3X SERIES PRESENTS

# THE SOBER PRIDE GUIDE

A Sober Queer's  
Guide to Pride Month  
and Beyond!

By Sober S3x Educator, Ms. Mac



# THE SOBER **PRIDE** GUIDE

A Sober Queer's Guide to Pride Month and Beyond!

Social events, especially during Pride month, can be overwhelming if you are sober or sober-curious. It can feel isolating, as many events are centered around substance use and/or held at a bar. Not to mention, substances, especially drinking, are so normalized within our culture as a way to celebrate.

## IN THIS GUIDE, YOU WILL FIND:

Prologue: "Lights!"

Setting the Sober Scene .....Pg 2

Act One: "Camera!"

Getting Show Ready .....Pg 7

Act Two: "Action!"

It's Showtime! .....Pg 12

Epilogue: "Strike the Stage!"

After the Show .....Pg 17

If you find yourself nervous and apprehensive to go out, **you aren't alone!** The Sober Pride Guide provides a space for you to move through this discomfort. This Guide offers prompts to ruminate on, exercises to practice, and a judgement and shame-free space to cultivate perspective to support you wherever you find yourself in your sobriety journey.

Take as much time as you need to move through this and **thank you** for being on this journey with me!

# PROLOGUE

**"Lights!"**  
**Setting the**  
**Sober Scene**

---



# "LIGHTS!" SETTING THE SOBER SCENE

## YOUR SCRIPT

*One of the first steps in prepping for social events is to let your friends and chosen family know you aren't going to be drinking or partaking. Here are a few questions to marinate on before having this conversation:*

### **Do I feel comfortable being around others who aren't sober?**

This might seem obvious, but checking in with yourself on whether or not you are comfortable being around people who are partaking is an important first step in determining your plans for going out.

### **Am I OK with being in a bar setting?**

Sometimes being in the bar can be difficult or tempting. If you are not comfortable being at the bar, it's OK to set boundaries and let people know you will be joining say, for dinner before or to the show, but not going to the bar or going to stay at the bar after the event.

### **What is my Covid-Consciousness?**

Considering your safety and safety of those around you is imperative during the time of Covid-19. It is important to determine with those you are going out with what everyone is comfortable with. Masks are vital in protecting our community, even if vaccinated. Consider your Covid-consciousness when deciding what events to go to.



# "LIGHTS!" SETTING THE SOBER SCENE

## YOUR SCRIPT (Cont.)

**How late am I comfortable staying out? Do I want to set myself a Curfew and/or Check-in?**

Deciding on a time beforehand that you are going to leave can be helpful in determining your boundaries. This can look like setting a "Curfew" for yourself to support not staying out as late.

**Example: "I am going to leave at 11 p.m."**

It can also include deciding a time with yourself or with those you go out with to Check-In (skip to Pg 16 for Check-In exercise).

**Example: At 10 p.m. we will all decide if we want to continue staying out.**

As it can sometimes be tempting to stay out later if you are including others in your Check-In, consider implementing both a Check in & Curfew so that you can maintain your boundaries.

**Example: "At 9 p.m. I will Check-in with myself. Regardless of what my friends want to do, I will leave at 11 p.m."**

**REMINDER: A Curfew doesn't have to be a punishment. Maybe you can leave out your favorite PJs for you to put on when you get back home, or maybe there's a furry friend you want to get back to. Implementing a Curfew can be a way to take care of yourself, regardless of what's going on around you.**

# "LIGHTS!" SETTING THE SOBER SCENE

## YOUR CAST

*Taking into account the community you are surrounding yourself with can assist in supporting your sobriety. Who are you going to include in your social calendar? Who do you want next to you at social events? Or are you dancing on your own?*

**When considering who to go out with, think of:**

- + Those who already know you're sober
- + People who respect your "No"
- + Those you feel safe around
- + Friends or chosen family who are sober
- + Those who honor your boundaries

**Something to note:** The people you spend the most time with may not be the same ones you feel comfortable going out with. Those you work with, for example, or even the people you typically go out with, may not be the ones you want by your side. Considering you are likely to feel vulnerable and potentially activated while out, cultivate a cast of characters who will keep your journey in mind.

# "LIGHTS!" SETTING THE SOBER SCENE

## BACKSTAGE

*Behind the scenes, marinate on your 'WHY.' Why do you want to be sober at this event? Why is that important to you?*

**Write down your WHY for choosing to have a sober event. You can refer back to this later:**

As you generate ideas around your 'WHY,' consider developing lists as quick refreshers when you need them:

### Joys List

What joyful moments can you share at the event with a sober mind? What connections are you looking forward to cultivating being sober? Maybe it's the joy of dancing with your friends. Or the joy of remembering who you text throughout the night. The joy of being in control of your decisions. Anything that brings you into gratitude, list it!

### Consequences List

Another option is keeping a list of things that could happen if you do partake, providing the "worst-case scenarios" upfront to refer back to if you are tempted. If you choose to do this exercise, please note it may bring up a lot for you. Consider writing your list with a trusted person present or while on the phone with someone you love if that feels accessible for you. Provide them with the opportunity to support you through your sobriety journey.

# ACT ONE

**"Camera!"**  
**Getting Show**  
**Ready**

---



# "CAMERA!" GETTING SHOW READY

## BEFORE THE EVENT

*Pick your Alcohol-Free (AF) Beverage to order or bring with you.*

*Here are some things to consider when choosing:*

### **Is this an outdoor event where you can Bring Your Own Beverage?**

If so, bring anything under the sun that supports your sobriety (i.e. kombucha, sparkling water, coffee, juice, tea, etc).

### **Is this a bar or somewhere you will need to order?**

If you know where you're going to be going, look up their menu for what alcohol-free options they have.

### **What if I don't want a drink?**

If you don't want a drink, consider mints, gum, suckers, stim toys, or anything tactile to keep your mouth and/or hands busy. People may be less likely to ask if you want something if you already have something in your hand.

### **No AF Ideas? No Problem! Try:**

- +Cherry Coke**
  - Add Grenadine**
- +Any Soda/Pop**
- +Mocktail**
  - Shirley Temple**
  - Bar's AF Specials**
- +Water**
- +Arnold Palmer**
- +Soda Water**
  - Add Bitters/Lime**



# "CAMERA!" GETTING SHOW READY

## BEFORE THE EVENT

*Practice, Practice, Practice!*

*Beginning to form new habits takes practice and declining substances is no different. It's okay to need practice to form your "No." before the event, so that you can show up prepared if/when someone asks. Here are some exercises to support your "No.":*

### **Use your "No." in situations unrelated to substances**

Before working with this question specifically, can you practice saying "No." outside of this setting? Becoming more clear in your "No." can deepen trust within yourself and your boundaries, which will assist in stressful scenarios. Instead of feeling rigid about setting this boundary, can it be an **act of care** for yourself and others?

Start building your "No" in lower stakes situations. Maybe it's telling someone "No, thanks!" when they ask if they can pick you up anything from the store. Or declining hanging out with a friend if you're too busy. Then try using it in more difficult moments, like if someone asks if you're OK and you aren't, letting them "No."

### **Practice saying "No." or "No, thanks." in the mirror, if that feels accessible, or to a trusted friend/chosen family member**

As you begin to feel more confident in your "No," ask someone you trust to practice with you. **It will likely feel awkward at first!** Can you lean into the discomfort, embracing the awkward moments with playfulness and finding softness for parts of you that may feel raw or open? Whatever comes up, know you are supported in this boundary.

# "CAMERA!" GETTING SHOW READY

## BEFORE THE EVENT

*Practice, Practice, Practice! (Cont.)*

### Practice Exercise

**CW: Body Scan (skip to Pg 11 for exercise without scan)**

As you begin to get more comfortable with your "No." what sort of sensations are you experiencing? Notice what begins to come up in your body as you say "No." when you mean "No."

Are your cheeks hot? Tight in the heart? Clenched shoulders or hands? Do parts of you feel clammy? Sweating? If accessible, what does your "No." sound like in your ears? Or feel like coming out of your mouth? Loud and defiant? Quiet and shaky?

Noticing what is coming up for you in your body with a curious mind, rather than from a place of judgement, allows you to show yourself compassion with cultivating your "No."

Journal about the experience here:

# "CAMERA!" GETTING SHOW READY

## BEFORE THE EVENT

*Practice, Practice, Practice! (Cont.)*

### Practice Exercise

As you begin to get more comfortable with your "No." what sort of feelings are you moving through? Notice what thoughts begin to form as you say "No." when you mean "No."

How did it feel to use your "No."? Empowering? Nerve-wracking? Impossible? Disappointing?

Taking a moment to notice what is coming up for you with a curious mind, rather than from a space of judgement, allows you to show yourself compassion in cultivating your "No."

Journal about the experience here:

# ACT TWO

**"Action!"**  
**It's Showtime!**

---



# "ACTION!" IT'S SHOWTIME!

## DURING THE EVENT

*You've made it to the big day! Now what??*

### HAVE AN

### ACCOUNTABILI-BUDDY

Find an Accountabili-Buddy, a buddy to hold you accountable and talk to or text if you get cravings. This isn't something you need to take on alone. Investing in collective care gives your community the space to support your sobriety.

If you don't have or want a bud, consider setting reminders on your phone throughout the night to Check-In with the Guide on Page 16.

**REMINDER:** You don't have to justify your reasoning to anyone! "No" is a complete sentence. There's no need to go into a detailed explanation unless you want to.

How to Respond to  
"Why aren't you drinking?"

(Check all that apply!)

- ☐ I don't feel like it.
- ☐ I don't want to.
- ☐ I am! (show AF beverage)
- ☐ I'm fine without.
- ☐ I'm good!
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ \_\_\_\_\_

Add your own!



# "ACTION!" IT'S SHOWTIME!

## DURING THE EVENT

### *Strategies for Coping with Overcoming Emotions*

#### **AFFIRMATIONS**

Communicating with yourself with compassion can help support you as you are out. Coming back to an affirmation or two can help to reground and show yourself care. Here are some examples. Circle any that resonate or create your own!

I am enough as I am.

My sobriety is sacred.

I am still cool and fun sober.

I am grateful for my sobriety.

My sobriety is non-negotiable.

I am proud of myself.

I approach myself with compassion.

I like who I am sober.

Who I am without substances is enough.

I choose myself first.

Caring for myself is revolutionary.

I will protect my peace.

Sobriety is self-care.

I am whole on my own.

#### **BREATHING**

Taking a moment to slow down and breathe can be an important tool if accessible. Try 4X4X4: Four counts breathing in, hold for four, four counts breathing out. Repeat as needed.

If breathing does not feel accessible to you, and you are comfortable (and Covid-conscious) being close to someone or something, co-regulating may be an option: hugging someone directly (heart to heart), putting a finger on their wrist pulse point, or petting a furry friend if there is one nearby can help calm your nervous system.

## DURING THE EVENT

*Strategies for Coping with Overcoming Emotions (Cont.)*

### TAKE SPACE TO MAKE SPACE

As much as your presence at the event is appreciated, **it does not need to come at the expense of your sobriety**. Don't be afraid to step away from the event for a few minutes, go outside, or leave. It's okay to take space to make space for your feelings and whatever is coming up for you.

If you are going to leave, check-in if your Accountabili-Buddy or a trusted friend can go with you. If accessible, consider asking someone sober who is not out to come pick you up. Or find a coffee-shop, library, park, chosen fam/friend's house, or any space nearby that feels safe and accessible for you.

### REMEMBER YOUR WHY

Refer back to your **"WHY,"** referencing your Joys and/or Consequences Lists if needed. Keep this information on a Notes App on your phone, or a small piece of paper to take with you. Remembering why you chose to come to this event sober in the first place can help reground and support your experience.

**REMINDER: You aren't disappointing anyone when you show up for yourself, your needs, and your boundaries.**

# "ACTION!" IT'S SHOWTIME!

## DURING THE EVENT

*What does a Self Check-In look like?*

This can be similar to the exercise you did with your "No." on Pg 10 and/or 11. Noticing, without judgement if possible, what feelings or sensations are coming up. Here is a non-extensive feelings list for you to reference. Circle any that apply:

Proud

Lonely

Loved

Empowered

Happy

Frustrated

Sad

Annoyed

Excited

Joyful

Scared

Uncomfortable

Nervous

Overwhelmed

Anxious

Brave

Engaged

Numb

As you consider what is coming up for you, **thank** your mind and/or body for the information. In the same way you would support a friend if they were moving through these feelings, **how can you best support yourself?** If necessary, incorporate the strategies you have moved through in this guide or make other necessary adjustments to best take care of yourself.

Feelings are temporary and **whatever is coming up for you is valid**. The mere fact that you are here and showing up for yourself is something to be proud of.

# EPILOGUE

**"Strike the  
Stage!"  
After the Show**

---



# "STRIKE THE STAGE!"

## AFTER THE SHOW

*Congratulations! You've made it through! Below are questions to reflect on post-event.*

### What if I forgot my lines?

It's inevitable that throughout your sobriety journey, there will be moments you stumble. Healing is not a linear process, so try to be gentle and compassionate with yourself if you faltered. Use this slip-up as information for you to try again next time. You do not have to get everything right to be worthy and deserving of compassion.

### Do I have to stick with the same boundaries whenever I go out?

Needing to reevaluate your boundaries is OK. You may not know how you feel about a situation until you are presented with it. Your boundaries can ebb and flow as you move through this process. Continue to communicate with yourself and others to best support your boundaries.

### How can I better show up for myself next time?

Take a moment to reflect on what you learned about the experience and yourself. Can you show yourself gratitude for trying, no matter the outcome? Thank yourself for being here and take **PRIDE** in showing up to this process!





Looking for support with  
your intimate relationships  
& your relationship with  
substances?

**Join the Sober S3x Series  
Community Substack!**

**AskMsMac.Substack.com**

Have questions about  
sex and substances  
you're unsure who to  
ask?

**ASK MS MAC**

 [SoberS3xSeries.com/  
AskMsMac](https://SoberS3xSeries.com/AskMsMac)

 [NGL.Link/AskMsMac](https://NGL.Link/AskMsMac)

**Connect with Ms. Mac**



Instagram



TikTok



E-mail

@SoberS3xSeries @SoberS3xSeries MsMac@SoberS3xSeries.com

