RESPONSIBLE DRINKING – FOR WHOM?

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THE MYTH OF “RESPONSIBLE DRINKING”

- “Drink responsibly” – sounds moral, hides harm
- WHO: “There is no safe level of alcohol consumption.”
- Every drink increases risk – to health, relationships, and society

WHY THIS DISCUSSION MATTERS

- “Responsible drinking” is a social construct, not a fact
- Shifts focus from systems → individuals
- Normalises harm through illusion of choice
- Convenient for industry & policy makers

WHO CAN TRULY “DRINK RESPONSIBLY”?

Very few – almost no one.

Groups for whom alcohol is unsafe:

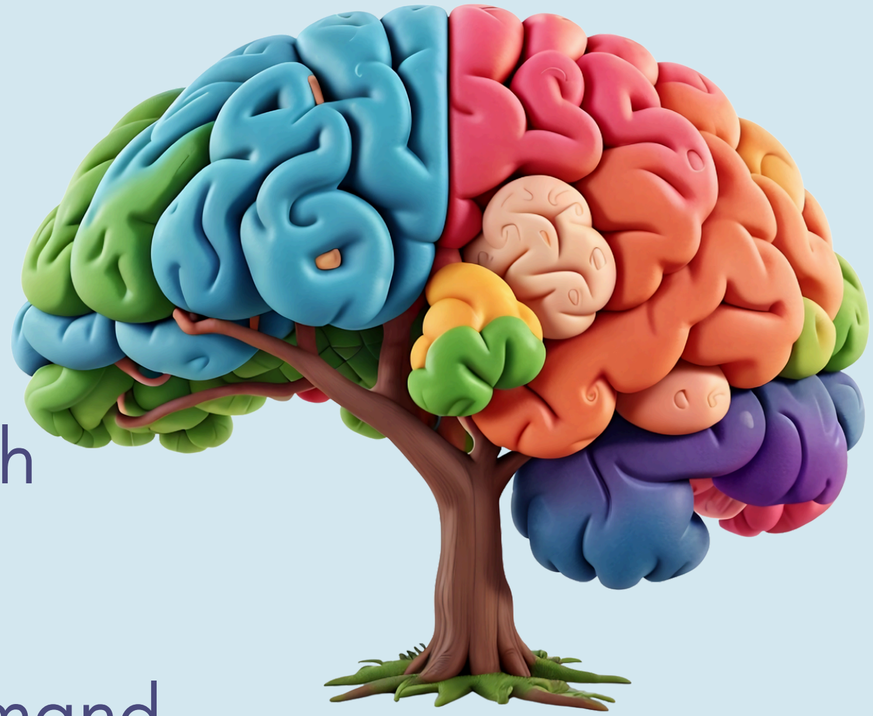
- 👧 Children & adolescents
- 🧠 People with depression / anxiety
- 🤰 Pregnant & breastfeeding women
- 💊 People using medication
- 🍷 People with addiction

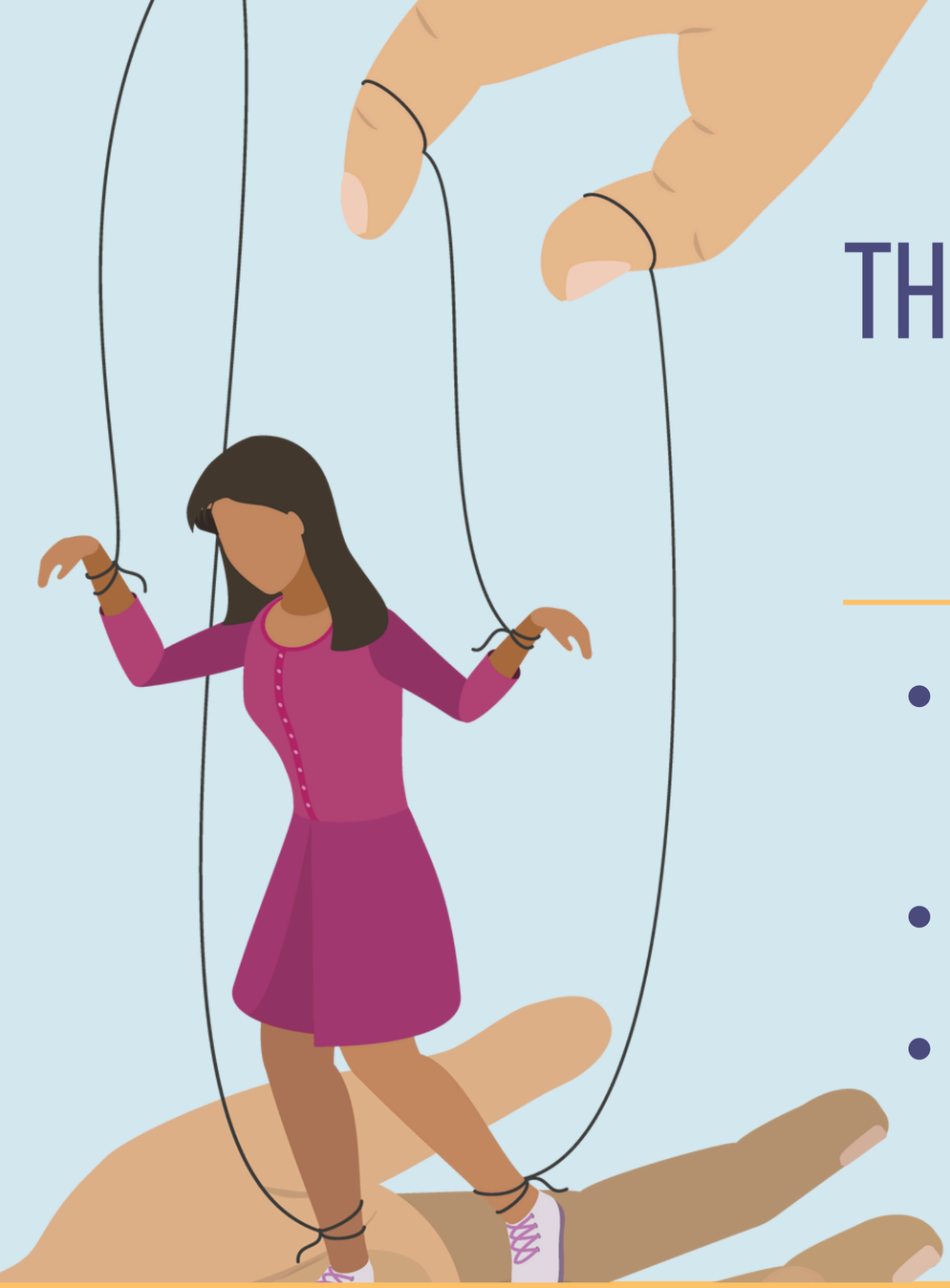
KEY GROUP INSIGHTS

- Youth: brain still developing → early use = higher addiction risk
- Mental health: alcohol = depressant → worsens disorders
- Pregnancy: no safe dose - fetal harm
- Medication: interactions → toxic effects
- Dependence: not a choice, a disease

ADDICTION – WHEN “RESPONSIBILITY” DISAPPEARS

- Addiction = chronic brain & social disorder
- Alters reward & control systems
- In Latvia: 80 000–120 000 people with alcohol dependency
- “Drink responsibly” = impossible command





THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC BURDEN

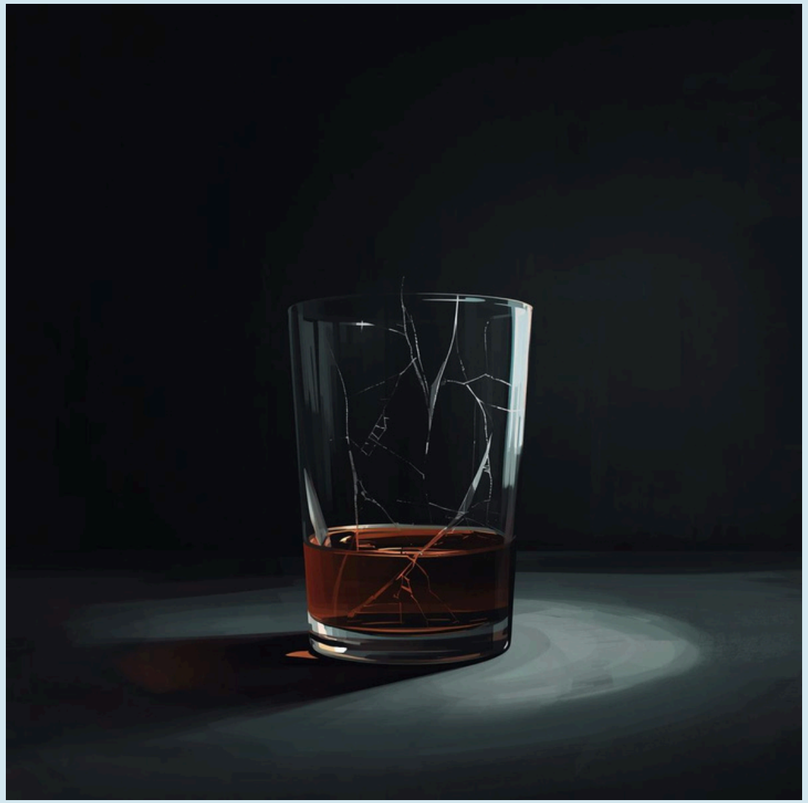
- Linked to domestic violence, child neglect, depression
- Causes injury, disease, and social harm
- Every €1 spent on alcohol → €2+ in social losses (WHO)

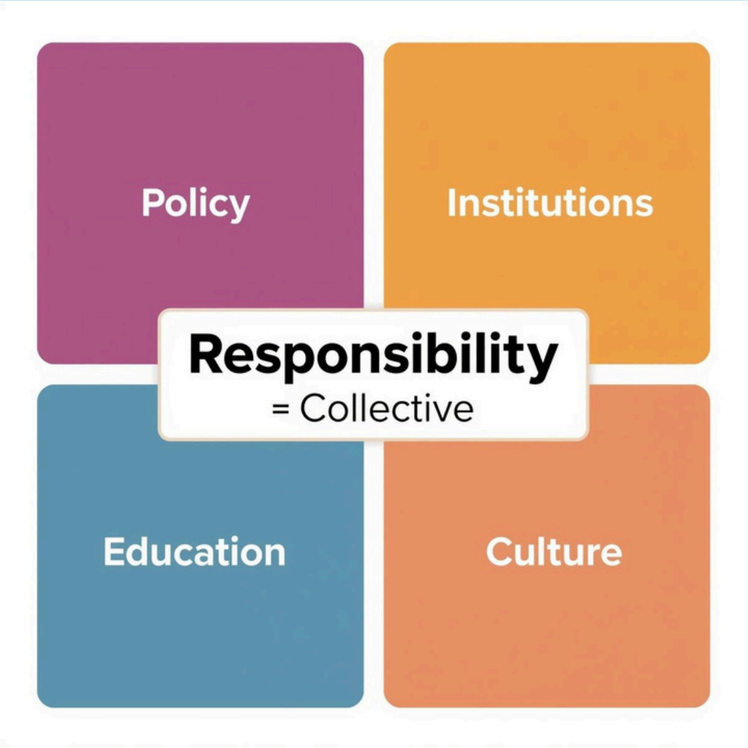
THE ADVERTISING PARADOX

- Industry poses as “responsible” partner
- “Drink responsibly” = marketing in moral language
- Protects brand, not consumer
- Risk normalisation through moral appeal

THE ILLUSION OF CONTROL

- “We are not like them.” → false security
- Control erodes over time
- “Drink responsibly” works – as advertising, not prevention



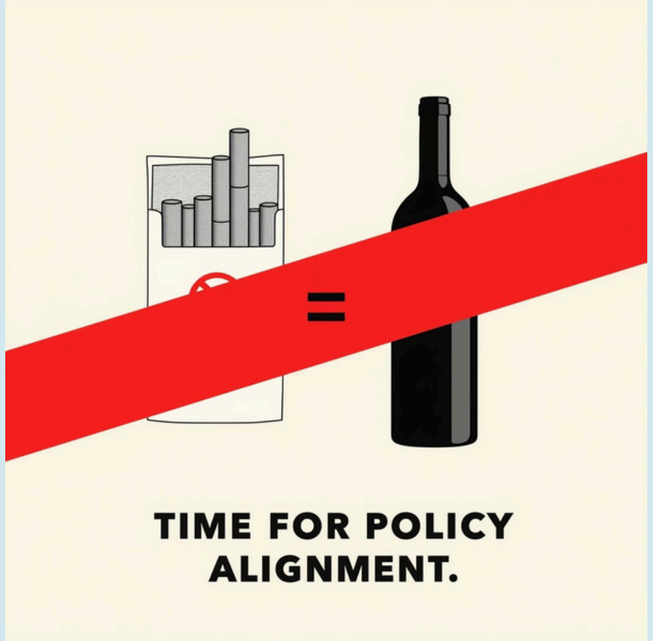


TOWARDS A NEW DEFINITION OF RESPONSIBILITY

- Collective obligation, not personal virtue
- Responsible policy: regulate & price for health
- Responsible institutions: accessible treatment & rehabilitation
- Responsible education: critical thinking & abstinence as strength

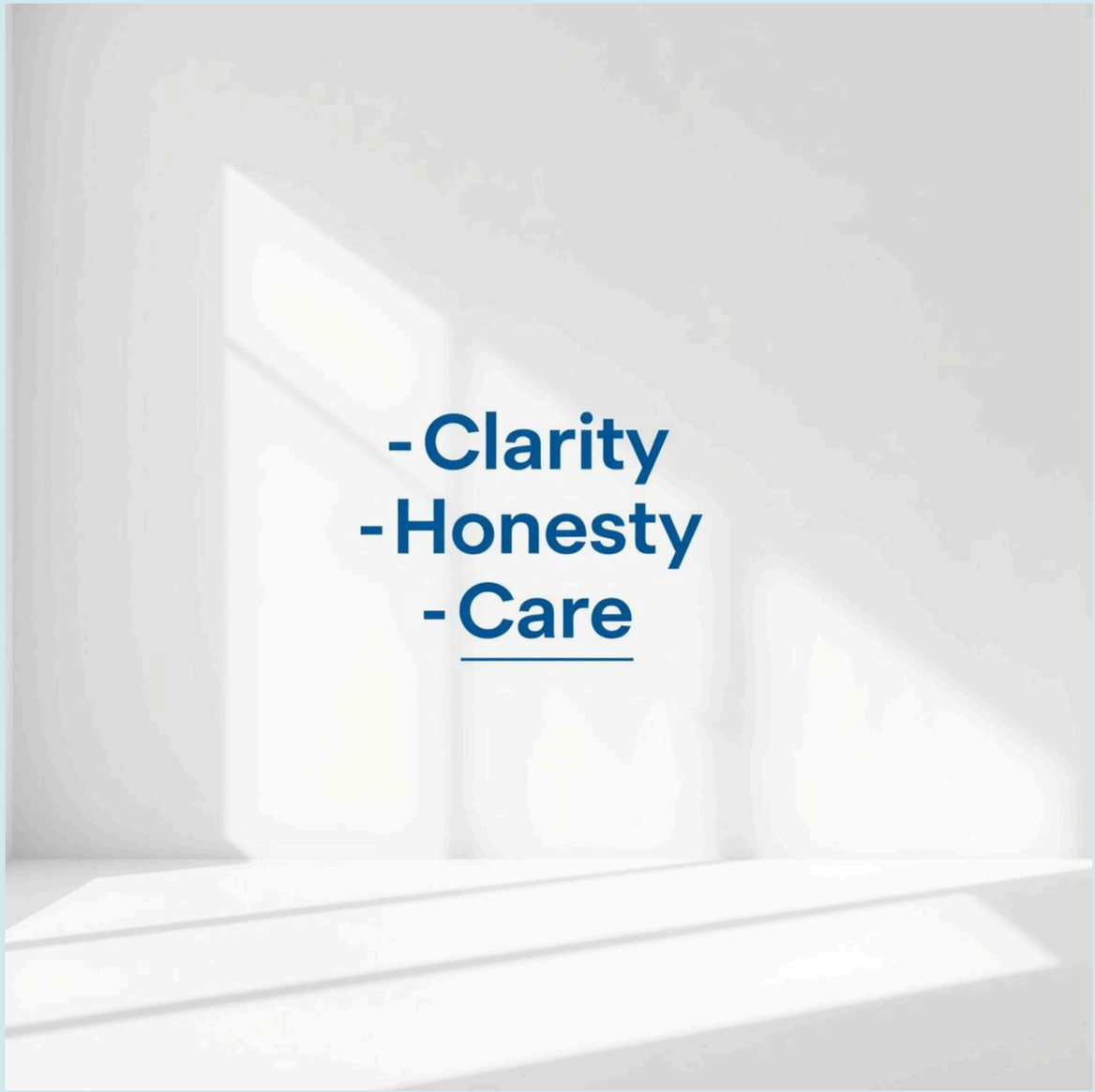
A PARADIGM SHIFT

- Treat alcohol like tobacco – a public health risk, not a consumer good.
- Protect people, not markets
- Move from symbolic → substantive responsibility

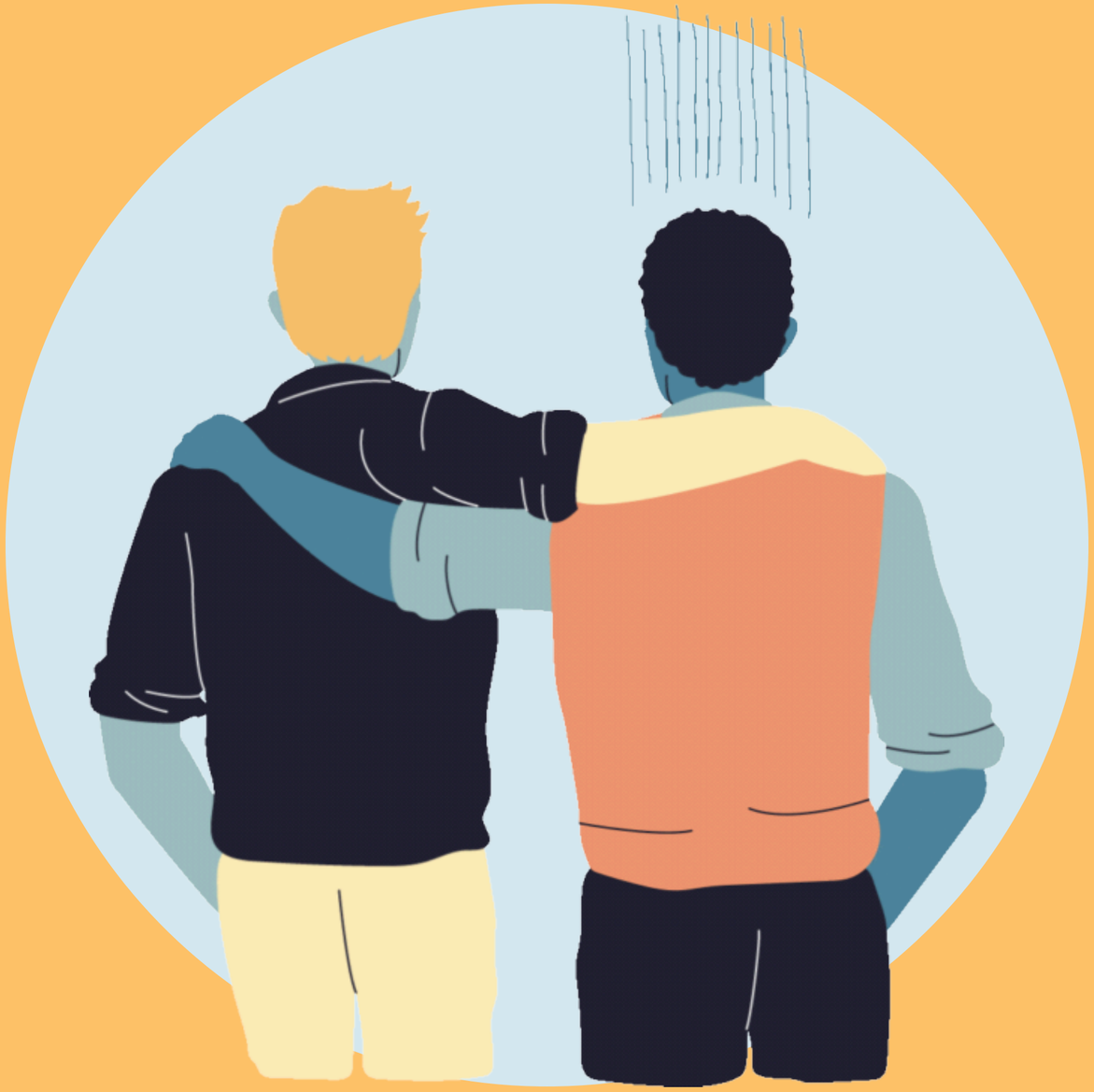


CONCLUSION – CHOOSING CLARITY

- “Responsible drinking” sounds ethical – but hides harm.
- Real responsibility lies in how we protect, educate & care for each other.



THANK YOU!



THANK YOU!

TAKE CARE!