The 2-Hour Cocktail Party

How to Build Big Relationships

with Small Gatherings

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PROOF MANUSCRIPT FOR WEBSITE DOWNLOAD ONLY

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Introduction

Tyler Vawser moved to Little Rock, Arkansas so his wife could be closer to her family.

Tyler had no job and no connections when they got there. He didn't know a single person in town except for his wife's family. He felt alone and worried about his career. He didn't even have a friend he could text on a Friday night.

Today, Tyler's life is completely different. He hosts popular gatherings that have a long waiting list of interesting people. He's become a vice president in charge of hiring for a major education company. His life feels full, he makes more money, and he has new friends and colleagues that inspire him.

What changed? He started to host small parties. Tyler created new connections and built up his relationships using the instructions in this book. I'll finish his story in chapter 5— it's a good one.

You'll meet other first-time hosts in special "Party People Profiles" throughout this book. Like Tyler, they all wanted something more in life— but they never considered hosting a party could make that happen.

Thanks to my unique cocktail party formula, which in turn helped them build new relationships, they dramatically enriched and transformed their lives. All from spending $7 on a pack of name tags and $100 on various drinks and snacks.

This book worked for them, and it will work for you.

Hi, my name is Nick Gray

I've created a lot of fantastic, meaningful relationships in my life. I count business owners, engineers, teachers, artists, and many interesting people who are just fun to hang out with as my friends.

I get to spend quality time with many of them— usually every single week.

Those friends helped me turn my wacky weekend hobby, Museum Hack, into a full-fledged business that gives "renegade tours" at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. I never thought this would happen, but that side hustle grew into a multimillion-dollar company.

Before I sold Museum Hack in 2019, we had fifty employees and were working in some of the biggest museums in the world, like the Art Institute of Chicago and the Getty Museum in Los Angeles. My company was included in the Inc 5000 as one of the fastest growing privately held businesses in America. I gave a popular TEDx talk and was featured multiple times in the *Washington Post*, *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, and other major media outlets.[*]

When I moved to New York City in 2007, I only knew a few people. I was a socially awkward twenty-something from a middle-class background trying to make it in the big city.

In social situations, I sometimes felt overwhelmed and intimidated. My heart would race and I'd stutter or say something embarrassing. Entering a room full of strangers was scary.

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[*] For links to these articles and to see my TEDx talk, visit www.party.pro/mypress.

If I got invited to a party, I would hang by the bar and play with my phone. In my braver moments, I'd hover on the sidelines waiting for the perfect moment to join a conversation.

That moment never came. Instead, I'd find a reason to leave the party early and go home alone. I felt sad and low, like I'd wasted my time. I always took it personally. It frustrated me that a city of millions of people could make me feel so lonely.

You might be wondering how I went from there to where I am now: How did I go from sitting home alone on Friday nights to having a packed calendar and lots of meaningful relationships?

Well, as you'll see in this book, the solution was simple...

Don't Attend Bad Events; Host Great Parties Instead.

Instead of going to random bars or meet-ups to try to create new connections, I decided to go a different route. Instead of going to other peoples' parties, I decided to bring the party to me.

What I discovered, through lots of trial and error, is that there's a specific way to structure parties to make them easy and successful—a "formula," if you will, that anyone can follow.

Over the last ten years I've hosted hundreds of these small parties. Then I've spent the past few years writing this book and testing every single aspect of it with different people around the world.

What follows in these pages is my formula to "hack" your social life by learning how to throw parties. I'll show you how to easily host fun events in your own home. You'll become very good at hosting a gathering, just as I have helped tens of thousands of people to appreciate the art inside the Met Museum.

Some people may think a party requires loud music, late nights, and tons of booze. But a party is simply where people get together and have a good time. There can be an explicit purpose such as playing board games, celebrating an event, or meeting new people. But the essence of a party is that you are there to enjoy yourself and to connect with others.

Combining partying and relationship-building may sound counterintuitive. But it works. I'll show you how throwing small parties in a strategic way can be the easiest method to make new friends and even boost your career.

The Perfect Party Formula

In the following chapters you'll find everything you need to feel confident hosting your first party, including:

- **Guest invitations**— Who to invite, how to invite them, and when to send the invitations to maximize RSVPs and minimize no-shows.

- **Scripts you can use**— My favorite and most effective email templates and event reminders to send after someone has RSVP'd. You'll learn how one of these messages makes people feel special, valued, and excited to attend—boosting your attendance rates above 80 percent.

- **Must-have supplies**— Checklists with all you need to prepare for a seamless event.

- **Proven-to-work icebreakers**— The best conversation starters that I've found, why they work, and exactly how and when to use them.

Plus plenty more tips and tricks to make your parties stress-free. From picking the best day of the week to knowing what to say when someone arrives early—and how to nicely ask people to leave at the end.

I used to be terrible at throwing parties. Then I discovered these specific tactics to get better at it. They are—and I can't stress this enough—incredibly easy to implement yourself.

You Can Do This!

Hosting parties that build big relationships is a skill you can learn. Everything you will read in this book has been tested and proven to work.

And sure, you might make a few mistakes. I've had mishaps along the way— like getting caught mid-shower when my first guest arrived early, or hosting a party where only two people showed up.

But I've written this book so you don't have to repeat my mistakes.

Now let's go!