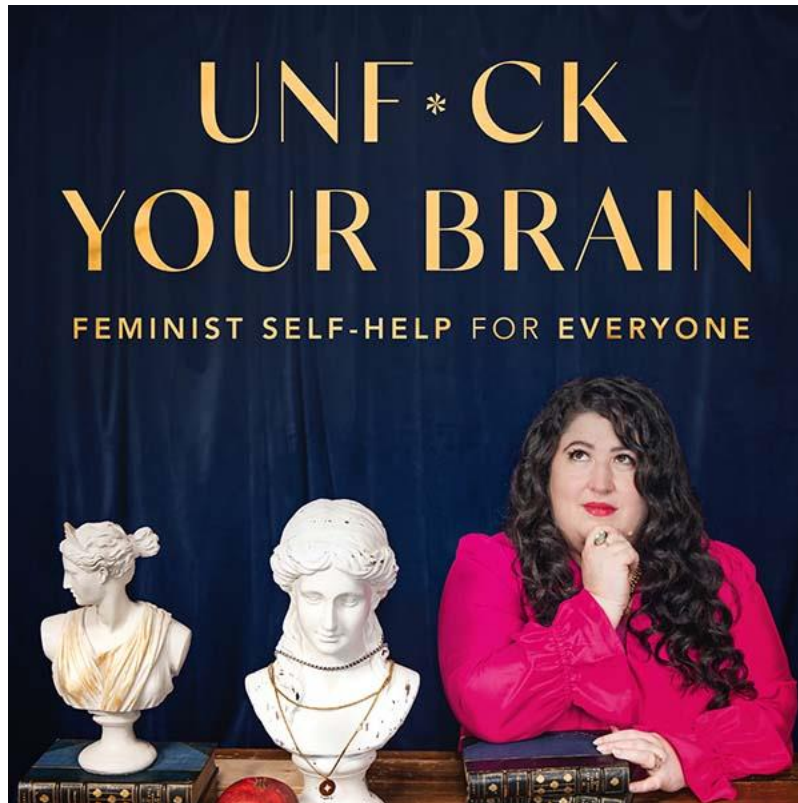


UFYB 328: Numbing Out To Avoid Our Feelings: A Conversation with Rachel Hart



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Kara Loewentheil

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Welcome to *UnF*ck Your Brain*, feminist self-help for everyone brought to you by *The School of New Feminist Thought*. I'm your host, Kara Loewentheil, Harvard lawyer turned life coach extraordinaire. And I'm here to help you get society's sexist messages out of your brain so you can be confident, feel powerful and live a life you won't regret when you die.

If you want to jumpstart that process, you need to grab my totally free guide to feeling less anxious and more empowered by rewiring your brain. Just text your email to +1347 997 1784 and use code word, brain or go to unfuckyourbrain.com/brain. Now let's get to today's episode.

Hello my friends. This is going to be such a useful episode for all of us, myself included. Any time I get to talk brains with Rachel Hart, who is my coaching ride or die, my platonic life soulmate and bestie is a good day. And we are going to be talking about primarily drinking as the version of numbing that we're focusing on in this episode. But I want to be really clear upfront and we talk about this throughout the episode.

Everything we're talking about applies to any kind of activity or substance or habit that you use to try to numb out negative emotions or distract or get away from negative thoughts that you don't want to experience. So everybody does this and it's human to do this. And I am not a coach who kind of pathologizes any numbing out. But I do think it's important to have a conscious and intentional relationship with your numbing out, which is a funny way of saying it, but I really think that's true.

There's a big difference between having no other tools and just depending on numbing out as your only coping strategy and feeling out of control with it and not able to change it. Versus having a bunch of tools and also knowing that maybe 10% of the time instead of 100% of the time, you're maybe going to use a tool to numb out and you're okay with that and you

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understand it and it doesn't feel out of control or it's controlling you. So I'm really from the, in the public health version, it would be called harm reduction, point of view.

So in this episode, because Rachel focuses on helping people change their relationships with drinking, we do talk about drinking, but it applies to everything. And one of the things we talk about is the ways in which women in particular use numbing and use drinking or shopping or Netflix or swiping on dating apps or food or pills or other drugs or smoking weed or smoking cigarettes or whatever. To kind of try to get a break from the relentless internal criticism and anxiety that so many of us have because of the way we think about ourselves.

And those thoughts are not objective and true. They're not in our brains because our brains are just objectively observing us and reporting. We think that way because society teaches women to think that way. Society teaches women to constantly evaluate themselves, constantly criticize themselves, constantly be anxious about not measuring up and not doing enough, and not doing things right, not doing things well, not being good enough. And so we're extremely anxious as a result. And then we use all these numbing strategies to avoid our anxiety.

And so that is why understanding what I call socially programmed anxiety is so crucial. Because socially programmed anxiety can actually be changed. It can be eliminated because it's the anxiety that specifically comes from your self-critical thinking about not living up to social standards. I have a whole free training that I teach about this and it's our most popular free training that I do. I haven't done it this year yet, but I'm going to be doing it February 10th.

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So if you're listening to this episode the day it comes out, that it's Thursday and we're doing it Saturday, Saturday, 2:00pm Eastern, February 10th. I'm going to be teaching the feminist anxiety fix, which is my premier training on socially programmed anxiety, the most popular training we do like I said. It's totally free. And if you can't attend live, we will send a replay. You get the replay whether you attended live or not. But I do recommend if you can try to come live, we're doing it on a Saturday because we get a lot of requests for weekend training.

So this is the first time I've offered that. And I'm hoping that a lot of you who have always wanted to make it now will be able to and be able to come live. Because when you come live, I'm going to teach, we're going to do an interactive exercise, so you're practicing. I'm going to coach and I'm going to answer questions. So it's all the good things and all the good things live is always so much more impactful. We're even going to have the chat on, so you guys can chat. We can really have that group communal conversation.

I'm just really excited. I haven't done this for a few months. We don't usually do it with the chat on and everybody getting to participate. So I'm just excited to try it that way and hear what all of you have to say. So you need to register even though it's free because we need to know you're coming and send you the link. So two ways to do that. You can go to unfuckyourbrain.com/anxiety. That's unfuckyourbrain.com/anxiety or text your email to +1347 997 1784 and the code word is anxiety.

So it's +1347 997 1784. Send us your email address. You'll get asked for a code. The code word is anxiety and then we will send you the link to register and sign up. And I'm going to see you guys on February 10th live and, well, not in person but live on Zoom and we are going to really dig into your brains and get you some concrete help and change just in the 60 to 90

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minutes that we spend together. Alright, my friend. So I will see you then, but for now, we're going to dig into this conversation with Rachel Hart.

Kara: Alright, you all, I was just telling my guest today, also my best friend, that I didn't really know what to say because I'm so used to saying, hello, my chickens and have a little conflict with our new identity and evolution and branding and chickens. And I was like, "Maybe I need another bird." And then she just said, "Why don't you just make bird sounds?"

Rachel: I said bird calls.

Kara: Bird calls. So if next time you listen to the podcast, there's just someone doing a, I don't know, whisper will, I don't know, that's not a name for a bird.

Rachel: A whippoorwill.

Kara: Whippoorwill, there we go, or a Blue Jay call, you have Rachel to blame. So we are talking about drinking today. But listen, even if you don't drink, I don't drink, you're going to want to listen to this episode because really what we're talking about is all of the kind of numbing and compulsive behaviors that we use to try to get away from our feelings. So if you are alive and a human, you are doing something to try to get away from your feelings and it may be drinking, it might be something else, but you're still going to get a lot out of this.

So this is the podcast about drinking that's for everybody regardless of whether you drink. I'm here with Rachel. Rachel Anne Hart, is that your name?

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Rachel: Yeah.

Kara: No, that's right because we have the same middle name. Rachel Anne.

Rachel: Spelled differently though.

Kara: We spell it differently. Well, I have the spelling I was given and the spelling I adopted, my chosen spelling. My parents spelled it A-N-N. But then I read *Anne of Green Gables* and, of course, wanted to be like that. So I emotionally adopt.

Rachel: You want to be me, A-N-N-E?

Kara: Yes, I mostly adopted the E but it's not on my birth certificate.

Rachel: I love that you emotionally adopted the way I spell my middle name.

Kara: Well, it wasn't you. It was *Anne of Green Gables*. But now it's this point of similarity. Alright, Rachel, tell us who you are and what you do and why you're here.

Rachel: I am not *Anne of Green Gables*. So I, like Kara, am a coach and I work with people to help them develop a relationship with alcohol that feels good for them, whatever that means. So for some people, that means drinking less. For some people, it means saving alcohol for special occasions. For other people it's not having alcohol in their life. So essentially it's about helping you figure out what feels right and good for you.

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Like Kara said, I work with people around alcohol, but of course, all the numbing behaviors come in. So a lot of times people will see that it's not just their drinking. It shows up in their eating. It shows up in their working. It shows up in spending. It shows up in all these places. And so it really is, you talk about, Kara, the idea of there's really nothing better than being in charge of your own brain. And that's what you're teaching women how to do. I feel like the same thing applies with my work as well.

Kara: And let's talk about how we met so everybody knows the background. We met at a Holiday Inn outside of Sacramento.

Rachel: It was a Holiday Inn Express.

Kara: A Holiday Inn Express, not even a Holiday Inn.

Rachel: A Holiday Inn Express.

Kara: A Holiday Inn Express.

Rachel: We met in a conference room. I was the first person in the room trying to get the first best seat for coach training and Kara was the second person in the room and immediately gravitated to me. And then it turns out we had all these things in common and the universe had been trying to bring us together for years.

Kara: Well, mostly we were in a room of people from all over the country with a lot of different dispositions and we were like, "You're from New York and a brunette and you seem to maybe not do mystical circles so great too." Of course, little did we know Rachel would end up doing mystical circles.

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Rachel: Did I do mystical circles?

Kara: I don't know. You got more woo than I did over time. But here we are, here we are eight years later, almost 10 years.

Rachel: A long time, yeah.

Kara: Alright, that's not why people are here though. Okay, so let's talk about, people who have been listening to the podcast are actually very tuned into this concept of falling off the wagon right now. Because we just did a whole series on kind of what I teach around why people fall off the wagon in general, what that even means, and why it happens. So I will not kind of rehash that here, but I'd love to hear from you.

I feel like drinking is maybe second right after weight loss, the most common thing for people to make a resolution about and then fall off the wagon. I even see in my social media posts, people I'm friendly with being like, "Well, dry January. Got to the ninth and then." It's almost a whole cultural narrative, both around trying to do a dry January and then how soon you stop. So I'd love to hear from you kind of why is that so common that people make a drinking resolution and then fail so quickly?

Rachel: Yeah. Well, I mean, I think alcohol, much like food falls often into this kind of good and bad or I was good, I was bad. And that mentality can fuel a lot of people getting to the end of the year and then being like, "Oh God, too much overindulgence. I was really bad. I was drinking too much. So now I'm going to be good and do a dry January." So it feels that kind of binge and restrict mentality that, of course, when you're approaching a period of taking a break from drinking with that mentality, it's not great.

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You're generally going to hit a moment where you're like, "Well, that didn't work", and then throw in the towel. I think also a lot of times there's so much shame that people will have and fear if it feels at all like, why am I not able to control my drinking, what is going on here? And so a lot of times what I see and what I did myself because this work was my work to do as well. I would approach it as, so I've got to prove that I can go a certain number of days to prove that I don't have a problem.

And so I wasn't looking at any of the reasons about, why I was drinking or what my desire was about. It was kind of let me just, I'm just going to grit my teeth and use avoidance and get through a certain number of days to kind of prove that there's nothing wrong here. And of course, both of these mentalities, I think, are why a lot of people fall off the wagon. And then, like you said, you see on social media people are like, "Okay, well, so much for that resolution. We got to day 10."

Kara: Or they make it through and they're like, "Okay, dry January is over. I celebrated by binge drinking February 1st." There is something so weird about the idea of I'm just going to. It's like a diet or a shopping freeze. Not that taking a break from an activity can't be helpful to understand. But if you're like, "Well, I'm taking a break and then I'm just going right back to how I did it before." What is the real point of the break? I think that idea that people are trying to prove something comes up a lot in resolutions.

One of the things that we've been talking about on the podcast lately is, what is the purpose behind the resolution you set? Is it shame motivated? Are you trying to prove something to somebody else? Are you trying to prove something to yourself? And that is such a good example that you're like, "My logic is that no matter how out of control I feel around my drinking and how negatively it's impacting me. If I can go 30 days then I don't 'have a problem' and then I can just go back to using it the way I have been."

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Rachel: Well, I think what happens though is we do people a disservice because so often the conversation around alcohol, and I mean frankly, food too, is really just a conversation around quantity. And so it's how much are you drinking? So we're very fixated on the number. And so when you're very fixated on the number, you think that if I just focus on the number, that's going to give me the solution. So if I'm drinking too much and then I'm able not to drink at all.

Then I had a problem with the number and now I changed the number. And that's why a lot of people, I mean, sometimes people go into it kind of, I made it to the end of January, now let's party. I find a lot of people will have the experience and I did as well of that felt good. I felt physically better. I noticed kind of physical transformations. Maybe I didn't need it as much in certain situations that I thought I would. And then you reintroduce alcohol and it can start to be this thing where it feels like you're just kind of falling back into your old patterns.

And so what was that all about? And again, because we tend to look at this issue just from the surface level. I tell people all the time, two people can be polishing off a bottle of wine at night and their motivations, their desires, what's going on can be completely different. But we're just treating it from this place of just don't drink so much or just take a period of time off. And I think that's one of the reasons why people are like, "Well, why didn't that work?"

Kara: Yeah, I think that gets to something you talk about that's so important, which is that most people aren't really even aware of why they're drinking. And I think the term you use is more, people ignore the reason they drink. So can you talk a little bit about that? Do you think people are consciously ignoring the reason they drink or is it just willful denial or people just aren't conscious of it?

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Rachel: Yeah, I don't think it's willful denial. And I mean, I think we're not taught to understand it. I don't think no one gives us kind of any kind of, I don't know, way to understand our drinking other than this kind of good drinking, bad drinking, normal drinking, abnormal drinking. So when I talk about people not really being fully aware, I mean, listen, for the longest time I was just like, "I just like to drink. It's fun, full stop." Or I like the taste. I like craft cocktails, the end.

And yeah, I always say to people, I'm not here to be like, "And that's not true. You don't actually really understand what's going on." It's yes and what else? You like the taste and what else is it doing for you? And by the way, that can totally change in different situations, in different settings, around different people. But we're not really taught to have that kind of deeper conversation and understand how it's intertwined in so many areas of our life.

And the fact that yes, it's a reward for your lower brain for sure. And also your higher brain is learning what it symbolizes. The drink will start to symbolize these unconscious things that I think we're often not aware of.

Kara: So let's talk a little bit more about, for people who haven't been listening to your podcasts, aren't as deep into your work. Can you talk a little bit about what do you mean when you say it's a reward for the lower brain? What is it doing to your system that feels good to people?

Rachel: Well, I mean, I think one of the things and I'm sure your listeners already know all of this. But the lower brain is really designed to just go find rewards in the environment. And so when I say it's a reward, it's a reward in the sense that your lower brain is like, "Ooh, good." It's activating your reward system in your lower brain. And so the fact that it is pleasurable,

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then your brain starts to remember it. It wants to know where can I find it again?

But also understanding that the reward that you get from a grape is going to be very different than the intensity of the reward that you get from a barrel of fermented grapes. That intensity goes up. And so understanding that the drive of the lower brain really is so basic, so simple. How do I keep this organism safe? And I'm going to do it by trying to find pleasure and avoid pain. And it's a very simple algorithm that's running that lower brain.

And so understanding that alcohol, like many things, like food, like sex, like the rewards that we get from scrolling through TikTok. There's so many things that give us that kind of immediate little, this is good, I want more. And so that's what I'm talking about when it comes to the lower brain.

Kara: And then on top of that, there are these sort of the stories that we layer on about what a drink means and what it does for us. So what are some common stories you see people have about kind of what drinking symbolizes or why it's important?

Rachel: Yeah. So I think for some people it can be this is my treat for all the hard work that I did. Sometimes it can be this is a sign that the day is done. So a lot of parents, I'm off the clock, open up that bottle. Get out the beer, I'm off the clock. A lot of people we have the stories around, this is how I form emotional bonds and feel connected. It can be about this is how we elevate situations or how we celebrate, how we make things more special.

We can use alcohol to feel more at ease in social situations when we feel anxiety. It can be about, things are too much right now, I just can't handle everything that's going on and this is my way to just tap out. It can be a sense of freedom for some people. This idea of now I get to be wild. I don't

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have to be paying attention to what people think. I can kind of cut loose and be wild. And then of course, it's often connected with sleeping. It's often connected with pain management.

I mean, there's so many different kinds of stories that are wrapped up into this. I mean, so I talk about this as different archetypes that your brain will start to learn, this is what the drink is doing for me. And that level, even though it's there, it's often happening at a very unconscious level.

Kara: Yeah, I definitely want to talk about the archetypes, but I just want to talk a bit more about the sort of, I think it's so interesting the way that our brain attaches a story to the act. And I'm thinking of two different examples. So one is when I dated this guy very briefly in my early 30s. But I remember him saying to me, he was in his also early 30s, not 21 and in a frat or something. I remember him saying to me. "You're the first person I've ever met who likes to have sex sober."

Because it's so common that people use alcohol to lubricate, pun not intended, I guess, sexual interactions, to feel sexy, to lower their inhibitions, to not feel uptight. And at the time I was just like, "What the fuck are you talking about?" That is, I guess, just moment of being, people are doing this in a completely different way. But that's sort of how common it was for him to have alcohol just be part of any kind of date or sexual interaction.

And then the other funny example I'm thinking of is my partner doesn't really drink that much anymore because I don't really drink and not that he's not allowed to or something. But he just says his frequency has gone down because I'm not drinking. So then he discovered non-alcoholic beer and he will drink non-alcoholic beer and to him it's fun, well, I'm having a beer. Actually the alcohol is no longer there, but the symbolism of having a beer still signals.

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It's such a perfect example of how the experience you're having maybe, actually we attribute it to the alcohol, but it may be actually completely unrelated to the alcohol. Or the alcohol could even be counterproductive to the experience. But we have a story about it. So it is still fun for him to have a beer because his story is that beer is fun, even though the beer is actually not doing anything to his system biologically, which I think is fascinating.

So can you tell us some about the eight archetypes, no pop quiz this feels like. I don't want to do it live. Tell us what the eight archetypes are. I mean, I think let's back up a little. Kind of tell us, why is it helpful to think of your drinking as an archetype? What led you to kind of develop this after working in this area for a while?

Rachel: Well, I mean, I think one of the things that I encountered is that people will have very unique relationships with their desire, with what the drink represents, how they use it. And so my desire to have a way for people to help kind of find themselves. And what I will say about the archetypes is it's not this is who I am. I am this type of drinker. The archetypes I always talk about, they're always present. They always apply. They're not just they only apply for problematic drinking.

It's about understanding that our brain is always getting these messages from the time that we're kids. I mean, this happens for many people well before they start ever drinking. But we're getting all these messages and the brain is starting to kind of learn, this is what the drink symbolizes. This is what it's doing for me or this is what I think it's doing for me in this situation. And so the archetypes, when I have people kind of take the quiz and go through and also self-identify, one of the things that I'm always saying is most people will identify with multiple archetypes, and it can change over time, it can change.

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Your archetypes maybe in your teens and 20s when you started drinking may be very different in your 40s and 50s. They may look very different depending on where you are. It's really just to help you understand, what else is here, in this moment when I'm desiring the drink? It's the, yeah, I like to drink, yeah, I like the beer and what else? What else is there? And so there are eight archetypes. We have the Upgrade, which is all about elevating situations, making things special, making things celebratory.

I talk about one called the Connector, which is like it sounds like, it's about creating emotional bonds.

The Reward, the reward is all about that kind of using alcohol either as a treat or a sign, kind of I'm done, this is the end of the day. Sometimes people will fall with their reward. That can be a daily thing. Sometimes people will be like, "No, I save it up until, I get through my week and then the weekend comes."

There's also the Escape, which is much more of that sense of, I just need to stop thinking, whatever's on my mind, whatever is bothering me, I need a way to stop thinking and then alcohol becomes a way to do that.

There's the Mask, that is something that I really identified with in my 20s, which is all about drinking to specifically deal with social anxiety and that sense of for me, because like you said, alcohol was also very connected with sex for me because I was like, "Well, it works well at parties, when I'm feeling anxious. So when I have all my clothes off, that will help too." So there's the mask.

There's also the relief or the Remedy, sorry, which is all about using it for managing any kind of discomfort, managing any kind of insomnia.

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There's the Hourglass, which is all about when people will start using it as a way to deal with boredom or having a lot of kind of unscheduled time.

And then there is the Release. That was another thing for me that I really identified with in my 20s when I was drinking a lot, which was all about I'm so good. I do everything right. And this is my chance to be kind of wild. And I don't have to follow all the rules. I can just kind of cut loose.

So the idea here is using these archetypes to help you understand why it can be challenging to say no. Because if we're just focused on quantity, if we're just focused on the number, we're going to miss what's actually happening in a particular situation. We're going to miss why, I can easily say no maybe when I'm at home, but it's harder when I'm out or people will say vice versa. To really understand, so what's happening beneath the surface that we need to address as well, if you want to create that change?

Kara: I think It's important to just emphasize what you said, which is that it's not sort of this is your genetic or astrological predisposition to this. It's just a way of describing kind of what are the thought and use patterns you've gotten into in ways, obviously, everybody's a tiny bit different. But if we look at all the ways people are drinking, we can say, "They tend to cluster into kind of these eight patterns and you're probably in what, two of the patterns, three, you could be in more than one of the patterns."

Rachel: Well, when people do this work, they always get a primary and secondary archetype, which just says these are kind of the top two tendencies that you have, but people will find other ones apply as well. And again, it's not we can like look into your DNA and this is going to describe what's going on. It really is just helping you kind of understand what is there, what is connected with your desire beyond just, yeah, I like to drink.

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Kara: I'm just thinking about, people go on vacation, one of the things I've always found odd as a non-drinker is that suddenly on vacation people just start drinking at 10:00am. And it occurs to me, it's the Celebration one and then it's also the not Hourglass, not knowing what to do with time. It's unstructured. I don't have my routine. You get into the airport and all of a sudden it's just a liminal space where it's normal to have beer at 9:00am at breakfast, when those same people wouldn't usually.

I mean, maybe some people are just having beer at 9:00am with breakfast anyway. But I feel more people in an airport are doing it who wouldn't do it somewhere else because it is that marker of it's fun time for people and that I'm out of my routine so I don't know what to do.

Rachel: Yeah. And for me, I used to travel a lot before I became a coach. And so I was traveling, I was in airports all the time, traveling internationally so much. And I had so much pent up anxiety about travel. And so my brain was always spinning, am I going to be there on time? Is there a cab? Are we going to get stuck in traffic? What's going to happen? And if I miss this connection. I had so much of that kind of I'm wound so tight in this anxiety.

But for me, I would get through security and where is the lounge? And it wasn't a fun thing in that instance. It was that for me, it was that moment of okay, this is my reward for just sitting, going through the Lincoln Tunnel and surviving it. But I think that's the point is that you can see, you can look at people drinking whatever at 8:00am in the airport and it's happening for all of these different reasons.

And again, one of the things that was so frustrating for me, and I think frustrating for so many people that I work with is this sense of why can I drink, 'normally over here' in this situation and I'm not overdoing it? And then in this other situation, it feels like a different version of me.

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So people again, because we so often only talk about quantity, we don't give people any kind of tether to understand, this is why your drinking can look different in different situations and why maybe you're like, yeah, I know to be like, okay, I'm going to take it easy over here and then this other place I don't. And that I think is the missing piece of a puzzle for a lot of people.

Kara: So I think what you're talking about really reminds me of what I've been teaching this month around falling off the wagon and why that happens. And people think that it's just about willpower or it's about discipline. And when you use that sort of flattening analysis, sort of, just the same as when you use the flattening analysis of, well, two drinks a night is normal. And so if I have that amount then no matter what the emotion or what it's like for me underneath, that's just, I'm just going to evaluate it with that number.

People use the same thing of sort of I can look at one person who's maybe going to the gym every day and I think, wow, they have so much willpower and discipline, but actually it may not even be hard for them to do that. Because they don't have whatever emotions are getting in the way, whereas somebody who's going once a week. It might be actually such a bigger psychological and emotional project for them to be able to do that based on whatever the kind of emotional and thought work barriers they have.

And one of the reasons people fall off the wagon is that we don't equip them with any emotional tools to be like, "Why is this hard for me? What is happening? What is coming up for me? It's the inability to feel discomfort is really why people stop achieving their goals, whether it's not drinking or anything else. It's not willpower or discipline. It's, I don't have the tools and skills to deal with how I feel. And so it doesn't matter how motivated you feel January 1st, if you don't have those tools, you're not making it very far.

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Rachel: Yeah. And I think sometimes especially when it comes to desire and urges. The only tools that we are given are, so you need to grit your teeth or you just need to avoid the situation. And I mean, I was just coaching someone on this yesterday where I talk about, we have to develop a different relationship with our urges. I always talk about, imagine just being so curious when the urge appears, welcoming it, wanting it to be there. I mean, I even talk with people I work with about, can we find some humor in the presence of the urge?

And this one person I was coaching was saying, "I'm just ticked off. I'm just angry. I'm just angry when it's there. I don't want to talk to it. I don't want to be curious about it. I want it to go away." And so as we were starting to really unravel what was going on there, one of the things that she was saying is, "Well, I just don't believe that I actually can trust myself when I have urges." And so we talked about what that means. When your lower brain is like, reward, reward and it's accompanied with this thought that maybe you've practiced over and over again, I can't be trusted.

What's actually going on is that you're not angry at the urge. You're scared. And so then how do we handle these moments? And I think a big piece of that when it comes to changing your relationship with your desire and your urges is disentangling all of that. Being able to see this is my lower brain over here just being like, reward, rewards are good, rewards, more reward.

Kara: That blinking like red neon sign in a red light district. It's just like reward, reward.

Rachel: And then over here is a story, the story that this person had attached to her drinking, which was, obviously I'm someone who can't be trusted. As if that was just who she was built into her DNA. And so yeah, we have to equip people with tools, not only how do you manage the

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discomfort? How do you get curious about your urges? How do you get curious around temptation?

Why are you avoiding temptation? A lot of people will structure dry January to be like, “Yeah, okay, I can do it, but I definitely can’t see these friends and I’m definitely not going to go here.”

Kara: Right. Or I can’t do it because my sister’s getting married in January so it’ll have to be a different month because I can’t possibly go to my sister’s wedding and not drink.

Rachel: Exactly. And so we need...

Kara: It’s changing the circumstance.

Rachel: We need all of these tools. And I think when it comes to all the excuses that come up, we need tools that are more than just, well, just say no. Just don’t do it. Just don’t be stupid. Well, when I’m having these excuses, I always think that excuses are actually really helpful, that they’re trying to help us understand something about the habit that we can’t fully see. They’re trying to, when we approach all of these things from a place of curiosity, they’re trying to show something and reveal something that actually helps us create change. But so often we’re like, “Ugh, just go away, I don’t want you here.”

Kara: Yeah. And I think that’s sort of one of the things that we talked about on the podcast a bunch before January 1st was a sort of unrealistic expectation when we make a resolution or set a goal. That’s just sort of like, well, I planned for what I need for this to all work great the first time. And so off we go as opposed to planning for, well, but what obstacles come up? And I used, I mean the example I gave on the podcast was actually, it

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was smoking and it was like, “Your plan can be I’m going to use the patch.” That’s not really a plan.

What are you going to do when you feel anxious and you’re used to smoking to cope with it? What are you going to do when your friends go for out their smoke break and you feel FOMO? What are you going to do when you get drunk and do have a cigarette? Then you’ve got to decide how to think about that. All of that is what you’re saying is completely in line, which is we need to have a plan beyond, I’m just going to white knuckle it. I’m just going to avoid these circumstances.

Which I think comes back to what we talked about at the beginning that feels so important which is what’s the purpose of the break or the change or the whatever? Why are we doing this and what’s the plan for afterwards? Are we trying to get to know our drinking better? Are we trying to reduce our drinking in some sort of ongoing way? Whether we’re not drinking to prove to ourselves, we don’t have a ‘problem’ or we’re trying to lose weight to prove that we’re good enough. Or we’re trying to work out to prove that we’re disciplined.

If you’re trying to do a thing to prove something to your own brain basically or somebody else, you’re projecting your own brain on to, even if you do it and you get to the end, okay, now what?

Rachel: Yeah, I think that’s why so many people, I work with so many people. I mean, I had this in my own experience. Well, I got everything else in my life figured out and I’m just like a fuck up here. So I’m finally going to stop feeling like a fuck up if I fix my drinking. I’m finally going to feel good about myself. And then I have so many people who are like, “But here I am.” I’ll work with people who are like, “I’m not even drinking right now but I’m here. I’m in this membership because I figured out how to say no, but

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I'm still just waiting for the other shoe to drop. And I still don't, actually feel good about myself."

And they don't realize when the brain has that thought pattern, you're a screw up or you're a fuck up, you change the circumstance and, yeah, but this neural pathway is very fast and it's very fun, we do it very quickly.

Kara: It's very familiar, yeah.

Rachel: Find the new thing.

Kara: Right. And I think that's the most common to just see it come up in some other area instead. Okay, I'm not drinking, but now I'm online shopping a lot or I'm really scrolling on my phone all the time or I'm whatever else. So where can people find and learn about their archetype? We love a good self-knowledge quiz.

Rachel: We love a good quiz. Yeah.

Kara: We love a good quiz. Where can we find our archetypes?

Rachel: So if you go to findyourdrinktype.com, you can take the quiz there. You'll get your primary and your secondary archetypes. Again, this is not who you are. These are the kind of tendencies that right now in your life your drinking may gravitate towards. Again, if you took the quiz a decade ago, if you take it a decade from now, it can change. So it really is about just giving you that kind of information. You'll also get your full results for all eight archetypes as well. So you can see which ones you're kind of most likely or least likely to apply right now.

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Kara: And you all need to know that Rachel is the most thorough content creator in the history of the universe. So I promise you I have not seen it, so I'm making this up, but I would bet that when you put together everything she wrote for all eight archetypes. It is probably the length of a published book and if not, could easily be made into one. So that is not to overwhelm you. You only need to read about one or two, but it's not going to be, surprise, you're the Social drinking archetype, you like to drink in social situations, the end. That's not how Rachel rolls.

Rachel: Yeah. So when you get the information, yes, that is a good point. So when you get it, it will talk about common obstacles. It will talk about the mindset trap. Each archetype has a super power. It will talk about that. It gives you a whole breakdown to really understand, when you see that this archetype applies, why does it actually make not only it tricky to say no, but why don't rules work? Why don't know setting rules or why don't just abstaining, why isn't that going to help you create the change that you want?

Kara: And then presumably it's going to help direct them towards how to do it better. So you should check it out. When Rachel sent in what she called B minus work for her interview prep for this. My PR person whose job it is to book podcast guest said, "I've never seen anything like this. This is the model for all time for everyone else." And that was what Rachel considers her B minus work. And she considers the archetypes her A+ work, so you need to go to the website, give it to us again.

Rachel: Findyourdrinktype.com.

Kara: Findyourdrinktype.com, go take the quiz. And then where can people find you on podcasts if they want to learn more?

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Rachel: So you can find me at rachelhart.com. My podcast is *Take A Break From Drinking*. And then I have a membership as well called *Take a Break*.

Kara: You will find our work is very compatible. Somebody in the Society Facebook group the other day was like, "I love this." I had said something at an event that was about work and they were like, "That sounds really similar to this thing that this coach Rachel Hart says." And I was like, "Yes, I'm sure that we got it from each other because we text all the time." Alright, thank you so much for coming on my friend.

Rachel: Thank you.

If you're loving what you're learning on the podcast, you have got to come check out *The Feminist Self-Help Society*. It's our newly revamped community and classroom where you get individual help to better apply these concepts to your life along with a library of next level blow your mind coaching tools and concepts that I just can't fit in a podcast episode. It's also where you can hang out, get coached and nerd out about all things thought work and feminist mindset with other podcast listeners just like you and me.

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