



HEALTHY WEIGHT IN HEALTHCARE

— with Katrina Ubell, MD —

Katrina Ubell: Hey my friend, how are you? Welcome back to the podcast. Today, I have a very special episode for you. I brought on my first guest and had a wonderful and fascinating conversation with another coach who specializes in over drinking. So, her name is Rachel Hart and she is a life coach who helps women who want to cut back or take a break from drinking. She helps her clients learn how to feel more in control, reduce their desire to drink, and feel fun, confident, and relaxed without a glass in their hand. She is brilliant, she is so much fun, and she has such a good, unique, personal take on the whole alcohol consumption and overeating issue. So, listen in and enjoy.

So, hey Rachel. Welcome to the show.

Rachel Hart: Thank you so much for having me, I'm really excited to be here.

Katrina Ubell: I think this is going to be so good for us to talk about drinking, because so many of my listeners are not only having some issues with their overeating, but are probably drinking a little bit more than they want to. So, let's start with you telling us all a little bit more about your story and how that brought you into coaching.

Rachel Hart: Yeah, I mean it's really interesting because when I talk with people like you and hear about the work around food, I realize that so much of my story really mimics the struggle that people have with food and overeating. It's just that my struggle sort of started with drinking. It started ... You know, one of those things that I drank a lot in my 20's, but so did everyone in my peer group, right? It wasn't abnormal. Weekends were spent going to bars, and going to parties, and I always had a drink in my hand. And I think the thing that was my struggle was feeling like ... It's just unpredictable, right? Like sometimes my drinking would be fine and I would feel like I was in control and sometimes I would drink way too much and wake up the next day wondering what happened and why did I do that? And I didn't understand ... I didn't understand why my "off switch," as I like to call it, was faulty. Why it worked sometimes, why it didn't work other times, and why I also felt like I needed it in a way to deal with feeling anxious, or deal with feeling insecure.

It was especially when I was around ... In certain situations or around people I hadn't met before. It felt like my first instinct was, well I've just got to go to the bar and grab a drink and then I'll feel better. So that was something that I just noticed, that it felt like my drinking was different from the drinking of my friends. It felt like something that I couldn't explain to myself and that question was really what sent me in this direction of trying to figure it out, and feeling like all the solutions that I knew out there were really black and white. It was either you don't have any problem drinking and you're a "normal drinker." End of story. Or if you have any struggle at all, you might be an alcoholic and then you should stop drinking and never drink again. And I felt like I was somewhere in between and couldn't figure out why I was different and what was wrong with me. And that's really how I started focusing on this and what led me to where I am today, which is coaching women on this issue and helping them feel more in control around their drinking, or even take a break from drinking.

Katrina Ubell: Nice. Yeah. And I think that is such an important point to make because it is so black and white, right? You either don't have a problem with alcohol or you're an alcoholic and you should be going to a 12 step program.

Rachel Hart: Right.

Katrina Ubell: And I think you and I both know there are many, many people who would like to drink less.

Rachel Hart: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Katrina Ubell: Take a break, like you say, from drinking. But would never, ever step foot into an AA meeting. Or ever identify themselves as an alcoholic and so they're kind of in the middle. They're floating around not sure how to deal with it. Did you find that you drank to deal with stress or work related ...

Rachel Hart: Yeah, it's really interesting.

Katrina Ubell: Anxiety.

Rachel Hart: It's because I was really very, very copious at keeping journals in my younger days. And when I go back and look at them, I actually talk about feeling like I was using alcohol as a crutch. I mean, I write about that when I was 22. And there's a little part of me that's like, "Wow, how did I have that insight." But I did. I knew that if I was feeling anxious, if I was feeling really stressed out. Like I'd had a long work week or issues with my boss, or just frustration during the 9 to 5, that that pull to drink and to feel better was so strong. And of course, it makes sense. Alcohol is such a quick and easy fix to change how you feel. And it's not surprising that any time I was going into a situation where alcohol might be there, and I already had this negative emotion going on, of course I would have this pull. Because I had taught my brain, "Hey, this is a really simple way to feel better."

Katrina Ubell: Totally, I mean, I identify with that so much. I've never been a big drinker, I never have ever thought I had a problem with alcohol. But have there been times in my life where I've drunk more than I would like to? Definitely. And towards the end of my time in medical practice, for sure that was a huge part of it. I've told this story before on the podcast where I would come home literally feeling like I was a zombie. My brain was so wiped out ... The patients had sucked the life out of me and I'd sit down, drink a half a bottle of Prosecco and eat some popcorn.

Rachel Hart: Yeah.

Katrina Ubell: And that felt like a nice thing to do for myself. It seemed like the right thing to do in the moment. Then after a period of time, I started noticing, "Wow, instead of just doing that once or twice a week, I'm doing that most of the nights of the week. Oh, and look at that. Maybe even on nights when I didn't work just because the kids were kind of stressing me out." It was interesting how my brain started kind of suggesting that more when I had gone for months at a time, many, many times where I didn't drink and I didn't even think anything of it. So it's like that dopamine hit that we talk about.

Rachel Hart: Yep.

Katrina Ubell: Same thing with food. You're getting that dopamine hit with alcohol. And I think, too, that there's this kind of cultural sort of theme amongst more middle aged women right now where it's like ... Wine down Friday. It's all about ... It's always time for ... 5:00 somewhere, you can have some wine. You definitely deserve wine because you had a hard day. All about this kind of glamorization of having alcohol as a way to cope. Or your kids are driving you nuts, you definitely deserve to have some wine. And that's completely fine if the results in your life that you're getting are what you want. There's no problem with that at all, and I don't want to come across like I'm judging that, but I find that so many women who are doing that to somehow cope with the stresses of their lives. First of all, it doesn't make your kids behave any better. Doesn't make your thinking about your kids any better after the alcohol's worn off. In the short time you're drinking it maybe does. But ... And then, you're probably gaining some weight for a lot of people.

Rachel Hart: Yeah, I mean I often ... I think about it a lot because so many people can relate to this idea of ... By the end of the day, I just need to take the edge off. I just need to shut off my brain. I just need to take the edge off. And what I always want people to ask themselves is, what is that edge? What are you taking the edge off of? Right? And I think so many of us, myself included for a long time, just blew right by that. It was just like, "I've just got to relax. I just don't feel good. I just need to take the edge off." And I wasn't spending that time examining, "Okay, well what is that thing that I'm trying to escape from?" And for me, and for a lot of people, it is negative emotions. It is stress, it is anxiety, it is sometimes a loneliness, it's boredom. Whatever that negative emotion is that we don't want to feel, right?

And so you start to teach your brain, "Hey, this is a way to deal with it." And then surprise, surprise, you're not making any headway on actually getting at the root cause of what's creating that negative emotion in the first place. And your brain all of a sudden is like, "Hey, that seems good. That was good on Monday, I bet it'll work on Tuesday. I bet it will work on Wednesday." And then you just get in that cycle, and then you wake up and you're like, "Hey, how's this happening? When did I start drinking half a bottle of Prosecco?"

Katrina Ubell: Like most nights of the week. Right?

Rachel Hart: Yeah.

Katrina Ubell: Who am I right now? Where I'm asking my husband, "Did you get more wine?" Like, what? How did this happen? I think it's so interesting, too, because that edge ... Because everybody talks about it that way. "Oh, I've got to take the edge off. I just need to relax." It's like what we don't really realize is the edge is created by our thinking.

Rachel Hart: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Katrina Ubell: It's our thoughts, our perception, our experience of our lives that's creating the edge. And then we don't just change our thinking to soften the edge. We want to look to an outside source. The other thing about alcohol that's so interesting is the idea of coming home from a hard day and having a drink is so socially acceptable. I mean, think about it, happy hour. Or even when you look back at old TV shows, the '50's and '60's, right? The husband would come home from work and right away either go make himself a martini or the wife was over there making him a cocktail, some sort of before-dinner drink. So, I think a lot of us grew up just thinking like, "Oh, this is what adults do."

Rachel Hart: Yeah.

Katrina Ubell: They have a hard day, they have a glass of wine, they have a cocktail. It's not a big deal. But I think that for a lot of physicians who are my main audience on this podcast, they are kind of sometimes finding, "Okay, well, if I'm not eating ... If I'm not eating to make myself better, well then I'll just have a couple more glasses of wine."

Rachel Hart: Right.

Katrina Ubell: So, let's talk about that. Kind of switching one ... Buffering or neutralizing negative emotions with one thing, and switching over to the other. Whether it's stopping drinking and then eating too much, or the other way around.

Rachel Hart: Right, well it's so interesting because this is exactly what happened for me. What I started to notice is that I would take alcohol out of my life. I would take a break because I was getting all these negative consequences that I didn't like. I didn't like waking up with the hangovers, I didn't like not having a full memory of what

happened the night before. I just didn't like how I felt. And by the way, and I think a lot of people notice this, the longer that it goes on and the older that you get, it seems like, "God, I just don't bounce back from these hangovers."

Katrina Ubell: It takes like a whole day to recover.

Rachel Hart: Exactly, exactly.

Katrina Ubell: And you wonder why you can never get anything done around the house.

Rachel Hart: So that would happen. I would take it out and then I would just find myself doing the same thing with food. Right? And so I had this one story that I tell because for some reason this really clicked in my mind. I wasn't drinking at the time, and I was really making a concerted effort to be healthy. And I had gone to Whole Foods and I had gotten the organic cauliflower, and I had the Himalayan sea salt, and I had roasted a whole pan. I lived on my own at this point. I was making myself a healthy meal. And I finished my dinner, and I just kept going back to that pan. I kept eating more cauliflower. I kept going back and back. And it's cauliflower, right? I mean, what ... There's not going to be a terrible downside. But here's the thing, I was just ... I was doing the same thing that I was doing with drinking. I was putting something in my body, so much of it, filling up my digestive system so much, that it was literally pulling energy away from my nervous system. Away from all those thoughts that I didn't want to think, I didn't want to feel the emotions that those thoughts were creating, and directing that energy elsewhere.

And in that moment, I just realized, "Oh. This is what I do with drinking." I saw ... I saw suddenly this connection that I had never understood before. And in that moment ... One, it kind of erased a lot of the shame that I had had because I was like, "Oh, I'll do it with anything."

Katrina Ubell: Right.

Rachel Hart: "I just don't want to feel."

Katrina Ubell: Exactly.

Rachel Hart: Right? And if it's not drinking too much wine, I'll eat too much food. I will work so much that my brain doesn't even have a moment to be alone with its thoughts so I don't have to feel. I will go onto eBay and shop and shop and shop so that I don't have to be with these emotions. And once I realized that, that for me was the beginning of actually kind of setting myself free because I realized, "Oh." It's not that there's something wrong with me and alcohol. It's that I just taught myself that there are ways to cover up how you're feeling and turn down the volume on your emotions and, frankly, you can do that with most things.

Katrina Ubell: Totally.

Rachel Hart: And I just need to learn a different way.

Katrina Ubell: Totally. I think that is ... Yeah, so good. Yeah, and I think it's also ... You can treat yourself with anything. I found myself sometimes being like, this roasted broccoli is amazing. Who am I, number one?

Rachel Hart: Yeah.

Katrina Ubell: Number two, what is the deal here? So one thing that really worked for me in terms of alcohol. I have kind of gone back and forth with drinking, never really identified it as being really a problem for me. But the agreement I have with myself with alcohol right now is that when I decide ... Or when my brain offers to me, "Oh, a glass of wine would be nice right now." Or "You should have a beer, you should have a cocktail." I always ask myself, "Okay, so how is that going to make this situation better?"

Rachel Hart: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Katrina Ubell: And if I like my reason, if I can come up with a really good reason, then I can have it. And you know what? I can almost never ever come up with a good reason. Because almost always, the answer is to try to escape some sort of discomfort. I'll give you some examples. For a while there, if the kids were kind of getting rambunctious around dinner time and I was just trying to make dinner, I would have a little Prosecco just to take the edge off. It made ... I just loosened me up. It made me more patient. It made me have more fun making dinner. And I felt like I was having more fun around the dinner table, even though I wasn't really. It was just the alcohol. But then what I would find is that I would be really tired that night. And instead of getting a couple things done after the kids went to bed, I was basically just like, "Blech. I don't feel like doing anything."

Rachel Hart: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Katrina Ubell: So you're not catching up on those things. Or if you are doing them, they just seem so much harder or slower or things like that. So when my brain goes, "Ooh. Glass of wine would be nice while you're cooking." And I ask myself that, I'm just like, "No. What I'm trying to do ... I just want to de-stress. I just want the kids to behave themselves." Guess what? Me drinking alcohol does not improve their behavior. And so then I'm ... I literally will be like, "Aww. That's a bummer. Okay, well. I do want something fun to drink, so maybe I'll open a Lacroix or something." Right? I'll just have something like that to have. So I think, for me, that's worked really, really well. Just really thinking, why do I really want this? How will it make this better?

The other area that you mentioned about anxiety and social situations, I know it can seem kind of strange, but I'm ... I'm what I call an outgoing introvert. And so going to a party kind of situation, I dread it for days ahead of time. Even if when we have to RSVP, I get the invitation, I'm like, "Uhh, I have to go to this. I'm not going to want to go." And so, if you go and have some wine, it does loosen you

up and socially you're more fun. But like you said, there's been times where after the fact, I'm like, "I was kind of weird. I didn't really show up as me. Can I just go and be me? Can I just go and have the party not be fun?" That's okay.

Rachel Hart: Yeah. Or also ... Here's the other thing. I was actually working with one of my clients yesterday, and she was talking about she was going to a happy hour. And she was really feeling like, "Well, I just like ... These colleagues are new and I'm going to feel so awkward. Right? And I know if I have this drink, I'll feel less awkward. And she probably would feel less awkward. I mean that's not made up. There's a reason why alcohol is considered a social lubricant. But here's the thing, right? What we end up doing is we teach our brain over and over and over again that when I'm in an uncomfortable situation, when I'm meeting new people, when I'm going to a bar after work ... Whatever it is, we teach our brain, "Okay, the way to feel more comfortable and to be more myself is to have a drink." And then you get to this point ... Because I said to her, "Okay, well, what if you just experimented? What if you said I'm going to go to happy hour and see what it's like without drinking."

Her brain ... I mean I could watch it, her brain was like, "Wait, what? Why would I go?"

Katrina Ubell: Right. That's a possibility?

Rachel Hart: Right. Like, "I don't ... That ... Huh?"

Katrina Ubell: It's not computing.

Rachel Hart: And it was just like ... How many times have you gone to a happy hour and had a drink? Right? You've just taught your brain, this is what you do. But I think all of us in the long run ... We want to feel more authentic. We want to feel more ourselves. We want to feel more comfortable. And if we don't ever give ourselves the chance of learning how to do that without having a glass in your hand, the only thing that will happen is it will just mean that you won't actually learn how to do those things. You won't actually gain that skill set. You just find yourself feeling more and more reliant. Like, "Oh, God. This celebration's really not going to be fun. The party's going to be awkward. How could I possibly enjoy my vacation if I don't have a glass of wine there with me?" And I totally understand that. Because I ... I mean, I felt like that for so long. Like, "You want me to go to a wedding and do what? Are you sure? Like, aren't weddings meant for drinking? I don't get this. Is it not the benefit of being a guest?"

Katrina Ubell: Right, exactly. Open bar. Totally, totally. And I think, too, when ... With your happy hour example. I think it's so interesting because I think that what we do is we think all those new people are going to judge me if I don't have a drink because they'll think I'm weird or I'm all clammed up or I'm just not that much fun. So what we're really doing, though, is we're projecting our thoughts about ourselves onto the other people. That's really what we think about ourselves, so we're just like, "They'll think that way about me, too. So I better have a glass a

wine or something like that." And I think that is so interesting when you start realizing that. And I see that with food, too, all the time. It's a similar thing. I can go to a birthday party and not eat cake? Like, what? For me it was when I literally made from scratch chocolate cupcakes and homemade icing for one of my kids' birthdays and did not even have the desire to eat one. I was like, "What? This works! I can't believe it. This is something that happens to people?"

Rachel Hart: Right, I mean ... That was the exact same thing with me. This idea that I could ... I mean, I loved to drink. I loved it. I loved my fancy cocktails, right? That was something if you had told me, "Actually, you can unlearn this desire and not miss it and not feel like you're missing out and not feeling deprived." It's just like, "Mmm, I think that you're wrong. In fact, I'm pretty sure this cannot be right." But I think a big part of that is we just walk around kind of assuming, "Oh, well this food is what is creating my desire. This drink is what is creating my desire." And so we just sort of accept or actually convince ourselves that the desire has nothing to do with what we're thinking. Has nothing to do with the thoughts running through our mind. It has everything to do with these things in our external environment.

And so most people are like, "Well, if I'm going to stop desiring it, then I need to remove myself from the situation. I need to make sure my pantry is totally spotless. There's not one bit of junk in there that I could be tempted by because it's the bag of Doritos that creates all the desire." And we just blow right past the idea of, "Okay, but what's you're thinking?" You know, if desire is an emotion that you feel in your body, and we know that our emotions are created by our thoughts, let's take a look at these thoughts. And that was ... That was the thing that really switched things for me was to understand, "Oh, how I'm thinking about alcohol. How I'm thinking about why I want it, what it will give me, what I think the benefit is ... " All of those thoughts are optional.

Katrina Ubell: Right. And that way, you can end up going to a bar with all these amazing craft cocktails and the best thing ever and have it completely un-phase you because your thinking is different. You don't have to avoid bars for the rest of your life.

Rachel Hart: Yeah. Here's the thing, I got married not too long ago. And my husband and I had an open bar and I wasn't drinking. And the idea that you could get married, you could have this most important day of your life, this incredible celebration and not feel like you were missing out because you didn't have champagne in your glass, right?

Katrina Ubell: Right.

Rachel Hart: I mean that just ... The fact that I was able to do that and just completely enjoy myself, completely be in the moment. Not feel any deprivation, in fact, not even think about it at all.

Katrina Ubell: Remember everything.

Rachel Hart: Yeah, remember everything. But it also just like some guests were drinking and some guests weren't. And it just didn't ... It barely registered. That to me was like, "Okay, well obviously this thought work is magic."

Katrina Ubell: There's something to this. Yeah. So if there is a listener out there who is thinking, "Yes, I definitely would like to drink less or cut back, take break for a while." What would be the first couple of steps you would offer somebody who's thinking, "I'd love to do that, but I don't even know where to start."

Rachel Hart: Yeah, I mean, I think really just first having that insight into looking to see what is going on in your mind. What are you thinking around the drinking? What happens for so many people is that the urge to drink appears, and we act on the urge.

Katrina Ubell: Just like with eating.

Rachel Hart: Yeah, the same thing with eating.

Katrina Ubell: That brownie looks good, I'm going to eat it.

Rachel Hart: Exactly, exactly. And so I often tell people ... Just even building in a pause, just even having that moment to bring awareness to your thoughts ... So much of the work that we will do later on, and that I'll do with my clients, is about starting to change your thinking. But so much change happens actually in just bringing awareness. What are you thinking in that moment? What are you telling yourself that drink is going to do for you? Why are you telling yourself that you need it? Just pay attention to that. And the same is true when people say, "Yeah, you know, I'd rather drink just one glass rather than three glasses." Once you start drinking, it's not like you then lose all control over what's going on in your mind. But most of us don't pay attention to any of the thoughts in there. We're not really conscious or aware or noticing the thoughts that say, "Oh, another won't matter. I'll be better tomorrow. This one won't hurt." So we have all these thoughts in there that are fueling our desire, and we just don't even pay attention to and we just think, "Well, it's a bottle of rose. That's why I keep pouring another because the bottle is so irresistible. The wine is so irresistible."

Katrina Ubell: Yeah, right. Yeah. Or sangria for me in summer. I was like, "It's half juice. It's not even that much wine." It's like a bloody Mary, it's like a meal.

Rachel Hart: The number of people that tell me, that I work with, that will talk about how certain times of the year, certain seasons ...

Katrina Ubell: Yeah.

Rachel Hart: Right? The weather starts turning warm and the idea of like, "But how am I going to get through summer? What am I going to do?" Like, really? You want me to consider going to a baseball game?

Katrina Ubell: Not have a beer. Right, right. You know, that happened for us last summer where we were going camping and what we would always do after we finally got the kids to sleep in the tents with camping, is we would totally have some beers. And my husband and I were around the campfire and we really had to think ... He kind of ... Well, I always said he did the same work as me, but kind of through osmosis. He never really formally sat down, but he asked me, "Are you going to drink anything?" And I'm like, "I guess I'm not." And so then we're kind of talking about it and he's like, "Hmm ... " And we're like, "Okay, well, let's just drink some sparkling water." And you know what was so fun was having the same experience around the campfire, talking, looking at the stars, sleeping well.

Rachel Hart: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Katrina Ubell: When the kids wake you up in the morning at the ... I mean, earlier than the crack of dawn. Right? Camping. It's just like ... You want to shoot yourself it's so hard. You're like, "Well, okay. I can get up. It's no big deal." It was really better.

Rachel Hart: Yeah.

Katrina Ubell: And that's actually one thing I want you to touch on because I know ... There's kind of the idea of like, "Well, maybe my life could still be good if I didn't drink." But you talk about, what if your life was actually better if you didn't drink.

Rachel Hart: Yeah.

Katrina Ubell: So I want you to just touch on that.

Rachel Hart: Yeah, and look ... I think most people come into it and they're like, "Okay, well. I guess I could cut back. I guess I could take a break and I'd be healthier." And they kind of say it in that way. Like there's no excitement. It's like, "Well ... Yeah ... My doctor would be happy." But the idea that ... Yeah. It's not only that things can be better, but you can be so much happier. You can enjoy things so much more. And I think a big part of that is that when you're always getting that hit of dopamine when you're drinking and that's the thing that's making happy hour fun, that's the thing that's making Friday night date night enjoyable, that's the thing that is adding to you when you hang out with your girlfriends ... You start to have this artificial basis for what you think fun feels like and enjoyment looks like. And it's through this external thing that's giving you dopamine and ... There is something that ... It's hard to explain, but what happens when you take that out, you start to understand all these joys that you were missing because they were more subtle and couldn't compare to that big hit of dopamine.

So I think about my previous life, and I would have these really big highs. Go out and get drunk, right? You'd have this really big high from it, but it would have these super, super low lows. And so I think that I was going really high and really low. And now I feel like I'm in a place where I still have highs and lows, but the highs are ... There are so many more of them because I see them in so many places that I just missed before because ... Honestly, going outside for a walk in

nature was nice. But it didn't really compare to couple glasses of wines, for me back then. So I just kind of missed it. And it's little things like that that I think you start to understand. There's all these moments of joy that you're bypassing. And the other thing, it just really opens up your life. I mean all ... I was spending so much time thinking about drinking and when we were going to drink, anticipating the wine that I was going to have at this restaurant.

But then also spending a lot of time and energy recovering from it. And feeling kind of groggy the next day and waking up with a headache, and maybe even dealing with the repercussions of beating myself up for why did I drink too much again? So imagine what happens when you clear out all the time that you're spending, not just drinking, but thinking about drinking and anticipating drinking and looking forward to drinking, but all the time and energy that you are dealing with on the repercussion side. All of sudden you have ... I mean I had so much more time. More than I knew what to do with. And it opens up space in your life to actually start to discover, what do I really like to do? How do I really want to spend my time? I think ... Like, you said it earlier, drinking is just ... It's such a social norm that it's just like, yeah, having a fancy glass of wine with dinner ... That's what you do on date night.

Katrina Ubell: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Rachel Hart: Right?

Katrina Ubell: Totally.

Rachel Hart: And hanging out with your friends, right? Just happens to involve cocktails. And so when you open up that space, it really opens up a place in your mind to start to think about what do I want to do? And, you know, surprisingly I found things that were more enjoyable and more exciting and more me outside of drinking.

Katrina Ubell: Now, did you find, though, that your relationships with your friends changed? Did you find that there were some people who gave you a hard time? Like, let's talk about that a little bit. Just about the idea of the people ... I always talk about food pushers. You know, the people who are like, "No, you must have this piece of cake." There are definitely people who are like, "What do you mean you're not having a margarita? Come on, we're celebrating!"

Rachel Hart: Yeah, I mean ... You know, it's interesting because when I ... When I think about that, I do think a lot of that had ... A lot of the pressure that I was feeling was ... I was getting pressure from some of my friends, but I was also putting a lot of pressure on myself. Right? I was having a lot of judgment about what they were going to think of me, but it was really what I was thinking about me, and whether or not I was still fun. And was I still normal? And could I still have a good time? So there were definitely people that said, "Oh come on. I've seen you take a break before. This isn't going to last. Just have a drink. It's Cinco de Mayo." Right?

Katrina Ubell: Right. Totally.

Rachel Hart: It's someone's birthday. But I think ... You know, I think actually for the most part, yeah there were some people that maybe I don't spend time with anymore. But actually for the most part, most of my friends really are still all my same friends, it's just that our relationship doesn't necessarily revolve around drinking. And I often say, this is the other thing, almost all of my friends drink. It's not ... I haven't moved over to a new group of friends and nobody drinks anymore.

Katrina Ubell: Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Rachel Hart: It's just that I don't anymore. I don't have desire for it. And yet we're still ... We still have a friendship, and in many ways I think I convinced myself for a long time that wouldn't be possible.

Katrina Ubell: Yeah, I think that's so good. Right? So much of what we think ... We have this whole story, this whole belief that we've created for ourselves around something that we've never even tried.

Rachel Hart: Yeah.

Katrina Ubell: That was one thing that I really ... I had to always work on with my eating was, you know, something ... Like, could I actually sit down with the family and not eat if I wasn't actually legitimately hungry? And what I always ... And I think this is kind of like with the medical mind, a little bit, you know kind of rationalizing a little ... Just like, "Well, is it possible?" That I could sit down with the family and not eat food and have it not be weird. I mean, I suppose it's possible. Right? You know, just like, I guess in some alternate universe. Maybe. Well, I guess I could try it and see. You know, and then I'd do it and I'd be like, "Okay, so that was literally not a big deal at all. Okay, this is interesting." You know. Or going to a restaurant.

Rachel Hart: Yeah.

Katrina Ubell: I've gone to a restaurant and literally had club soda and that was it while everyone else was eating. And it's just not a big deal. I kind of look at it like it's a big deal when you make it a big deal.

Rachel Hart: Yeah.

Katrina Ubell: And that's all what you're thinking.

Rachel Hart: Yeah.

Katrina Ubell: And it's not a big deal.

Rachel Hart: Completely. And I think part of that is for a really long time, how someone reacted about me not drinking ... I always made that mean something negative about me. Right? Which in reality, it really means something about them. And

you know there are people ... It's not like there are still ... There are people in the world that think it is weird not to drink and think that it's kind of ... Like, if you're not drinking, you're missing out on a really important part of life. Right? You're really missing out on a really big piece of pleasure and ... Of course, we're supposed to. There's a reason why humans invented it thousands of years ago. It's part of human civilization and culture and ... Just part of the experience. So there are people that definitely ... And you know, when they find out that the coaching issue that I work on are like, "Why would you want to desire alcohol less?" But how I feel about it has changed so drastically, not because their responses to me have changed, but because what I think about it is so tremendously different.

Katrina Ubell: Right.

Rachel Hart: Right? And understanding whatever reaction they're having, has to do with them.

Katrina Ubell: Totally.

Rachel Hart: Not necessarily good or bad, but it just has to do with the thoughts that are going on in their mind.

Katrina Ubell: Right.

Rachel Hart: Right?

Katrina Ubell: And you get to decide to make those mean whatever you want, so you might as well choose something that serves you.

Rachel Hart: Yeah, yeah. And I think it ... I mean, it's the same thing with food, right? It's the same thing really with any decision we make in our life, that we're worried about what are people going to think? What does this mean about me?

Katrina Ubell: Mm-hmm (affirmative). Yeah, and so what we pick ... We're mirroring what our own thoughts are ... That we have about ourselves as though they're coming from somebody else. Yeah, that's ... Yeah, so good. Well, Rachel, this was so great. Thank you so much for coming on. If people want to find you, you have an amazing podcast. Tell us the name of it.

Rachel Hart: It's called Take A Break from Drinking.

Katrina Ubell: All right. So you can find that on iTunes, Stitcher ...

Rachel Hart: Yes.

Katrina Ubell: All that. Perfect. And then your website is rachelhart.com?

Rachel Hart: That's right.

Katrina Ubell: Okay, awesome. Thank you so much for coming on.

Rachel Hart: Thank you for having me.

Katrina Ubell: All right. Take care.

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