

# Ep #262: When Drinking Is What You Have in Common



## Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

**Rachel Hart**

[Take a Break from Drinking](#) with Rachel Hart

## Ep #262: When Drinking Is What You Have in Common

You are listening to the *Take A Break* podcast with Rachel Hart, episode 262.

Whether you want to drink less or stop drinking, this podcast will help you change the habit from the inside out. We're challenging conventional wisdom about why people drink and why it can be hard to resist temptation. No labels, no judgment, just practical tools to take control of your desire and stop worrying about your drinking. Now, here's your host Rachel Hart.

Hello, everyone from foggy San Francisco. The foghorn has been going off for like 36 hours, and it's a good thing I like it. Anyway, we are talking about what happens when drinking is what you have in common with someone else. So, we're going to be talking a lot about connection today in the podcast. I did a whole episode, one of my earliest episodes was all about connection. I think it's number 34.

Because this can be a stumbling block for so many people who want to change the habit. So, they feel more connected to others when they drink because it lowers their inhibitions. Then they're more talkative, and it's easier to open up. You know, we just kind of have this belief in society that you know, you pour a drink, and it just kind of greases the wheels when it comes to connecting with other humans.

Now, I just want to add because in my experience, you know, I have worked with thousands of people to help them change their relationship with alcohol. That's not actually everyone's experience. I have worked with people who will say, you know what? I drink because it has the opposite effect on me. Because I actually worry that I'm too much, too loud, too over the top, and when I drink, it kind of helps me clam up a little bit.

Because now, I'm kind of worried about like, oh, what am I going to do? What am I going to say? How am I going to act? Because now I have alcohol in my system. So, there are some people out there that find when

[Take a Break from Drinking](#) with Rachel Hart

## Ep #262: When Drinking Is What You Have in Common

they drink, it actually helps them tone down or withdraw a little. So, I just wanted to add that because your experience really is unique to you, but what's not unique, and this is really important, what's not unique is how connection works within the think, feel, and act cycle because that's the framework that we use to understand the habit.

But listen, that's the framework we use to understand life. How you create a connection regardless of how you use alcohol that works the same. And by the way, it is something that you create. When you feel that kind of friendliness towards someone else or when you feel separate from who you're with, that connection or that disconnection, it doesn't just happen. It doesn't just appear. It's the result of what's going on in the think, feel, and act cycle. It's the result of what you're thinking about the person or the situation or the environment.

And before you start this work, before you start to really understand connection in a new way, these thoughts that are either creating connection or generating a lot of disconnection they will be totally unconscious to you. So, your job and what we're talking about today is really noticing and finding out, hey, what's happening in my brain? The place where we so often don't look. What's happening in there?

So that you can deal with a thought like, listen, drinking is what I have in common with this person. So, I want to remind you before we get started that the word connect is a verb. It expresses an action. Something that you're doing, and again, while most people might focus on what we're outwardly doing, right? What are we drinking? How are we talking? Are we making eye contact? Are we smiling? Are we listening?

I like to take a step back and think first of what you are doing as what you are thinking. Your thoughts create the connection. Your thoughts create the disconnection, not who you're with, not what you're drinking; the sentences running through your mind. And with that understanding, you have to ask

[Take a Break from Drinking](#) with Rachel Hart

## Ep #262: When Drinking Is What You Have in Common

yourself then, okay, so, what happens when my thought is, yeah, but, drinking is what we have in common.

Now, I will tell you I remember thinking this with so many people in my life. What we have in common is we drink because that's what we do when we hang out. That's what we do when we're together. I had this thought with people I was dating, with friends, colleagues; drinking is what we have in common. It's our thing.

And I was so sure, right, take alcohol out of the equation, and I was kind of like, okay, well, like, then, there's nothing there. Now, I will add that many people also have this thought with their family, right? So, you might have a belief, like, we're a family that drinks together, drinking is just part of how we spend time, how we hang out as a family.

This belief, drinking is what we have in common. It can show up in different ways for different people. So, just be curious about where it appears in your life. The point is really how deeply, and I mean deeply, deeply, deeply, I believed this thought and was certain that it was true when it came to particular relationships in my life. You want to be aware of that for yourself. How deeply you may currently believe that the thought, drinking means what we have in common is just the truth.

And when you believe that it's a truth, let me tell you what's going to happen. There's going to be a lot of fear about losing that connection. There's going to be a lot of what-ifs. What if I tried to drink less, or try to change the habit, or stop drinking altogether? What then? And I will tell you, my brain, when that started to happen, I only knew how to catastrophize. I only knew how to envision the end of relationships and the end of friendships and just a pretty bleak future.

That's what was going on for me, and it really is fascinating to see how the think, feel, and act cycle unfolds in the situation. Because lots of times

[Take a Break from Drinking](#) with Rachel Hart

## Ep #262: When Drinking Is What You Have in Common

when we're thinking this thought that drinking is what we have in common. Drinking is how we create connection; we're not even with the person in question. A lot of times, we're thinking this thought on our own. We're just imagining a life where they're drinking, and you're not or picturing an event where they have a glass of wine, and you're just sitting there with bubbly water.

This thought and the feeling that it generates and then the actions that you end up unconsciously taking more often than not it plays out before you're even with the person in question. It's all unfolding when you're on your own just contemplating change, and I want you to consider that for a second. I want you to consider that when you're by yourself thinking the thought, drinking is what we have in common when you think that thought. You're by yourself. Do you feel connected to that person, or that relationship in the moment, or do you feel disconnection without that shared activity?

Because what happens is that your brain starts sorting. It loves to sort. I have a whole episode on this, on labels, right. The brain loves to sort. It loves to put you and other people in categories. I'm over here; you're over there. You're drinking. I'm not. And from that place, from those separate categories, all your brain will see is a difference. You don't even have to be with the person. Just thinking the thought will create the feeling of disconnection.

I've talked about this a lot on the podcast, how your thoughts direct what your mind sees. When you think drinking is what we have in common, your brain focuses on alcohol as the common denominator. Then everything else is either a difference or just doesn't count, right? It's like, well, we're both humans, and we both struggle, and we both work in the same industry, and we have this shared past, and we root for the same sports team, and we love the same silly movies, but really drinking is what we have in common, and all of that crap doesn't count.

[Take a Break from Drinking](#) with Rachel Hart

## Ep #262: When Drinking Is What You Have in Common

From that place, this place of focusing on difference or discrediting what you do have in common, what you do share, you simply can't create connection. Because your brain is like on a scavenger hunt finding just disconnection, and all of this is happening on your own. But here's what we do, we think this thought, we let our brain catastrophize about what will happen. We discredit all of the things that we do have in common.

Then, we're thinking this thought on our own, generating all of this disconnection before we even see the person. It's like you're kind of headed to meet up with someone before you go, especially if you're thinking about changing the habit or trying to do something different when you're with the person. It's like you put all of this disconnection in your purse or in your pocket before you left the house, and you're like, okay, you and me, disconnection. Let's go meet up with this person that I really care about.

I want you to notice what happens when you ask your brain to think about all that you have in common with someone that does not include what's in your glass. What happens when you give your brain the task? Okay, brain, go, find all the things we share. Sure, we both drink, but I want you to find everything else. What happens when you ask your brain to go on this task, and then write it all down, and come up with 10, 15, or 25 things that you have in common with this person.

I will tell you what would happen with me. I was like, this is dumb. I was so resistant to this exercise I was like, oh, come on, Rachel, you're just trying to fool yourself into believing that drinking isn't playing an outside role in your relationship when you know it does. When you know it's a big deal, you know that not drinking is a big deal. Drinking is what we have in common. All of this resistance would bubble up inside of me.

But listen, sending your brain on the task of finding what you have in common outside of alcohol that's always step one. When you have a

[Take a Break from Drinking](#) with Rachel Hart

## Ep #262: When Drinking Is What You Have in Common

thought-creating disconnection, a thought like, drinking is what we have in common. You have to actively put your brain to work to find how the opposite may be true. Then, you have to notice all the resistance that's going to bubble up. All of the resistance to this is silly. These things don't really matter. They don't count.

Notice if before you even find evidence of connection, your brain is so sure that you're wrong. I think here, and this is important for everything that you're learning on this podcast, I think too often we try to ignore or push past resistance instead of looking at it like, hey, this is a valuable moment to stop and pause and ask myself, what's going on here? What's this resistance really about? What's the benefit of putting up a wall or believing something doesn't apply, or that it won't work, or that an exercise is pointless?

We don't do that in life with resistance. So, either we encounter resistance and either we walk away, we head in the opposite direction, or we just tell ourselves, oh, I have to push past, right? I just have to push past instead of just pausing for a second and saying, like, huh, what's the benefit of this resistance? How's it helping me, because of course, there is one. Of course, it is helping you.

Just for a second to pause and consider, hey, what's the benefit in letting this thought be right, letting it be true that drinking is what I have in common, and not exploring whether or how it could be wrong? So often, again, because we just want to walk away or push through resistance, we don't slow down in these moments. And the answer here is, I promise, it is worth exploring.

If you were right, if it's indeed correct, that the only thing the relationship has in common is drinking, and if you really value the relationship, if you fear losing the connection because you really love and cherish this person, or, and by the way, this is also really common that you fear losing

[Take a Break from Drinking](#) with Rachel Hart



## Ep #262: When Drinking Is What You Have in Common

connection because you have scarcity about the possibility of new relationships coming into your life. By the way, that was really true for me.

So often, I was like, yeah, but I don't have a lot of friends, and it's hard to make new friends. I can't afford to lose these people, or it's really hard to find a boyfriend, and I don't want to lose this boyfriend. I can't risk losing this person because, you know, it might not be so easy to find a new one. That's what my brain was telling me.

But whatever the reason is for you, really considering why your brain wants to be right, that drinking is what you have in common in this particular relationship. It really is worthwhile to notice any resistance to considering that you could be wrong, considering that you actually have lots of things in common, or the resistance to like, oh, God, but what if I discover that I'm right? Then there's nothing there, and I lose this friend, or I lose this partner.

It really is important to stop and pause and ask yourself the benefit. What's the benefit of being right? That drinking is all that we have in common? Because then, you get to discover something really important. You get to discover okay, well, if that's true, if I'm right that drinking is what we have in common, then change is out of the question. Because change means not just the loss of my favorite drink, but it's the loss of connection that I have with this person.

I think it's really fascinating to approach it from that angle, to use the resistance to understand this. Then, you start to see, oh, as long as I believe that I'm right, that drinking is what we have in common, then I'm not going to change the habit. I'm going to stay the same, and suddenly the necessity for believing this thought takes on new meaning for you. It's like, oh, as long as I believe this thought, then my lower brain, which p.s. just cares about rewards, it's going to stay happy because I'm not going to change.

[Take a Break from Drinking](#) with Rachel Hart



## Ep #262: When Drinking Is What You Have in Common

So, it's going to keep getting the rewards that it wants. So, the lower brain, that part of you that doesn't care about the future. It doesn't care about your goals, dreams, or your big ideas. It just cares about like, find pleasure, avoid danger, and doing it as quickly as possible and as easily as possible. That part of me is going to stay happy.

This thought and believing this thought and leaving it unchallenged when you start to see what your resistance is about, you start to see, oh, maybe it's keeping me safe from facing the fear of loss, rejection, or loneliness. But here's the thing, I was wrong. I was wrong about this for a lot of people in my life, that drinking was the thing we had in common. What if you're wrong? What if drinking is one thing that you have in common, but it's not everything?

What if you have lots of things in common that have nothing to do with alcohol, and drinking has just become a proxy for connecting. And I really do believe that's a real problem is that most people, in fact, believe that connection just happens, right? So, we walk around, and we're just like, I don't know, I just feel connected to this person. I feel like, you know, it's just a vibe. I can't explain it. Or we say the opposite, yeah, I just feel like we're different people and we just have nothing in common.

This is how so many of us approach our relationships. We approach connection not as something that we're creating but as something that just happens. It's just this vibe, right? It's unexplainable. Or what we do on the flip side is we unconsciously teach our brain that connection is created by drinking. Listen, it's just how I open up. I have a glass, and then I laugh more easily, and I'm more talkative. I'm more willing to talk about things that normally I might keep to myself. Alcohol does all of that.

So, then we become convinced that alcohol, that the drink is in charge of creating connection. Listen, either way, you're disempowered. Either it's just a vibe that you can't explain. You just feel it, or it's the drink in front of

[Take a Break from Drinking](#) with Rachel Hart

## Ep #262: When Drinking Is What You Have in Common

you that has the power. In neither of these scenarios, do you have power? You're just sitting back and letting connection or disconnection happen based on a vibe or based on what's in your glass, instead of the truth.

And the truth is I create it with my mind. I create it by what I'm thinking. I create connections. I create disconnection because how I feel towards someone, or something is a product of my thinking. That's how the think, feel, act cycle works. So, step one is really questioning the thought that drinking is what you have in common with someone.

Step two is noticing any resistance to being quick to like, yeah, this is a dumb exercise, or if I do the exercise like, these things don't count, right? To notice the resistance and then get curious about, like, hey, what's the benefit of the resistance? Then, step three is really deciding, and it is a decision to step into a place of power and understanding; hey, connection and disconnection are not just a vibe that happens. It's not the product of sharing a bottle of wine.

Step three is, oh, I create connection, and I create disconnection based on what I'm thinking. The place to look isn't what's in your glass or what you have in common. It's what's happening in your mind. And that, to me, is when things start to get really interesting. When you start to understand, hey, I can feel connected to anything I choose to feel connected to. That's such an amazing power.

When you recognize this feeling that I want, it's a product of my thoughts, of what's happening in my mind. Then, suddenly, it's like, oh, it's not about the alcohol. I can just choose to create it if I want to. For me, recognizing that I was always the one creating connection or disconnection that it was always me, that feeling was created by what was happening in my mind. It really helped me to go to an extreme example.

[Take a Break from Drinking](#) with Rachel Hart

## Ep #262: When Drinking Is What You Have in Common

There are people in your life that you feel connected to even though they're no longer alive. So, I think of my grandparents. I think of a good friend of mine who died in his 20s. I feel connected to these people even though they're no longer here. How is that possible? Because the feeling of connection is created in my mind.

Someone doesn't need to be alive. They don't need to be in the same room as me. They don't need to be in the same place. They don't need to be in the same country for me to feel that connection. Then, when you start to play with this concept, it gets very interesting to see, oh, gosh, who do I feel connected to right after that, even though I don't really know them at all. Think about the times it's happened for you in your life.

You find out one little tidbit about someone like, oh, we both graduated from the same school, or we grew up in the same place, or we loved the same team, and all of a sudden, you feel closer. Why? It has nothing to do with the shared circumstance. It has everything to do with what you make it mean. And usually, it's as simple as a thought as like, oh, we have something in common. We're similar.

That's what creates that feeling of connection, that friendliness. But these thoughts we don't even notice that they're there because we're so accustomed to believing that connection is created by our external circumstances. We just think that it's like, where we got our diploma, or where we grew up, or the sports team that we're rooting for that creates the feeling. When actually, those things didn't do anything.

Your thought about, oh, hey, we have something in common, we have a similarity. That's what created the feeling. And you can see the opposite effect at work too. We assume we have nothing in common with people. Think about the number of times you have been surprised because you were so sure, like, oh, God, I have nothing in common with this person. They're totally different. Your brain assumed disconnection from the outset.

[Take a Break from Drinking](#) with Rachel Hart

## Ep #262: When Drinking Is What You Have in Common

Because it noticed a difference in gender or sexuality or where someone is from or their religion or social class or political leanings, whatever, your brain started out with like, yeah, we have nothing in common. And then, we're so amazed when that turns out not to be true. When it turns out, oh, yeah, we actually do have stuff in common. You're only amazed because you started with this unconscious thought; this person is different from me. We have nothing in common. That thought is the real block.

That thought is creating disconnection because just by thinking it, you feel separation. Then, your brain is prime to find everything else that is different rather than everything else that is the same. And so just to take it back to drinking, listen, drinking may be one thing that you have in common, but it's never the only thing. The question is, why are you giving it so much weight? Why are you giving it so much prominence? Because you know, you might both eat potatoes, grapes, or wheat, but you're probably not giving that a lot of credence when it comes to connection.

So, why are you giving alcohol so much weight? What is your brain imagining will happen if you say, yeah, not tonight, I'm taking a break, or you know what, I think I'm kind of over it? What do you believe will be true? That you won't be able to open up? That you'll feel awkward? That it will be harder to talk about your day? Or do you believe you know, they're going to judge me, they'll think I'm no fun, maybe they'll think I'm judging them, or they'll think I have a problem?

Listen, whatever your answer is to that question, those are the thoughts that are the real problem. And just notice how much your brain is just handing away power and giving away credit to the drink. Instead of, hey, you know what? I practiced believing for a very long time that alcohol creates connection, and drinking is the thing that I have in common with people. The more I continue to believe this thought, the more I disempower myself.

[Take a Break from Drinking](#) with Rachel Hart

## Ep #262: When Drinking Is What You Have in Common

The more unlikely I make it that I will actually change my relationship with alcohol because as long as I continue to believe that drinking is what we have in common, that thought is going to fuel me staying stuck in the habit when you could be directing your mind to think, hey, in what ways are we alike? How are my thoughts right now creating connection or disconnection with this person? How can I create more connection with this person just by thinking differently? What thoughts are blocking connection in this moment?

You can ask yourself, listen, right now is my brain searching for all the ways we're different, or all the things we share, all the things we have in common? When you start redirecting your mind in this way, it puts you back into a place of power. It puts you back into a place of saying, no, no, no, it's not just this vibe that's inexplicable. It's not what's in the glass. It's me.

I can create connection, and I also create disconnection. You have to stop giving away the power to the drink in front of you and start reclaiming it for yourself. So, go through these three steps. Don't just listen; go through these three steps and see what comes up for you. Alright, everyone. That's it for today. I will see you next week.

Okay, listen up, changing your drinking is so much easier than you think. Whether you want to drink less or not at all, you don't need more rules or willpower. You need a logical framework that helps you understand and, more importantly, change the habit from the inside out. It starts with my 30-day challenge. Besides the obvious health benefits, taking a break from drinking is the fastest way to figure out what's really behind your desire. This radically different approach helps you succeed by dropping the perfectionism and judgment that blocks change. Decide what works best for you when it comes to drinking. Discover how to trust yourself and feel truly powered to take it or leave it. Head on over to [RachelHart.com/join](https://RachelHart.com/join) and start your transformation today.

[Take a Break from Drinking](https://RachelHart.com/join) with Rachel Hart