

# Ep #411: I Can Only Stand This Person if I Drink



## Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

**Rachel Hart**

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

## Ep #411: I Can Only Stand This Person if I Drink

Have you ever poured a drink to make the person you were with less annoying? When certain people just get on your nerves, why not open a bottle of wine so that your time with them is more bearable? This is episode 411, and we're explaining why so many people fall into this trap, what's actually happening in your brain during these moments, and how to approach your cravings differently.

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.

Rachel Hart: All right, everybody, welcome back. So listen, I had Adriana Cloud on a couple episodes ago, and we had so much fun talking, we thought, let's come back, let's chat some more because she does work with me inside the membership and we were talking about how it could be really useful to share with all of you some of the common challenges or themes that we see coming up for members all of the time.

And I know that you have one that you wanted to talk about today. So what are we talking about?

Adriana Cloud: Hey, everyone, I'm so excited to be back here. And Rachel, I'm so excited to talk to you again. So here's one that has been coming up in slightly different phrasings, but I think it's a common struggle for people. So I thought it would be helpful for us to talk about it. And it's basically variations on the theme of this person or the situation is really annoying and I can only stand them if I am drinking. So what do you think about that? First of all, can you relate?

Rachel Hart: Yes, number one, yes, I can relate. Number two, I have a feeling that that has been coming up or we've been seeing a pattern there

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

## Ep #411: I Can Only Stand This Person if I Drink

because this is something that tends to come up around family and the holidays. Of course, it's not always related to family. Sometimes it can be like, you know, I have to – I don't know, like I have to go to like a work event with my spouse and I don't really want to go and I don't really have anything to say or I'm not really interested in that industry. So yes, this is something that has definitely come up for me in my own life.

This is the hourglass archetype for those of you who are wondering what archetype this is. So this is when your brain associates alcohol with entertainment. So either when you're bored or when you don't like who you're with or what you're doing. It's like, okay, I could be here not liking this person, or I could be here not liking this person having a drink. Are you familiar with this? Has this happened to you?

Adriana Cloud: Oh yes, oh yes. This is for sure bringing up a lot of, oh God, if I have to be there, then at least there better be alcohol there. Otherwise I'm not going.

Rachel Hart: Right, which a lot of times, you know, I often talk about that in terms of the mask, because sometimes that kind of language or that excuse that we have is like, oh God, like if I'm going, there better be alcohol or there better be something to drink. You know, sometimes that kind of a flavor of that shows up just with anxiety, but then over here with the hourglass, it really is like, I don't wanna do this. I don't wanna talk to these people. I don't particularly want to be here. And so it is very common.

The way that I kind of like to talk about it with people is this is really, it's either a boundary issue or a mindset issue that's going on here that you're trying to solve with alcohol.

Adriana Cloud: Ooh, say more about the boundary. I want to hear more about that.

## Ep #411: I Can Only Stand This Person if I Drink

Rachel Hart: I kind of think of it a little bit like a decision tree when you're in a situation like this and you're kind of like, oh, God, I don't really want to see this person or I don't like being around them. And you're already kind of envisioning how drinking is going to make them more tolerable. So in my mind, the decision tree is kind of, you know, starting with a question of, you know, do you want to get along better or like this person better? Like just starting from that place. And that's really just a yes or no question.

There's no right or wrong. We are not obligated to like everyone and everything.

Adriana Cloud: Okay. See, now I think this is what is going to break people's minds because I think so many of us have this idea that we have to get to a point where we like people and it's not okay to find someone annoying or distasteful or boring.

Rachel Hart: It's totally okay. This is something that, you know, there's a lot that we can do with mindset work in terms of changing our thoughts and having more helpful and supportive thoughts and, you know, more grateful thoughts. But we're not supposed to go around like unicorn and rainbow robots and thinking that everything is wonderful.

I think it's important to just accept that dislike is a very normal and natural part of the human experience, and it doesn't mean that you're doing something wrong and you're not meant to like everybody and you're not meant to like every activity. And in fact, the things that you like and dislike, whatever your combination is, that's what makes you you.

I think it would be kind of unsettling. In fact, I have met people like this. I don't truly believe that they don't dislike anything, but I have met people where it's like, everything is wonderful and everyone is amazing. And I find that very unsettling. I don't like being around that. It's like, where's the real person?

## Ep #411: I Can Only Stand This Person if I Drink

Adriana Cloud: That's not normal. I'm with you on that.

Rachel Hart: Yeah. So there's that piece of really just accepting that it's okay. Like what if it is okay that you don't like this person? So that kind of goes back up to the decision tree. You know, do you want to get along better with this person?

You may think, yes, I do. Right? I don't really like this person, but I have people in my life like this right now that I am currently doing this work with in my life right now, where I'm saying I struggle with this person, but I really truly want to like them more, not out of obligation, not because I'm supposed to, not because it's the right thing to do, but truly like I want to have a better relationship with them.

And there are other people who it's like, no, we all have very limited time and energy in this world, and what I want to dedicate my energy towards is not liking everybody. So that's kind of the first place I think to start when you find yourself - it's just, you know, find yourself because you're drinking because you want to just make someone that you're with more tolerable, it's just to ask yourself that question and then to really honestly answer it and know that it is okay for you to say, no, I don't want to.

But I think what happens, a lot of people just by asking that question, like you said, it will kind of break your brain because then there is like, but aren't like, I shouldn't like, if I was a good wife, shouldn't I get along with my mother-in-law better? You know, like if everybody else likes this person, right? Like, shouldn't I like them too? So often what kind of bubbles up is then all the judgment and the ways in which we shame ourselves because we're supposed to be liking someone. So that, I mean, that's the first place to start. Have you given yourself permission to dislike people?

Adriana Cloud: I have given myself permission, yes. But I'm curious because there is a second layer here. Let's say we do ask ourselves, okay,

## Ep #411: I Can Only Stand This Person if I Drink

is it actually okay for me? Am I giving myself permission to dislike this person or be annoyed by them? And let's say I get to a point where, yes, I'm okay with disliking this particular person, I've made my peace, but what about this annoyance? What if I still don't want to feel annoyed? What then?

Rachel Hart: Well, okay, so I think it brings us to the second question in the decision tree, which is, do I have to spend time with this person? So this is where I'm talking about, like, this is where the boundary piece is coming in. So we have the mindset piece and then we have the boundary piece. And again, this is an area when, you know, we are coaching people on this and when we coach ourselves on this, it can break your brain a little bit because so often we treat seeing certain people as if it's just like, yeah, I have to. There's no choice.

Like, how are you even asking me? Do I get to choose? I don't get to choose here. I have to. And I, again, I think it is really, really powerful to just acknowledge, really? If you're an adult and you have free will, you have the ability always to say no. Do you have to?

And then – I don't know if your brain has done this, my brain has definitely done this, where I start, it starts like going in all these like crazy kind of twists and loops and turns about all of the reasons why I don't actually really have a choice. And then...

Adriana Cloud: Yes. In theory, I understand the concept of a free will, but let me tell you why this particular situation is an exception, and actually I do not have a choice whatsoever.

Rachel Hart: Exactly. Exactly. But just backing up and acknowledging I could say no, maybe I don't want to deal with what I perceive to be the consequences of saying no. Or I just think about it, there have definitely

## Ep #411: I Can Only Stand This Person if I Drink

been times where I have attended work-type events with my husband for his work where like I did not want to particularly spend my time doing that.

And it's such a mindset shift to go from the place of, ugh, I don't want to be doing this, I don't want to be here, this is so annoying, I don't have anything to talk to these people about. I could be like at home, curled up with a book, versus, you know what? Yeah, this isn't what I would choose, but I'm deciding to go because he's told me that this is important for him.

I'm sorry, we just had a Bernadoodle run through my office. I don't know if you can hear her going back and forth. She just came back from her walk like a crazy dog. Okay, she's now doing circles on my couch. We're just going to keep this all in because this is...

Adriana Cloud: Part of the fun.

Rachel Hart: But to shift my mindset around this and say, you know what, he's told me it's important for him and I'm making the decision to go. Like I want to support him. It's something that I'm choosing to do. That does not then mean I go on to have the most amazing time of my life. That does not then mean that I'm, you know, come back like, oh man, I was so wrong, that was amazing, I love these people. But it's so very different to engage with someone and to be able to do it from a place of knowing that this is my choice rather than this is an obligation that I'm not able to get out of.

Adriana Cloud: I think this is something that a lot of people struggle with because we seem to have this idea that if I'm choosing something, then I have to feel good about it. That I'm not allowed to choose something and then proceed to not feel amazing.

So I think that's the second piece where we need to give ourselves permission to feel however we're feeling. Yes, I am choosing this. Yes, maybe in a different situation I wish I could make a different choice, but



## Ep #411: I Can Only Stand This Person if I Drink

right now this is what I'm choosing, and it's okay for me to not be thrilled about it.

Rachel Hart: Yeah, and it's also, guys, because I don't want people hearing this saying like, okay, so then I still have to go, I'm just gonna tell myself that I'm choosing to go. Because you also have the ability to say, I'm gonna sit this one out, or I don't wanna do this. Because then we get into, when we're avoiding doing that, when we don't wanna say no, when we're trying to say, you know, we're saying yes because we're trying to make somebody else happy.

I mean, then we look at, okay, the decisions that we make around alcohol, this is what I think is so fascinating, it seems like it's just a decision in the moment of like, you know, white or red, or what can I get you? Like, I'm going up to the bar to get a drink. What do you want? It seems like that's just a decision that we're making in the moment, but there's so much going into it, including sometimes people pleasing, right?

And the people pleasing may not even be about people pleasing, you know, around your actual drink order. In other words, these people would be happier if I joined in. But people pleasing, I'm trying to people please this person by going to this thing that I don't want to go to because I can't handle if then they have negative emotions or then they feel upset that I decided to say no.

So I mean that's what I think is so powerful about looking at the archetypes and seeing what's there because you start to see it's not just red or white. It's not just what's happening in that moment. Sometimes it's, you know, you agreed last week to go to this thing because you thought that it wasn't okay for you to say no. You thought that you didn't actually have a choice here.



## Ep #411: I Can Only Stand This Person if I Drink

And also you're telling yourself that you're supposed to, and you're supposed to like everybody and all these other people like these people, so you should too. I mean, there's just so much going into then what is happening in the moment with your cravings.

Adriana Cloud: There is so much, and that's it really, because most of us don't even do one tenth of this work to even ask ourselves, do I have a choice here? We just get straight to, oh no, they are annoying, this is annoying, this event is annoying, this person is annoying, or unpleasant, or boring.

Rachel Hart: And I know what will make it better.

Adriana Cloud: Oh, yeah. Yeah.

Rachel Hart: All of this is so annoying and I know what's going to make it better. I just need to have a glass of wine or I just need to get a drink and like, that's going to be the thing that makes it better. And then here's the thing that happens with the hourglass archetype, and this is why really digging into what your brain is learning, I think is really powerful and why we can't just approach the decisions that you make around alcohol just from this place of, I just got to have more discipline and I just got to have more willpower.

But when you're believing that you're making either what you are doing or who you are with more tolerable by drinking, it seems so believable. But then here's what happens. It's becoming less tolerable, right? You have less tolerance because now you still don't like the person or you still don't like the activity. Again, not saying that you have to, right?

You still don't like it and then if you're in the middle of a dry January or if you're trying to cut back, you're in that place of, I still don't like them, and if I'm saying no to a craving, now my lower brain is like doubly annoyed

## Ep #411: I Can Only Stand This Person if I Drink

because it's not getting the reward it expects. Because it's like, listen people, this is what we do when we're hanging out with this person, I get to drink because they're very annoying.

Or when I think about, you know, the hourglass actually comes up in this really fascinating way with so many people that we work with. So this is in the evening for a lot of parents who have kids at home and it's like family movie night and you all got to agree on something to watch and then you may find yourself watching something, I don't know, like Frozen for the fifth time because the kids really want to watch it.

And so many people are like, oh, God, I just opened up that bottle of wine because this is the last thing that I want to be doing. But I'm trying to like do the right thing and like get along with everyone. And so we think that we're making the situation more tolerable, but we're actually making it less tolerable. Because guess what? Because dislike is a normal part of what it means to be human. You are going to encounter this situation or this person again.

And now your brain is going to be like, oh, I shouldn't have to feel dislike. Not only should I not have to feel it, and by the way, you're a bad person if you're feeling it. So it has all that judgment, but also like, guess what? When I feel dislike, I get a highly concentrated reward. So hand it over, buddy.

Adriana Cloud: Absolutely. Who wouldn't want that, right? If that's what we have taught our brains to think. Of course, they'll keep asking for more of that reward.

Rachel Hart: Yeah.

Adriana Cloud: Yeah. For me, what's really curious is that moment where we notice the feeling we don't like. Maybe we are able to identify exactly

## Ep #411: I Can Only Stand This Person if I Drink

what the feeling is, maybe not, because sometimes it happens really quickly, and if we're not used to investigating our emotions, we might not be able to name it. But either way, we notice, oh, I'm feeling something that I don't want to be feeling, and immediately the next thought is, oh, I need a drink.

And so that space there to me is so interesting because what happens in your brain that tells you the solution to this feeling is the drink? What makes this feeling intolerable? Why is that feeling a problem? To me, that is so interesting. So I'm curious, what do you think about that and how can we help people to sit with that in that space?

Rachel Hart: Well, I mean, I think partly it is what we are taught or should I say what we aren't taught about emotions and getting the message from a very young age that you should be happy about this and you should put a smile on your face and you should be grateful. And so there's that piece. It's like we have a lot of negative socialization around certain emotions.

So all of that I think is factoring in. So that's always really fascinating work that I think we get to do when we're working with people is really slow things down. I mean, so much of the think-feel-act cycle, it's really just about can we slow down this moment that is happening so quickly and so fast it feels like I just wanna drink, I just like to drink, I just like the way it tastes.

So slow down and start to ask these questions of, well, okay, so you don't like this activity or you feel annoyed when you're around this person. What if we just start from, why is that a problem? That alone, I mean, I love doing coaching on Zoom because you get to see what I call the head cock. When I ask a question and someone's like, huh? And their head kind of cocks, like what is she talking about? What do you mean, why is this a problem? Did you not hear that I said I felt annoyed? Did you not hear that I said I disliked the situation?

## Ep #411: I Can Only Stand This Person if I Drink

But so to just go there, and then it just really, it's such a fruitful conversation and I've had it with so many people to just be like, hey, you're supposed to dislike some things. Nothing has gone wrong. And all of a sudden we're not even figuring out, okay, so what am I going to say? How am I going to resist temptation? All of a sudden just by removing that resistance removes a lot of the intensity of, oh, I'm experiencing dislike, so now I need to immediately go find something to fix it very quickly.

And so a lot of times I think what is really fascinating is we end up having conversations and doing work with people that they're surprised about. They kind of think like, okay, so I'm gonna work on changing my relationship with alcohol, so we're just gonna talk a lot about the excuses and how do I have more discipline and how do I avoid certain situations?

Rachel Hart: And it's like, actually let's just talk about why you think you need to like everything or everyone.

Adriana Cloud: Yeah, yeah, exactly. And that's it, so many people don't even know how to begin to scratch the surface on these questions. And alcohol and the habit of drinking gives us a way in. But this work goes so much deeper than what is this one habit that you've taught your brain to participate in daily or frequently, and to really start to change your relationship or at least to investigate your relationships with your own thoughts and feelings. What thoughts do you think are allowed? Are you allowed to think that someone is unlikable? And are you allowed to feel-

Rachel Hart: And that you don't have to like them, and that that's okay, and that doesn't make you a bad person.

Adriana Cloud: And what I find really interesting sometimes when people say, oh, so-and-so is unlikable, or this thing is annoying, to really turn it back on, I find this thing unlikable, or that person, because I'm the one who is creating this feeling. It isn't that the thing is that everyone can agree the

## Ep #411: I Can Only Stand This Person if I Drink

thing is annoying. There isn't such a test we can apply. It is me, I am making it unlikable to myself because of a thought I'm having. And then even if, again, as you said, it's not that we have to change the thought and get to a place where we like everything.

Rachel Hart: Yeah, because that's where mindset work can really be used against yourself. I did this for a long time. I watch people do this all the time, where if you're not understanding that you have an underlying belief that you're not supposed to not like this person, right? Or you have an underlying belief that certain emotions, you're not supposed to feel them.

You can end up trying to use this work and use the think-feel-act cycle to be like, okay, so I'm only supposed to have, you know, these amazing thoughts and like everybody and feel great all the time. And if I'm the one, right, if I'm the one, you know, if my thoughts are created by my feelings, then I should just be able to change all my thoughts so I only ever feel all the good feelings. No.

Adriana Cloud: No.

Rachel Hart: No. That is not what the human experience is supposed to be like. And in fact, when we treat the human experience as if we are just moving to this place where we only have all the good feelings, that is where we get into trouble because that is where we are constantly trying to escape ourselves rather than using this work, using the think-feel-act cycle to understand our humanness better, not to erase a very normal and natural part of our humanness, which is, I don't like everybody, and I don't like everything, and that's okay.

Adriana Cloud: That's really okay, yes. And I think the more that we can understand where the feeling comes from and what the thought is underneath the feeling and even to understand the thought too because if I

## Ep #411: I Can Only Stand This Person if I Drink

think so-and-so is really boring, well, what does that actually mean? What do I mean by boring? How do I know that so-and-so is boring?

So if I get curious about that thought and really sit with, huh, how did I come up with that label? Where did that come from? And so if I really understand my thoughts better and my feelings better, I am more likely to just leave them be. That's what I find in my experience.

If I understand something better, then this urge to try to change it or "fix it" sort of goes away on its own because when I have awareness and understanding, again, it comes back to understanding that all of this is part of our human condition. We have complicated feelings and thoughts and so many layers of our experience of the world and people and things and events and conferences and all of it.

Rachel Hart: Yeah. I will just say, you know, just to end here, I think the hourglass, it is one of, to me, one of the really fascinating archetypes because it seems on the surface like, yeah, I just have like too much time on my hands. Or it seems like, yeah, I just have to like spend time with people that I don't really like.

And there's just so much in the hourglass that I think when people start learning about it and working with, it really kind of unlocks a whole different way to relate not only to moments where you don't have neural stimulation, right? I always like talking about boredom in that way, it's just the absence of neural stimulation.

So relating differently to those moments, but also giving you a lot of freedom around the things that you don't like to do and not forcing yourself into, I have to figure out how to like it. And then also having like with this decision tree, having these conversations with yourself about, do I have to do it? Can I say no here? I think this is one of the most fascinating archetypes, but I will tell people, if you're curious if the hourglass is one of

## Ep #411: I Can Only Stand This Person if I Drink

your archetypes and applies to you, you can take the drink archetype quiz. You can also read all about it in the Ultimate Guide to Drinking Less.

We have a whole section all about the hourglass. We have a whole set of exercises that specifically deal with this archetype, including one called Dealing with Dislike, which is, again, one of my favorite exercises because it kind of blows people's minds. So thank you so much for talking about this with me. I love doing this. I think we're gonna keep doing this and just sharing kind of what we're seeing inside the membership so you all can learn from it too. Thanks, Adriana.

Adriana Cloud: Thank you, Rachel. Thanks everyone.

—

Hey guys, you already know that drinking less has plenty of health benefits. But did you know that the work you do to change your relationship with alcohol will help you become more of the person you want to be in every part of your life?

Learning how to manage your brain and your cravings is an investment in your physical, emotional and personal wellbeing. And that's exactly what's waiting for you when you join my membership *Take a Break*.

Whether you want to drink less, drink rarely, or not at all, we'll help you figure out a relationship with alcohol that works for you. We'll show you why rules, drink plans, and Dry January so often fail, and give you the tools you need to feel in control and trust yourself.

So, head on over to [RachelHart.com](http://RachelHart.com) and sign up today, because changing the habit is so much easier when you stop trying to go it alone.

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