



**Be Brave.
Make
Space.**



**Learn More
About Me**

Hi! I'm Coach Margie
I'm glad you're reading the Brave Space newsletter. My newsletter is written to share information and support.



Please indulge me for a moment while I gush over my new grandson! May I present to you Henry Bennett Shorter, born Wednesday, 10/25/23. He is a healthy little bundle of joy! And I am a very proud MiMi!

Ok, thanks for that! Now for why you're here. This week I want to introduce you to some really interesting psychology to use in your sober-curious journey.

Unlocking Your Emotional "Why"

When it comes to cutting down on alcohol or cutting it out completely, many of us start with the logical "*shoulds*." **We tell ourselves we *should* drink less** because it's better for our health, our relationships, or simply because it's the socially responsible thing to do. I told myself I *should* quit because of my high blood pressure.

These are all valid reasons, but **they often miss the emotional core of why we drink** in the first place. The difference between "should" and "want" may seem subtle, but it's crucial. **"Should" is often imposed by external forces, while "want" is driven**

by internal desire. Stay with me here!

Let's explore the emotional reasons behind our choices when it comes to alcohol. **Our rational minds understand** the health risks, strain on relationships, and the shame associated with excessive drinking. We can intellectualize the idea of cutting back or giving it up every day. Especially in the morning when our heads are throbbing and we feel like crud. But something changes in the afternoon, right? Yep - we start rationalizing that we'll cut back or quit tomorrow. Happy hour here we come.

Our emotional brains crave the relaxation, the good feelings, and the instant relief from cravings that alcohol provides. Our emotional brain (or limbic area) developed first as we developed as humans. We taught our emotional brains that we need alcohol to be happy, relaxed, etc. Our brains latched onto that with repeated experiences. Couple this with the fact that alcohol is an addictive substance.

Now, in the face of these powerful emotional desires, the rational "I should" often feels empty. The emotional "I want" part of our brains will win out every time in this scenario.

What drives us to make lasting changes?

Allow me to get sciency for a moment. Understanding the psychology behind it can make all the difference. According to **self-determination theory**, there are two types of motivation: extrinsic (outside of self) and intrinsic (inside of self). Extrinsic motivation is driven by external factors like rewards or punishments, while intrinsic motivation is fueled by internal desires, values, interests, and enjoyment.

Initially, many people start considering their relationship with alcohol due to extrinsic motivations. These factors included being part of the in-crowd, being seen as "fun" and keeping up with societal pressures that "women can do it all and have it all" - with a drink in hand, of course. However, if external or extrinsic factors remain the primary driver, sober-curious folks often find themselves torn between what they *want* to do and what they *should* do.

What's the transformative power for change?

Uncovering your emotional "why" is the pathway to tap into your intrinsic motivators. By **connecting drinking less with your values, long-term goals, and personal identity**, you start to engage not only your logical mind but also your emotional self. This shift can create a balanced push that keeps you on track even when challenges arise.

Here's my example. I was motivated (extrinsically) to give up alcohol because I didn't want to have a stroke. Pretty powerful reason, huh? But I didn't want to give up alcohol. I **grew up thinking that drinking alcohol was something I should want** to do because everyone around me was drinking. Oftentimes to excess. It was...normal.

But when I joined the This Naked Mind community and began to learn that **real and lasting change happens at the emotional level** of why I drank, I learned to change the way I viewed alcohol from the standpoint of **how I want to feel**. I asked myself how I felt about my drinking and how I wanted to feel. I wanted to feel good. I wanted to be free. I wanted to experience happiness and joy again.

When I was faced with external pressures to drink (dinner out with friends), my internal want (to feel good, have fun *and* remember the evening), made it easy for me to pass on the wine and order a delicious non-alcoholic alternative.

You learned about creating your core values in a previous newsletter.

If you want to review that newsletter or the series of newsletters I wrote about values, click the button below to go to my website where you'll find all past newsletters. **One of my core values is spending quality time with family.** I realized that I couldn't honor one of my core values and continue to drink alcohol. **When I was drinking I avoided people.** I scheduled everything in my life around my drinking. I was missing out on so much of what life had to offer me. That realization made my decision to give up alcohol easier. This is my new normal!

Now you can put this into action!

One of the first exercises I ask my clients to do when they want to change their relationship with alcohol is to **create two lists: Why They Drink and Why They Want to Stop (or cut back).** It's a powerful exercise that determines all of the work that we do together.

You can do this too! Just remember, your journey isn't about external judgment or societal norms; it's about aligning your actions with your emotional core and what you value most. **Let your emotional wants determine your motivation.**

So today, I invite you to dig deep into your unique emotional "why" and tap into the transformative power of your intrinsic motivation. If you want some help getting started on your journey towards lasting peace with alcohol, click the link below to schedule a free coaching call.

Please remember that **your emotional "why" is your guiding light**, and with it, you can make meaningful and lasting changes in your relationship with alcohol.

I hope you found some value in this newsletter! Please let me know on social. All of my accounts are listed below.

Until next week, be brave and make space for yourself!

Margie

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