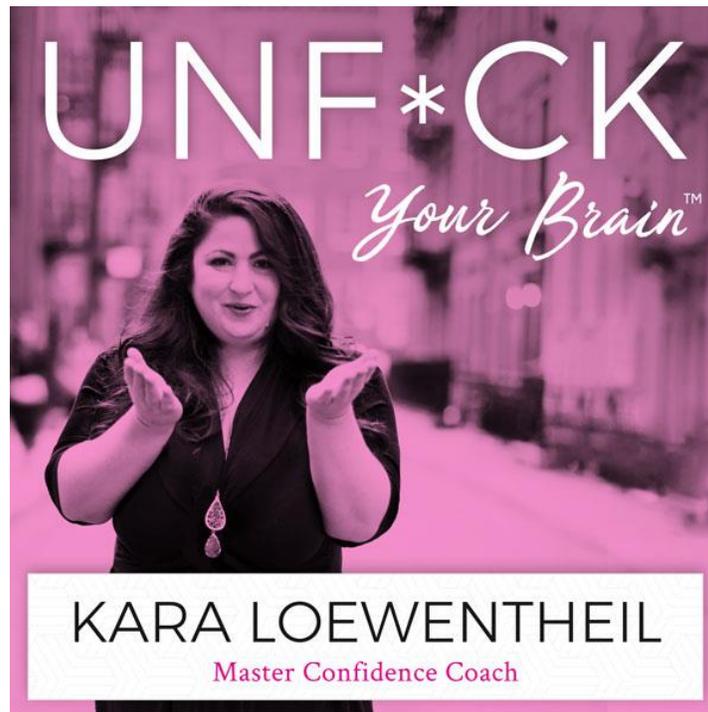


UFYB 162: Soulmates, Friendship, and Coaching Breakthroughs: A Conversation with Rachel Hart



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Kara Loewentheil

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Female Announcer: Welcome to *Unf*ck Your Brain*, the only podcast that teaches you how to use psychology, feminism, and coaching, to rewire your brain and get what you want in life. And now here's your host, Harvard law school grad, feminist rockstar, and master coach, Kara Loewentheil.

Kara: Hi, my chickens, I am so excited this week. I decided that I wanted to – basically I just always want to hang out with my friend Rachel. You hear me talk about her on the podcast all the time. She is my best friend that I stalked to be my best friend, my platonic soulmate and also the only person that can effectively coach me without wanting to kill herself other than Brooke Castillo.

So, we are going to talk today – we are going to basically just shoot the shit, but we want it to be helpful to you. We have a format. We're actually going to each share three things that we learned from each other. I think I wanted to do this episode for a couple reasons, number one, I just like to hang out with Rachel. Number two, we have some real good back and forth. We could have like a travelling vaudeville podcast show I feel like. People would pay to watch us patter.

But also because I think number one, it's so important to show that there's plenty of coaching and success to go around and to support each other and that nobody has to be a silo. I think sometimes when we start to learn a new coaching technique or are new to thought work we get very rigid about what's the right answer and I have to do it the exact way and I have to follow this teacher exactly. The truth is there's so many brilliant women thinking about these issues and creating important and I just wanted to share some of Rachel's brain with you.

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So, we're going to each share three things we learned from each other and talk about them. I'm going to let Rachel say hello because –

Rachel: This is so much more formal than I expected. I thought we were going to talk about our love story and how it came to be.

Kara: Okay, well let's talk about that. Tell everybody how we came to be in love. Do you want to introduce yourself or anything or no?

Rachel: Oh sure, fine. That's less interesting than how we fell in love with each other.

Kara: Okay, well let's tell everyone how we fell in love. People are going to be confused. Now, people will think that I'm a lesbian.

Rachel: Platonic love, soulmates forever. Hi, my name is Rachel Hart. I also am a coach and I have a podcast called *Take a Break From Drinking*. Kara and I – the universe really conspired to bring us together for a very long time. I think that's an important piece to understand.

Kara: To our mythology.

Rachel: Yeah, the universe was trying to bring us together well before we met five years ago at coach certification. Kara sat down next to me. I, of course, was the first person in the room because that's who I am.

Kara: You're a lunatic.

Rachel: On day one I was the first person in the room and then Kara sat down next to me and it's just been faded ever since, but we discovered we

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were both living in New York City then we started discovering really strange things. We shared the same doctor in New York City.

Kara: Oh, I forgot about that part.

Rachel: Right? Remember when we discovered that? I was like, “Wait, what?”

Kara: But also we worked at the same place.

Rachel: Yes, Kara interned not just at the ACLU where I worked, Kara interned in my project, the Reproductive Freedom Project at the ACLU when I was working there I just refused to be kind to her because I did not like any of the law students because I didn’t go to law school. So, I was just very standoffish. We spent a summer together at the ACLU.

Kara: Did we meet though? I don’t remember ever meeting you.

Rachel: I remember being introduced to you.

Kara: Really?

Rachel: Like introduced to the three or four interns and was I like, “Ugh, I’m going back to my cubicle.”

Kara: And I’m still such good friends with one of the other interns, too. That really was a formative summer.

Rachel: Oh really?

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Kara: Yeah, my friend, Brooke Kelly.

Rachel: Oh, Brooke [inaudible] too?

Kara: Yeah.

Rachel: I don't even know. All right, and then my older sister who actually – I bring her up because this is something that we will talk about today, something that Kara coached me on which was a very good lesson, but my older sister had a legal fellowship at the Center for Reproductive Rights that Kara took over.

Kara: Yeah, I took over her office. There was a picture of her and her running shoes in the desk when I moved into that office.

Rachel: Yeah, it was just a lot of conspiring to bring us together, but then Kara still did have to stalk me, that's true.

Kara: I did have to stalk you. Is that going to be one of your lessons? It's one of mine.

Rachel: It's so funny because I have a bunch of lessons here.

Kara: All right, well I thought we should trade off. Like, I'll do one, you do one back and forth, but since you have a bunch, you start.

Rachel: Oh geez, start. Okay, well, I'm going to start since I did bring up my sister, I think this is one of our earliest and funniest coaching moments.

Kara: I totally know where this is going.

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Rachel: You know what this is? So, Kara and I were driving back from DC.

Kara: Where were we?

Rachel: We were in New Jersey. I really remember very good.

Kara: Where were we driving?

Rachel: We were driving back from a writing workshop that we did together.

Kara: Oh, in DC, yeah, okay.

Rachel: Yes, so we were driving back from writing workshop. We were still very newbie coaches and Kara – when we get together we just coach each other all the time very aggressively. That’s just how it works. You were –

Kara: We call that conversation, it’s just that’s just how we talk.

Rachel: You were coaching me and my sister. I have an older sister. She’s amazing. She’s very smart. I’ve also have had a story for a very long time which I did not realize was a story at this point that everyone likes my sister better than me. She’s more personable, more friendly, just people like her better.

Kara was, as she does, kind of surgically dismantling my logic. I kept bringing up so many instances. It was both a combination of people like her better and she steals my friends. It was a combination of the two. So, I kept bringing up instance after instance after instance and Kara was just – it was like I was the solicitor general in front of the Supreme Court. That’s how I

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remember it. She was also driving on the highways in New Jersey. But that's how I remember it.

Just trying to keep up. She was just dismantling my logic and I was so mad. This was not a peaceful coaching session. I was so mad and at one point she had finally kind of dismantled the last piece of my logic that everyone liked my sister better and I just out of nowhere like out of the depths of my soul yelled out, "What about Guinevere?"

Kara: I can't not laugh, but they probably didn't even hear you. Try again, I'll mute myself so my laughing doesn't get –

Rachel: I yelled out, "What about Guinevere?" so loud. It was a very pained moment for me and, Kara, I remember you just driving and looking at me being like, "Who is Guinevere? What is going on?"

Kara: Rachel was a super weird kid so the possibility that we were talking about King Arthur's wife did not seem totally out of the question. Like there might be some kind of re-enactment thing or I was like it couldn't be.

Rachel: I just want you to know that I'm laughing so hard that I'm waving my hand in front of my face.

Kara: Yeah, this is something Rachel does when she laughs really hard, it's my favorite.

Rachel: That's one of my things. Guinevere was our family cat and I think we got her when I was four or five and immediately was just like, "Oh, the cat likes my sister more than me." It was just an amazing moment to – in

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that moment I was so angry because I still had a lot of emotions about the fact that I believed that the cat loved my sister more.

Kara: That God damn cat.

Rachel: But it was such a funny moment of seeing your own story and seeing how my little four-year-old, five-year-old brain had just formed this story that living things liked my older sister better and then was just so committed to applying it again and again and again. I think we came very close to getting into a car accident.

Kara: What can't be translated now as we laugh about it is how extremely serious you were about it at the time. You didn't yell, "What about Guinevere?" laughing the way we do now.

Rachel: No.

Kara: It was like an aggressive like, "I have incontrovertible proof. What about Guinevere?" As if you were a detective that had just found the murder suspect. Like Guinevere has the DNA.

Rachel: And it was painful.

Kara: Yeah, but I think that's such a good lesson actually that we both learned from each other all the time which is like – and I think our students both really need to hear it which is like, it does not matter how good you are at this or how smart you are or how much you coach yourself, when you are in it you're a fucking moron just like anybody else. When you're in it you're just like, "Excuse me, the cat is proof of this. Why are you laughing?"

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Rachel: Yeah, and it was so painful because when I was in it it was like all of the –

Kara: You were crying.

Rachel: Yeah, it was like all the emotion.

Kara: So, when you're in it you're in it. I think there's this human tendency to put teachers up on pedestals because we think the goal is to never have to have human emotions again so then if we see somebody who seems to know something about managing their mind we're like, "I bet she never feels sad or bad or whatever." It's like, no, no, just crying in a car on the New Jersey Turnpike about a cat named Guinevere who's been dead for 20 years and feeling it very acutely.

Every time I'm crazy I'm also like, "I don't understand why you're laughing about this. This is a very serious problem we have."

Rachel: Yeah, this is not funny.

Kara: I have very serious thoughts that are true.

Rachel: Yeah, it's like all someone needs to do is look at our text chain to see that.

Kara: Our text chains are basically us alternating being, "We have the most amazing lives. Can you believe that this is our reality?" And then being like, "I hate everything and everyone and all my thoughts are true."

Rachel: Yeah, that sums it up.

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Kara: It's like life is 50/50. That's it. That's basically the deal.

Rachel: Also, I'll just add on that it was just I think it's really powerful to see that your brain is always going to go back to the story. It's always going to go back to what you practice unless you're doing this work, unless you're learning how to manage your mind. Sometimes I don't even like to say "manage." I think unless you're learning how to observe yourself and observe the stories that you told yourself and question them and that was so powerful for me, but it was – we almost lost our lives.

Kara: Yeah, but Guinevere lives on in our memories now. I'm sure we think about her now more than we ever would have before. Now her fame will spread far and wide, so I'm sure that in the afterlife she likes you better because you've just made her famous.

Rachel: Oh, I made her famous.

Kara: Yeah.

Rachel: Okay, that's right. She likes me better in the afterlife. All right.

Kara: So, my first thing that I think I learned from you is – so Rachel is – what's the best way to say this?

Rachel: Oh dear.

Kara: Rachel is very – she's like a modern dancer who's doing interesting interpretive embodiment work all the time, but Rachel's very focused on feelings which I think makes so much sense also with your niche. You work

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so much on helping people allow their emotions for people who don't know how to do that.

So, I think that the first three years of our friendship any time I got coached was just you being like, "But have you tried having the feeling?" And me being like, "No, I don't need to." Or, "I already have," and her being like, "I don't think so. What if you just had the feeling?" I think that's all we did for three years was me being like, "Rah, rah, rah," and you be like, "How about you just have the feeling though?" And I'd be like, "No!"

Eventually, she wore me down because I couldn't get any other coaching out of her other than to have the feelings, but I think that you are so – I feel like I don't know whether to talk in the second or third or first person, but one of the things that I have learned from you is to really focus on that embodiment part, on that physical part even though I don't do your crazy mat dances that you do.

Rachel does all of these amazing embodiment practices that I just never get my shit together to do, but I do think that that has been a really powerful balancing to my kind of coaching which tends to be very analytical and logic-based not that yours isn't also, but that sort of like being willing – I mean, I just remember you coaching me about – I was in my kitchen and I don't know it was something about dating, maybe it was a break-up? We were just like, "What if you were just willing to feel how off it's going to feel?" It's like you hear something – I'm sure you had said, "What if you're willing to feel that?" 10 million times to me before, but for whatever reason it was that finally clicked and I feel like I use it all the time still of just like even when you're at our "level" and I'm now pretty comfortable with my emotions I still catch myself having a negative emotion and not wanting to have it and you do, too and so do our teachers and all the way back.

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It's still such a powerful flip to be like, "What if I was just willing to feel this?" I think one of the big things that people don't understand when they're not willing to feel negative emotion – I'm curious what you think about this, is that they don't understand that 80% of their suffering is the resistance to it not the actual emotion underneath. It's like what they imagine they'll have to feel is the terribleness of the resistance but actually when you remove that part the actual emotion you feel is not nearly as intense usually.

Rachel: Yeah, 100% I agree with that. Two things, it was so interesting, I was coaching someone yesterday and I do a lot more kind of drop into your body and really observe the feeling and it was so funny. We watched her process an emotion just like on her own, but she was just watching what her body was doing. She wasn't even trying to get it to process and I think that that's what we forget that – I don't think the body wants to stay stuck. I don't think it's meant to stay stuck, but when we have all this resistance to it then you get stuck and you start to teach your brain, "I can't feel these emotions." Or, "This emotion is a problem. This emotion is an emergency. This I have to drink over, eat over, distract myself or organize or work long hours."

That piece, to me, just the ability to really start to – it's being in a relationship with your emotions. I will say, though, I think that because this doesn't come easily to me. I think that when you learn thought work for the first time when I really understood it, "Oh my God, shifting my thinking can change how I feel?" And because I think both of us are very, verbal in that sense that we're just like, "Okay, you just want me to write a new thought? I can write a million new thoughts. Let's go."

So, it's easy to fall into that trap and to start just being like, "Just give me the new thought. Give me the new thought." That, to me, is when you start

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to take your coaching to the next level. When you're like, "Yes, okay, changing my perspective, changing how I understand the situation it can be really helpful, but I'm never going to be able to shift my thoughts so much that I don't have to have the full human experience."

Kara: Yeah, and I think if you find you can't shift a thought it's often because you're not willing to feel the emotion.

Rachel: Yeah.

Kara: Like you're stuck and you can't get through. It's been really interesting for me working with one of my – well, current students who is also a trainer and who knows a lot about evolutionary biology and neurobiology and stuff, but when you watch animals they have physical things they do to reset, basically.

So, if an animal is scared and running when it gets to a safe place it'll turn its head left to right and shake its body. It completes what they call the stress response and I think there's so much that gets stuck because we've conformed our bodies to society in these ways of like, "I have to sit at the desk and keep making this face even when I feel like I'm going to lose my mind." That kind of getting into the body I think is so – yeah, it took me a while to appreciate that part of it.

Rachel: And just like we don't allow our bodies to move. We're like, "I'm not going to do that or move that way."

Kara: She's doing a little shoulder shimmy that you can't see.

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Rachel: I'm doing a little shoulder shimmy. Yeah, I think that's really important. It's with physical sensations, too. I can't even tell you the number of people that I coach that we just have conversations about like do you actually allow yourself to go to the bathroom.

Kara: Oh yeah, totally. I always think about that Susan Hyatt story about her client who's peeing in a Tupperware in her office. I'm just like, "It's not okay. We've got to change this."

Rachel: Yeah. Okay, my next one – I have so many. I think this is from giving birth. So, I had a two-year-old, two years ago I guess.

Kara: I think that is how that works.

Rachel: Yeah, I had a two-year-old two years ago. The whole time-space continuum as a parent has really –

Kara: Everything before 2020 took 10 seconds and 2020 has been –

Rachel: I know. Yeah, so there are a couple things we can talk about with this, but one of the most vivid coaching memories I have is I actually texted you from the labor and delivery room in the hospital. So, I went into labor, my water broke on a Wednesday night and I was kind of 24 hours into the process and not really making progress. I hadn't dilated even though I was experiencing a fair amount of pain and contractions.

I think at like hour 26 I made the decision to get an epidural and I wasn't morally opposed to the idea. I wasn't like, "I definitely want to have no medication with my birth experience." But I think I was more like, "Well, if I was going to get an epidural, why on Earth did I just go through 26 hours of

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this ridiculousness?” For whatever reason that was so – I remember feeling so defeated and so I was despondent. That’s actually what I was. I was despondent. I was like, “Well, why did we do this?”

I remember texting you and we went back and forth. It was so funny; it was such a crazy experience. You’re the only person outside of that room that I talked to and I was just like, “What the what, Kara? Come on! What’s the point?” I remember you texted me back and you said, “Well, what if you don’t need to know the point right now? What if you don’t need to understand why it happened or what it means? What if you don’t have to assign meaning to it? What if it can just be this thing that you don’t have to know in the moment?”

For whatever reason it just gave me such relief because I think I was trying to do exactly what we just talked about. I was feeling very despondent and I was trying to think my way out of it by being, “Okay, so what’s the point? What’s the meaning?”

Kara: Yeah, you were trying to reframe it, but then you couldn’t get there and then it was like –

Rachel: Exactly.

Kara: So, the only alternative is there was no point.

Rachel: Exactly. Just like you giving me permission to be like, “Well, what if you just don’t know what the point is yet? What if it’s not for you to find out right now in the middle of your labor process?” That was enough for me to be like, “I can just – “I think it like stop resisting because that’s what I was doing. I was really resisting feeling so despondent about it.

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Kara: I think that's so key because I will say that I think when I first started coaching I had this feeling of – like when you first start and you're obsessed with this you're so curious if you are – so then I'm like – I was like, "What other terrible thing can I go through that I will then be able to coach myself?" It's like, "Oh, I'm going to learn something from this no matter what. I'm going to go hang out with my family that makes me crazy before I knew about thought work," but then I'm going to learn something from it.

Then, I definitely in the last year have noticed you coached me on this, I think I also got somebody else to coach me on this, but it was sort of a similar thing where it was like I was having so much resistance and negative emotion and I was basically telling myself that I wasn't going to learn anything from it. It was like, "I've already been through this. I already know what this feels like. I already know the lesson so there's no point to it."

But, of course, that wasn't true. There's always a different lesson to learn, but I do think that's sort of like I don't have to know what the meaning is now, I can just experience this and I'll find out later why I'm going through this or what the meaning of this experience is can be so helpful when you're in something.

Sometimes I do think we're hustling so hard to reframe or find the positive thought and we think the only alternative is to stick with our negative, terrible thought and what if you can just be in that place of, "I don't know, I'll find out eventually," or, "I'll see the meaning later." It's all just what we make of the meaning anyway.

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Rachel: I think that's a really important point though because I actually think what you said is so true, this idea that at first with thought work you start whatever it is, hanging out with your family or doing things that you normally would have avoided and it feels as if it's like this very curious, exciting thing to do and you're going to learn something from it, so it feels like, "Oh, I'm putting myself in this position, in this situation, there's a point for it."

That was something, for me, around changing my relationship with alcohol that was kind of like, "I'm going to put myself in this situation that I would normally avoid. I would normally be like, 'Well, if I'm not going to drink, I'm just going to stay home.'" But because there was something for me to discover and understand.

Again, it's one of those things where that is a really useful tool and then, I think this is really important, all the tools are really useful and sometimes you use the tools against yourself.

Kara: Totally.

Rachel: There always has to be a meaning. Always has to be like, "What am I discovering here?" And you use it against yourself.

Kara: And the meaning, we make up the meaning anyway, so we can decide the meaning is that I learned to go something without making a meaning. We always get to decide.

Rachel: Yeah. I just want to add this piece just because I think it's an indication of what a good friend you are. Kara did also – so, I live in San Francisco now, she also flew out after the baby was born and then – I

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mean, she always stays in Airbnbs, let's be honest, almost always rather than hotels. That's your preferred style of living. But made a meal, a home-cooked meal in her Airbnb and then brought it to me and then fed me.

I remember you taking the baby, taking him from me, but it was just like that was some good –

Kara: I stole her baby is what she's saying. I was like, "Listen, I made you lasagna, but I'm taking your baby." It was like an old fairytale.

Rachel: I think it was brisket. I think it was something –

Kara: I braised you a brisket, I think.

Rachel: You braised me a brisket.

Kara: Listen, this is how Jews roll. You have a baby; somebody has to bring you a brisket.

Rachel: I didn't know.

Kara: Now you know.

Rachel: I'm on board.

Kara: I know. None of my friends in California are allowed to have babies until after the pandemic because I can't come out there and make them briskets.

Rachel: Agreed.

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Kara: I guess I could ship a brisket. So, here's what I learned about you – not about you, here's what I learned from you is that – or from our friendship is that I can be more excited about someone else making a million dollars than I am about myself making a million dollars. I was 100% more excited about you making a million dollars than about me making a million dollars.

Rachel: It is true.

Kara: It's true. I really was. I was excited when I did it, but when you did it, I was like, "There should be fireworks and confetti." But I think that's – I don't know why this one just really stood out to me because I'm actually not even totally sure what the meaning is, but what I was thinking about is I think that before coaching – I think one of the things that's really special about our friendship and that is special for any friendship where both people are doing thought work and can be honest about it is that we don't have to hide any of our insecurity about each other and the ways that we try to use each other to be mean to ourselves. It's just like all-in and part of the friendship and we talk about it all the time.

Rachel: Yep.

Kara: However silly or important it is. It came up when we were going to record this podcast, right? We can both just be like, "Hi, my brain says now you love this other person more than me and it makes me sad," right? And we can just deal with it. They say that in romantic soulmates, in romantic relationships you often really bond with people who push your buttons and I think that we both pushed each other's in that way where my biggest struggle has always been around relationships and dating work. That's the part my brain has the most trouble with and you were like in a great

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relationship and have a great marriage and then your brain has the most trouble with success and believing you're smart enough. I went to Yale and Harvard and I made a million dollars first even though we were peers.

We trigger each other in these ways that are so – as in any relationship like is actually such an invitation to do good work and to see where we are. I was so excited – I feel like if I ever get married, you're going to be like, "I'm more excited about your wedding than my wedding." Because it's like when you really love someone and you're all-in on the relationship and you're not pretending that you don't have human emotions, but you've been able to be totally transparent and honest about them you're so excited when they work through something that was holding them back or a place that they were having trouble. It felt more like I feel a parent must feel – not because I feel parental towards you, but just something where I was like this is something you've been working on for so long and I know how much work went into it. I'm so proud and excited for you and you were having a human experience and being like, "Wait what?" All the weird emotions you have when you do hit a milestone in your life.

Rachel: Oh and there were a lot of weird emotions.

Kara: That's what I'm saying, yeah, so you were not riding high, you were like –

Rachel: No.

Kara: But I was totally – it was great for me. I really enjoyed when you made a million dollars.

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Rachel: No, I was not riding high. I was – I think I had a good three weeks of crying.

Kara: Yeah, you were like, “This is terrible.” Actually, now that I think back about it with my last serious partner when I was falling in love at the beginning and you were like all happy for me. You were like, “This is amazing.” I was like, “I want to die. This feels horrible.” That’s also just such an example that getting what you want usually feels terrible, but at least you can be happy for your friends when they do.

Rachel: It’s true, yeah. I mean, I haven’t really thought about that before, but I do think that there is something to the fact that we can just bring everything to the table because definitely part of why I think you had – I mean, I think there are a lot of reasons why you had to stalk me at first in our friendship, but I think part of it was because I was very like, “Ugh, okay, Ivy League.”

My brain just wanted to use you as like every –

Kara: Like, “Don’t you dare be a human. I’m using you to beat up on myself. You can’t also be a-”

Rachel: Exactly. Well, I went to Wellesley, you went to Harvard. Like, so ridiculous, but I think that that was – I mean that was actually I think – personally kind of like a turning moment was to really be willing to do the work so that I wasn’t constantly using against myself and also could be excited for the things that you accomplish and not like, “Of course she did it first.”

Kara: Right.

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Rachel: Of course. The excitement thing is a big thing though for me. That is something that I have gotten a lot of coaching from you on. I will say, I mean, you knew that I was going to bring up the little blue heron, I think.

Kara: Oh yeah, the little blue heron. That's going to be the name of our compound farm we're going to have.

Rachel: 100%. Kara sometimes gets confused and calls it a great blue heron.

Kara: Yeah, I'm sorry, y'all. It's a little blue heron, it's pretty unacceptable of me.

Rachel: It's a little blue heron. I think allowing myself to go to a place of real excitement for myself is just something that I've kind of capped and I'm used to capping that was kind of just like – I think of it like a – I don't know. Like a practice. It's like I was working out a muscle. It's like don't get too excited. That's not really – so anyway, the little blue heron it's come up several times.

It came up – Kara and I were doing horse coaching together which P.S. so fun.

Kara: You're not coaching the horses. I feel like people don't what we mean when we say horse coaching and they're like, "What? Do you coach horses on how to be better horses?" No, the horses' coach you which actually sounds even crazier.

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Rachel: Yeah, but not really crazy if you have any experience with horses and that's the last time, we saw each with this stupid pandemic. We were doing –

Kara: I know. That was our second horse coaching.

Rachel: That was our second horse coaching in Arizona. Anyway, we were doing this for the first time. We were in Georgia? Were we in Georgia?

Kara: Yeah, we were in Savannah.

Rachel: We were in Savannah and we were doing this, and we were on a lunch and there was a bird that I had never seen before in my life that was just stunning. I mean stunning how blue and purple it was. It was in the middle of – it was kind of in the shallows of a lake and I – I mean, I think I kind of legit lost my mind. I remember you being like, “Oh yeah, yeah, it's a nice bird.” I was just like, “What – “

Kara: It's amazing our relationship survived my lack of excitement about the blue heron.

Rachel: I know. I had to like to stop and look it up on my phone and identify it. I discovered it was something called a little blue heron which I didn't even know existed. It had kind of blue and purply plumage. It was just unbelievable looking and I was just rightfully so if any of you have seen this bird before just so – I couldn't contain myself. We went back to the lunch table. I remember I got other people to look at it and nobody wanted to keep talking about it except for me.

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But all of that said, I was just having so much excitement and I think maybe a day earlier I had told you that I was pregnant and you, I think maybe later on in the day pointed out that I may be allowing myself to feel more excitement about a little blue heron than I was about my own pregnancy which was something that I had been working at for some time.

I was just very – in that moment I was really like, “God, she just doesn’t get it. It’s like she’s not – “

Kara: “She doesn’t get why the heron is more exciting than having a baby.”

Rachel: Yeah, I really felt like I was like – I don’t know, maybe I just have these kind of special technicolor glasses in which I see the world and Kara doesn’t see. I don’t know, but that happened years ago. Then it came up again recently. I was really fighting for – I was really like, “No, I am excited. I am excited. I am excited.” And Kara brought up – she mistakenly called it the great blue heron and I in that moment was like, “Oh my God, you’re so wrong. It was a little blue heron and let me tell you how excited – like how amazing this bird is.”

The initial instance had happened years ago, but in that moment I really was like, “Oh, she is right when she’s saying that you’re not excited about this thing.” Because I could feel in my body how it just – like thinking, imagining, I wasn’t even seeing the bird and I was so animated and so excited and trying to convince everyone about how special and unique this bird was.

I think that that sometimes especially because of the work that we teach about really learning how to not just identify what you’re feeling which is so hard. We’re so used to just saying, “I don’t know. I feel terrible. I feel ugh. I

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feel fat. I feel ugly.” So, we’re not used to identifying emotions, but then I think sometimes we convince ourselves that we’re experiencing positive emotions when we’re really not.

Kara: We just say the words and we’re like, “Well, I said I’m excited so I guess I am.”

Rachel: You’re not excited. I’m excited, I don’t what I mean –

Kara: You sound very excited right now.

Rachel: I don’t know why you need to – why do I have to prove to you that I’m excited, Kara? I’m excited. But I just didn’t have that reference point and I think that that’s part of what this work gives you is it starts – you start to get reference points and now it’s like, “Oh right, remember what you’re like when you see a little blue heron.”

Kara: That’s also just such a good example of how we get delighted about – like if we were all as delighted about ourselves as you are about that little blue heron imagine how different everything would be.

Rachel: I know. I told you that I’ve been writing love letters to myself. That was kind of like my gift to myself on my 40th birthday which just happened.

Kara: I like it.

Rachel: That I’ve been writing a love letter to myself every morning or in the evening and really is just like you start to see how – I feel like even in the short time that I’ve been doing it it’s like oh yeah, you can be really excited about yourself.

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Kara: After our last mastermind Rachel and I started – we text each other with a brag every day which I highly recommend all of you do. She just has to brag about everything and I have to brag about how I'm brilliant. I have a very specific assignment, but I feel like everybody should just find a friend and send them a texting brag every day.

Rachel: Yeah.

Kara: So, this actually leads to the third thing that I feel like I've learned from you which is kind of a funny one. When I met Rachel she was living in this apartment in Greenpoint where she had like meticulously hand-restored the fire covers. I don't even know what they're called.

Rachel: Fireplaces.

Kara: Fireplaces. She could have had a second career in vintage furniture repair and re-upholstery and finishing. So, she had hand-restored this apartment as if she was a contractor specializing in antique restoration. She had all of these eclectic collections of radio ham cards and she was making her own make-up out of berries from scratch.

Rachel: I had also been single for a long time, you know.

Kara: This is before she got fancy. So, she was fancy in some ways.

Rachel: And I didn't have children.

Kara: And she didn't have children. She had a lot of spare time. She had art up on the wall that she had made. She had all these art projects. She

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had this whole morning routine involving E.B. White for several years that I don't know if that's still happening, but she just –

Rachel: I love E.B. White.

Kara: She had a whole – I think she had a secret E.B. White Twitter account. She had all of these very – basically, she was doing all the things that I always told myself that if I just did all those things I would be happy and perfect. If I just – I mean, I didn't have that whole make-up out of berries thing. That was like a next level *Little House on the Prairie* situation, but like if I had this morning routine – there's so much weird fetishization of morning routine in the self-help world.

If I had this perfect morning routine and if my hair looked perfect like that and if I did art and I journaled – she did so much journaling.

Rachel: So much.

Kara: If I journaled. So much – you guys can't see what she's making, but her eyes are very wide right now. She's like, "So much journaling."

Rachel: I feel like the lesson here is that you are like, "And then I saw she was so batshit crazy."

Kara: Yeah, but it was such a gift. It set me so free. I was like, "She's still a normal human." These are all the things that I told myself like if I just did all of these then I would – that would be proof that I was good enough and worthy enough and then I would just feel amazing all the time. You were like actually just still a human.

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Rachel: Yeah, I usually felt very amazing in the morning but then I had to like deal with the world.

Kara: This is the true sign of being a hermit is you're like, those hours when no one else can speak to me are really quite lovely but then –

Rachel: Yeah and then I have to like engage with the world. I really – I miss that apartment.

Kara: That was a great apartment.

Rachel: Yeah. I think the reverse is kind of true. That I'm just like, "Well, if I had gone to law school, if I had – "

Kara: Yeah, remember that master coach training session where you were...

Rachel: Oh my God.

Kara: It was similar to the Guinevere scream. There was like at the end Rachel was getting coach – we went through master coach training together, too, because obviously we have to do everything together.

Rachel: Together always.

Kara: We can't be at a mastermind without each other, but she was getting coached on something and she was like very agitated and upset about it. At the end she just yelled, "Then I would have been on the Supreme Court." It was just like, "Well then what about Guinevere?"

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Rachel: Yeah and it was – I think it was that I was forced to – I had this hang-up like, “Well, I should have gone to law school – “

Kara: It was about drinking in Wellesley. It was like, “I wasted my time in college.”

Rachel: Oh, was that what it was?

Kara: “If I hadn’t wasted my time in college then I would have gone to law school and then I would be on the Supreme Court.”

Rachel: Oh my God.

Kara: Which like your job right now is so much better, are you kidding? You do not get to work from home on the Supreme Court.

Rachel: Also like best education I ever got drinking so much at Wellesley, let’s be honest.

Kara: Right? Seriously.

Rachel: Let’s be honest, I just didn’t know the education that I was getting. Yeah, I think it was like this belief of like then I wouldn’t – then I would feel fulfilled, then I would feel complete, then I would feel smart. Or you would just take your brain to all of those places.

Kara: Yeah, totally. And it’s also just I think sometimes we just look at whatever where we have a gap. Like I don’t particularly worry about not being smart enough, but then I have all this other shit that I worry about that you don’t worry about. It’s like we look at something and we’re like, “If I

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had gone to Harvard then I wouldn't have to worry about being smart. Since that's my main worry then everything would be great." But it was like, no, you would just some other insane thing that you'd be worrying about, right?

Rachel: Yeah, but also it is – I mean, I really feel like this is the one thing that I coach on so much is just the constant moving of the goal post, right?

Kara: Totally.

Rachel: Because Wellesley was my dream college. I only looked at women's colleges. I was 100% set on like no, I'm desperate to be in an environment where there's only women. I applied early decision. I got in. I remember my parents being like, "Do you think you should apply to some other schools?" I was like, "No. What are you talking about?" Then I was just like, "Oh, if only I could do that." Then, of course, I did that and then I was like, "Maybe I should have gone to a different school."

Kara: "I don't feel amazing. What's happening here?"

Rachel: It wasn't smart. It didn't really prove my smarts because it's ranked high enough. It's like we just move it all the time.

Kara: Yeah, all the time. It actually reminds me of the pregnancy thing because you mentioned like you had really worked on that. It wasn't just like, "Okay, I want to get knocked up," and then next week I do.

Rachel: No, it took 13 months.

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Kara: It was like this whole project and you took it very seriously and there were like acupuncturists and you were doing all the things to get there, but this is why we're both, I'm sure, always teaching like you have to enjoy the journey because the destination is not going to feel amazing if the journey doesn't. So, you got there and you were just like, "Okay, well now I'm pregnant. I feel about as excited as I did about trying to get pregnant which is not very excited." It was like the same.

Rachel: Yeah, it was like making a million dollars.

Kara: Right, same thing. I was excited about a million, but I think my versions of that are more like, again, relationship stuff where I'm like, "Oh, this doesn't solve all of my – " It's like we all have the thing that we're like, "If I just had that thing when I get there – I'm going to hate my way there, but when I get there it's going to be amazing." That's not how it works.

Rachel: It was so funny with a million dollars because I was definitely like, "Okay, I know that circumstances are neutral and that it's your thoughts that create your feelings," but I was around all of these women who were seven figures, like multiple millions and I was kind of like – I listened to what they would say that it doesn't make you happy. I was like, "Okay, wink, wink, right?" I was like, "I know we got to say that."

Kara: Right, it's just –

Rachel: Like, I know we're supposed to say that, but like come on. I think that's why I cried for three weeks afterwards because it was something for me that I had really held on to of like, "No, then I'm going to feel like I've really made it." Like I'm going to be able to kind of relax in my business and sure enough I was not able to. I was just like, oh, I'm still me.

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Kara: It's like people have that depression dip after they marry, right after the wedding because in their mind it's been like on the other side of that night – I mean, it's so crazy when you think about it, right? That you're going to stand up and say some words to somebody you already know and mostly even live with in front of a bunch of people and then the next day your whole brain is going to be different and everything will feel amazing. Then they get depressed when they find out that's not true. I feel like that's what you went through, too.

Rachel: Yeah, and that's so interesting for me because I feel like with marriage I was always like, "I'm never getting married." So, I didn't have that same kind of story around it, but like –

Kara: And that's why it wasn't that difficult for you to get married either because you were not attached to it as being an arbiter of meaning or worth for you.

Rachel: I was like, "I did not think this would happen." Because I had this amazing apartment in Greenpoint –

Kara: Yeah, it had very well-restored fireplaces.

Rachel: Yeah. I was like, "I'm here. This is it. This is the apartment." I rented, I didn't even own and I was like, "May I please be allowed to restore all of these things for free? Thank you. Because this is the apartment. I will be here in New York City for the rest of my life."

Kara: Right.

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Rachel: Yeah. It's so funny because I remember my bookkeeper being so excited for me the month we knew like you're really going to hit a million dollars this month. So, she was giving me updates all the time and it was just like dread. I remember you being so excited and I was like, "Ugh, I'm going to die. It's coming. I'm going to die."

Kara: "This terrible milestone is coming." But I think that's such a perfect example. Because you weren't hung up on getting married it was easy for that to happen, right? Because I wasn't hung up on making the money which doesn't mean that we don't have anything. It's like sure, you had some relationship insecurity.

Rachel: Of course.

Kara: Sure, I had some money stuff to work through. I do think there's a difference. I don't know if we need a word for it, but there's areas of your life where you just have the normal level of brain shit to go through and then there's like the area is like your white whale. It's like the thing that is like the area you have to work on so much longer and the pattern seems so much more persistent. It's like, I feel like for me that one is dating and relationships and love. For you that one is money and success and enjoyment of it. It does feel like it's a different level.

It doesn't mean that – I totally had nervous breakdowns about building my business and making – it doesn't mean it's just like smooth sailing. You had stuff in your old relationship and –

Rachel: Of course.

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Kara: It does feel like there's a different quality to it. It is more like not primal like it's natural or biological, but maybe just like early. It's just like it feels that groove is so much deeper or it's just – I don't know. It's almost like when I think about different theories of reincarnation it's like "Oh that's the – " I don't really believe in reincarnation necessarily, but it is sort of that feeling of, "Oh, that's the problem I came back to solve this time." It's like this is a theme of my life that I need to learn how to solve versus the day-to-day thought work that comes up of just having a human brain and going through things.

Rachel: Yeah. Mine is just like freeing my family tree from believing that money is evil.

Kara: Yeah.

Rachel: I don't know how we did this whole thing and not talk about all my Puritan –

Kara: I know. We got to talk about them now because I feel like that time that you were like if you – when you put money in the bank it belongs to the government was also pretty big. This is why you guys have to get a best friend that's raised totally differently than you because it gives us – I actually think it's one of the reasons we're so good at coaching each other is we don't any – I mean, we share being like feminist New Yorkers, so there is that overlap, but our childhood – I grew up this Jewish New York fan and you grew up in like such a Puritan, repressed family and so I feel like we're able to see each other's crazy and be like, "I'm sorry, what now? Can you say that again? What happens?"

Rachel: I was like, "I just don't really feel like it's my money."

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Kara: Right, you were like it's not my money because I put it in the bank and I was like, "I think it still belongs to you. Can you go get it out?" And you were like, "No, once it's in the bank it belongs to the government." I was like, "No, that's not actually how that works."

Rachel: Obviously, there has been so much – I mean money really is like – it's a little bit of like the white whale for me. It really is. It's also this idea of it's just virtuous not to have money and it's –

Kara: What's really crazy is I was raised with that idea even though my family has money. People will contort themselves into any kind of – it's virtuous to not want to make money which is quite easy if somebody left you a lot of money then you don't have to worry about it, right?

Rachel: Yeah. I think there is also something to when I – it was something about gardening. It was something about how just doing things the kind of like old-fashioned way. My brain was like, "Well, obviously there's more virtue in growing your beets than in getting in the store."

Kara: Oh yeah, remember when you moved to California and you were like, "You can't trust the state. They have raspberries in winter."

Rachel: Listen, it was strawberries and I really burst into tears when I saw them in the farmer's market in September. I was just like – I think what I said to my then-boyfriend at the time was, "There's too much abundance here."

Kara: Yeah, I believe that's what you texted me also.

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Rachel: Yeah, it was something worth crying about. I was not excited about – because I was like how can you ever celebrate strawberries if you have them all the time? You can just eat them in September. You're supposed to have like a limited period of the time in June where you have strawberries and then you have your strawberry festivals and your strawberry shortcake and that's when you make all the strawberry stuff. That's when you enjoy it –

Kara: I got stuck on the strawberry festivals which I didn't know was a thing.

Rachel: You haven't been to a strawberry festival? I don't –

Kara: It's so interesting, there is some old wisdom in the idea of things having a season and it's like you do enjoy things more in some ways when you don't have constant access to them, but at the same time I think that's what happens with an unmanaged mind.

I think with a managed mind or whatever you want to call it we can learn to practice – I think Susan Hyatt calls it like staying in the miracle, right? Like, I can live in a place where there's strawberries all year round and enjoy that on purpose. Decide to enjoy strawberries on purpose all year round. I was just thinking. I had something else when you were talking but now it's gone.

Rachel: We've taught each other so much.

Kara: Something about puritanism. So much. All right, any parting words?

Rachel: Parting words, I really like the idea that just having someone that you can take your entire brain to and whether that is your best friend or a

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coach or just whomever it's so important just to – like I feel like that's what we have. It's just like, "Here is all of it." There's nothing I think really that you and I hold back including about each other, including about our relationship.

Kara: Yeah and I think we also both show up taking full emotional responsibility. It's like we can share anything because I know that if I'm like well my brain told me that you think this I know that you know that it's my brain and I know it's my brain so there isn't going to be any weirdness about it.

Yeah, I think that and then I think just for me also like it's been such a – especially when I started this work I was so hung up on dating and romantic relationships and thinking about a romantic soulmate and then this work was like, you got a platonic – we joke all the time that we're in a throuple and her husband is just on board because he knows he doesn't have any choice. It's just like this is what's happening.

My next life partner I'm sure will be like, "All right, it's a quadruple, but listen really you guys are on the periphery here." So, I think it's like something about that that I think women are always so encouraged to prioritize their relationship with men and the romantic relationship in their lives. Then like the celebration of female friendship is also put as if it has to be in opposition to that, right?

I think what I love about our throuple is that you are – it's not a real throuple for anyone who's concerned. It's just him understanding that we have to be able to text whenever we want. It's like that abundance thing. It's like there's room for it all. Especially because you are someone I think who's

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always just been like, “I have my partner and that’s kind of it. Then I have some friends sort of over there.”

I think, I mean – I don’t know I could be wrong, but I feel like I may be the first person – the first friend you’ve had that has been like this integrated into your life or like this.

Rachel: Certainly the first most persistent one.

Kara: This is how Rachel feels better about the fact that I went to Harvard is that I had to stalk her to be my friend.

Rachel: No, but really I think you’re like, “When are we seeing each other? When are we making plans?” There’s so much that I think I just have this habit of keeping people at arm’s length. Yeah, so I do think it is the most integrated. Also, I will say on birthday my husband was like, “Ugh, my flowers are going to be late and of course Kara’s flowers are here.” Then there was a present the next day from Kara and he was like, “My flowers still haven’t arrived.”

Kara: His flowers didn’t come that day? Oh my God.

Rachel: They were two days late.

Kara: Get on it. Ridiculous.

Rachel: There was like a hurricane, I think.

Kara: What? There was a hurricane, mine still got there.

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Rachel: I know.

Kara: He needs to step up his game. But I also think that's such a good example. I've been thinking about this too is like with you I didn't ever worry about – I was like, "Yes, I'm going to teach you how to have friends. We're doing this. It's happening." I didn't have any thoughts of like, "Maybe she doesn't really like me, or maybe whatever." Maybe the first three days of training, but I think when I think about that what if we – I'm not saying you should – I wouldn't have stalked if there was no indication you were interested in being friends. I don't think we should do that to people or goals, but what if I was that confident in all the other things that I go after?

Where I was just like, "This is happening. Let me explain to you how it's happening and why you might as well get on board." Just so you guys know now she texts me and Facetimes me all the time.

Rachel: All the time.

Kara: All the time.

Rachel: Because I got to brag.

Kara: Yeah, we got to brag. All right, thank you for chatting with me.

Rachel: Yeah, thank you.

Kara: I miss you. I'm sure I'll talk to you 12 more times today.

Rachel: I know. It's like I miss you, but we will just share all our love.

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Kara: We'll just have our little personal time later.

Rachel: It's just like text and Slack and Facetime and –

Kara: Marco Polo.

Rachel: All of the channels, it's happening on all the channels.

Kara: I can never get enough. All right. Goodbye, my chickens. Thanks for listening.

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