

[Get started](#)[Open in app](#)

Lonna Whiting

474 Followers · [About](#) [Follow](#)

It's Not You. It's the Alcohol.



[Lonna Whiting](#) Nov 8 · 4 min read



For at least a year into my life as an ex-drinker, I began to hate lot of things I used to love.

While I spent a lot of my energy trying to find ways sobriety would work best for me (meditation, yoga, reading, naps, puzzles, alone time), at the same time I started to avoid some of the activities I used to love when I was a drinker, like cooking, socializing, and going to spin class.

I couldn't pinpoint why, exactly, I got so pissed off while chopping garlic for marinara, when at one time I found it a sensory joy to split open that pungent smell of a fresh clove as I minced away.

Sometimes, in those early months, I'd start making a meal and abandon it the minute I realized I'd have to clean a head of broccoli, because fuck, who has the energy to rinse a vegetable when chopping garlic feels like an insurmountable pain in the ass? Takeout it is. Or was, rather.

I felt the same way about socializing, which I know is a "thing" for the newly sober. I knew it would be different to be without the armor alcohol provided me in situations when I would be expected to have lively discussions and be super extroverted (INFP over here).

Spin class? Forget it. Getting to the yoga studio was enough.

To make things even more interesting, because you have to sit with your feelings when you're sober, I'd started to have this increasing sense that I was *so privileged* as a drinker — and now as a non-drinker—that I stopped allowing myself certain luxuries because of this sad sense of white fragility (pathetic). To be sure, many of the resources I had begun to lean on to support myself in sobriety were (and are) super white, ultra classist; but then, so was buying \$25 bottles of rose every night and thinking that was normal (also pathetic).

And when I say I hated things I used to love, I mean, activities that I once lived for; that I considered hobbies, pastimes, part of who I was as a "cool chick." Part of how I identified as a modern woman!

As time went on, however, I realized that it wasn't the activities I hated. It's that I had progressed as a drinker to the point that pretty much everything I did somehow related to wine.

Cook a meal? Drink wine.

Go get your workout on? Get wine for afterwards.

Read a magazine? Drink.

Sex? Wine.

Luckily for me—and likely for you, too, if you're sober or sober curious—is that, though it took some time, I realized that it wasn't the activities I hated. It was that I had related their enjoyment with drinking, not with the actual doing of the things (as they say).

I hadn't ruined cooking for myself. Alcohol ruined cooking for me.

Cooking. As a drinker, I could spend hours in the kitchen devising up all sorts of home-cooked, from-scratch vegan fare: dim sum, lasagna, lo mein, palak paneer and naan; magically healing soups like green ginger pureed with harissa, fish and rice. You name it. But it all came with an extra-large pour of wine next to me.

So for many months after I quit drinking, I quit cooking. Over time, I started cooking a little more and more, and learned that an icy glass of soda water was all I needed.

I hadn't ruined fitness for myself. Alcohol ruined exercising for me.

Fitness. Because I rewarded myself with wine after a workout, I hated working out as a newly sober person because I missed that reward afterwards. Just like cooking, it took a shift in my mindset to understand that there were other ways to enjoy a hobby I once loved so much as a drinker. It just takes time to figure out how to optimize the experience once again—this time sans the booze.

I hadn't ruined socializing for myself. I actually just always hated it.

Socializing. One of the greatest learns I've had since giving up alcohol in 2018 is that I really like to be alone. I mean, really, really like it.

That's not to say I don't love my partner and the time I get to spend with him, but I made a room of my own, a la, Virginia Woolf, where I have space to do my favorite solo activities: yoga, reading, napping, writing, cuddling with my Gracie cat, meditating, scrolling on my phone.

What I realized is I'm the kind of person who can go days without socializing and be totally fine with it. In the years I considered myself a social butterfly, it wasn't the company of

others that filled my bucket; it was the prospect of alcohol filling my gullet.

So if you find yourself questioning your alcohol use, or you're newly sober, or you're still on the long-term experiment like me, I would highly recommend giving yourself some grace and patience when it comes to examining the activities, things and people in your life that you used to enjoy as a drinker. Give yourself time and reintroduce these things slowly. If you absolutely still hate chopping garlic at the end of the day, then maybe it's time to retire the chef's hat and find something else that fits the new, improved you.

I just hope that you can embrace the fact that if you find yourself disliking stuff you did as a drinker, take a moment and remember:

It's not you. It's the alcohol.

[Alcohol](#) [Food And Drink](#) [Drinking](#) [Learning](#) [Self](#)

[About](#) [Help](#) [Legal](#)

Get the Medium app

