

# Ep #237: When People Want You to Keep Drinking



## Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

**Rachel Hart**

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## Ep #237: When People Want You to Keep Drinking

You are listening to the *Take A Break* podcast with Rachel Hart, episode 237.

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.

Welcome back, my friends. We are going to talk today about when people in your life think that you should keep drinking. And this is a much more common issue than you might expect.

So, many times, people come to the 30-Day Challenge, and they are knowing, "This is the right step for me. I want to do this. I need to take a break. I want to reexamine my relationship with alcohol. I know this is right."

But then, the people closest to them will kind of say the opposite. They'll say, "Oh, come on, you're fine. You don't need to do this. You're being too hard on yourself. You're being too restrictive. You're being too intense, or too extreme about your drinking. Everybody drinks a little bit too much."

And that can really cause a lot of conflict for people. When someone is like, "No, this is the right thing for me. I want to do this," and then people in their lives are saying to them, "I don't know, I think you're making too big of a deal of it..." So, that's what we're going to talk about today; why this happens and how to handle it.

Now, let's just start out by acknowledging that people are always going to have a lot of opinions about your drinking. They're going to have a lot of opinions about everything you do or don't do in life. That's just how things work.

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So, wanting to be in a place where nobody has any opinions about your choices, or wanting to be in a place where people only have supportive opinions, opinions that are aligned with what you want, it's unrealistic. Wanting this is going to cause a lot of needless suffering. You're going to spend a lot of time trying to get everybody on board and everyone to agree, when you could be using that time and energy to understand the habit of drinking, understand your relationship with alcohol and really learn how to change them.

Wanting to get people on board, it really is a fruitless endeavor. It's like wanting people not to have opinions. And what I want you to focus on is how do you have your own back? What matters is what's right for you. What do you want?

So, I talk about all the time on this podcast, no one but you can decide the relationship that you want to have with alcohol and with drinking and how much you want to drink. And that's really important that I will tell you this; stepping into that kind of authority with yourself, it's going to be really hard to do. It's going to be really challenging if you're always trying to get people on board with your decisions.

What matters is what you do with people's opinions. People's opinions about your drinking, it's just a given. So, I'm not talking about do we listen to them, I'm talking about what matters is what happens in your brain when you hear their opinions. How do you interpret them? What do you make them mean?

When you hear people say, "You're being too hard on yourself. You're being too extreme. Don't be so restrictive," what are you making that mean? That's what matters.

One of the things I teach on the podcast is to really understand, the habit is just the product of your thoughts and your feelings and your actions. That

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think-feel-act cycle is always working behind the scenes. It's always working to really create the habit. And it happens at this unconscious level.

But once you start to bring awareness to it, you can start to see, "Oh wait, my drinking doesn't just happen. I didn't pick up that drink for no reason." It's connected to a thought that drives the feeling that gives rise to the decision to say yes or to say no.

And the beauty of studying the think-feel-act cycle and really starting to understand how habits work is that you start to understand, "Oh, it applies to everything in my life. It can be the lens through which I understand everything in the world."

Because we have thoughts and feelings and take actions in response to everything, not just whether or not we decide to drink. And this includes people's opinions about whether or not we should have a drink tonight, whether or not we should stay for another round, whether or not we should take a break or keep with the status quo.

And here's what I see happen over and over again. So, someone will say you should stop drinking. And you might end up feeling kind of defensive. And your initial knee-jerk thought is, like, "They don't know what they're talking about," or that's really the pot calling the kettle black, or "You know what? Do they think I have a problem? Do they think something's wrong with me?"

So, that will happen when people give their opinion that we shouldn't be drinking. But then, here's what will happen when people say, "Oh, you don't need to take a break. You don't need to stop, you don't have a problem," then what will happen in your mind is maybe you'll start to question, well maybe they're right. Maybe I am making too big of a deal about this.

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Or you'll try to convince the other person that no, this is something I need to do, and I need you to be on board with me. Or you might get a little angry and think, "Why can't they just support me?"

But I want you to notice what's happening in these situations. Regardless of what the person's opinion is, so much of your energy becomes outwardly focused. It's focused on the other person, being defensive towards them, trying to convince them, getting angry at them, feeling embarrassed about what they think.

When your focus is on other people, it's always going to get in the way of habit change because habit change is a very internal and very inwardly focused process.

The truth is, you don't need a reason. You don't need any reason. You don't need a good reason to take a break from drinking. You don't need a reason at all. You can just decide that you want to do it.

I think sometimes, we don't actually give ourselves the permission to decide to do something without having all this kind of supportive evidence or reasoning backing up our stance.

We can just decide, you know what? This is what I want to do. This is what I've decided. Because so often, we don't realize we can do this, and we end up feeling like we need to defend our position. But you don't need to offer evidence or back up anything that you decide to do. You really don't need to offer anyone anything ever. And in fact, trying to do that is just focusing all your energy outward on them.

What you really need to do is focus your energy on yourself. That's how you're going to change a habit. You're not going to change your relationship with alcohol if you're putting all your attention and all your energy on the other people in your life. That's not going to help you.

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This really is true for everything. You don't need evidence or supporting papers or good reasons to do anything. You can just decide that you want to do it with everything in life, including the decisions that you make around drinking.

You don't need to prove that you're okay to drink or that you're okay to reintroduce it or that it's fine for you to take a break. You can just decide what feels right for you.

And this is what I'm talking about when I say that really, you're the ultimate authority. I will tell you; a lot of people don't like that I say this. They'll say, "You know, Rachel, you can't tell people who drink too much, you can't tell people who really have a problem that it's up to them whether or not they drink or how much they drink."

And my response is, why not? They're the ones making the decision anyway. That's actually how things work. The truth is, it's always up to the individual. Unless you're going to lock people up and start taking away their freedoms, it's up to them.

It's always up to every individual to decide what to do. And trying to pretend that that isn't true, trying to say, "Well you know, some people can't. Some people can't make that decision..." I actually think that that's the real problem.

Because what I see happen all the time is that when people are told that they can't do something, guess what happens. They want to rebel. They want to prove that they can. Which is why I watched this happen with me. I watch it happen with so many other people that I work with, people being like, "Yeah, I just want to say screw it. You can't tell me what to do. I can make these decisions."

But it's kind of crazy when you think that part of the habit sometimes is just kind of proving that you can drink. It really is the ultimate irony. Because if

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you really believed that you were in charge and you were making decisions, you wouldn't need to prove anything.

There's so much freedom in recognizing that people are going to have opinions about drinking, people are going to have opinions about how much you drink or taking a break, no matter what. Either way, people's decisions are coming towards you. That's a given.

You don't need to avoid their opinions. You don't need to get them to line up with yours. All you need to do is figure out, how do I have my own back? How do I keep my energy and my time focused on me?

If I want to say no tonight, how do I have my own back? If I want to take a break, how do I have my own back? If I want to say goodbye to alcohol forever, how do I have my own back? And if I want to drink, if I make the decision to drink, how am I going to have my own back?

Am I going to move forward without judgment of myself? Am I going to move forward unconditionally loving myself and bringing compassion and curiosity to the results that I get? Or am I going to spend all my time and energy trying to convince people that my decision is the right thing to do?

It's really a matter of deciding that your opinion matters more than anyone else. Which I know for a lot of you is going to feel kind of foreign. It felt very foreign for me for a very long time.

If you're used to prioritizing other people's opinions above yours, then it will feel a little weird to say, "No, no, my opinion is the most important." So often, we're focused on, "Do they think I'm making the right choice? Do they like what I'm doing? Are they happy?"

But really, what if the only thing that matters is, "Do I think I'm making the right choice? Do I like what I'm doing? Am I happy with the decisions that

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I'm making around alcohol? Do I believe that my opinion matters the most?"

Having your own back is really about trusting that only you, you are the only person that will ever know what is best for you. Your loved ones don't know what is best for you. You can listen to this podcast, I don't know what's best for you. Your doctor and the WHO, they can give you guidelines, but they don't know what's best for you. Only you. You are the only person.

What does it feel like to kind of step into that authority? If you're going to do it, if you're going to take on that kind of authority and really, truly believe it, it means you have to be willing to listen to what's working and what's not when it comes to your drinking and leave behind getting everyone on board or proving that you can drink.

You have to be willing to just say, "What is working? What isn't working? If I don't like the results I'm getting, how am I going to change it?" But I think that's why people start to think that others know what's best for them. Because no one really teaches us how to listen to ourselves without beating ourselves up.

We aren't taught how to relate to what's working in our life or what's not working in our life or a goal that we set without falling into self-abuse. Think about how many times you said, "I'm just going to have one, or I'm just going to have two tonight," and then you don't follow through.

And then, what happens the next day? You fall into self-abuse, and you say, "Oh my god, that was stupid. That was irresponsible. I should have known better. Why can't I learn my lesson?" We all slip into self-abuse. And that's the problem, that doing that blocks our ability to know what is best.



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Because if we're in self-abuse, if we're just beating ourselves up, if we're just saying that we should know better, we lose the ability to have insight about why something didn't work, why we're getting certain results.

Having your own back doesn't mean that you have the best defense, and you can convince everyone around you how right you are. It's knowing that people are not always going to agree about the decisions you make when it comes to drinking, and that's okay. You don't have to be angry about it. You don't have to be defensive. You can feel totally at peace.

Imagine what that would be like. You have to be totally at peace with yourself as well, totally at peace with the decisions that you're making. That's really having your own back.

Other people may have different opinions, and that's okay. It doesn't mean that you're making the wrong choice for you. It doesn't mean that they're doing something wrong. It just means that y'all have different thoughts. And at some point, you have to decide which set of thoughts you're going to live by.

Will they be someone else's or will they be your own? And that's what the whole journey is about changing the habit of drinking. It's about deciding the thoughts you want to live by when it comes to alcohol. Not the ones that you've been conditioned to believe by your family, not the ones that you absorbed through books and TV and movies. Not the ones that advertisers try to sell you. Not even the ones that I offer up on the podcast.

What do you want to decide? What do you want to believe? And you really can decide to believe anything you want. But you have to go to that place of a blank slate, where alcohol isn't good or bad and drinking isn't right or wrong. Drinking too much isn't right or wrong.

How much you drank last night, it's not a badge of honor. It's also not a sin. It's all devoid of meaning and it always will be. Because the point is

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knowing that none of it is a reflection of you. It's a reflection of the think-feel-act cycle at work, an unconscious cycle that most people don't even realize is there.

And that's what happens when people in your life say, "Oh come on, you don't need to take a break." And I can't even tell you the number of people that I had in my own life who often thought that I was making too big of a deal about my drinking.

It's fascinating, right? Because I've talked about the other side as well. I had people in my life who thought, like, Rachel, you need to figure this out. And I had people in my life who thought, "You're being too restrictive with yourself. Come on. Lighten up."

They're both going to exist. What matters is, in that moment when other people have opinions about how much you should drink and whether or not you should drink, and trust me, they will, do you know how to have your own back?

Are you just going to slip into being annoyed or defensive or trying to prove that you can drink? Are you wanting to convince people that, "You know what? I need to do this. This is good for me. You should get on board."

Or can you just stop and say, "You know what? I love you. I respect that that's your opinion. But this is what I'm going to do." And not defend it and not explain it and not feel like you need a good reason for it, but just knowing that you like the decision that you're making, and you have your own back. Because that's the key here.

Whatever you decide, whatever relationship you want to have with alcohol, you have to decide first to have your own back. Alright, that's for today. I will see you next week.

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