

Ep #108: Do You Really Love to Drink?



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Rachel Hart

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You are listening to the *Take A Break* podcast with Rachel Hart, episode 108.

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.

Well hello everybody. Today, it's going to be a bit of a shorter podcast episode but I really love this topic and there's a lot in here so I want to make sure that you do the exercise at the end.

I decided that I wanted to talk about what happens when you love to drink because I hear from so many of you that you are frustrated with your drinking and you're frustrated with the negative consequences, but the problem is that you just love to drink. What are you supposed to do when you love to drink?

And I will tell you that I can relate to this so much. This place of not being able to imagine life without this thing that you love because I was there too. I loved to drink and it always blows my mind that here I am on the other side of it without any desire. And really, with the ability to look back and kind of cock my head and think like, what was that all about? Because it's very hard to put myself in that place now, that place of really, really loving to drink, but I know for sure that that's where I used to be.

So here's what it was like for me. I would swear up and down that I loved to drink, it was so much fun, it was the best thing, but I hated how it affected my sleep. I hated waking up with that terrible fuzzy taste in my mouth. I hated the massive dehydration and just in general, how I felt the next morning, even if it wasn't a full-blown hangover.

Waking up with the fogginess and the headache and the bloat and then going to the bathroom and looking in the mirror and seeing the puffiness in my face. I hated the number that I saw when I stepped on the scale. I hated

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all the physical effects, but I told myself over and over again, "No, but seriously, I love to drink."

And not on that, not only the physical recovery. I hated walking into my kitchen and seeing the empty wine bottle on the counter and the dirty dishes in the sink and the crumbs from my late-night snacking, or the late-night delivery order, the empty boxes. I hated the fact that I had fallen asleep on the couch again in front of the TV, not bothering to brush my teeth, not bothering to face my wash.

And I hated when I had to piece together the night before, when the memories would float back unexpectedly and grimacing at the thought of what I had done or what I had said. I hated the memory of having been too loud or too forward or too brash or too obnoxious. I hated how I would sometimes pick fights with people, how I would sometimes treat the people that I loved. I hated the drunk dialing that I did, I hated the text messages that I sent when I was drinking, or the things that I posted on social media.

I hated so much of how I behaved and wish I could take a lot of it back, but I was still really committed to the fact that I loved to drink. And I hated looking at my bank account the next day to see how much money that I had spent at the bar or how much money I had spent at the restaurant. I hated the times that I left my phone in a taxi, or when I left my leather coat behind at a bar, or the money that I spent on the pack of cigarettes, that I probably would not have purchased and definitely would not have smoked as many had I not been drinking.

I hated all that wasted money, but I really, really loved drinking. This is what I told myself. And again, I hated the time that I wasted drinking and recovering from drinking and the evenings that I could have done something more productive instead of just zoning out on the couch with a glass of wine. I hated how much time I spent worrying about the habit and worrying that something was wrong with me. I hated the regret and the shame and the guilt. I hated the anxiety.

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But I kept telling myself over and over how much I love to drink. And I want you to consider what happens when we cling so desperately to this narrative that we love it. We love to drink, we love everything about it. What happens in the think-feel-act cycle? When your thoughts create your feelings and your feelings drive your actions, what happens when you continually tell yourself how much you love to drink?

Well of course, you create desire. You create wanting. You create longing. You create all these emotions, which then send you in the direction of taking the action of deciding to drink more. And I was thinking about this because I really work with this all the time with my clients and I hear about it so often from those of you who listen to the podcast.

And what came up for me was a memory of a guy that I dated in my 20s, and I will tell you, I really liked him a lot. My friends, on the other hand, they were super skeptical. And I remember they would say, "Rachel, why doesn't he ever make any actual plans with you? He always seems to leave you waiting and wondering and hanging by the phone and haven't you noticed that he seems to only text you after 11 or midnight when he's leaving the bar and looking for a hook up? And haven't you also noticed that he seems to ask you to do weird favors for him and you're not even his girlfriend? He doesn't introduce you to anyone and the times that we've met him, he hasn't been all that nice. He's kind of been a jerk. We're not really sure he treats you that well."

And I stood so firmly in my position that they just didn't really know him the way that I knew him, that he was incredibly funny and he was so handsome, and I had such a good time with him. And my friends would point out, "Yeah, but you seem kind of miserable the rest of the time because he's not returning your phone calls and he keeps bailing on you at the last minute, and you know what, he's also pretty cagey about whether or not he's seeing anyone else."

But I insisted, "You guys, I really, really, really like him. You just don't know him, you just got to give him a chance." And you know what, the memory of that relationship brings me back to how I was with alcohol. I had that same

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kind of tunnel vision where I was so sure that it was the best thing ever, I was so sure that I loved drinking, but meanwhile I had all these negative consequences that were adding up.

And when I was thinking about this, it occurred to me, well, why did I hang onto this guy for so long? Why did I hang on, really convincing myself that none of the other stuff mattered? The fact that he was really cagey about whether or not he was seeing anyone else, the fact that he really never really wanted to make concrete plans with me, that he'd bailed on me quite a bit, that he often, most often would reach out after he was leaving a bar, that he didn't introduce me to people, he didn't return a lot of my phone calls, what was I doing? Why was I hanging onto this guy for dear life?

And the fact was it was because I didn't believe that I could do better. I didn't really think that there was a better option out there. I kind of thought that he was it, that this was as good as I was going to get and I was kind of lucky to even have this guy interested in me. And I think that I did that a little bit with my relationship with alcohol as well and when I listen to all of you, I hear some of that coming through.

Because when you talk about loving it, it's because you believe that it makes your life better. But I want you to consider this; what if you're wrong? What if the life that you know now, that you are so sure is made better by drinking, what is there is a life waiting for you that is way better? Way better without alcohol. Beyond what you can even imagine.

But the only way that you can find out is to do the brave thing of setting aside what's not working to go in pursuit of something that is. That's why I didn't want to do that with that guy that I was so infatuated with. I didn't want to set him aside to go in pursuit of something that I was kind of telling myself I'm not even sure if it's out there, I think this might be as good as it gets. I mean, I was so wrong. Thank god.

Thank god I set him aside and I believed that actually, there was something better out there and there were relationships out there and men out there who were going to return my phone calls and who wanted to spent time

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with me and introduce me to their friends and family and wanted to be exclusive with me.

But I remember I was so sure that that wasn't the case, and that's how I think a lot of you are with drinking. You're not really yet sure that there is something better out there, but the only way that you can start to discover that is if you are willing to go see if that is the case. You have to believe that there is something better waiting for you.

And so I want you to think about this. These questions are really important. I want to make sure that you actually take the time, write them out. Don't just do them in your head. When you think about life without drinking, I want you to answer, what do you think you would be missing out on?

So everything that you imagine you would miss out on, what would that be? What would be less fun? What would be less enjoyable? Where would you feel less connected? I want you to really go through these four questions and just do a brain dump. Get everything that you think would be less fun, less enjoyable, less connected, where you would be missing out, write that down. Get it on paper.

And then I want you to look at this list that your brain right now feels 100% sure is just true, it is just factual, and I want you to consider what if you're wrong? What if there is a life waiting for you where you don't need a drink to have fun, to enjoy yourself, to connect with people, to be spontaneous, to relax, to celebrate? What if there is a life waiting for you where you can do all of these things and more? And it is better because you're never suffering any of the negative consequences from the habit of drinking.

And what if there is a life where you can have all of this and not be reliant on a drink? You're not at its mercy to enjoy yourself, to have fun, to connect with others. It really is when your brain is so convinced that definitely, life would be worse if you were to take a break from drinking, this really is such a powerful thing for you to do. Such a powerful thing for you to just start to conceive, to imagine that there is something better out there.

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And not just better because you don't have the negative consequences. Better because you are fully present and fully able to experience all of the emotions that you look for when you reach for a drink, you are able to experience all of those emotions 100% because you are fully present. You aren't pretending that you feel that way. You aren't masking how you feel. You're actually able to step into those emotions fully.

That really is the power of this work, but the only way that you can do that is by believing that that might be true for you, believing that there might be something better in store and then taking the leap to go find out. Alcohol will always be there. It's not going anywhere. It's been with us for thousands of years. It will still be there after you take a break.

Your alternative is to just keep hanging on to how much you love alcohol, despite all the consequences and stay there, stay stuck there. But I really do think that for all of you who are in that place of feeling like I just find it too difficult to change the habit or too difficult to say no because I just love to drink, this really is your work. It seems very simple but it's incredibly profound to go through and look at that list, everything that you think will not be as good without alcohol. All the things in your life, and consider that you might be completely wrong.

Maybe there is something better, way better out there for you. That's what I discovered, but you have to believe that it exists. Alright, it's a short one this week but it's such a powerful exercise. I want to make sure that you do it. If you have any questions, you can always send them in to podcast@rachelhart.com. See you next week.

Hey guys, if you're finding this podcast helpful, and I really hope you are, I would love if you would head on over to iTunes and leave a review. And as a special thank you, I've updated and expanded my free urge meditation give away. I've created two audio meditations plus a brand-new workbook that will teach you a different way to respond to the urge to drink. The meditations are super simple. All it takes is five minutes and a pair of headphones, and each one now comes with a follow up exercise in the

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workbook to help you dig deeper and really retrain your brain when it comes to the habit of drinking.

So after you leave a review on iTunes, all you need to do is head on over to rachelhart.com/urge. Input your information and I'll make sure you get a copy of both meditations plus the workbook in your inbox.

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 and start your transformation today.