

Ep #277: I Know What I Should be Doing, I'm Just Not Doing it



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With Your Host

Rachel Hart

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You are listening to the *Take A Break* podcast with Rachel Hart, Episode 277.

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 everyone. We're talking today about a thought that I've had many times in my life; that I watch people that are inside the Take a Break membership struggle with all the time, that I watch friends and family struggle with all the time. It is very, very common. Often, when we are stuck in this thought it is hard to feel like there's any commonality. It just feels like there's something wrong with us. The thought is, "I know what it is I should be doing, I'm just not doing it."

I can't even tell you how I struggled with this thought for so long about my drinking; "I know what I should be doing, I'm just not doing it." To me, what I should be doing was: Making better choices, and being more responsible, and going home instead of having another, and not stopping by the wine store on the way home from work. I knew what I should be doing, but I just wasn't doing it.

Here's the thing, I watched this happen all the time when people started to do the work of the think-feel-act cycle, and the learning of how to allow your urges and really take the power out of them. Everything we teach, all the pillars that we teach inside the Take a Break membership... I watch as people are initially so excited by these concepts, like suddenly it's like, "Oh my gosh, my drinking makes so much sense. I have this logical framework; I don't feel like it just happens anymore." Or, it's just, "Something is wrong

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with my brain.” Or, “It’s because it runs in my family.” All of the sudden, it makes so much sense.

Of course, you have to practice if you want to change. You just can’t consume. You just can’t sit back and watch; you actually have to show up differently. People will say, “Okay, I know. I know what I should be doing, and I’m not doing it.” They use that thought to beat themselves up.

It sounds so reasonable. It sounds like, “Yeah, I get it. I know the answer.” The fact of the matter is that thought is actually hiding something so important that you need to understand. When you tell yourself, “I know what I should be doing, I’m just not doing it,” what you are neglecting to tell yourself is this story of “why.” The true story; not the made-up story in your mind. The true story of why you are not doing it.

The made-up story in your mind will sound a lot like, “I don’t know, I’m just someone who never follows through.” Or, “I never stick to my commitments.” Or, “I start off really excited and then my motivation just wanes. I’ve always been like this. I’ve always done things half-assed.”

Whatever your story is about why it is you’re not following through, that’s what you’re believing right now. I want you to know that that story is B.S. It’s not true. It’s not actually what’s going on when you tell yourself, “I know what I should be doing, I’m just not doing it.” You’re not doing it because the habit, the decision to drink, is offering you a benefit in the moment. There’s an upside to it that your brain doesn’t yet have an alternative answer for.

I talk about this all the time on the podcast. I talk all the time, that you cannot... if you want to create lasting change... I’m not talking about a change that will last for a day or six months or a year, I’m talking about

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lasting, permanent change. If you want to create that, not just with the habit of drinking but with every habit in your life, you have to be willing to not just focus on the downsides. You have to be willing to look at the complete picture of how the habit works.

The fact of the matter is, if there wasn't an upside, if there wasn't a benefit you wouldn't be reaching for that drink. It's not a matter of, "Yeah, you're just someone that doesn't follow through, and you've always been this way, and you always done things kind of half-assed." No, it's a matter of not being willing to really examine the benefits.

I think that why this happens is because, many times, we're afraid. If we look at the upside, if we focus on the upside we're never going to change. We're so used to creating change through focusing on everything that's bad; everything that's wrong; everything that we don't like; all the ways in which we're failing ourselves, and all the ways we're not being the best version of ourselves. We're so used to trying to fuel change through focusing on the negative. It's really what we're taught to do.

So, the idea that you could sit back, and you could look at the upsides, you could look at the benefits of your drinking, I think for a lot of people it's kind of scary. Like, "If I even crack that door open a little bit, if I look at the upside, if I look at the benefits then I'm never going to change." But the fact of the matter is, right now, when you're telling yourself, "I know what I should be doing, and I'm not doing it," and you're focusing on this negative story about yourself, and you're focusing on all the negatives of drinking... The fact of the matter is that's not helping you change either, so why not look at the benefits?

I did an episode early on, right at the beginning when I launched this podcast in... When did I launch it? 2017. Oh my gosh, so long ago. I did an

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episode early on called, "*Change Your Perspective, Change Your Results*," that came from my own personal experience. My experience of starting to understand, "Hey, instead of looking at all the ways that drinking is a problem for me, how is it helping me? What is the upside?"

When I started thinking about how it was helping me it started to show me the skills that I was missing. It started to show me the areas in my life where I felt like, "Yeah, if I don't have the drink, it's not going to be very fun. I'm not going to know what to say. I'm not going to be able to relax. I'm not going to be able to go on this date." Whatever it is, it started to reveal to me the areas that I needed to work on.

Instead of being in this "just say no" mentality, which is what I had tried for so long, I really thought changing my drinking, and changing my relationship with alcohol was about being a rule-follower. And, just saying "No," and having more discipline, and having more willpower...

When I let go of that idea and instead started to see, "Wait, maybe it's about skill building and not the skill of following rules!" The skill of, "How do I create more pleasure in my life, just on my own?" Not just because of what I'm eating or drinking, or what I'm buying, or where I am. How do I create more pleasure? How do I create more confidence? How do I start to be a more confident person? How do I deal with my worries and my anxiety? What do I do when I feel bored?

I started to see, "Oh, there are actually these areas that I can start to expand and grow." Suddenly, I was in this place where changing my relationship with alcohol wasn't about gritting my teeth. It was about evolving to the next version of myself. That's what I want to offer to all of you right now who are thinking, "Yeah, I know what I should be doing, but I'm not doing it."

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What I want to offer is that you have a terrible story about yourself and the reason you're not doing it. It's a story you've probably used over and over again. "I'm just someone who... I've always been this way." Also, you're so used to focusing on the downsides of the habit. You're so used to focusing on the hangovers, or the emotional or physical toll that drinking takes on your body, or how you feel the next day and how you have regret or embarrassment, or how you don't like how you're showing up in your relationships. You're so used to focusing on all those negatives.

Your negative results are real. They are real. They're only one part of the picture. If it was all downsides you wouldn't want to drink in the first place. When you contemplate doing this work, stepping back, and zooming out and not just focusing on the downsides, not just focusing on everything that's bad about your drinking, but also everything that will be bad if you tried to change it, everything that will be bad even if you just take a break for thirty days...

I remember for me, my first thirty-day break was so intimidating because I was like, "Oh God, I'm going to be deprived and missing out. I'm not going to have any fun. I'm not going to know what to say. People are going to ask questions." It felt like this lose-lose situation. You have to really zoom out and instead of focusing on all the negatives, start to see things from a different perspective.

Consider the upside of your drinking. The ways in which it's helping you. Also, potentially, the upside of taking the leap to create the change that you want, whatever your goal is: Whether or not you want to drink less, or drink only occasionally, or not drink at all. What is the upside there?

By zooming out and looking at the habit from every angle; from looking at the costs and the benefits, the upsides, and the downsides, what you start

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to do is create a unique map, a unique picture that really shows you the inner workings of your habit. Everyone's looks different. Everyone has different skills that they need to work on and different areas of focus. Think about this.

We have this exercise when people join the membership, it's one of the benefits we have in the bonus area, where people go through the exercise of doing the costs and benefits of the habit, and the costs and benefits of taking a break. You've got to be willing to look at the full picture.

Really go through... "Okay, let's think about something I've probably never thought of before. Let me understand the upside to my drinking in all areas of my life. So, maybe, the upside with: My health, with my emotions, with my well-being, with my productivity, with money, with memory, with sleep, with rest and relaxation, with food, with socializing, with celebrations, with friendships and relationships, with intimacy and sex, with family and children, with job and career, with education, with hobbies and interests, with my future, with my spirituality, with safety..." Let's look at it all.

You will have this knee-jerk to be like, "No, no, no. I know I shouldn't be doing this; I know it's bad for me, I'm just not following through." You will resist doing this. If you have that resistance, I encourage you to examine why. I encourage you to ask yourself, what do you think is going to happen if you look at the benefits?

Instead of having this fear that the benefits are going to keep you stuck, maybe the benefits are going to show you the way forward. That's what happened for me. It showed me exactly what I needed to work on. It showed me exactly the skills that I was missing. All of the sudden, changing my relationship with alcohol really didn't have anything to do with

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alcohol. It didn't really even have anything to do with the wine glass. It had to do with me and changing my relationship with myself.

For all of you today, who are telling yourselves, "I know what I should be doing, I'm just not doing it," I really want you to take this episode to heart. Relisten to it. Really consider that, maybe, what you're doing is failing to tell yourself the complete picture of the habit.

All right, that's it for today. I will see you next week.

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 empowered to take it or leave it. Head on over to www.RachelHart.com/join and start your transformation today.