

Ep #279: Why Your Compelling Reason Isn't Working



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With Your Host

Rachel Hart

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Ep #279: Why Your Compelling Reason Isn't Working

You are listening to the *Take A Break* podcast with Rachel Hart, Episode 279.

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, everyone. We are talking about compelling reasons, today, and the importance of compelling reasons. I'm going to give you a new framework to really think about this.

I've talked about this, a bunch, on the podcast before. I think we have two other episodes that specifically deal with how to find and work with your compelling reason. It really is important to be able to do this, because if you're going to change the habit, if you're going to move towards what is uncomfortable, that's what's required. In habit change, to do the uncomfortable thing you've got to find a compelling reason. You've got to find something that's going to help you inspire change.

I think we talk about compelling reasons in a really backwards way. A lot of times, the conversation around compelling reasons is like, "Well, listen. You'll finally get your act together when things get bad enough." It's this idea of; if you hit rock-bottom then you will finally be compelled to take action.

I will tell you, for someone who does not consider that she ever hit rock-bottom... When I was so stuck, and so unable to figure out why my drinking was something that really did feel kind of outside of my control, and why I couldn't learn my lesson, and why I kept repeating the same mistakes... When I was really stuck, in that place in my life, I vividly remember thinking,

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“Well maybe, things haven't gotten bad enough,” which is a kind of crazy thought to think. It was like, “Maybe if things get worse, I'll finally change.”

That is not the message we want to be sending to people. That things just have to get really bad and then you're going to get your act together. We talk about compelling reasons, often, as like, “Okay, yeah. If things get really bad, you'll finally get your shit together.” I don't think that's a helpful way to talk about compelling reasons.

We also talk about compelling reason as if that is the “thing”; the *reason* that you find, is the *thing* that creates change. If you just have a reason that is inspiring enough, or compelling enough, or means enough to you, is important enough to you, then you will finally be able to change. What's the problem with this?

I see this happen all the time inside *Take a Break*. People will say, “I'm struggling. I'm struggling to keep my commitment. I'm struggling to do the work. Now, I feel terrible because I truly do have these very compelling reasons. I truly do have these reasons that matter so much, whether that is, my health, or my family, or my relationships. I have these reasons that really matter to me.”

Then, they start beating themselves up. Then, they start saying, “Oh God, am I just the person that I care more about drinking that I do about; my health, or my family, or my children?” That's a terrible place to be in, as well. That's part of the confusion, here.

Part of the confusion is, really, if you have a compelling enough reason, that is going to be the “thing” that is going to make it possible for you to show up differently. I think compelling reasons are important but they're not the be-all and end-all. We have to stop approaching habit change as if, “If only I could find a reason that was compelling enough, then I would be able to do it.”

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What's happening is it's taking you out of the equation. It's taking your thoughts and your feelings out of the equation. It's taking your brain out of the equation. It's giving all this power to a sentence. That is not going to serve you.

The other problem I see with compelling reasons when I ask people... And I do have people, when they join *Take a Break*, and they're starting that initial 30-day challenge, I do have people work on creating a whole list of compelling reasons. We really have people create like... Let's create more compelling reasons than you could even imagine. Let's get twenty down on paper.

The reason we have people do this is, I think it's important to stretch the brain, stretch their mind and think about; why does this really matter? Why am I willing to do this work? Why am I willing to feel uncomfortable? What really is the upside waiting for me?

One of the things I will tell you, when I look at people's compelling reasons... Truthfully, this was something that I struggled with, as well. When I was thinking of my own compelling reasons, at first, they all kind of centered around alcohol. I just wanted to learn how to be a normal drinker. Or, I just wanted to be someone who could stop at one. Or, I just wanted to be someone who could wake up, after going to a party, and not wondering what I did last night; not wondering what I said. I just wanted to be someone who didn't have to suffer from a hang-over.

So many of my compelling reasons centered around alcohol. It makes sense. But what I want you to do in the framework, that I want to give you today, is to really instead of just limiting yourself to how you want to drink... People, a lot of times, will say, "I just want to be able to take it or leave it. That's who I want to be. I want to be someone who can take it or leave it. Or, I just want to be someone who can have a glass and stop."

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There's nothing wrong with those reasons, but they're very limiting in how you see yourself. They're very limiting in terms of what this work is about. They put alcohol at the center of the story, and while it may feel like it might make sense right now, when you put alcohol at the center of the story, guess what? You're going to stay really focused... That alcohol, and your relationship to it, is the most important thing.

The most important thing is not alcohol. The most important thing is your relationship with yourself. It's nothing to do with how much you drink, or whether or not you drink. You don't want to put alcohol at the center of your story.

That's not saying that it can't be in your story. It's just like when you write out your compelling reasons and you see they're all about drinking, or a lot of them are. You really have to question and be curious, "Why am I putting that front and center in my story?"

The framework I want to give you today, to expand your view when it comes to think about your compelling reasons, is thinking about: What are you tired of, in your life?

I remember thinking about this when it came to my own situation. I was tired of feeling like "fun Rachel" only came out when she had a couple of drinks. I just wanted to be "fun Rachel" all the time.

I was tired of feeling like, if I walked into an event where I didn't know anyone, it was going to be massively painful until I figured out a way to get to the bar, and get a drink in my hand.

I was tired of being the person who felt like she needed a drink. Felt like, without it, why bother going to the wedding? Why bother going to this

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party? Why would I even engage in socializing if alcohol wasn't going to be involved?

I was tired of being the person where alcohol was playing a starring role in my life. And, not just in the problems that it was causing for me, but in how it really seemed to be a fixture in everything I did.

I was tired of being the person that felt like, "Yeah, well, if we're not drinking this weekend, what are we doing?" I was tired of how I felt the next day. I was tired of how I felt physically, and I was tired of how I felt emotionally.

I want you to expand your idea of compelling reasons to include this framework of: What are you tired of?

I was tired of worrying about it. I was tired of being at dinners and only being half present. Because, either I was fixated on how quickly my companions were drinking, and whether or not I was drinking too fast, and would they notice if I flagged down the waiter to order another drink. Or, were they thinking, in their minds, "Jeez, Rachel really drinks, really quickly?"

I was tired of being half present in my life. I was half present in my life a lot of the time when I was out with people, when I was socializing. I was tired of thinking that I needed a drink to have good sex. Or, that I needed it to be intimate with someone. I didn't want to be that person. I just wanted to be someone that could just enjoy sex, and not feel like, "This is going to be terrible and awkward. We don't have a buzz."

When I started thinking about it this way, it started to stretch my mind beyond, "I just want to be able to drink like everyone else. I just want to be a normal drinker. I just want to be able to have one, and then call it quits."

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I started to really think about how do I want to grow as a person? Even though that was intimidating for me, it was also kind of exciting. It was exciting to think that change was about; how I wanted to grow as person, and who I wanted to become, and how I wanted to start showing up with other people, and in the world, and in my life, differently. It was bigger than just, "I just want to show up and be the person who can take it or leave it."

I started to have, when I answered this question, I started to have... It was almost like a little map of where I was headed. I really didn't know how I was going to get there; it felt kind of fuzzy. But it was a direction that also felt exciting to think about; how I could change, and how could grow, and how I could evolve, and who I could become. That's what I want for all of you.

If you get my emails you're subscribed to my newsletter, which you should be, you will see that, right up at the top, it says, "Change your drinking, unlock your potential." Because, that's what I really think this work is all about. It is not about a number. It is not about a quantity.

It's about unlocking a version of you that, right now, you can't access. The only reason you can't access, is because you have this internal story about all the ways that you need it. Or, that alcohol makes things better or makes you better. Or, helps you cope or gives you relief. That's the only reason. That's the only reason that you're not able to change, right now.

Letting go of that story, and seeing that where you're headed is so much bigger than just, "Yeah, I just became someone who could take it or leave it." To, no, "I became the next version of myself. I learned the skills to evolve into the person that I wanted to be. That had way more to do... It was way bigger than what was in my glass."

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