

# Ep #288: How to Stop Finishing What's in Your Glass



## Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

**Rachel Hart**

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## Ep #288: How to Stop Finishing What's in Your Glass

You are listening to the *Take A Break* podcast with Rachel Hart, Episode 288.

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.

Okay, everybody, welcome back.

We are talking today about how to stop finishing what is in front of you. This is something that a lot of people struggle with. People struggle with not finishing what's in the glass, or what's in the bottle, or the bag of chips, or what's on your plate. When it comes to consuming things, a lot of us find this very difficult.

I know I did. I remember that I would watch people sometimes, when I really did not know how to do this, I would watch people who would just leave alcohol in their class. They would have half a glass of wine, and then not finish it. My brain would watch them, and it was like it was breaking my brain; how did they do that?

How is that possible? Why are they not having an internal struggle with themselves? Why do they look so peaceful about it? Or, people who would eat half of the food on their plate or not finish a burrito? I don't know. For the longest time, I was like, "What is going on? Do these people have some sort of magic that I don't have? How are they so peaceful around consumption?"

I did not feel peaceful at all, I felt, for a very long time, like I was in a race, even if no one was there. Sometimes I was in a race... I remember this,

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and I've talked about this before, on the podcast, a lot of the habits that I had around alcohol started first around food. And, I remember as a kid, really feeling like I was constantly racing my sister.

My sister does not race at all when she eats, she takes her time. And even though she takes her time, I was just like, "I've got to be the one to get as many nachos as possible." It just felt like a competition, always. "I've got to get my fair share." And, somehow my fair share, "I'm not going to get it if I don't go fast. And so, I'd eat really fast. I would just be just be very focused on getting as much as I could.

I remember, I'll tell you this, I remember this in my 20's; I was so horrified. My friend said this to me, I love her to death, my best friend Susie. Susie and I both used to live in Brooklyn, and we went out to this Japanese restaurant.

I was suggesting appetizers that we could split. And she said, "I don't really like sharing appetizers with you." I was like, "What are you talking about? We're foodies, and we love eating the same things. What are you talking about?" She was like, "Yeah, but I feel like I have to eat faster, or else I'm not going to get my portion."

I remember just being, "Oh my god!" I love Susie to death. But it was just one of those moments where someone says something, it just felt like, "Oh my god, can I crawl under the table?" And the thing was, she was right. I had a lot of patterns and habits around consumption that was like, go, go, go, race, race, race. This was true, even if no one was there. It felt like I was racing, even if no one was around.

So, it started with food, and very quickly I just started mimicking the same pattern with drinking. I would look around at other people and I would wonder how on earth are they not done with their drink? Isn't it time to flag the waiter over and get round number two? What is going on? These

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people are so slow. It was just so perplexing for me. I could not figure out what kind of magical fairy dust had been sprinkled on them at birth, that somehow had bypassed me. It really was perplexing.

Now, what I didn't understand at the time, because again, all I was focused on was the action; how much I was consuming, and how quickly I was consuming, and how it compared to other people. And even if other people weren't there, what it was like to leave things on the plate, or to leave wine in the glass?

I was so fixated on the action, and how the action was a problem, and I needed to stop going so fast. I needed to not finish everything that was on my plate. But the problem was, I was trying to change that without understanding *why* I had those behaviors. I was just looking at the behaviors and seeing, "Yeah, they're wrong. Other people don't do this, and I should be more like other people."

But I had no idea why I was consuming in this way. I had no idea that there was a thought and a feeling that was connected to how I was consuming, and the speed at which I was consuming, and my desire to finish everything in my glass or on my plate.

This is the problem with habit change. When you don't understand how the habit is functioning, you'll spend all your time trying to change the action. But it's like, I don't know, trying to fix a car and you don't understand how an engine works. You've got to have some basic fundamentals to understand how something works if you're going to be able to figure out how to fix it properly.

That's the problem, people, with willpower, and discipline, and trying to believe that you just need to be a good rule follower. Willpower and discipline and following rules, doesn't do squat to tell you how a habit works. You have to start to back up and understand, "Okay so, how am I

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feeling? What am I thinking when I notice myself going really quickly? When I notice myself finishing what's in the glass, or what's in the bottle, or what's on my plate? What's happening? What's unfolding inside of me?"

That's the piece that, for me, I was like, "I don't know. Who has time? We're just going so quick. Let's consume, consume, consume. There's nothing happening; this is just who I am." Of course, that's never the case. If you want to learn how to stop finishing what's in front of you, or not just automatically finish the glass of wine or polish off the bottle, you have to be able to examine why you're doing that in the first place.

It's nothing to do with who you are. Has nothing to do with there being something wrong with your brain, or it running in your family. It has to do with this unconscious thought and feeling that is motivating the action. And for many of you, you will, like me, discover that you have been practicing this for a very, very long time.

I don't want you to get freaked out about that. I don't want you to be like, "Oh my God. You know, my drinking actually looks very similar to my eating. I started eating like this when I was eight years old. And so now, I'm totally hosed. What am I going to do?" No, it's fine. Don't stress out.

You have this thing called neuroplasticity in your brain, which means that you can change. It means that you can teach yourself new skills, I don't care how old you are. Your brain's ability to change, and form new neural pathways, and learn new skills, that is available for you throughout your entire life.

So, let's just examine what happens when you try to slow down. What initially bubbles up for you? I will tell you, what initially bubbled up for me was just like, "Oh, I hate this. This feels terrible. I hate this. I hate having the drink in front of me, and not drinking it. I hate having the food in front of

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me, and not eating it. This just feels awful.” Now, that's the place where most people start, “It just feels uncomfortable. I don't like it. It feels terrible.”

And so, one of the things that we have to do, if you want to break this habit of just automatically finishing what's in front of you, is understanding, okay, there's this story of what it feels like. The story that you hate it and it's terrible, and it's awful, and you don't like it.

Then, there's actually the sensation of it. Now, for most people, the story, and the sensation, they're so combined we don't even realize that we can start to tease them apart. And you can start to separate, “Okay, this is what is happening in my mind. I have all of this drama: That it's awful. It's terrible, and I hate it, and it's uncomfortable.”

And then, we actually have what it feels like to desire something and not immediately meet that desire. They're so different. This is a huge piece of what we're doing inside *Take a Break*. If you want to learn how to take the power out of your urges, you have to be able to separate out the story that's happening in your mind, from the sensations that are happening in your body.

You will start to see that urges are really not a big deal. That deprivation is really not a big deal. What's a big deal, is all of the *drama* that you have around that. And so, that's really the first place that most people start.

Now, people will start there, and they will start to see, “Oh, the urge is really not that big of a deal. And being deprived, wanting something, and not immediately having it, actually doesn't feel awful when I pay attention to the sensations in my body.” So, once you start to do that level of work, you get to the next layer.

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The next layer is all a story about, “I don't want to waste. I'm not getting my fair share. This was really expensive.” Like, you start to then, get out of the drama of, “Well, this is just horrible. And I hate it; it feels awful,” and into the story of how we shouldn't be wasteful, or it was really expensive. Or, it's unfair if someone gets to have more than you. So, it's kind of the second level of work.

And again, a lot of these thoughts were adopted at a very young age. Think about the clean plate club; I have a whole podcast episode that talks about the clean plate club. And, how so many of us don't realize that we're also in the clean glass club, or the clean bottle club. That we have been taught, again, from a young age, not to tune in to how we feel when we're consuming something, but to, instead, use an object to tell us when we're done, whether that object is a plate, or a glass, or a bottle.

So many of you are just so disconnected to what it feels like to feel satisfied. What it feels like to have enough. I was like, “What do you mean, what does it feel like to have enough?” Especially when it came to alcohol, that was very confusing for me. It was like, “No. I just need to get to the point where I am not feeling like I have more desire. I just need to get to the point where there's no part of me that's calling out for wanting more.” What is enough?

This is a big thing. It's a big thing to understand these stories about that it's wasteful. Especially with alcohol. Especially for some of you, when you have so been sold the idea about how it's fancy, and it's expensive, and it's rare. And what about this vintage? I mean, I live in California. I am not far from wine country, and Napa Valley and Sonoma. I'm very familiar with the ways in which, wine in particular, is kind of put on this pedestal, and talked about in this... Varieties, and the expense, and the rarity.

Listen, I don't think that there's anything wrong, for anything that we consume, paying attention to how it's grown, and caring about the time,

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and the effort that was put into it. But I do think you have to understand, if you're having a story inside of yourself about how something is really rare or expensive, therefore, you can't waste it...

So, what we end up doing, is we have only one part of the conversation. And that part of the conversation is like, "I shouldn't waste. It's special. It's expensive. It costs a lot of money." We have that part of the story, but we're not having the other half of the story.

And the other half of the story is like, "Well, how is this expensive for me? How is this being wasted on me? What is the expense in my life, when I am teaching my brain that the thing to do is just finish what's in front of me or finish the bottle?

Or, that I shouldn't ever pour anything out? I shouldn't let anything in my glass, go un-drunk? How is that an expensive story for me to perpetuate in my life? How is that actually leading to a lot of waste for me? Because then, I'm drinking to this point that then doesn't feel good. And then, it's creating all these secondary effects for me." We're not having that piece of the story.

I see nothing wrong with really caring about how things are created, and the time, and the care, and the energy, and the types of products that went into creating, whatever it is. Whether it is some sort of like, I don't even know, heirloom carrot, or grass-fed cow, or biodynamic wine. I don't think there's any problem with any of that. In fact, I pay a lot of attention to the things that I consume.

You just have to start to understand how some of those stories may be preventing you from stopping when you've had enough. Or, from stopping and just letting there be some left in the glass, or some left in the bottle. If you want to be able to stop finishing automatically, what's in front of you, you have to be so curious about all of this.

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What I hear from people, time and time again, when they start to remove all that initial drama, they see those underlying stories about, “Well, I don't want to waste it. It was expensive. I want my fair share. It's unfair, that my partner or my friend can have more, and I'm having less.”

You start to really see that those are the stories that are driving your consumption. Or, that it just never even occurred to you not to use the object, not to use the glass, or the plate as an indicator for when you're done. It just never even occurred to me that I could tune into my body and ask myself, “How do I feel?” You can do that with food; you can do that with alcohol. I'm just like, “No, I have this drink, I'm just finishing it. No, I just have this plate of food, I'm just finishing it. Duh.”

This is a work that you have to do, if you want to learn how to stop from always consuming what's put in front of you. This will happen a lot, people will say, when we're in the membership, people will say, “You know, someone just put the glass of wine down in front of me. I was at a wedding and the waiter came by, and they didn't even ask me, they just refilled it.” It's like, “Okay, so what? Why do you then, have to drink it?”

The only reason that your body is making a move towards the drink, is because of a thought and a feeling that you're having. So, what's happening there? This is a totally, possible thing to learn. It is totally possible to learn: How to be someone who can just stop; how to be someone who can just not finish everything that's in the glass; how not to polish off the entire bottle, but just pour out what's left over. Go to bed. This is totally possible.

But it's not going to happen by following rules. It's not going to happen through discipline. It's going to happen by really understanding the thoughts and feelings that are connected to the habit. You can learn how to do this. We have a course after the 30-Day Challenge.

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We have a course called the Mindful Drink that's all about this. It really is all about just like learning how to slow down, but not just for the sake of going slow. But for the sake of understanding, "Hey, what's happening in my mind? What's unfolding? What am I thinking about the drink in front of me?" That is the missing piece of the puzzle, my friends.

If you don't understand that, no rules, no plans, nothing is ever going to work long-term for you, because you won't be changing the habit at the deepest level.

Alright, that is it for today. Pay attention to everything that you are consuming. Pay attention to your habits and your patterns, and see if you can just be curious around what you're using as a cue, to tell yourself that you're done. You don't have to judge yourself; you don't have to make it mean that you're doing anything wrong. Just be curious. That will help you change the habit.

Alright, 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](http://www.RachelHart.com/join) and start your transformation today.

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