

Ep #291: How to Decompress Without a Drink



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Rachel Hart

[Take a Break from Drinking](#) with Rachel Hart

Ep #291: How to Decompress Without a Drink

You are listening to the *Take A Break* podcast with Rachel Hart, Episode 291.

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.

Hello, everyone. I went to record today's episode, and I was like, "How do I record a podcast on my computer?" Because it has been a couple months since I've actually done this. You have been getting your weekly podcast from me. But I have taken a couple of months off of recording because I had a little baby. I had a baby boy, a couple of months ago. If you're in my membership, you already heard me talk about this.

But this is the first time I'm talking about on the podcast; had a little baby boy. So, now I have two boys. I have a four-year-old and a two-month-old, and we have a puppy. We have a six-month-old puppy because my husband and I thought that we should get a puppy before the baby was born. Our neighbors were all like, "Do you guys know what you're doing?" we're like, "No, this is a great idea." Turns out a puppy is a lot of work.

But I was thinking about, what do I want to talk to everyone about on my first episode back. I realized, oh, how to decompress without a drink. Because this is a stumbling block for so many people. I will tell you, right now in my life, my desire to decompress at the end of the day, it's pretty strong. I got a lot going on here.

I was actually coaching someone yesterday, I was coaching another mom, and she was saying, "You know, please don't tell me to go outside and have a walk in the evening. Because I can't even do that," because her kids are too young. I could immediately identify with that. Immediately, I was

[Take a Break from Drinking](#) with Rachel Hart

Ep #291: How to Decompress Without a Drink

like, “Yeah, exactly.” All I would like to do, it's just like, oh, can I just even take a walk outside?

But I can't even do that. Because the four-year-old is coming out of his room, you know, for like the 12th time. And, the baby is crying, and the dog is barking. Then even if we get them all down and all asleep, maybe at that point, maybe I have 45 minutes until it's actually time for me to go to bed. It's like yeah, you can't leave the house and go for a walk.

So, I really understand this. I understand how many of us develop a habit around, you know, life is crazy. Work is crazy. Kids are crazy. All our obligations are crazy and overwhelming. We're running around all day, checking off our to-do list and go, go, go, and taking care of everybody else. You get to the end of the day, and it's like, ah, this is me time. I finally have some time for myself. Yet, I am so stressed. I don't want to feel this way. I just want to decompress.

That's what I want to talk to all of you today about. It's something that we work on all the time, inside the membership, because that end of the day desire to decompress is so strong for so many people. I think one of the biggest misconceptions, from everything out there, one of the biggest misconceptions is okay, you just need to find new ways to relax.

I will tell you, that is not the place to start. The place to start is not to find new ways to relax. People will try to tell you that that's what you need to do. Just figure out a new way to relax. Figure out, you know, another activity rather than pouring a glass of wine, that will help bring your stress down. Now, I think there's lots of benefits in finding new ways to relax. I just don't actually think that is the first thing you need to do, in order to create lasting change.

That really is the key, because so much of what I teach, it's not quick fixes. It's not kind of tips and tools that are a quick fix. Because you know what? I

[Take a Break from Drinking](#) with Rachel Hart

Ep #291: How to Decompress Without a Drink

don't think there is a quick fix. I don't think there's a quick fix to changing any habit, much less changing your relationship with alcohol. I do think it's possible. I completely believe that lasting change is possible.

But we can't start from that place of quick fixes. We have to start from a deeper place if we want to create deeper change. So, instead of finding new ways to relax, what I want to offer to all of you, who get to the end of the day and you're like, "Oh, I just need a drink. I just need to decompress."

For all of you who are in that situation, I want to offer you that the way to create lasting change is not to find new ways to relax, but to start listening to your internal dialogue, about how you relate and how you talk about stress.

Now, I will tell you I was coaching someone recently on this. When I introduced this idea of like, what's your internal dialogue? What do you think about stress? It's kind of perplexing for people. It's like, what do you mean? Like, what do you mean my internal dialogue about stress?

But I want you to think about those moments. Maybe for those of you who are parents like me, it's the moment that you finally get everyone in your house asleep. Maybe, if you don't have kids, it's that moment where you're finally like, "Okay, I can stop looking at work email. Work is done for the day." Maybe some of you out there are like, "I never even get those moments. It never even feels like I get to an endpoint in my day."

But when you notice that desire, the desire to pour drinks so you can decompress, I want you to start paying attention to what's happening in your mind. So, what's been happening a lot for me lately, is this: When I listen...

[Take a Break from Drinking](#) with Rachel Hart

Ep #291: How to Decompress Without a Drink

If you could all like listen to what was going on in my mind, when it's like, I don't know, eight o'clock at night, maybe. Really, it's not eight o'clock at this point. But maybe it's eight o'clock. I'm like, if everyone was asleep by eight o'clock, that would be great. But let's say it's eight o'clock.

If you could listen to what's happening in my mind, you would hear a lot of, "Oh, my God. I just can't, I can't. I cannot take it anymore. This is too much. I just, I don't want to feel. I don't want to feel this way. I don't want to feel anything." That's what's happening in my mind.

That's what's going on when I'm having this desire to check out and decompress, and just not be present with my current emotional state. This is what I want you to start being on the lookout for. Start listening for; how are you talking about the stress that you're feeling in that moment? Maybe it sounds like this, maybe it sounds a little different.

But that is your first place to pay attention. Because learning to decompress, without a drink, does not start by finding new ways to decompress. I know that that is counterintuitive. But it does not start by like; Okay, how else can we relax? That's where we think the solution lies; Okay, so just tell me how else can I relax?

But it really starts by first, understanding the internal dialogue, the internal conversation that you're having about stress. Because I guarantee, that those thoughts, "Oh, my god, I just can't, I can't take it, this is too much. I don't want to feel this way," those thoughts are actually what's driving the habit.

If you don't do the work, to start to change that line of thinking, then you can't actually create lasting change. It doesn't matter all the yoga poses, or deep breathing exercises, or, you know, evening walks that you go on. That won't actually create the kind of lasting change that you're looking for.

[Take a Break from Drinking](#) with Rachel Hart

Ep #291: How to Decompress Without a Drink

Because everything that you're learning here is about the think-feel-act cycle.

It's about understanding that pouring a drink, doesn't just happen. It is the result of an internal conversation in your mind. It's the result of the sentences that you're thinking, and the feelings that they create for you. Because when I am thinking to myself, "I just can't, I just can't take it. This is too much." For me, those thoughts make me feel defeated.

When I feel defeated, what happens? I'm looking for a way out. I don't believe that I am the solution to my problem. I believe that the solution is outside of me; it's pouring something to drink, it's eating something, it's consuming something. That's where I end up. This is where so many of you end up. These thoughts are the problem.

These thoughts, when we let them kind of unconsciously fester, when we don't learn how to respond differently to them, then guess what? It's very difficult to create lasting change. And then, how we go about trying to change our habits is just through willpower. It's just, "Okay. Just say no, just say no. I gotta be good. I know it's not good for me." Well, that's not gonna last either.

You know that. You know that willpower may last for a while, and eventually what happens? You have an extra crappy day. You end up going to an event and you don't realize there's going to be an open bar. You end up, you know, going out with one of your friends, and she says, "Oh, don't make me drink alone," and then you give in. Willpower, it might last for a little bit, but it's always going to be temporary.

The way to create lasting change is to start with this, start by listening to this conversation. Now, here's the deal. I am not right now, pouring a drink in order to decompress at the end of the day. I have not deleted all of these

[Take a Break from Drinking](#) with Rachel Hart

Ep #291: How to Decompress Without a Drink

thoughts from my brain, I still have that internal dialogue of; uh huh, I just can't I can't take it, it's too much. I don't want to feel this way.

What I have learned how to do and what is possible for you is to notice it, and then to start to redirect. Notice it and then choose on purpose, what I want to think about how I'm feeling. So, notice, I'm not going to the place of like; okay, I just got to find a way to relax. I'm going to the place of; oh, this was the unconscious thought pattern that my brain handed to me.

I did not choose to think on purpose that I can't take it, or this is too much. That's just what my brain handed out. Because I've had those thoughts so many times in relation to stress. But now that I see that they're there, okay. So, what do I want to choose to think on purpose?

This is where you start to create deep lasting change, when you start to not delete those thoughts, but change how you respond to them. When you start saying, "Okay, you know what? I'm supposed to be stressed, sometimes. This is supposed to be a stressful time. I'm feeling stressed, nothing has gone wrong. Stress is a normal human emotion. My body was designed to handle stress."

You start shifting, and notice, I'm not talking, I'm not shifting to a place of like, "Everything's amazing. I'm so lucky to have a healthy baby." No, we're not going to that place, because that place is totally unbelievable to me when, you know, I have just put my son back to bed for the millionth time after he's been coming out of his room, right?

That's not a place I can go to. But I can go to, "Alright. Stress is normal. I'm supposed to feel stress, sometimes. This is a normal emotion; the human body was built to handle stress. Nothing has gone wrong here."

[Take a Break from Drinking](#) with Rachel Hart

Ep #291: How to Decompress Without a Drink

So, it's like you have these unconscious thought patterns, that if you leave them uninterrupted, they will just continue to fuel the habit. And trying to find new ways of relaxing, while well and good, it doesn't actually change the underlying thought pattern, that your brain is so good and has so much practice thinking, about your ability to handle this emotion.

The real lasting change comes from learning how to relate to stress differently. It's not, learning how to never feel stressed. Because that's not realistic. I don't care how much thought work you do; you're human. Part of the human experience is you're going to feel stress sometimes.

The problem is when we tell ourselves that stress is a problem, and that it needs to be solved by pouring a drink. Because then, our brain starts to learn; oh, maybe I can't handle this. The way to handle it is to have a drink. We start to actually reduce our capacity to handle perfectly normal emotions. Because we're teaching ourselves that the solution isn't inside of us. It's in the glass.

So, this is what I want you to think about. For all of you who are just ending your day like; okay, I just need to figure out how to decompress without a drink. Instead of going to that place of like, okay, so if I'm not going to decompress with a drink, where am I going to decompress? Like, what's the thing I need to do? Is it deep breathing? Is it a walk? Is it meditation?

Instead of going to the action, instead of going to a different, healthy way to relax, I want you to consider that the way to create permanent change to how you relate to stress, is by listening first, to how you talk about it, that internal dialogue. And then, to start changing that conversation and changing that conversation in a believable way.

Now, here's the thing, once you do that, once you start changing how you relate to it, then it's so much easier to say, "Okay, you know what? I do want to build in some activities that help me relax, and help me

[Take a Break from Drinking](#) with Rachel Hart

Ep #291: How to Decompress Without a Drink

decompress, and feel good.” But you're then building those activities on top of a foundation of; you know what? I know how to talk to myself about stress, and not make it a problem. And, not make it mean that I can't handle it.

Please notice, just for all of you who have listened to this podcast for years, please notice that I still have some of these thoughts. I still have the; I can't take it, it's too much, right? I can't handle this. I don't want to feel this.

The work that you're doing here, is not just; well, I'm supposed to scrub my brain clean of any negative thinking. No, the work that you're doing here, is to first see it, and then change how you respond to it, in a believable way.

For me, it is not believable, in the evenings, to start trying to tell myself, “You shouldn't feel stressed. You should be grateful you have a healthy family; you have a healthy newborn,” that's not believable in those moments.

What is believable is; nothing has gone wrong. I'm supposed to feel stress, sometimes. This is supposed to be a stressful time. My body was designed to handle stress, like every human body. I can handle this. It's not a problem.

Then from there, if you start practicing that, you will be amazed how that just kind of turns down the dial on the urgency to like pour that drink, or to go to the fridge and eat that food. Once you turn down the dial on that kind of urgency that comes with; I can't take it, it's too much. This needs to go away.

You're so much better positioned to then, actually figure out; hey, what would be good for me in these 45 minutes that I have to myself, before I go

[Take a Break from Drinking](#) with Rachel Hart

Ep #291: How to Decompress Without a Drink

to bed? What would be healthy for me? What would help me show up tomorrow in a way where I feel better and not worse.

All right. I'm so happy to be back with all of you, talking to all of you. I'm sure I will have many more things to share about thought work and the newborn. All right, everyone, talk to 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.