

Ep #293: How to Make Deprivation Work for You



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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 293.

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.

All right, today we are talking about deprivation. I know this comes up for a lot of you. But specifically, what I want to talk about is how to make deprivation work for you. This is not what most people think. Most people will think; well, how do I get rid of deprivation? How do I make it, so I never feel deprived?

But I want you to consider that deprivation is a normal human emotion, we're all going to experience it. And so, the challenge really is making it work for you. If you want to change the habit of drinking, if you want to change your relationship with alcohol, if you want to learn how to drink less, or to stop drinking, you cannot skip over this part.

I really hate the idea, that is out there in the world of; well, if this is something you struggle with, you're just gonna have to learn to live without feeling deprived. I think that that's crap, I don't think that we should be in a place of feeling like we're always missing out or suffering for our health. But that doesn't mean that I think that deprivation needs to be gotten rid of.

What I want you to consider, is that you can start to make it work for you, you can start to consider deprivation in a different way. Now, if you listen to the podcast, you will hear me talk about the think-feel-act cycle. And the point of the think-feel-act cycle is to really help you see that your drinking doesn't just happen. It used to feel, for me, like my drinking would just

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happen, I wasn't even planning on it. Or, I don't even know how that third round came about. It felt like it just happened.

But there's always a thought and a feeling connected to it. And, the reason for you to see this, to see that think-feel-act cycle unfold is because the more that you can see it, the more that you bring the unconscious habit to light. And when you can see it, you can start to change it.

And so, we talk a lot about the emotions that can be connected to that desire to drink, that habit of drinking. Maybe it's boredom. Maybe it's getting home from the end of the day and wanting to relax. Maybe it's wanting to open up when you're in social situations. Maybe it's insecurity, or awkwardness, or anxiety, or loneliness. Whatever it is, there are emotions connected.

A lot of times we talk about negative emotions. And one of the misconceptions is that people will say, "Okay, well, I understand it. It all makes sense. But that's just not me. I'm not drinking because I feel bad. I'm drinking because I feel good. I like the taste. I like the social aspect. I like having fun. I want to keep the good times going. This is not, you know, me being, you know, sad about life and opening up a bottle of wine."

What I always tell these people, and what I want you to consider is that, even if you can relate with that, you're saying, "I'm not drinking because I feel bad. I'm drinking because I feel good. And I just want to have a good time and I want to have more of the good times." What I want you to consider is that your emotions are still connected to the habit.

The question to ask yourself is okay, so how do you feel when you say no? You're drinking because you like the taste, you want to have a good time, you liked the social aspect, you like having fun; how do you feel, in that moment, when you have the desire to have a drink? Or, you have the desire to have another, and you say no. How would that feel?

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What people always tell me is, “Oh, well, then I’d feel deprived.” And what do most people try to do when deprivation bubbles up? We try to drink over it, right? I don't want to feel deprived. So, let's just have that drink and avoid feeling deprivation.

The problem is the more you try to avoid deprivation, the more you will come to dislike it and the more intolerable it will feel, and it becomes this vicious cycle. Because the more you reach for a drink to avoid feeling deprived, the more your desire grows, and the less tolerable deprivation becomes. So, guess what? More you're going to drink.

I'm not going to tell you just to suck it up, or to learn how to feel deprived, or accept that your deprivation is for some sort of greater good. No, instead, I will want you to consider that yes, emotions are always involved in that habit of drinking. That think-feel-act cycle is always playing out, it's always unfolding in your mind.

And, if deprivation is that feeling that has you reaching for a drink, I want you to consider that, instead of trying to get rid of it, instead of trying to make it go away, I want you to consider that it has a purpose. That you can start making deprivation work for you, that it can shed insight into a deeper aspect of your life.

You might actually come to realize that deprivation is something we need, that it serves a really valuable purpose. So, whenever deprivation comes up, when I'm coaching people, I always ask them; okay, well, why don't you want to feel deprived? And they always look at me like, I'm crazy, right?

Like, “Rachel, what are you talking about? Who wants to feel deprived? I'm not a crazy person, right? No one wants to feel that way. Feeling deprived is awful. Of course, I want what I want. Of course, I don't want to feel deprived in the moment.”

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But doing this work, the work that we do so much, inside *Take a Break*, is starting to separate out the sensations in our body from the story that we have about them. This is such a powerful piece of the work that we do. And you start to see that deprivation is just a sensation in your body. What feels awful, is the story that you attach to it.

So, I remember, many times in my own journey, going out to dinner with my friends and they would be drinking. I would be sitting there with my seltzer and lime, and I'd be thinking to myself, like; how come they get to drink, and I can't? Why is this so easy for them and so hard for me? That story felt awful.

Or, I would go to a party, and I would not be drinking. And I would be thinking the whole time to myself; this would be so much more fun, I'd be having a better time, if I had a drink in my hand. That story felt awful. The sensation is really not a big deal. It's a story that we unconsciously connect to it. The story of how we or our situation is somehow lacking, that will feel terrible.

Most often, people will say, "Okay, so let's just stop feeling deprived," not realizing that it has the opposite effect; the more you try to get rid of deprivation, the more powerful it becomes. I talk about this a lot with urges. People would be like; oh, I just want to get rid of my cravings or get rid of my desire. But the more that you think your cravings are a problem, the more you're trying to avoid them or get rid of them, the more powerful they become in your life, when really, they have no power.

The same is true of deprivation. So, making deprivation work for you means giving it a purpose beyond the story that your brain just came up with. Your brain is always going to come up with stories, and nine times out of 10, unless you're doing the work of managing your mind, the story is not going to be a good one.

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This is what my brain came up with, right? Deprivation is terrible. Of course, I don't want to feel it. No one wants to feel it, it should be avoided. It's a sign that something in the situation is lacking. It's a sign that something about me is lacking. That's what my brain unconsciously came up with. And, those stories felt awful.

But you can choose to give it a purpose beyond that unconscious story. What if deprivation is trying to show you something important? And if that's the case, then it's precisely what you need to feel. Because it's something that you can investigate, it's something that you can be curious about. And you see what it might reveal, not about how something is wrong with you, or how you're lacking, but some deeper desire that you have in your life.

Because when I'm coaching people on deprivation, I often have them tell me, "Okay, so where else in your life are you feeling deprived?" And sometimes, just that question, it's like the floodgates open, right? It's like; Well, where am I not feeling deprived? I never have a moment to myself. I'm working long hours; I'm taking care of everyone else's needs. And so that glass of wine is that space, that tiny little space, to carve out some me time.

Sometimes people will struggle with this question, right? Where else are you feeling deprived in your life? And they'll say, "I don't feel deprived. I have everything. I have a wonderful spouse, and a great family, and a beautiful home. I have everything that I've ever wanted." And the more that we start to talk, the more that they start to acknowledge; I just feel like I shouldn't feel deprived. That it is ridiculous to have the life that I have and feel unsatisfied.

But they do feel unsatisfied. They feel like there's something missing in their life. Something more that they want or more that they are called to do. And other people will say, "Oh my god, I'm super strict with food. I'm just counting calories. I have entire food groups that are off limits. I have all this

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deprivation around what I eat, but at least I give myself the pleasure of a drink.”

I've also worked with a lot of people who have autoimmune conditions. They will feel so deprived about how many things that just don't work for their body, how many things they can't eat anymore. And they fall into this mentality of; I'm just so deprived in my normal life, please don't take this away, too. Please don't take away my glass of wine.

And so, however, you might answer that question, when you start getting curious about deprivation, you start getting curious about where else in your life you might be feeling deprived. The point is really to stop accepting that unconscious story, that deprivation is awful, and it's something to be avoided. And instead, start getting curious.

What is it trying to show me about my life? Maybe you need more time for yourself. Maybe you need to stop putting everyone else's needs ahead of your own. Maybe you need to be better at drawing boundaries. Maybe you need to start moving in the direction of a long-held desire, that you've held on to for so long. Maybe it's to travel, or to paint, or to take up a hobby. Maybe you need a healthier relationship with your body, or your food, or family, or whatever.

But what is it trying to show you about your life? And sure, pouring a drink will be easier. In that moment, it will be easier to say like, “Listen, this feels like too much to tackle, right? How am I going to start making time for myself? How am I going to start moving my body more?” Whatever it is, It will feel easier in the moment to pour that drink. But you know it's not easier in the long-term.

Soon, what people find, is that you're burning up all this desire that you have, not on the life that you want to create for yourself, but looking forward

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to the end of the day of like; okay, so like, when can I have my glass of wine? Or, when is it going to be Friday? When can I start enjoying myself?

You really can use deprivation to shine a light on your life. What are you not doing, that you want to be doing? What don't you have, that you want more of? That answer is always going to be deeper than a bottle of wine. It might be carving out time for yourself. It might be moving your body. It might be working on a project. It might be getting out of a rut. It might be changing your career. It might be getting into a relationship. It might be travel, it could be anything.

But telling yourself, that just having the drink, so that you can avoid the deprivation, that actually won't ever move you towards the life that you want. That's the power of this work. So often, I feel like what I want you to consider is that you came here, you're listening to this podcast because you want to drink less, or you want to stop, or you want to have a different relationship with alcohol.

People come here and they think it's a numbers game. How do I just get to my magic number? And what I want you to consider, that it's not a numbers game. The work that you do, to change your relationship with alcohol, is the work that you do to change your life. It is the work that you do to grow and become the next level of yourself.

Because isn't that what life is about? It's just about growing and experiences, and what we can create, and what we can do and how we can live. That's what this desire, and this deprivation that you experience, can start to shed a light on. So, instead of fixing deprivation or trying to make it go away, you can use it for you.

You can notice your current story about it. That; this sucks and it's terrible. And, you've got too much of it. And it's easier for other people and it's

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harder for you. You can decide to tell yourself a different story, just by being curious.

Where else am I feeling deprived? Why don't I want to feel it? What is this deprivation really about? What is it trying to show me? What is it pointing me towards? Not because something is wrong with you or wrong with your life, but because too often, we sit on our hands and stall. Instead of moving towards the direction of the life that we so deeply crave and deeply desire.

And so, the next time that you're sitting there, feeling deprived, the next time you're out with friends, or the next time you come home from a stressful day, the next time you have one drink, and you notice that deprivation appear when you tell yourself, "Okay, no more." What I want you to consider, is changing the story that you have about it.

Starting to see that you can make deprivation work for you, just by asking some of these powerful questions. Really, deprivation is not something that we just have to kind of grin and bear. But it's also not something that we can ever truly get rid of. It is a normal part of the human experience.

The trick is figuring out how to make it work for us.

Alright, that's all 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

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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.