

Ep #294: What to Do When You Want to Escape



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With Your Host

Rachel Hart

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Ep #294: What to Do When You Want to Escape

You are listening to the *Take A Break* podcast with Rachel Hart, Episode 294.

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, we are talking about something today that hits close to home, for me. We're talking about, when you just don't want to feel anymore. You know what this is like. It often happens at the end of the day. So, all of your emotions have built up, you reach that kind of boiling point. And you're just like, "I just want to tap out, I just don't want to feel anymore."

This is the point where so many of us start to get into the habit of numbing. Get into the habit of reaching for that glass of wine, or reaching for food, or trying to find something outside of us, because we just don't want to feel anymore. We just don't want to feel anything. I will tell you, this happened to me the other night.

It was bedtime in my house, and my four-year-old was screaming at the top of his lungs. It's funny now; it's funny now, to remember him in his superhero pj's screaming at me. I did not think it was funny at the time. My baby was in the other room crying, my puppy was downstairs barking, and I just had it. I didn't want to be here. I didn't want to feel, I didn't want to feel anything. I was, at that moment, where all I wanted was to tap out.

And I will tell you that in the past, this would have been the trigger for me to say, "Okay, I just have to make it through this. And then, I can go downstairs, and I can have something to drink. I can go to the pantry, I can open up the freezer, I can go outside and sneak a smoke," right? Like this

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would have been the moment, for me in the past, for the habit, to turn to all of those things as a way to deal with how I was feeling.

Now, how did I get to the point and learn how not to do that? How is it that so many people that I work with find themselves in the exact same situation, but they feel stuck. They feel like, “Listen, when I just don't want to feel, I'm just going to go straight to the fridge and grab that wine bottle.” The reason is because we don't have the skills, we aren't taught the skills for how to navigate these moments.

Instead, I had years and years and years, and you may have had this as well, years of teaching my brain that emotional overwhelm meant, “Okay, it's time to tap out.” And, that's what drives the habit. Because when we have all this stress in our lives, especially for those of you out there who feel like the stress just doesn't go away. That you're just making it through another day, or making it through another bedtime, you're making it through another work emergency.

When you feel like the stress doesn't go away, you are teaching your brain that the solution to emotional overwhelm is finding something outside of you to tap out, to numb, to not have to feel. That's what drives the habit for so many people. This learned response, that the way to solve how you're feeling is by consuming something.

And I'm going to tell you this, that if you want to change your relationship with alcohol, your relationship with food, your relationship with anything, the way to change this habit is not through discipline and willpower. It's through figuring out how to take care of your needs. In the moments when you're having an emotional meltdown.

I know this might seem very touchy-feely, this idea of; well, I gotta take care of my emotional needs. But listen, it's really important, because most everyone doesn't have any idea how to do this. We don't learn how to do

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this from our parents, because most of our parents don't know how to do this. So, they can't model it for us because their parents didn't know how to do it either.

We are simply not taught what to do when we are in emotional meltdown. And, that's what I want you to understand today. That's what I want you to consider, is that this is something that not only have you never been taught, but it's something that you truly, truly need. Not just to change your relationship with alcohol or your relationship with food, just because it's a way to take care of yourself that will feel so much better.

And I will tell you, that how you do this is not by taking a bubble bath, it's not by going for a long walk, it's starting by simply listening to how you talk to yourself in these moments; these moments when you are melting down. Starting to notice those thoughts, and then deciding if you want to keep them or to start thinking something new. Thinking is a skill; it's a skill that we can all practice, we can all get better at.

So, there really are kind of three categories of thoughts that I see come up for me and come up for the people I work with, when they're really in this emotional meltdown. They just want to tap out, they don't want to feel anymore.

And the first set of thoughts are: This is too much. I can't do this anymore. How many times have you said that to yourself? I've said that to myself many times. I was saying it to myself the other night, when my four-year-old was screaming at me, "This is too much; I cannot do this anymore."

As soon as you tell yourself that, as soon as you have a thought like that, guess what will happen? You will feel defeated. And when you feel defeated, you will start looking for solutions outside of you. This is the think-feel-act cycle unfolding. Telling yourself, "This is too much; I can't do this

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anymore," it might feel true in the moment, but I promise you, that when you feel defeated, you're not going to end up with a result that you like.

You're not going to end up with a result where you are solving your own problems. You're going to end up teaching your brain; hey, the solution is that wine glass. The solution is eating something, it's going to the pantry, it's going to the freezer.

The thing that is kind of crazy about these sets of thoughts, that this is too much I can't do this, is that we have these thoughts in the moment. When we are doing the thing that we think we can't do, right? You're in emotional overwhelm, you're feeling all the feels, and you're literally telling yourself at the same time that you can't handle it.

But in that moment, when you're telling yourself that you can't handle it, you are actually handling it. I want you to think about that. It's a little twisty turny for you to wrap your brain around. But in that moment, you are actually handling it.

You may not like how it feels, you may not be enjoying it. But telling yourself this is too much I can't do this is actually not true, because you are doing it. So, pay attention to that. Pay attention when you notice that kind of thinking; This is too much. I can't do this anymore.

Another line of thinking that comes up, in these moments in emotional overwhelm: I'm doing something wrong. This is my fault. Now, I will tell you that that night, what happened for me was my brain wanted to go right to the place of; you're a bad mom. You know, if you were a good mom, you would know how to handle this. You wouldn't have a four-year-old that was screaming at the top of his lungs. You wouldn't have World War III every night, at 7pm.

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So, whatever your version is here, that you're telling yourself; someone else would be doing this better, someone else would be a better dad, a better sister, a better brother, a better employee. Whatever it is, you have to start to notice that piece, that is the lie.

The lie, is that there's some sort of person out there, who would be able to do it all perfectly and never have these moments of emotional overwhelm, emotional meltdown. If you're a human, these moments are coming; there's just no two ways about it. And telling yourself that you're doing something wrong, that this is somehow your fault, that you are the problem, that is only going to compound the situation, because now you're to blame.

So, maybe you were feeling defeated when you told yourself this is too much. But now when you make it your fault, and you tell yourself you're doing something wrong, and that some other person in your shoes would be doing a better job, now you start to feel shame and guilt. So, now, we've layered shame and guilt on top of the defeat. Not a good combination.

And then of course, the third kind of line of thinking that comes up in these moments is: Yeah, the thing I need is in the pantry. The thing I need is in the fridge. The thing I need is not inside of me, it is somewhere else. I just need a drink. I just need some chocolate. I just need a smoke. I just need something, so I don't have to feel this way anymore.

These three kinds of thought patterns, are patterns that most people find themselves stuck in. As soon as you're telling yourself that the answer is outside of you, guess what? If you don't know how to interrupt this thought, you're going to have a lot of urgency to just figure out; okay, how do I get to the kitchen? How do I get to that drink? How do I get to some food?

Taking care of yourself in these moments of emotional meltdown, it's not changing what's happening. It's not making sure that, you know, everything runs smoothly. It isn't even actually feeling better. It's noticing these thought

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patterns, and noticing the feelings that they create for you. You've got the emotional overwhelm, right? And then we're layering feeling defeated, feeling shame, feeling guilt, and then feeling urgency on top of it. That's the pattern I want you to notice.

Then starting to learn; okay, can I talk differently to myself in these moments? Because that's how you start to take care of yourself. Can you start to say, "Okay, I know I'm telling myself that I can't handle this. I can't do this; this is too much. But I can handle this, because that is literally what I'm doing. I'm standing here feeling totally overwhelmed. And, feeling totally overwhelmed is actually, me, handling it. It's only true that I can't handle it, when I try to escape."

But in the moment that I've told myself, I can't do it, that moment, it always precedes the action. It proceeds, when you're looking for the escape hatch, which means in the moment that you're telling yourself, you can't handle it, you actually are handling it. It just doesn't look the way that you think it should.

Taking care of yourself in these moments is not about blaming or shaming. Listen, your house can be a hot mess. Bedtime can devolve into a yelling match with your kids. You know, you can miss deadlines at work or be behind on a project, that doesn't mean you're doing something wrong, or that you're bad, or you're not a good parent, or you're not a good employee.

This is true for parents, this is true for work, this is true for your relationships, it's true for everything. You have to start separating out, that whether or not you are good or bad, means that you would somehow be avoiding these moments.

You don't need to have the perfect family, or the perfect home, or be the perfect employee. You don't need to be perfect at anything. No one's

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perfect at anything. Your worthiness is totally separate from this. You're worthy just because you're here, just because you exist.

So, taking care of yourself in these moments, it's just noticing; oh, I'm blaming myself. I'm telling myself that I'm doing something wrong. That this is my fault. I haven't done anything wrong. Everyone is in emotional turmoil, sometimes. Everyone sometimes feels like a hot mess. That's normal. That's part of being human.

And finally, taking care of yourself in these moments is really starting to teach your brain that the answer is always, always, always inside of you. That's really what I'm teaching people all the time. When people join me inside the *Take a Break* membership, it really is about discovering that the answer is inside of themselves. I don't have the answer for you.

I can't tell you what your relationship with alcohol should look like. I don't know what's going to be right for you. I don't know which thoughts you're going to connect with and which ones are going to fall flat. But I can help you start to see that you have the solution, you have the answer inside of you.

That is really not what most people believe. We believe; oh, I need this thing. I need someone else to tell me. That's what we have trained our brain to believe, to find the answer in a book, or on the internet, or on our phone. No, no, you have the answer.

And the truth is, that the human body was designed to handle every single emotion that you feel. Humans evolved, with all of our emotions long, before Chardonnay and chocolate bars. Long before we had pantries, and fridges, and wine stores. We are really very confused when we think we need something outside of us to handle how we feel. And, we're also confused when we think that we need someone outside of us to tell us what to do. We're just not used to asking ourselves or listening to ourselves.

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So, you need to stop telling yourself that your negative emotions mean that something has gone wrong, or that you're doing something wrong. That is the lie. That is what has you tapping out and believing in these moments that you're not cut out to handle how you're feeling, and that it's better just to find the escape hatch, it's better just to numb.

Because here's the thing, when you're in that emotional turmoil, when everything feels like a hot mess, what you need is the memory that it passes and you saw yourself through it. But every time we don't actually let it pass, we try to drink over it or eat over it, we don't create that memory. We don't create that knowledge for our brain, that this will pass, that we can handle it, that we haven't done anything wrong, that we have the answer inside of ourselves.

That is what I always try to remind myself in these moments. To remind myself; I can handle how I'm feeling. No matter what's happening, I'm still a good person. I'm still a good mom. I'm still a good wife. I'm still a good sister. I'm still a good daughter. And the answer that I need in the moment, it's right inside of me.

If you can start doing this, if you can start learning how to take care of yourself in these moments, without blaming or shaming, but truly to take care of yourself, it will change everything for you. Changing your relationship with alcohol really is changing your relationship with yourself.

Alright, that's it for today. I've got another bedtime coming up tonight. I'll 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.

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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.

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