

Ep #308: Believing in Your Ability to Change



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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 308.

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, everybody. Today, I am talking about believing in your ability to change. This is really the idea of giving yourself the gift of a new thought. Now, I get this question a lot. People will say, "Rachel, do you really think that anybody can change their relationship with alcohol?" And my answer is, yes. Anyone.

It doesn't matter who you are. It doesn't matter your age, or how long you've been drinking, or how much you are drinking, you can change, period, full stop. This is possible. And I will tell you, sometimes this freaks people out. People will tell me, like, "I don't know if that's true. I think you might be giving some people false hope. Some people are really beyond the pale." And I will tell you, I really disagree.

I believe that people have an unending ability to change if they are given the tools. If they are taught how their brain works, how the think-feel-act cycle works, how habits are formed. If they are really helped to understand that nothing they do, their drinking doesn't just happen, it's connected to a thought and a feeling. And, you can learn how to interrupt these patterns.

You can learn how to shift your thoughts in a believable way. I'm not talking about, you know, positive thinking and rainbows and unicorns. I'm talking about learning how to shift your beliefs in a way that actually feels believable for you.

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I don't think that we give people these kinds of tools. I think what we do is we hand out a lot of rules. We say, "You know what? If you struggle, if you don't know how to naturally moderate, it means you have a problem and you should never drink again." We heap on a whole boatload of shame with all of this.

But when you start to teach yourself that all you need are the tools, that's it. All you need are tools and the ability to practice them. And the only reason why you're not practicing, is because of your belief in your own ability to change. I want you to really think about that for a second.

I want you to just close your eyes and ask yourself, when it comes to your drinking, when it comes to your relationship with alcohol, what do you truly think about your ability to change? Go with that first knee-jerk response. Not what you're supposed to think. Not, what you hear me say on this podcast. What is, truly, your belief about your ability to change your relationship with alcohol? Because that is everything; you have to start there.

You can't start with a place of, this is what I'm supposed to think, this is what I should think, you have to start with where you actually are. Once you know where you actually are, then you can start to change it. But I will tell you, this is what kept me stuck for so long.

I told myself, for years and years and years, "I'm just someone who loves to drink. I'm just someone who thinks more is better. I'm just someone who doesn't have a lot of willpower." I thought that I was just relating the truth about me. I would also tell myself, "I feel like I'm always going to struggle. I'm always going to struggle with my drinking. I'm always going to struggle with food. I'm always going to struggle with self-discipline. I just feel like I'm never going to be able to figure this out."

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Again, this, to me, was just relaying the truth. I would look back on all my past attempts. All the times where I had failed. All the times where I had broken a commitment, and I used that as evidence to say, "Yes, see? This is just what my life is always going to be like."

I would tell myself, "You know, I think you're always going to feel like you're missing out. You're not having as much fun. You're not connecting with people if you're not drinking. And if you say no, you're probably always going to feel a little awkward, and worry about what people think of you, and worry that people might wonder if you have a problem."

All of these beliefs, I had them for so long. I practiced them over and over again. And, I didn't even think that they were optional thoughts. I really, truly believed that it was the truth of my situation. Because that's what the think-feel-act cycle does.

We don't understand, number one, that it's even operating in the background. Or, number two, how it is perpetuating these thoughts. The more that we think these thoughts, the more that we are creating feelings that generate actions, that just provide more evidence that it is true.

And so, here's the thing; I was stuck there for so long and yet, I figured out how to change. I changed my desire to drink. I changed my mindset about the role that alcohol played in my life. I changed my relationship with my cravings. And the question is how? How did I do that? What is the difference?

Right now, as you're listening to me, what's the difference between you and me? How did I make this leap, when I had all of these thoughts for so many years? I will tell you this, I am not smarter than you. I do not have some sort of endless reserve of willpower; there is nothing special about me. The only difference is that someone finally showed me how to start, not only identifying that these were thoughts that would perpetuate themselves. It

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wasn't just me relaying the truth of my life; it was an optional thought. But also, someone taught me how to start shifting them in believable ways.

That's what I want to offer for you, today. I spend so much time working with people inside *Take a Break*, inside the membership, just working on this. Because no one teaches us how to do it at school. It's really, like the most important thing we should be learning. And, no one teaches us how to do it.

You have to learn how to baby step. You have to learn how to start kind of tweaking and editing and shifting your thoughts in ways that feel like, okay, maybe it feels like a little bit of a stretch, but also, part of me can believe it. Right? To go from, "I don't know, I'm just always going to be someone who thinks more is better." That's just what I believed was the truth about me. I didn't think this was a thought, again, I thought this was just who Rachel was.

To be able to shift it to, "You know what? Maybe, this thought that I keep having, 'More is better,' maybe it's not who I am. Maybe it's just a thought that I've practiced over and over again, until I started believing it was a truth about me." Notice, all I'm doing there, is just calling out the thought for what it is. It's just a thought, it's not who I am.

That alone can be so transformative. To start to separate out your thoughts, and not make them your identity. I mean, it's just a thought that I practiced over and over again, until I started to believe it was a truth about me. But maybe, it's not the truth about me. Maybe, it's just a sentence that my brain is really good at thinking.

I learned how to baby step from the place of, you know, this is always going to be my struggle. I'm always going to struggle with my drinking, and it's so unfair. Oh, man, I just thought like, "Why me? Why is this my struggle?"

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Look at all these people in my life who aren't struggling with this?" It felt so incredibly unfair to me.

And I started to shift to, okay, maybe this struggle, maybe it's trying to show me something. Maybe, it's trying to teach me something about my relationship with discomfort, and how I cope with emotions. Maybe actually, it really doesn't have that much to do with alcohol. Maybe, I can start to see how this struggle shows up in other areas of my life.

You know, all I really started to do was see that instead of this struggle being this like unfair thing that I was saddled with, to start to see like, well, maybe it has a little bit of a purpose. Again, I wasn't going to rainbows and unicorns. But just the idea that maybe, it's trying to show me something, maybe I can learn something from this. Maybe, there is a purpose behind what I am dealing with right now. And it's not just some sort of unfair weight that has been strapped to my back.

I baby stepped from; I'm just never going to have as much fun as I do when I'm drinking. Oh, I had so much evidence for this. I had so much evidence that when I wasn't drinking, I was all caught up in my head. I was all caught up in judging myself and worrying about myself.

And I didn't know how to kind of be at ease in my body, and I needed the drink. I needed the intoxication in order to actually just have fun and relax, and forget about work, and forget about my worries and forget about my hang ups.

I was so sure that this was true, until I started telling myself, "You know what, Rachel? Maybe, it's possible. Maybe, it's possible that I can return to a time when I didn't need to consume something in order to have fun; I just created fun." And mind you, I had to look pretty far back into my childhood.

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But there was a point in my childhood, where I wasn't consuming things in order to have fun. I didn't need anything outside of me, really. I just knew how to create fun. I knew how to do that with my mind. And then I, over time, kind of lost that skill. The more that I told myself, I needed to eat something or drink something or consume something, in order to feel good, in order to have fun.

What I want you to consider right now, is that this is the only difference between you and me. This is it; the ability to start to not only identify your thoughts, rather than seeing them as this is just who you are. But once you identify them, being able to baby step them into believable shifts. Into a new possibility that you can actually start to practice instead.

You can start practicing believing. That's the gift that I want to give you, right now. To take whatever your belief is, whatever your belief is about your ability to change. Your true belief, what you really think about your ability to change your drinking. To become someone who doesn't always say yes to your urges and your cravings. To change your relationship with alcohol.

Whatever that belief is right now, to take it and just see it as a sentence that needs editing. That's all it is, it's sentence. We know how to edit our sentences, you do it all the time you do it in emails, you do it in text messages. You know how to do this. You just don't realize that you can apply that same skill of editing, what you have written, to the thoughts that you are thinking.

Everyone has that ability. You have that ability, you just haven't applied it here, yet; editing your thoughts to consider what's possible. To remind yourself, "You know what? This isn't who I am, it's just a thought that I've practiced over and over again. And the more I've practiced it, the more evidence I've created that it's true. But it's still just a sentence."

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Or editing it to contemplate; hey, what is this struggle trying to show me? What could it, maybe, be trying to teach? What could it be trying to reveal to me about my relationship with discomfort? Or, my relationship with cravings? Or, my relationship with urges or, you know, emotions? To get yourself starting to see that it might have a purpose.

And then, just considering the possibility; it might be possible that I'm not always going to feel like I'm missing out if I say, no. It might be possible that I will be able to relax and feel at ease, and know how to handle whatever comes my way, without immediately turning to a drink.

This is what I want for all of you. I just really want you, today, to think about, there's nothing different between where you are and where I am right now, other than understanding and knowing how to use this skill of starting to believably shift your thoughts. That's it. That's all you need. It is a skill that will help you change your drinking. It's a skill that will help you with everything in your life.

Give yourself that gift, today. Take out a pen and paper, write down your belief, and then just practice editing. It will feel weird, at first. It's okay, let it feel a little weird. Let it feel a little uncomfortable. The more you do it, the better at it you will get. This truly is the only skill, the most fundamental skill that you need in order to change your drinking.

All right, everyone. 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.

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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.