

Ep #318: How to Say No When You're Having a Bad Day



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Rachel Hart

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

Ep #318: How to Say No When You're Having a Bad Day

You are listening to the *Take A Break* podcast with Rachel Hart, Episode 318.

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.

Hey, everybody, we are talking about something that I deal with quite a bit with people inside *Take a Break*. And that is the question; what am I supposed to do when I'm having a crappy day? How am I supposed to say no to the drink? How am I supposed to stop raiding the pantry when this day has just been terrible?

Now, I will tell you, especially when you start doing the work and the learning about the think-feel-act cycle; learning how your feelings don't just happen. They're connected to what's unfolding in your mind. The meaning that you're attaching to everything that's happening. And of course, you all hear me say all the time, your actions don't just happen. It's connected to that bigger picture, those feelings, and those thoughts.

And so, the temptation when you learn this work and you start to realize, "Oh, if I shift my thoughts, I can feel better," that is such a powerful, powerful lesson to learn and skill to have. But the temptation is to believe that you should never have a bad day.

To believe that you should never have a negative emotion. And then, you start endlessly searching for, "What do I need to think? Just tell me the thought that I need to think so that I don't have to experience this bad day.

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

Ep #318: How to Say No When You're Having a Bad Day

So that I can avoid then trying to drink over it or eat over it.” This is a trap. It does not work this way.

Because I don't care how much thought work you practice. That's what I'm teaching here, how to actually start to work with your thoughts. How to edit them. You know how to edit all the other sentences in your life. You know how to edit emails and text messages and documents.

Well, let's edit the sentences that your brain comes up with. Let's do that work that no one teaches us, because then we're in so much more of an empowered position. But I will promise you, it does not matter how long you do this work, how skilled you become at editing, you're not going to get to the place where you erase having the human experience.

Because the human experience is not just positive emotions. We were designed to have both the positive and the negative. I tell people this all the time. When they are working with me, I say, “Listen, you have to start to normalize how you're feeling.” Because if you always meet anger and frustration and annoyance and boredom and awkwardness, and whatever the negative emotion is that you particularly don't like. You're always meeting it from this place of something has gone wrong, I need to fix this.

It's the same problem when you meet your urges, the urge to drink, with, “Oh no, something has gone wrong.” No, the brain was designed to have urges in response to rewards. That's normal. The problem is when we start to make it mean that we have to say yes to the urge. That the urge has power over us. That saying no is terrible, and we have to fight it and we have to distract ourselves.

Well, the same is true with our emotions. We were designed to have the full human experience. And the problem is when we start telling ourselves,

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

Ep #318: How to Say No When You're Having a Bad Day

"No, no, I shouldn't be feeling this way." So, the first thing you always have to do is really normalize how you're feeling. Nothing has gone wrong. And this is really important.

Once you do that, you can start to dial down the intensity of how you're feeling. You cannot delete negative emotions from your life. But you can learn how to take the drama and the catastrophizing and the black-and-white thinking and the all-or-nothing thoughts, you can learn how to remove those so your negative emotions aren't nearly as intense and you're more able to work through them.

Because here's the thing, bad days do not require a drink, they do not require food. Bad days, all they need is you. Bad days are moments for you to practice having your own back. I talk about this a lot.

And people will say, "Rachel, what does that mean? What does it mean to have your own back?" Well, think about how you have your friend's back. What does that look like? What are all the ways in which you support this person? All the ways in which you help them see a different perspective?

What are all the ways that you show them what's amazing about them? And how they're so much more capable than they think they are? And how they can do so much more and have done so much more than they give themselves credit for?

We know how to do this for other people. But we don't have a lot of practice applying this to ourselves. This is what we need. When we're having a bad day, we need to practice supporting ourselves in ways that help rather than creating all these negative consequences. I also think we need to acknowledge the suffering that we're in, in the moment, rather than dismissing it.

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

Ep #318: How to Say No When You're Having a Bad Day

How many times have you told yourself, "Oh, I shouldn't be this stressed. I shouldn't be this worried about this. This is silly," right? Instead of just acknowledging, "Hey, this is where I am right now. This is what I'm feeling and I can start to put it in perspective. I can start to dial down the intensity. But I'm not going to make it mean that I'm doing something wrong."

We can really remind ourselves, hey, we're so much more capable than we give ourselves credit for. We're so much more capable to navigate these moments. We can navigate our emotional experience without turning to a drink, without turning to food. We were designed to do that.

But so often, when we're having a bad day, we do the exact opposite, right? We have all these thoughts like, "This is too much. I can't handle it. It's never going to get better. I'm never going to figure this out. You know, my needs always come last. Nobody respects me."

We tell ourselves all the time that we shouldn't feel how we're feeling, while we're feeling it. So, what are we doing? We're catastrophizing. We're believing that we're not capable. We're adding drama to the situation and we're dismissing how we feel.

Listen, what you need when you're having a bad day is not a drink, it's to stop doing all of that. Because when you're doing those things, that's why you're heading to the fridge and opening up a bottle of wine. That's why you're staring, opening up the pantry doors and just staring. Like, "Oh, God, what can I eat now?"

None of what you are consuming is happening because you're having a bad day. It's happening because you don't have your back in these moments. And by the way, not your fault. No one taught you how. No one taught us about the think-feel-act cycle.

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

Ep #318: How to Say No When You're Having a Bad Day

No one helped us see that the knee-jerk automatic responses, the meaning that our brain just automatically makes, no one taught us to say, "Hey, you know what? You can challenge that." Just because your brain came up with that meaning doesn't mean you have to accept it.

When you're having a bad day, the temptation is just to say screw it and have the drink and raid the fridge. But what I want you to consider is, the only reason that that's what my response is, is because of everything else that's happening behind the scenes.

All of the thoughts that this is too much, that I can't handle it. All of the worries about how I'm never going to figure this out, it's never going to get better; all of the ways. We don't mean to but we kind of endlessly dramatize what we're going through, we make it worse.

All of the ways we tell ourselves we shouldn't feel how we feel. We dismiss our feelings. We try to push them away, instead of just being there and saying, "You know what? Yeah, you feel this way. You haven't done anything wrong. That's okay. And I can help you start to turn down the intensity. I can have your back in this moment."

It's such a different shift. It's such a different shift to understand, "I'm not drinking because I had a bad day. I'm drinking because of what happened next. Everything that I'm telling myself." And the solution is not to get rid of all bad days, for, you know, the end of time, because that's not possible.

The solution is, "Okay. So, how do I learn to show up differently in these moments? How do I start to talk to myself differently?" You have to. If you want to change your relationship with alcohol, you have to start talking to yourself more than you're listening to yourself.

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

Ep #318: How to Say No When You're Having a Bad Day

And when you do that, you will start to see that it is actually much easier than you think to not reach for the drink or not reach for the food when you're having a bad day. Because you know how to talk to yourself differently. And that changes everything.

All right. 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 and start your transformation today.