

Ep #334: Why You're Going Back for More



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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 334.

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. So, on today's episode, I want to cover five categories of thoughts that may keep you drinking once you started. I've talked about all of these different categories before on the podcast, but I'm bringing them together today, because I want you to kind of listen to this and see if one or more, or maybe all of them, are contributing to how much you're drinking.

So, I'm just going to dive right in with the first category of thoughts that can keep you drinking once you've started, and that is opposition to waste. What am I talking about here? I'm talking about what happens when you look at an almost empty wine bottle. You look at that almost empty wine bottle and you think, "Oh, I might as well finish what's in the bottle. I shouldn't let it go to waste." It was, maybe expensive. Maybe it's a rare vintage. Maybe neither, maybe you just think you shouldn't be wasteful.

So, instead of stopping when we've had enough, we unconsciously focus on not wasting. It's so fascinating when you start to see this happening. A lot of people have a very similar thought when it comes to food. But this idea of, "Instead of tuning into my body, I'm going to focus and pay attention to not wasting something." Which of course, it's a little funny, because if you drink past the point of having had enough, that extra alcohol you are consuming, it's going to waste inside of you.

But so often, we get really fixated on not wanting to waste things. And we don't realize how that, even in small areas where we think, "Oh, what does

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it really matter? What does it really matter if I finished what's left in the bottle or what's left in the glass?" But it does matter, because you're consistently looking outside of you for indications of when to stop drinking, rather than tuning into yourself.

The second thing that I see happen a lot is that you'll end up using your eyes rather than your body to tell you when you've had enough. So, this is similar but different from this idea of opposition to waste. I've talked about this before, the idea of the clean plate club. The idea that it's a good thing to finish all the food on your plate, regardless of whether or not you're hungry. Regardless of whether or not you actually want it.

Well, many people have grown up with this premise, 'it's good to finish everything'. And I see the clean plate club kind of turning into the clean glass club, right? Instead of listening to your body to determine, again, "Hey, have I had enough?" I'm using my eyes and looking to see, "Hey, is this just all done?"

So, maybe it has nothing to do with opposition to waste. Maybe it's just that habit of getting a gold star for finishing everything. Whether it is finishing off the glass or polishing off the bottle, your eyes are not a good indication of when you should stop. But think about how often you use your eyes to determine.

Now, I know a lot of you are listening, and one of the things that happens when I introduce this, especially when we do this work inside the membership, after people have done the 30-Day Challenge, there are a segment of people who are interested in reintroducing alcohol. And so, we do the work with the mindful drink. To sort of build that muscle of being mindful while you're drinking.

And one of the things that I see comes up a lot, is people feeling like, 'whoa, I really can't trust my body. My body is not a good gauge. It is not

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something that I should pay attention to. In fact, I have too much desire. My body kind of lets me down.' And so, this, in particular, can be something that can be challenging to really step into that place of, 'maybe I can stop relying on my eyes. Maybe actually, there is good information in my body for me.'

And I will tell you that I have just worked with people over and over again, who are so amazed when they start to realize, "Oh, yeah, I am actually getting all these subtle cues of when I've had enough. My body is trying to tell me, but I've been so used to using my eyes to determine when I'm done, that I just haven't paid any attention."

On top of it, if you don't trust your body, then it's very hard to listen to it. So, those are the first two: Opposition to waste, and then also, using your eyes or being in that habit of getting a gold star just for finishing something.

The third category of thoughts is really believing more is better. This was a big one for me, "If a little is good, more is better." And it didn't just show up in my drinking, it really showed up, really with everything in life. So, for me, it was like more food is better, more money is better, more accomplishments, more attention, more accolades, more stuff. Like, more, more, more is better.

And again, all of this comes back to this idea that your external environment really is in charge of how you feel. Which of course, if you're listening to the podcast, and you're hearing me talk about the think-feel-act cycle, what you're learning, is starting to pay attention to what's actually happening in my mind? What's unfolding there? Let's pay less attention to my external environment and pay more attention to my thoughts.

But again, this is a category of thoughts that for many people, it shows up in way more areas than just drinking. And so, it really is a habit that many people develop well before they start drinking. Now, the beauty of doing

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this work, specifically around alcohol, is that when you start to unravel this thought 'more is better' when it comes to the glass of wine, you start to unravel this thought in other areas of your life as well.

And so, I think for that reason, doing this work can be really, really powerful in the belief that 'more is better'. Something that kind of is along those lines, but slightly different. This fourth category of, "I don't want the fun to end." So often I'll talk to people, and they say, "Listen, but if I stopped drinking, then the night's over, the fun is over. I have to go home. I have to acknowledge that maybe, yeah, I'm tired. Or that it will actually be hard for me to keep up with everyone else if I stop."

Again, it seems silly, but we're so used to using the intoxicating effects of alcohol to really push past how much energy we actually have. This is something that a lot of people will fall into. Kind of not wanting to recognize, "You know what? My body is saying, the nights over, I'm tired, it's time to go home. I don't want to acknowledge that. So, let's keep the party going. Let's keep drinking."

Or sometimes people might say, "No, no, no, I have plenty of energy. It's just I'm not going to have a good time if everyone else is having another round, and then I switch to seltzer." And so then, it's really a matter of dealing with the deprivation that comes up.

I will say again, this was especially true for me, I never, in my life, even when I was in college, I have not ever been a night owl. Even back in those days. Even when I was going out and partying a lot. One of the things that I didn't realize at the time is that I was so tired before heading out. I really needed that drink to kind of get me started before I even walked out the door. And I didn't realize until well after how much I was using alcohol as a way to keep my energy up.

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So, paying attention to this piece, paying attention to, are you continuing to drink because you think if you stop the fun is going to end? Whether or not you physically don't have the energy or you're afraid of feeling deprived.

And then finally, the last category of thought that I want you to pay attention to is, "I've already started, so I might as well finish." It can also look like, "Well, I already have the glass. The glass was already poured for me. I already placed my order. I already opened the bottle. So, I might as well finish."

This one is so insidious, because so many of us have a kind of all-or-nothing attitude towards change. And the idea that 'if I'm going to change then I need to be a good rule follower. So, the moment that I don't follow the rule, then I've already started, so I might as well keep going'.

What happens when you tell yourself, "I'm not going to drink," and then you give in? It's like, "Okay, well you know..." For me, it was always like, "Okay, now I'm off to the races, because I already didn't do the thing that I said I wasn't going to do. So now, I might as well just go all in."

Or what happens when you set a limit, and then you go over that limit? Same thing. Again, it's that mentality of, 'well, I broke the rule. So, I just might as well finish what I have. I might as well keep going'. But I want you, today, to really just think about these five categories of thoughts. There are other categories, other thoughts that can have you continue on, but these are the ones that I see come up the most often.

And the reason why I'm sharing this, is really just to kind of plant the seed, maybe when you look at your relationship with alcohol, and you look at how much you consume, maybe the quantity that you're consuming isn't about alcohol. It isn't about the intoxicating effects. It's not the fact that once you start, you can't stop.

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I want you to start to consider what are the thoughts, what are the beliefs, that I'm bringing with me, that are already kind of baked into my head? What are the thoughts that I have practiced, maybe, well before I started drinking, that then are influencing how much I drink?

There's so much power in doing this work. There's so much power in stepping back and pausing and saying, "Hmm, what else might be going on here? What thoughts, what feelings, might be influencing how much I am consuming?"

Because the most important thing for you to understand, is no matter what your particular goal is, when it comes to changing your relationship with alcohol, if you don't ever do any work on these thought patterns, what's going to happen is you're going to keep this belief that 'once I start, I can't stop.' And so, the moment that you aren't perfect, guess what's going to happen?

Looking at these thoughts is really setting you up so that you don't have to be perfect. And really, what I think is so remarkable and so powerful, is seeing how you can step into this place of authority with yourself, this place of comfort with yourself, just by examining the thought patterns that you have been informing your relationship with alcohol.

Because if you can start to see those thought patterns, you can start to change them. That is the one thing, and that's the one thing that I hope, really, for everyone listening, we don't need to change everything in our world. We don't need to go into the woods and hide out and never be around alcohol. We don't need a new friend group.

We don't need to change all these things in our life if we just focus on the think-feel-act cycle. If we just pay attention to these thought patterns, and understanding how it's influencing our drinking. So, think today, spend

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some time thinking about where some of these thought patterns show up for you.

Alright, that's it for today. 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.

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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