

Ep #335: Compelling Reason 3.0



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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 335.

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.

Hello, everybody, welcome back. We are talking about compelling reasons today. I've talked about this many times before on the podcast. But it's been a while and I thought it was time to revisit compelling reasons, because it's something that I have people work on as soon as they start doing the work inside *Take a Break*. You really got to get it out on paper, not in your head.

You've got to write out as many compelling reasons for "why". Why you want to have a different relationship with alcohol? Whether that is to drink less, whether it is to stop drinking, whether you're in this position of 'I don't know what I want, I just know that I want something to be different.' What are your compelling reasons?

Now, most of the time, people will start from a place of health. The negative consequences, or impact, that alcohol is having on the body. I think it's good to include physical health as well, when you're thinking about getting down as many compelling reasons as you can. But I really like for people to think about every single aspect of their life, and your physical health is just one piece.

There's also your emotional wellbeing. So, emotional wellbeing, that can mean both the worry and anxiety and negative emotion and time spent worrying about your drinking. It can also be the fact that many people experience, after a night of drinking, they'll wake up feeling a little low, a

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little down, or a little blue. I think one of the amazing things that so many people find when they start doing this work, is how their moods start to level out.

So, you can think about your emotional wellbeing in terms of how alcohol may be affecting your mood. But also, how your worry and anxiety about your drinking is leading to not great emotional wellbeing. You can think about productivity and time. What would you be doing differently? How would you be using your time differently? Would you be waking up earlier in the morning?

For me, mornings are a time that, when I'm able to do it, when I'm able to have that early morning time before the rest of my family wakes up, those days are always so much better for me. Just to have some time for myself to think before the day gets started, before kids need food, before people are going off to school and I'm getting ready for work. That's such a magical time for me.

So, thinking about how would your mornings be different? How would your evenings be different? What would that look like? I can't even tell you the number of times that I would stop by the liquor store on the way home from work. I would pick up a bottle of wine. Of course, with the intention of 'I'll just have a glass or two.' And then by the end of the night, the entire bottle was gone.

It was like, what am I doing with my evenings? What am I doing with this time? I felt like I was spending so much time drinking, and often a lot of time recovering from drinking. It was sucking up a lot of time on the weekends. The number of times that maybe I started with a boozy brunch with friends, and then you just...

It's fun at first and then you have that kind of slump. And then it's like, "Well, if I'm going to keep my energy going, I might as well keep drinking.

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So, how would your productivity be different? How you spend your time? How would that be different? What about money? This is a big thing. I think a lot of times we think only about money spent on alcohol. But the truth is, it lowers your inhibitions. So, it's not just the money spent on the bottle of wine, on the cocktail, it's what else are you purchasing that maybe you wouldn't have? Maybe you would have thought twice about?

I remember, in my early 20s, going with a friend after work for happy hour, having probably three or four drinks, and then deciding that we were going to go shopping. Buying myself a purse that I had no business purchasing, like I did not have the money to do this. And the next day, it was just like, "Rachel, what on earth were you thinking?"

So, it's not just the money that you spend on drinking, it's the money that maybe you spend buying things that you wouldn't otherwise buy. Or ordering extra food that you might not normally eat; you might think twice about. It's also the money wasted, right? Maybe you signed up for a gym. But you have a couple of drinks, and you're less likely to actually make good on that membership or meet with a trainer. So, thinking about that money piece.

Memory, this is a big one. And memory is not just, "Oh, I don't remember what happened last night." I think it's a level of just kind of sharpness. And that's a piece that I missed for a long time. If I was ever thinking about concerns about my memory, when it came to drinking, it was purely, "I don't remember what I did last night." But the fact of the matter was, I just was not as sharp. I was spending a lot of time the next day, just not fully there.

So, thinking about that. Thinking about sleep. Thinking about energy. You can think a lot about the people in your life. So, that might be romantic relationships, friendships, socializing, your kids? What are the compelling reasons when it comes to the relationships in your life?

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What are the compelling reasons for why you want to change your drinking? What does that look like? What about your education? What about your job? What about your career, your hobbies, your interests, your dreams, your goals? I mean, there's so much that you really can explore.

That is one of the first exercises I always have people do. I encourage people to get down as many compelling reasons as they can. The worksheet that we have, it has space for 20. I know that people start kind of scratching their head, like, "Oh, God, I've got to find like another compelling reason?"

But just the exercise of thinking about all the ways that drinking is impacting different areas of your life can be incredibly, incredibly useful, and important. And so, it's important to get those compelling reasons out. And it's important to write them down. But I also always caution people to be very careful with what they think the purpose of a compelling reason is.

Because there is this misconception, that I had for a long time, that I see a lot of people have, that if I just find the right reason, if I just find that one super compelling reason, then change is going to be easy. I think that it connects back to this idea of rock bottom. This idea of almost like a spiritual awakening or conversion that we have one awful, terrible, no-good night; that's our moment of rock bottom. And then we decide, "Never again, I can't do this anymore," and everything changes.

People talk about it often, almost like a spiritual conversion. Almost like, "I woke up the next day, and everything was different. I decided enough was enough, and I never looked back." Listen, if that is your experience, amazing. That was not my experience. That is not the experience of most people that I work with.

Most people, yes, they will have moments where they really decide, "You know what? I want to do something about this. I need to do something

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about this. I don't like this relationship.” But the idea that you can just find this kind of perfectly compelling reason, and then change is going to be easy, that is fiction. Truly.

I think it's important to know that. It's important to know that the purpose of really understanding what your compelling reasons are, is not to make change easy. The purpose of your compelling reason is to ensure that you keep moving towards change even in the face of discomfort. Because it will be uncomfortable at times.

It will be uncomfortable to say no to your urges. It will be uncomfortable sometimes to be the only person not drinking. It will be uncomfortable when you go to someone's house, and they just open up a bottle of wine assuming that you're going to have a drink. It will be uncomfortable if you want to limit yourself, if you want to say no after a certain number. That discomfort is coming, but it's also not a problem.

Discomfort is how we change. It's how we grow. It's how we evolve. It's how we build a muscle. That's so much of what I think this work really truly is. It's about developing the muscle of being able to allow those urges and watch them pass. Not immediately give in. Not make the urge itself a problem.

So, what is that compelling reason for you? What would be motivating for you to do this work? To face inevitable discomfort? Now, I'm not saying it's going to be uncomfortable forever. But when you're stepping outside of your comfort zone, it's going to be a little uncomfortable at first. That's okay. But what would make it worth it to you?

That's a moment where I think we really need to kind of go beyond, “I wouldn't be waking up with a hangover. I'd be a better role model for my kids.” But really thinking about: Who do I want to be? Who am I trying to become?

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I've talked about this on another episode, where I give a lot of ideas about what a really amazing compelling reason can sound like. But what I find is that a compelling reason, when it really feels motivating, it's talking about the person that you're trying to become. Why is it worth it to you to learn how to manage your lower brain? Why is it worth it to you to not always give into your urges?

Yes, there are physical benefits and emotional benefits, and benefits with your productivity and time and money and all of that. But can you connect to something deeper? Can you connect to this idea of who you want to be? Who you're trying to become? The person that you are stepping into? This is something that, when we do the work inside *Take a Break* to talk back to excuses, to find believable ways to talk back, it's not just about saying no, no, no, over again.

It's about coming up with responses that actually feel like it gives you something to latch onto. A lot of times, we will talk about, and we will come up with ideas that are very connected to, "This is who I'm trying to become. This is a version of me that I'm trying to step into."

I talked about this on the podcast before. I talked about, years ago, working with a client who said her compelling reason was she wanted to be the captain of her soul. It gave me goosebumps. I thought, "Yeah, that's amazing." I want to be the captain of my soul, too. Don't we all? So, what is that rationale? Listen, it's not supposed to come to you, immediately.

You're going to have to spend time with this. You're going to have to think about who is the person that I'm trying to be? What is the best version of myself? What are they doing? How are they different? Not the perfect version, but that version of myself that's willing to move towards discomfort, that challenges myself.

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That version of myself who believes that I can handle the difficult moments. That I can handle stress, or anxiety or awkwardness or deprivation without reaching for a drink. Who is that person?

And then finally, the piece that I want to talk about, is what would you be using your mental energy for, when you free up mental energy? Because that really is, what I truly believe is the promise of what I'm teaching for all of you. It's not about quantity. It's not about limiting yourself to a certain number, or never drinking again.

It's about freeing up your mental energy. I really think that how much you drink is only one part of truly changing the habit. Just as important, just as transformative, is getting rid of all that constant back and forth, all that internal drama. The debate of, should I drink tonight? How much? Am I going to be good? Are people judging me? Why did I mess up again? Why can I figure this out? What's wrong with me? All of that back and forth, that drama.

What would happen if it wasn't there? What if all of that brain chatter about your drinking was eliminated? If your mind was quiet in this area? By quiet, I mean, if you don't want to drink, it's an easy decision that you make without a ton of back and forth. Right? Saying no, doesn't feel like you're missing out or stuck at the kids table. It's just, "Meh, I'm not into it."

And if you do want to say yes, well, you're able to make a conscious decision without feeling like you're on autopilot, right? You enjoy it and then you move on, because drinking is no longer the best part of who you're with or what you're doing. That's what I'm talking about when I'm talking about your mind being quiet. You just make a decision without all this chatter.

So, then the question is, if you freed up all the energy that you're using right now to think about drinking and debate how much and beat yourself up and make it mean that something's wrong with you...

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If you freed up all of that mental energy, what would you use it for? I think sometimes this can be a scary question for people. I know it would have been for me. Like, "I don't know. I just need to figure this out. But I don't know what I'm going to do with this. I'm not sure what I'm supposed to do with my life."

I think it's intimidating because we think that there's supposed to be some sort of right answer here. But all of us, I really believe that every single person, we all have things that we want to do. We have goals. We have ideas. We have things that we want to bring to life. We have things that we want to see in this world.

What would you be using all this extra energy for? Who would you be stepping into? And this, to me, really is the power of doing this work. The power of learning how to have authority over your lower brain and over your urges. Yes, it's about being in control and in charge of the decisions that you make around alcohol. But more importantly, it is about really becoming the next version of yourself.

I think so often, one of the things that is very painful as a human is when you feel stuck. I know I felt stuck in so many areas of my life for so long. It just felt like, "I'm not making progress. I'm not moving forward." I think that we're here, not to be stuck, but to constantly grow and evolve and to learn. And the question for you is, to what end? What do you want to grow and evolve and learn towards?

There's no right answer here. It's just worthwhile spending time thinking about that. Because that is the promise of why it's worthwhile to do this work. Why it's worthwhile to let yourself be a little restless or a little uncomfortable or worry what people will think. That's the promise, you're doing it so that you can step into the next version of yourself.

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So, think about those compelling reasons. You can go back and revisit my other two episodes on this. But the work that you do here, it helps so much to show you why it's worthwhile, and the direction that you are headed in.

Alright, 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.

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