

Ep #377: Special Occasion Drinking



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Rachel Hart

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You are listening to the Take a Break Podcast with Rachel Hart, Episode 377.

Hey everyone, welcome back. Today we are talking about an excuse that comes up quite a bit when you are trying to change your relationship with alcohol, and that excuse is, "It's a special occasion."

Maybe you're one of those people who has made a lot of headway with your drinking. It's no longer part of your routine. It's no longer just what you automatically do when the day is over. You're drinking way less, but then you look at the calendar and you see a party, or a birthday, or an anniversary, or a wedding, or something special coming up. And you start to think, "Am I not going to drink that? How much am I going to drink? How much am I allowed to drink?" Or maybe something random comes up. Maybe your best friend gets a promotion or a friend you haven't seen in years comes into town and suddenly it's not just a regular tuesday, it's a special occasion. And special occasions need a celebratory drink or one or two or more.

This is an excuse that comes up for The Upgrade archetype quite a bit. When this archetype is activated, the brain associates alcohol with elevating whatever you are doing. Drinking makes everything like the meal, the celebration, the sunset, a little bit better. By the way, if you don't know about the eight different Drink Archetypes and how they show up in your drinking, make sure you take the quiz, go to drinktype.com. You can take the quiz there. You'll get your results that will help you better understand why it's hard for you to resist temptation and what you need to focus on to change.

This excuse, "It's a special occasion", it shows up a lot for The Upgrade archetype, but you know what? It can appear regardless of your particular blueprint of archetypes that you have. And I will tell you this, you're probably not going to get very far with this excuse by focusing on how healthy you're being by saying no, or by limiting how much you're drinking. Because in that moment, you don't want to be healthy, you want to

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celebrate. And I don't want you to get in a tug of war with yourself, feeling like your choices are, "I can have a good time or I can miss out."

The real trick for dealing with this excuse is not about telling yourself that you're being healthy if you don't drink or if you limit yourself. It's not about trying to remind yourself how good you're going to feel tomorrow. It's about turning this excuse on its head and asking yourself a simple question.

"Why isn't this moment enough?" Whatever you're doing, the dinner you're at, the birthday you're celebrating, the friend that you're with. Whatever it is, ask yourself and really answer the question, "Why isn't this moment enough on its own?" I really want you to consider that question and consider what your answer is because this is what happens when drinking becomes a habit. The more that you start to outsource to a drink, the less enticing everything seems without the drink.

The more that you teach your brain that alcohol makes what you're doing better or more special, the more you actually diminish what is good and what is special and amazing around you. That's not to say that there's something wrong with a champagne toast. It's just to help you realize that the champagne toast can sometimes act like blinders on you. Rather than making things more special, your brain is just fixated searching for how to make the moment better, to make it more celebratory, to find the way to enhance it to the highest level.

When your brain is caught in this loop, it can actually distract you from the all the specialness surrounding you. It can actually take away from the moment. Ask yourself this question the next time you have the excuse like, "Oh, but it's a special occasion."

"Why isn't this moment I'm in enough?" Instead of going to this place of starting to wrestle with how much should I or shouldn't I drink? Instead of trying to fixate on a number, let's just get curious to the answer for this question. Because changing your relationship with alcohol, it's not about denying yourself pleasure. It's the opposite. It's about moving towards it. It's

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about finding all the pleasures around you that your brain wants to overlook because simply it's just fixated on what it perceives to be the highest reward in the environment.

But the highest reward in the environment, whether it's a drink or whether it's sugar, whatever it is, it's not much of a reward if you are consuming it at the expense of yourself. If you can't stop thinking about it, you can't actually be present because you're so fixated on whether or not you're going to have any or whether or not you're going to have more.

Moving towards pleasure means moving towards pleasures that don't leave you feeling unsatisfied. Don't leave you always clamoring for more, but pleasures that actually stay with you. Pleasures like being in the company of the people that you love. Celebrating another year on earth celebrating an anniversary that you have with someone that you deeply, deeply care about. The next time you hear this excuse, but it's a special occasion, I want you to turn that excuse on its head and ask yourself, "Why isn't this moment enough?"

All right, that's it for today. I will see you next week.