

## Ep #416: Are You in a Pleasure Desert?



### Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

**Rachel Hart**

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Do you run around all day trying to get everything done and then find yourself drinking in the evenings because you deserve it and you deserve to feel good? This is episode 416 and I'm explaining how the Reward archetype and the Upgrade archetypes often go hand in hand and why they can make it so hard to resist temptation at the end of the day. I'm also gonna talk about what you need to do to break out of this cycle, and I promise it's not what you expect.

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.

All right, so if you've ever joined me on one of my webinars or one of my coaching calls, you may have caught a glimpse of my Bernedoodle, Violet, hanging out in my office. She's actually asleep in my office right now. She's three years old. I'm obsessed with her, to put it mildly.

We got her when she was 10 weeks old. I think I was seven months pregnant when we got her, which is a kind of insane time to get a puppy. Everyone in our neighborhood made clear, like, what are you guys doing? This is a crazy time to get a puppy. But I guess we figured, you know, our life was going to get crazier with the second baby. So why not make it even crazier with a puppy?

So she has been in my life for three years and I will tell you the other day, she really helped me understand something about the Upgrade archetype and the Reward archetype, and why these two are such a common pairing when it comes to drinking and drinking more than you want.

Now, if you don't know your archetypes, you can take the quiz at [drinktype.com](http://drinktype.com). You can also now go to [rachelhart.com](http://rachelhart.com) and read about the eight different archetypes and all the ways that they influence how much and how often you drink.

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But here's what happened. I'm sitting in my office and I hear this little rapid set of chirps and kind of strange huffing noises coming from my right. So this happened to me the other day and I turned and I saw that Violet was asleep in her dog bed, but that she was dreaming about something, right? So I could see her paws kind of shuffling back and forth as if she was running after something, and it was so cute, it was adorable.

But I was in the middle of trying to get a lot of work done before my boys got home, and maybe after two seconds, maybe I gave her two seconds of attention, I turned back to my computer. I kind of looked, saw that she was dreaming, thought, oh, how cute, and then turned back. That was kind of the full interaction that I had.

And I turned back to my computer and I was staring at the screen and I was just like, wait a moment, wait, what are you doing? You love Violet so much. And in fact, you often talk about wanting to have more pleasure in your day. And I just caught her mid-dream, and I couldn't even give her more than two seconds of my attention. Why am I in such a rush to not take in this very enjoyable sight for me and get back to work?

And when I had that little moment of awareness, I just turned back to her and I just watched her until her dream ended, until she fell back into peaceful sleep. Maybe it was a minute, maybe it was two. I don't even think it was two minutes, but I will tell you, it wasn't very long. It felt like a very long time because I am not used to giving her that kind of full uninterrupted attention.

You know, often when I think she's doing something really cute, I immediately wanna take a picture, I wanna video it, but I just said, Rachel, just give her your attention, just watch her right now. And so it felt like a long time, but it was actually relatively very short.

And when she was done with her cute little, you know, huffing and chirping noises, and when her paws stopped shuffling, I just turned back to my computer and I got back to work. It did not throw off my schedule. Dinner did not end up late on the table that night. But what happened was I went

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from giving that moment two seconds of really not very great attention to giving it probably 60 seconds, maybe 120 seconds of my full undivided attention.

And I will tell you that the pleasure that I got from watching her during that, the 60 to 120 seconds of undivided attention, that pleasure that I got was so much greater than that first time that I turned to my right and thought, oh, how cute, she's having a dream, and then turning back to my computer. It was so much better because I was really allowing myself to relish that positive emotion and to feel more of it.

And what I want you to consider is that your day is also filled with moments just like this. You don't need to have a Bernedoodle. You have little pleasures that you are not pausing to take in because you're also telling yourself that there's too much to do. Your knee jerk is, nope, I gotta get back to my list.

Most of you blow right by these moments without even noticing them, right? So you don't even notice that all of these moments of pleasure are available to you. Some of you do what I did, right? My knee jerk was, okay, I'll give it two seconds of attention and then, oh, that's nice, and then get back to work.

But it's really, really rare for adults, I see kids do this all the time, but it's really rare for adults to slow down and really take a moment like this in to really give all of our attention to these little pleasures. And guess what? Hurrying past all of these little pleasures that are sprinkled throughout your day, when you hurry past these moments, it will show up in your drinking. It will influence how much and how often you drink.

This is why when it comes to the eight archetypes, the reward and the Upgrade are such a common pairing. So many people experience them together. So the Upgrade is all about using a drink to elevate a situation or make things special, whereas the reward is about treating yourself for working really hard.

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So what I want you to think about is if you spend your days rushing around, doing all the things day after day, your focus is on, okay, I got to get everything done. Guess what is going to happen in the evening when it's all about checking things off your to-do list, the to-do list that by the way is never ending.

But when that is your focus every day is I got to do more, I got to do more, I got to get this done, I got to do this, I have to do this, when you end your day, when you finally have some time to yourself or your workday is officially over, and for a lot of you, if you're like me, your workday may be over, but now you're onto your second shift, now you're onto taking care of your family.

But when you finally have this moment in the evening, what are you going to do? You're going to try to pack your evenings with as much pleasure as you can find, which means you will pour a drink and then another and then another, all the while telling yourself that you deserve it and you deserve to feel good and you just wanna feel good, which by the way, you do deserve to feel good.

But when you try to outsource pleasure to alcohol, when that becomes your go-to, because you have a lack of pleasure throughout your day, and then you're trying to make up for it by, okay, let's open the bottle of wine, let's have a beer, let's fix a drink. Not only are you gonna end up with a lot of regret, you're not gonna like the results that you're getting from drinking, you're gonna drink more than you want, but when you're outsourcing all that pleasure to alcohol, what happens with the Upgrade archetype is that you fail to notice all these little moments of pleasure that are sprinkled throughout your day.

So you're not even taking them in, right? What I was doing in that moment was reminding myself, hey, Rachel, what if you just gave 60 seconds, 120 seconds to actually feel it and take it in? But most of you aren't even noticing these little moments that would make your day so much more pleasurable.

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Now, this is not about comparing the dopamine response that you get from looking at a dog that's dreaming to the dopamine response that you get from drinking a glass of wine, it's about understanding when it feels as if you are in a pleasure desert, when that is what your day feels like. It's like, oh God, I'm just slogging through and I just gotta do this and I gotta do this and you're not having any little moments of pleasure.

At the end of the day, you will have such a lack that you will try so hard to fill it up, but you're going to be filling it up with something that not only is not creating the outcome that you want, not only fills you with regret, but makes it harder for you to take in these little moments. That's what really happens with the Upgrade archetype.

It hijacks your brain into thinking that alcohol is the most important thing. Alcohol is the thing that makes everything better and makes things special. This is where the true enjoyment is. And it's like you get blinders on, and it's just kind of like, all right, I gotta make it through my day, right? And then I get to go home and I get to open up that bottle of wine or I get to go home and I get to have that beer.

So when I work with people on both of these archetypes, because they so often really do go hand in hand, we really have to start by taking a look at the Reward archetype and taking a look in particular at your beliefs about your to-do list. When your to-do list rules your waking hours, when it is the most important thing to try to cross everything off, that will also block your ability to notice and savor these tiny pleasures sprinkled throughout the random moments of your life. And I promise you, they are there.

For me in that moment, it was that little pleasure of watching Violet dream and feeling just how much I love her and how grateful that I am that she is in my life. You will have lots of moments like these, but if you don't do the work on understanding why you're so focused on your to-do list and your insistence on trying to get more and more and more done, and believing that you will finally be able to relax if you just do one more thing, it will be very hard for you to take in these moments, and that will then show up in your drinking later in the day.

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When you just focus on work and doing more and getting more done, the problem is no matter how efficient you are there's always gonna be more to do, right? That is what it means to be alive. There will always be more things to do, more things that we could be doing.

So all of that is to say that the lie that we tell ourselves that, you know, I'm gonna be able to relax, I just need to get one more thing done, that is a fallacy, that is a lie. That promise that we make to ourselves, I just need to get one more thing done and then I can relax, that's not true, right?

Because what happens so often with a reward, when you actually do try to put your feet up and relax, when you do try to say day is done, it's very difficult for people to shut off. It's very difficult for people to stop thinking about everything that remains on their to-do list, right?

And then when it's like, okay, I gave myself permission to relax, but now I can't even relax, I'm still thinking about what I have to do. Well, then what happens? We turn to a drink. Maybe that will quiet the chatter. Maybe that will turn down the volume of my anxiety about everything that I didn't get to today.

So what I want you to really understand is that the more that you deny yourself these little everyday pleasures, the more intense your cravings will be at the end of the day. You might not think that these tiny moments, 60 seconds here, 120 seconds there, you might not think that these moments can possibly make a difference, that they can possibly matter, but I promise they do. They add up. They will help you drink less. And understanding how the upgrade and the Reward archetype may show up for you can be so transformative.

And I'll just add you with this little bit, this little food for thought. When you make it a priority to stop and smell the roses, the need to fill your evenings with rosé won't be quite as strong. All right, that's it for today. I'll see you all next week.

Hey guys, you already know that drinking less has plenty of health benefits. But did you know that the work you do to change your relationship with



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alcohol will help you become more of the person you want to be in every part of your life?

Learning how to manage your brain and your cravings is an investment in your physical, emotional and personal wellbeing. And that's exactly what's waiting for you when you join my membership *Take a Break*.

Whether you want to drink less, drink rarely, or not at all, we'll help you figure out a relationship with alcohol that works for you. We'll show you why rules, drink plans, and Dry January so often fail, and give you the tools you need to feel in control and trust yourself.

So, head on over to [RachelHart.com](http://RachelHart.com) and sign up today, because changing the habit is so much easier when you stop trying to go it alone.