

Ep #118: How to Feel your Feelings with Rachel Hart



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Tobi Fairley

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You are listening to the *Design You* podcast with Tobi Fairley, episode number 118.

Welcome to the *Design You* podcast. A show where interior designers and creatives learn to say no to busy and say yes to more health, wealth and joy. Here's your host, Tobi Fairley.

Hello, friends. I hope you're enjoying your summer; it's going so fast already. I can't believe we're getting close to July and it's been such a strange year. We're not used to being inside so much. And I hope you're getting to get out and enjoy some summer and some weather. I've had a little taste of it myself and wow is it much appreciated? So I'm hoping the same for you, but let's talk about today's episode.

Okay, so today I have Rachel Hart on the show. She's a friend of mine who is a master life coach. In fact, back in January when I was in the Grand Caymans doing my master life coach training, she was one of the instructors. And we got to know each other a little better there. And so I'm really excited to have her on the show today.

So she works with people who are trying to change their relationship with alcohol, and she'll talk more about that in the show. But we do a lot of talking about, and even work on how to feel your feelings in this episode. And let's just be honest, we've all had to feel a lot of really uncomfortable feelings in 2020. We've had everything going on. We've had Covid. We've had racial injustice. We have had all the things that have come with both of those. And a lot of you have had issues with your business and your finances, and feeling the recession and all the things that are happening.

And I just can't remember a time when we've had any more of a mix of emotions. And on top of that, a lot of us use things like food and alcohol and shopping and social media and binge watching Netflix to really help us feel better, to cover up our feelings. But what I've learned for quite some time now, even though I haven't mastered fixing it yet. I've learned that every time I do that, every time I cover up my real feelings I'm just postponing the work of feeling them, and are going to come back up later.

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So, Rachel and I get into a ton of conversation about what it really means to feel your feelings and how people never taught us what that meant. In fact probably our parents, our teachers, our mentors, people in our lives, our families, they didn't know themselves, and very many of them still don't know how to do this today.

So I think this is a very important episode, if you've ever found yourself not wanting to feel your feelings, or if you've ever found yourself kind of not wanting to hang out in your own body. Because we're so bad at judging ourselves and not liking ourselves and being perfectionists, and let's be real, if we're going to feel our feelings we've got to hang out in our body. So if any of that sounds like anything that you can relate to then this is the episode for you.

And you might, just might even want to get out a pen and paper, or if you're driving right now, circle back later and get out that pen and paper, because there is some really good stuff in this episode with my friend, Rachel Hart, so here we go.

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Tobi: Hey, Rachel. Welcome to the *Design You* podcast. We are going to do some serious stuff today on this episode.

Rachel: Thank you. I'm so excited.

Tobi: I'm so excited. I told you a second ago; I'm like, "Okay, just pretend like you're basically talking just to me. This is a masterclass for Tobi and anyone else that may be listening to this episode.

Rachel: I love it.

Tobi: Okay. So we're going to talk about – well, why don't you tell everybody first a little bit, if they don't know you, if they haven't seen you do the IG Live we did together recently, tell them who you are, what you do. And then we're going to get into this awesome work about feelings and feeling our feelings. But give them a little synopsis first.

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Rachel: Sure. So my name is Rachel Hart, and I am a master certified coach. And I work with women who want to change their relationship with alcohol. They are at a point where they're kind of fed up with their drinking or they just don't like the fact that what was once kind of a once in a while treat, has turned into, hey, every night, where's the rosé? Where's my treat? Where's my reward for making it through this day?

They want to transform that relationship and do it in a way that is about learning about themselves and really not about just willpower or shaming themselves, or trying to be more disciplined. But really understanding, hey, what's going on here? What is my body and my wisdom trying to tell me about this desire that I have? That right now for a lot of people can feel really unmanageable.

I know I come to this work through my own struggle with alcohol and so I know what it's like to feel like, God, I have all this desire, what do I do with it? How do I rein it in without just it being one big battle of willpower?

Tobi: Right. And so many people can relate to that and this doesn't necessarily mean you have a severe drinking problem, it just means it could be alcohol, it could be food, it could be Facebook. It can be anything that you're using to deal with our emotions and just cover up our feelings and not feel them.

Rachel: Yeah, a 100%. And I will say I think one of the biggest pieces that I really try to help people understand, because it really is missing from our cultural understanding of alcohol, and how people use alcohol. Is that the vast majority of people who want to change their relationship with drinking, this is not a severe problem. This is not something that needs medical intervention. But we talk about the issue in such a black and white way.

I really think, for the women that I work with, it's like let's stop worrying about, oh God, why did I have that third glass of wine? Or let's stop worrying about why did I eat that? So that we can take your mental energy and your mental power and put it towards what you actually want to use it

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for, which is a lot more than just worrying about what you ate or drank last night.

Tobi: Yeah. And when we do go just on one with alcohol, because we all have done that, or something similar to that, food or alcohol, we're just postponing the dealing with the whatever it is we're not wanting to feel. So it's not like it really solves it, it just kind of parks it over to the side. And then we still have to come back and feel it or deal with it at some point anyway, it's going to resurface.

Rachel: Yeah. Well, like parks it to the side but also you get a bunch of parking tickets.

Tobi: Like not good sleep and yeah, then you ate a bunch of stuff because you wanted to kind of soak up those couple of beverages you had and all the other net negatives that go along with it, yeah.

Rachel: Yeah. And also all the beating up of yourself that most women do, which is why can't I figure this out? Why am I still struggling with this? I am too old to be worried about this. Am I ever going to figure out food? Am I ever going to figure out drinking? I mean that I think, those are like the parking tickets, we park our problems over there then we come back and we're like, "Oh dear, a lot of ramifications here I didn't want."

Tobi: Yeah. And I definitely have noticed myself occasionally during the 2020, because we've been through a lot in 2020 emotionally. I've noticed myself having beverages, alcoholic beverages here and there. I don't usually struggle with that so much, I usually eat my emotions. But it's the same thing. And I always say to myself, "I don't have a food problem, I have a not feeling my feelings problems." Yet, even though I have that awareness, I don't have the solution.

And that's what you're here to teach us today, because we were having a little bit of a pre conversation about this and I want you to speak to it about kind of nobody taught us this. Our parents didn't know, this is not like a life skill, it's not a class in school, it's not even an elective in college of learn to

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feel your feelings. It's not like communications in college that we all go through. So we're not equipped. We don't even really know what the problem is I think. So talk to us a little bit about that.

Rachel: Yeah. I mean this is where I always want people to back up and really say, "Okay, what are you actually searching for? What do you actually want in the moment? What are you trying to move towards and move away from?" And when you really get honest with those answers what you will find is it's about how you're feeling, it's about an emotion. And I'm not saying, "Well, you're really depressed or you're just unbelievably sad and that's why you're reaching for the bag of chips, or that's why you're reaching for a drink."

No. What I'm saying is, listen; emotions are the current of our life. I mean we all are feeling them all the time, even if we pretend that we're not, even if we only pay attention to the ones that are kind of knocking down the door really loudly. Emotions are a normal part of being alive; they are here to help us and guide us and give us information. But like you said, no one gives us any information about them and how to manage them, how to have a peaceful relationship with any emotion. Much less, how to kind of change how we're feeling when we feel very stuck.

Because a lot of times that's what happens, that's why we end up into these habits of overdrinking or overeating. Because we're like, "Oh, I just feel so anxious, or so stressed, or so bored. Or just like I can't take 2020 anymore, just give me something to create relief," because no one ever showed us how to create relief inside of ourselves without anything external.

Tobi: Yes, I want to get into that. And I want to just say that as you were talking, I think you're so right because for me it's way less about those extreme moments that are at the edges, like the super, super sad or the super, super happy. For me it's more like kind of as you were saying, I'm a type A, super driven, productivity junky, all these big goals. And it all looks really positive, but just kind of in the pursuit of that, which is pretty much

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how we live in America, like this kind of fast always like you're saying yes to everything, pursuit of that.

You end up creating just this background noise of emotion all the time, some of us call it anxiety, some of us call it stress, some of us call it both. And I think that's the part, it's just there all the time and that to me is the hardest part to know what to do with it, much less, really feel it, right?

Rachel: Yeah, because it just seems like normal.

Tobi: Yeah, exactly. Exactly, but then yeah, totally, it's kind of normal but then some part of us is kind of like, when we do slow down enough, that's me. When I finally stop working for the day and I have this, I call it nervousness, but what most people would call anxiety. It feels normal, we did create it ourselves. We don't exactly know that. But then there's a part of us that also kind of feels like it shouldn't be there.

Because I think we have a belief that we're supposed to be happy or we're supposed to be relaxed, and so it is normal and it's like our BFF, unfortunately. Yet we're sort of always going, "But I'm not supposed to feel this way," I think, and that's what's confusing.

Rachel: And that's the tension, I think especially when you are incredibly productive, incredibly able to get things done, very type A. You see that to do list, and you're like alright, bang, bang, bang, let's go down the to do list and check it all off. We're used to trying to get things done as a way to manage our emotions. The story that we believe is, if I just can get through this to do list, if I can just get through today, or this week, or this month. We're constantly looking to see if I could just be productive enough then I'm going to feel better.

But what most women really understand when they recognize this in themselves, it's like I get a lot done, but I don't manage to feel better. Or I feel better for that fleeting moment. I think of it this way, it's like you have that fleeting moment when you can check something of your list, and it

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does feel good. But then there's just always more, then that anxiety creeps back in.

And so you get to a point where you start to realize, I mean this happened for me. There's not enough that I can do or accomplish, or check off my list in the world that's going to make my anxiety go away, that's going to make me feel okay. And so then it's like, okay, so then what? If we can't kind of be productive out of this problem then what do we do? And then of course, well, the answer is okay, we have to start to have a different kind of relationship with ourselves and with our body.

Our body is where we're feeling all the anxiety. We know that we're feeling anxious because there are all these little subtle changes happening in the body that were telling us. Maybe our heart rate is a little elevated. Maybe our breathing is a little shallow. Maybe we notice we're kind of fidgety or we have a very hard time sitting still. We might feel a little warm. We're getting all these clues in our body, we're just so used to not ever wanting to pay attention to our body and being very disconnected from the very place where we feel emotion.

Tobi: Yeah, totally, because I think you're exactly right. First I try to act my way out of the feeling and then when that doesn't work then I try to think my way out of the feeling, and that doesn't work. And what you're saying is pretty much like it's in a completely different place than in my head or just at the ends of my fingertips with my computer that I'm ever going to solve this problem. So the things that we're avoiding is dropping into, as you have taught me, or kind of settling into our body.

And I love that you reminded me, of course we don't want to be in our body, because we have these terrible judgments that we've all decided about our bodies.

Rachel: Yeah. I mean I think this is one of the first things that is so transformative for so many women is because what I'm saying is. Okay, listen, if you want to have a different relationship with your emotions, it's not

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about let's make sure we never feel anxiety again, because that's not realistic. We can't just delete emotions from our human experience.

Tobi: That would be great, but we delete all the good ones too. We'd be like, crap, I got rid of anxiety but there's no joy anymore either, so yeah.

Rachel: Right. So it's like we can't delete them, so then what are we going to do? The thing that we can do is start to have a different conversation, a different understanding, a different experience of what it feels like. And to have a different experience of an emotion you have to go into your body. But most women don't really enjoy being in their body. I think about this for me and for so long, my body was something that I was constantly at odds with. I didn't like it, I didn't like the way it looked. I didn't like seeing myself naked. I didn't like seeing myself in the mirror.

So this idea that I could have all of this resistance towards my body, and all of this – I would really say for me, I have a lot of disgust towards my body and a lot of hatred towards my body. And then it's like, you want me to be in here? You want me to take up residence and home in this place that I don't really like very much and I'm always trying to change?

Tobi: Yes, I was just about to say, always trying to change. If you think about that with a spouse or a mate and then finally you're like, "Well, of course I can't be in a happy relationship if I'm always trying to change everything about them." But as you were saying that about the body, I can so relate and I was like, yeah. It's never enough as it is. I'm always trying to change it no matter what, and always finding something wrong with it, for sure.

Rachel: Yeah. And I think, listen, that's not the normal state of being in the sense that humans weren't designed to be at odds with our body, that's not part of our evolutionary programming. That's something that we learn to do, we learn how to judge our body. We learn how to hate our body. We learn how to, all the time see, oh, if only I weighed this, if only I could fix this about my skin or fix this about my hair, then I would...

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Tobi: The backs of my legs could be smooth.

Rachel: Exactly. So then we're getting these messages all the time, it's really learned. And I think that's one of the most powerful things to understand is that you didn't come out of the womb hating your body. It was something you learned from maybe society. I mean I think I learned it from just reading teen magazines at first, I learned it from the women and the beauty ideals that were put up on the screen. And I saw in advertisements and movies and TV and I just unknowingly absorbed all of that.

Tobi: And we loved our bodies when we were little, I always loved that. And I remember thinking that when my daughter was a toddler and now she's a teenager. And she's in this space we're talking about, but when she was a toddler and she would run around and she would love to have no clothes on and she was so free. And it's so cute. And we're like, "Oh, they're so cute." And their bellies are not flat and their arms have rolls and we think it's so cute.

And then there's some spot at what, like 10 or something that we flip a switch and we're like now we're supposed to be skinny and perfect and beautiful and we change the way we think.

Rachel: Yeah. I think that most women can really identify with that. I mean I'll tell you for me it was kindergarten, it was a lot younger, it really was. I remember having my school portrait taken and the photographer was trying to get me to smile. And back then I had a pretty, what I thought was a pretty large gap between my two front teeth and I just refused to smile.

Because there was some piece of me that had already decided that my smile was ugly, which is crazy and so painful when you think about that for a kindergartener. To have that kind of something's wrong with me so I shouldn't smile, I shouldn't show a part of me. And listen, again, that – it was learned, I didn't come out of my mother being like, "Well, I don't really like my teeth, I don't really like my smile."

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Tobi: Right, right, yes.

Rachel: And so I think this is the thing, changing your relationships with your emotions, learning how not to have anxiety or stress, or that just kind of buzz of I've got to get something done. I mean so many women will just say to me, "Having a glass of wine is just my permission to sit on the couch. It's my permission to just say I'm done."

Tobi: Yeah, that's pretty much me. I mean if I'm not – I mean that's the only time, if I sit and eat something or I have a glass of wine, or maybe that one or two weeks of the year when we go to the beach, which we're not doing this year thanks to coronavirus. Are my permission to not be productive, but kind of all the rest of my life I'm telling myself I'm supposed to be doing something.

And that word 'buzz' I relate to so much, that's just that, like we said, anxiety or nervousness, it's just this constant kind of background noise that is – I mean it almost to me sometimes feels like an electric current running through your body.

Rachel: Yeah, yeah. I mean like this is the thing to me that I think is really powerful is what we don't recognize is that how you describe it as like an electric current or a buzz. Or whatever your listeners are thinking in terms of the emotion that they're like, "Yeah, I really don't want to feel that one." Or it hangs out with me a lot at the end of the day and like no thank you. It's our mind that developed the story about it, the story that it's too much, I shouldn't feel this way. I should feel something different, it's overwhelming, it's horrible. I hate it.

We have to start to separate out what's actually happening in the body from the entire story and judgment and belief system that we've created about our emotions. I mean just learning how to peel those two things apart and see there's what's happening in my body.

There is the sensation without any judgment. And then there's everything my mind is telling me about how it's too much and I can't handle it. And I

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don't want to feel this way and I don't deserve to feel this way because, hey, I've been so productive all day long, and I feel this way too much. Just separating those two things out is so powerful.

Tobi: Right, yeah. Because when you're just feeling the feeling of the buzz or whatever you want to call it, without those words and those stories, it's really, it's nothing. It's not uncomfortable really, it's not unbearable. It's not anything really.

Rachel: Yeah, I mean and that I think is a skill, like you said, that no one ever shows us how to do. Of course we learn how to deal with our emotions. We learn how to deal with the anxiety or the desire or whatever it is. We learn from the people around us and you think about it, it's like no one taught our parents. No one taught their parents, it wasn't this kind of ongoing conversation about how to handle emotions.

It was just like get something done or come home at the end of the day and what can you eat, what can you drink, what can you turn on the TV so that you can feel better? And so we learn that by osmosis, just by watching what our families were doing, what the parents and adults around us were doing. And now I think it really is a moment to say, "Okay, so I don't think that's serving me anymore, so what am I going to start to learn instead?" How am I going to reeducate myself about how to handle how I'm feeling?

So it doesn't – I always think that it's like the eating and the drinking, it's just our inability to deal with how we feel that's coming out sideways. It's not really about the food; it's not really about the alcohol. It's about how do I respond to myself when the story is I hate this and I don't want to feel this way?

Tobi: Yeah. And I think that's so important because we start to feel powerless over the food or powerless over the alcohol. And when I was able to start like really start this work, and I'm not finished with this work yet really. But when I started understanding, like I said earlier, I don't have a food problem. I have desire not to feel a certain feeling. It takes so much pressure off of you, like right just off the bat. It's like okay, so I'm not broken

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and I'm not completely powerless and I'm not always going to have this problem, because I knew I couldn't say no to food or alcohol or whatever.

I just have to learn a new skill is what you're saying, that I've never learned before, and that's it. And we can start to take some of that kind of even story about our powerlessness, or whatever negative story we've told ourselves around that. And just drop that, because it's like, wait, I made that up completely, I just fabricated that whole story. But here is the deal, nobody just taught me how to feel that buzz in my body and not eat something, and now I can learn to do something else. So what do we do from there, where do we go?

Rachel: So one of the first exercises that I love to give women is really about just how do you learn how to, how to interrupt the habit? Because for most people, when you get into a habit of using food, or using alcohol is a way to deal with how you're feeling, maybe to give yourself a treat or because you think at the end of the day I deserve it, or there's so much going on. You have to learn to how to interrupt it. And so it really is, I think as simple as noticing that desire, that desire to be like, maybe I should see what's in the fridge, or maybe we still have a little wine.

It's noticing that desire and just using that as a moment to pause, to just – the habit wants to be fast, the habit wants to just say, “No, let's just get off the couch, get in front of the fridge and do it all mindlessly.” But use that as a moment to pause. And instead of going into your mind, which is where most people want to do, that's where most people want to go when they want to change their drinking or change their eating. They want to go to the place of like, no, no, no, no. And let me think about willpower and let me try to bring it more discipline.

Instead of going into your mind, I want you to drop into your body, what's happening in your body? Now, when most people do this for the first time their brain's just like, I don't know, nothing, they just want to kind of like end it there. Nothing's happening, I don't know what you're talking about, this is stupid, this lady doesn't know what she's talking about.

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Tobi: Right. Weird, what a weird woo woo lady, like trying to, it's, yeah, no.

Rachel: Exactly. But it's like, no; it's a skill, dropping into your body. It's a skill, observing what is going on in there. And here's the thing, if really nothing was happening then you should be totally fine not eating or not drinking, if truly nothing was going on there. But of course there is a little something. I think what happens is like what you said, when you drop into it, you're like, yeah, it's just kind of a buzz sometimes. You start to realize, it's not as big a deal as you have made it out to be, you drop into your body.

And then the thing that I always recommend people is like, "Okay, take a breath, let's practice breathing." Because willpower and gritting your teeth is all about shutting down, if you even just like – for anyone listening right now, if you think about using willpower or you think about discipline or gritting your teeth. You'll see that your body kind of tenses up, that's why they call it white knuckling it, because you're trying to muster a lot of energy to make your desire go away. And what I want you to do is the opposite, it's not tensing up. It's like, hey, I can breathe into this.

Tobi: Yeah, like opening up kind of is what?

Rachel: Opening up, exactly. And that is a practice. That is not something that you can do once and think that you can snap your fingers and be done with it. It really is a practice, especially when you understand how much you don't want to be in your body, and how much you resist being in your body. Because you're always like, "Oh, my body's kind of let me down. I never like what I see, it's getting old, it's not functioning the way that it should." You feel like your body has let you down in so many ways.

And so it really is recommitting to have a relationship with your body that isn't just one, about always trying to change it or always trying to think about how it's not working the way that it should be.

Tobi: Yeah, I love that. And I love just noticing what you're saying about the difference between being in our head and being in our body. Because

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most of us spend so much time in our heads, we don't even notice the difference I think. And we forget all the thoughts, all the drama, all the stories, all the whatever, all the saga that we're saying at the end of the day, or focusing on problems. Or any of that stuff, it's all in our head, it's happening from our neck up.

And most of what you're talking about, which I had to start learning is like literally I have been living my entire life from my neck up, and ignoring everything from the clavicle down. And you've got to get in there and it feels really weird because I'm so in a habit of just being in that head space. And I'm really good in the head space. I can solve so much and do so much. And it's like, no; you're missing the whole point.

You're missing all the – as I was telling you earlier, a common friend of ours, Chris said, “Your wisdom is wanting your attention and it's not in your head, that's not where your wisdom is.” And that was so eye-opening to me to be like, “Oh, I'm missing a lot of important stuff that's from the neck down.” Yeah.

Rachel: There's so much information, I'm not knocking thought work and I'm not knocking what's happening in your head. But you're totally right, that so many people, myself included, for a very long time, I was living in my head and it wasn't very fun. It was either everything I did wrong yesterday, or last week, or last year, or my whole life. So it was living in a lot of regret and a lot of, why did I do that, what's wrong with me? Or it was living in this future that - it was never working out the way I wanted to, [crosstalk].

Tobi: Right. All this stuff to do, and all these things to be, and all this stuff to achieve, and all that was way in the future. And I love what you're saying, because I do notice that when I'm in either the past or the future, I'm usually in my head. And when I get into the present moment I do feel myself in my body. And that's kind of the only place you can be, in your body, is when you're really in this moment?

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Rachel: That's exactly right. And I think like bringing your attention back, just sometimes I will even have women practice the thought, come back, come back, come back. Every time you notice your brain wanting to go to the past and everything you did wrong, or wanting to go to the future and the future where nothing turns out well, just come back to this space.

Tobi: Or the future where it's for sure going to be better than it is right now.

Rachel: Yeah. Where everything's like I'll be...

Tobi: The grass is greener, yes.

Rachel: Right. I'll lose the weight and I'll have the partner and have figured out my food and I'll have figured out my drinking and we'll be in a different house, and everything will be better. But, listen, this I think to me the work that I teach women it's as important as going to the gym. And I think it's like going to a gym, kind of like an internal mental gym. And mental, not like your thoughts, but just like can I be present inside of myself, instead of always trying to escape?

And to me I practice this all the time and, listen, I've got a toddler at home, I am definitely practicing it quite a bit because I am so often noticing myself with him wanting to be like, "Oh, is it time for bed?" Yeah, I get so frustrated, because my brain just wants to be like, "He's doing it wrong, this is wrong, he shouldn't be doing this. He shouldn't be throwing that. Why is he doing this?" Instead of just like can I be present with what is happening, and that starts with being in my body.

Tobi: Yes, it's so good, I love that, I think you're so right. In fact I think it's probably more important than the gym because even when you think about it just from a weight loss or a health perspective, we can do more damage with the food. I always love the thought you can't out-exercise a bad diet or whatever. And so like you can't, you can drink 300 or 400 calories in a minute, and you're like you go to the gym for an hour and you're lucky if you burn that. Or if you go for a walk you're for sure not going to.

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And so I think in a lot of ways even for your actual physical health and the way your body looks, this has to at the very least be equally important to the gym, if not kind of a precursor to that next step of physically moving your body.

Rachel: Yeah, I totally agree.

Tobi: Yeah, it's so interesting, so interesting. It's so good. Okay, so learning to drop into the body, I get that. And I can be there for a minute and then I'm like, "Okay, had enough, let's go, let's get back to the head."

Rachel: When you say, "Had enough," what's the had enough piece?

Tobi: Yeah, you're like now hold on; let's hear what this story is. That's a great question. It's something like, yeah, been there, done that, felt that, I'm bored, let's move on. I don't know if it's that we're so used to like things happening fast and fast results and instant gratification and all of the things. Everything moves so fast and we're getting all these like, you know, I don't know, chemicals and dopamine hit and all the fun stuff.

And then you go into the body and you're just supposed to hang in there and it's kind of like just like having dinner with someone and like looking into their eyes. You're like, now what?

Rachel: Like we did it, I looked into your eyes.

Tobi: Yeah, we don't have our phones, this is an awkward moment, so yeah, kind of go look in my eyes and I'm like yeah, I see you there and that feels really uncomfortable. And so now let's just go back to what we know I like the busyness. Or let's go, okay, I tried that; let's go have the drink or whatever. But what are you supposed to do? That's what I want to know, what's supposed to be happening?

Rachel: Yeah. I mean so I think you're totally right, when you say it's very connected to that kind of like instant gratification, that's like, okay, I did it, where is my little reward?

Tobi: Exactly.

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Rachel: I mean literally it is supposed to be like I said, just like come back. If you just imagine, being in your body is not uncomfortable, it's your home, it's where you're supposed to be. Where we're like, "I don't want to be in this home, why are you making me hang out at home?" But it's like it gives you access to the fact that you either want to actuate out of it or you want to think your way out of it. I think a really important piece is about we're so used to these kind of fleeting moments of pleasure.

It's just like, I checked it off my to do list. Or I just had the chocolate or I just had the wine, or I just checked my email or whatever it is. One way that I think is really important to build the muscle of being in your body is that's building the muscle of having sustained pleasure with yourself. Because, listen, we feel pleasure because we can be in a body. Without a body we can't feel pleasure. And so it really is how do I start to have the kind of pleasure that isn't always just that little tiny dopamine instant gratification? But how do I actually create sustained lasting pleasure for myself?

And why, when you're kind of like, okay, I did it, I'm enough, I'm bored, what am I supposed to do? What if there's pleasure right in front of you happening in that moment that you just can't see?

Tobi: I love that. It's making me think of, is if you've ever gotten off of sugar before and you're like when you're eating a bunch of junk and sugar you can't taste things. And then if you get off of it for a week or two and you eat a piece of fruit or something, you're like this is never...

Rachel: Like a carrot, [crosstalk] carrot.

Tobi: Yeah, you're like this has never – like who knew this tasted this good, like a strawberry or something. And it's plenty, like it's so much, it's so sweet and it's delicious. And you're like, like I get to enjoy this. But we had desensitized ourselves to it because of all the other like these chemically laden sugars and things. And that's kind of what you're saying, it's like we've desensitized ourselves to the fact.

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And I know what you mean because when I do meditate or something and I get this like deep, deep peace that is like the ultimate in joy. And it's so funny, that's the opposite of what we're getting from all those little bitty bits of like you said, getting a like on Facebook or checking our email or a piece of chocolate or something.

And that's what you're talking about. It's almost like redefining the pleasure that we're really looking for. Because those other ones just, they don't really ever make us feel the way we really want to feel. But I think when we can feel that feeling that I've felt in yoga or meditation or in that presence, it's something that you're like, "Whoa, this is unbelievable, I want to feel this all the time."

Rachel: Yeah. I mean I think what's so powerful is, you know, when I started doing this work and when I was like, "Oh, I've just really got to figure this out. I've got to figure out my drinking. I've got to figure out my eating." Those were so connected for me, I felt like I had just so much, you know, I always said, "I just feel like I have this addictive personality and I just always want more, and more is better."

And I remember when I was starting this work at first; I really thought that it was going to be a lack of pleasure in my life. I really felt like, okay, now you can't have any of the fun things but it's being really responsible. I didn't understand at all that it was going to mean more pleasure, but pleasure like I wasn't used to.

I mean there's so much pleasure available all the time because we experience pleasure through our senses. We experience it not just through taste, which is how most of us are used to it. But through sight, and sound, and touch, and smell, and it's always available. Our body is always sensing, we're just so used to shutting it down. We're so used to not having time for my body.

But I mean that's something that I teach the women that I work with is, "Okay, let's talk about how to cultivate more pleasure in your life. And you don't have to add a single thing in to do it. All you have to do is be more in

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touch with your senses and more in touch with the fact that there's pleasure available to you right here and right now." There's pleasure in what you can look at, there's pleasure in the fact that you can breathe. There's pleasure in the touch that you feel. There is pleasure in what you're seeing around you.

But we don't tune into any of that because we're so disconnected from the body.

Tobi: Yeah. So if we haven't felt that in a long time or maybe ever, and we're like, I hear you and that's intriguing but we haven't really felt it, so it's hard to get ourselves motivated to kind of go there. How do we, like is it just deciding and practicing and will we feel it pretty soon? Because we are so conditioned to, I want to feel it right now, I want to know it's going to work and then maybe I'll try it, that instant gratification piece. So how do we get the leverage on ourselves to really stop and do this kind of work?

Rachel: I mean I think part of is really just deciding that you want to have a different relationship with your body, honestly. Because I don't know a single woman out there in the world, doesn't. And literally it's our home, it's where we exist, it's a thing carrying us around. So let's maybe see if it's possible to have a different relationship and to not constantly feel like either I'm trying to get out of my body or trying to put something in my body so I don't feel that way.

I mean, and I think, listen, we do have the example, I mean I think you used the example of seeing little kids, we know it's possible. Think about how little kids experience pleasure, we see it all the time that you really don't need a lot. But there is so much – I watch my son, he has so much pleasure just in like using his voice.

Tobi: I know he does.

Rachel: Yeah, just like using his voice he finds so pleasurable. And sometimes I'm like, "Oh my God, is he still screaming?" But I watch him do

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it and it's just – it's like his ability to be like, this is fun, mama, I like doing this. And so we've got examples all around us that it's possible.

It's so fascinating too because the other night, I can't remember what I was giving him. I think I gave him like a little piece of a cookie or something. And he was so not into it. He was like, "Okay," like moving on. But it's like it didn't even register. And we walk around the world thinking like oh my God, it's like the cookie, and the wine, and the chocolate, and the new stuff, like [crosstalk].

Tobi: Right. Yeah, can't resist, I've got to have it, I'm going to die, yes, it's so good.

Rachel: Yeah. So I mean I think it is, it's that willingness to like, listen, do I want to be at war with my body when I'm 80? I don't. No, I don't think most women do. And I think sometimes there is this sense of well, I'm just going to get to this place where I feel happy. And it's like, well, how? And how are you just going to get to this peaceful relationship with your body if you're not practicing it? So I think that's one piece.

But then I think about, I think it's so important to – if you can free up all the mental energy that you are using to worry about food, or worry about drinking, or worry about why haven't I figured this piece out? If you could free up that mental energy, and think about how many diets and how many first of the month, or Mondays, or beating yourself up after like why did I eat that? Why did I drink that? If you could free it all up what would you use it for?

Tobi: I love that. I love that.

Rachel: I mean I think you have to focus there because to me all of this worry, all of this suffering that is totally unnecessary for so many women, it just blocks the genius that each and every one of us has to bring into this world. All of us, I really believe has something really powerful and special and unique to share with the world. And we can't access it when all we're

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doing is thinking about why did I eat that, why did I drink that, why can't I figure this out? When am I going to get my next little treat?

Tobi: Yeah. And a lot of it, it's a cycle because the whole reason that we're eating and drinking that is because we're hating on our body or we're comparing ourselves to others. Or we saw ourselves on video for our social media and we thought we looked hideous or our voice sounded stupid, or whatever all these things are. Like a lot of times it is the judging itself that's creating the cycle of anxiety and all of that.

So even imagine just being able to lay that down, that we've been – like that's exhausting in and of itself, that trying to be perfect, trying to be different than we are, trying to be – I think about how many years of my life I've spent, and I know everybody can relate, of like how many years we've been trying to be different. And if we could just be like, I'm done with that and just lay it down, oh my gosh, the hours you would get back in your day when we all say we have no time. That is mindboggling, to just stop, right?

Rachel: And I think you made such a good point about like if you've ever cut out sugar before. It doesn't take that long before all of a sudden it's like your body resets and it's like whoa. I mean I think about it with me, I'm not even kidding that it was like a roasted carrot. That I think I had gone like three weeks without sugar and then I had a roasted carrot and it was like my brain exploded.

Tobi: Yeah, like a bomb in there, like a flavor bomb. And you're like, "What?"

Rachel: Are we sure that this carrot is not covered in honey glaze, like what is going on? I remember my boyfriend at the time being like, "What is wrong with you?" It was so intense and so wild. It does not take that much time to reset your kind of inner thermostat when it comes to this.

And I mean I think taking a break, I mean it's something that I do with the women that I work with. I really encourage, yeah, take a break and let's see what's there. Let's see if we can start to use that time, not just to cross

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days off a calendar but actually use that time to start the practice of dropping into your body. And also reset that thermostat inside of you.

Tobi: Yeah, I love that, that's so good. So I know when you were on that instagram Live you actually turned this into a little tool that you said these three words that were, "Stop, drop and breathe." So that's what you've been talking about in essence already today. So if we decided to take a break for what, 30 days from alcohol, or 30 days from sugar, or whatever, Facebook, whatever the thing is that is the problem. Then we just start practicing, that when we feel that urge to do it, we stop, we drop into our body and breathe, is that how it works or is there more to it than that?

Rachel: Yeah. Well, I mean that's the first thing is, whenever we decide to take a break from something we know that we're going to get a lot of practice. Like if you go into it thinking I'm going to do these 30 days perfectly, you are missing the point. The point is not to do it perfectly, because a lot of people can do it 'perfectly' and they were just gritting their teeth or they were just distracting themselves or they were just like, "Okay, I just have to make it like 10 more days." They were just counting down days.

So I always say, "Go into it expecting that this is going to be challenging, this is going to be a struggle and expect that the urges are going to come up." So part of it is dropping into your body. I do think part of it; I mean I do teach thought work as well. I think part of it is, understanding what is your brain telling you? What is it telling you about why you need a treat at the end of the day, why you should have a drink because your partner brought home a bottle? You have to start paying attention to all of that story, all of that language.

And part of dropping into your body is to give yourself a little bit of space. It's not like you have to stay in your, you know, like a meditative state the entire evening. It's just like let's create a little bit of space, let's get out of your head for a second. Because when you do that then you come at all of the excuses that your brain is going to come up with, and there will be

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many. You start to be able to look at them from a little bit of a place of curiosity and question it, and understand, well, why do I feel like I'll start tomorrow, what's really going on there?

When I say that I just, you know, I need to have whatever it is that you need to have right now, what am I really in search of? What do I really want right now? I think that question in and of itself has been so powerful for me because I told myself all the time, I deserve it, I deserve it, I deserve it.

And when I got curious with what that word 'it' meant in I deserve it. I realized I was not really deserving alcohol, in that I wanted more. It wasn't a glass of wine that was really the thing. But I couldn't see it because I was just like, whatever, I deserve it, have you seen my day? Have you seen this week? Have you seen what's been going on? And that's the thing, I mean ultimately I really do think like what you said, we have so much wisdom inside of us.

And that's what I think this work is truly unlocking. It's your ability to be your own best resource for yourself and to feel like, yeah, I've always got my back. No matter what is happening, no matter how I'm feeling, I know that I can show up for myself and give myself what will truly serve me, and what I truly need in this moment. And that's just developing a different relationship with yourself.

Tobi: Yeah, that's so good. When I did that same work it was similar, when I was saying, "I need this at night," or whatever, to unwind. It's because I wouldn't even let myself have a moment during the day to even go to the bathroom, take a break, walk outside, get fresh air. So it was this hardcore forcing all day and then it was like, okay, now, you get the treat or kind of the vacation from the day.

Instead of going, "What would it look like if you paced yourself a little bit more? If you just like literally took a breath or a five minutes break and walked outside periodically through the day, would you still be dying for food or alcohol at the end of the day?" And the answer is no.

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Rachel: Exactly. And then you see that it's really not about the food and alcohol. It's really about, okay, so why wasn't I allowing myself to. I mean I would do this too, I wouldn't even allow myself to get up from my desk and go pee, because I was just like I can hold it.

Tobi: Yeah. I'll just get this done, if I just stay here we'll finish this whatever paperwork, or this email or whatever, it'll just be checked off my list. And yeah, and we just play that game with ourselves all day until we are exhausted. And then we think we need this thing, which it's, yeah, it's really just – and then when we have the drink we of course then don't notice that what we really needed to work on was our schedule, or our day, or our thinking. So we just keep recreating that same thing over and over.

Yeah, that's the part that was really important to me when I was like when I just let myself have the drink or the food, I'm kind of just signing up to participate in the same day again tomorrow because I'm not stopping and listening to what the problem really is. And that really kind of blew my mind. I was like, "Do you really want to change?" Because if so you need to for sure not have the drink because that's not where the solution is, you need to sit maybe with your journal and a pen and ask yourself some questions.

I love it, yeah, so good. Okay, well, this has been amazing, really, really helpful. And I think that it's so timely because we have had a lot of anxiety producing, stress producing things this year. But it's also, I think, the perfect opportunity, especially if we're home for a while still, or if things kind of aren't the way we expect them to look in the next kind of few months. It kind of gives us an opportunity to be like, let's take this on, let's look at this, let's fix this while we're sitting here not getting to live kind of our normal lives, right?

Rachel: Yeah, listen, I think that this is some of the most powerful work that people can do right now is when the world isn't going the way that you want it to or the way that you think it should, how do you show up with yourself? And I think this time right now is calling us to show up with ourselves differently.

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Tobi: Yeah, I love that. Okay, so if everybody wants to find you, how do they find you? If they want to know more, you have a podcast, right?

Rachel: Yeah, the podcast is Take a Break from Drinking, it comes out every Tuesday. And then you can also check out my work on my website, rachelhart.com.

Tobi: Awesome, thank you so much. Every time I talk to you I just feel like I get closer to understanding this whole process of feeling my feelings. So I will be keeping you posted because I'm going to be doing some work, I love it.

Rachel: I want to hear all about it.

Tobi: Okay, so good, thank you for being here, it was really a pleasure.

Rachel: Thank you.

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Okay. So this is serious work you all. But it's really valuable work, it's really worthy work. And I think it's just part of our growth journey here on this planet. If we want to become better versions of ourselves and better moms and better business owners, and better people, and better citizens, and better friends and spouses and fill in the blank. That this is the work that's really required of us to do that, is to really understand and feel our feelings and deal with our emotions.

So I hope you loved it. If you have any questions, comments or love this episode and you want to talk to Rachel or to me, look us up on Instagram, Rachel Hart. We'll put all the stuff also in the show notes like we always do. And you can also go to Rachel's website. And again we'll have all of that for you in the show notes. But she's an incredible person as you can tell, super smart, and really knows what she's doing.

And she has a fabulous podcast that she mentioned. So if you want to change your relationship with drinking or even just some of these other things we talked about today, the work on your feelings, she's got amazing

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episodes. And you're definitely going to want to check those out on her podcast, so I hope you'll do just that.

And I thank you so much for being here and for listening, and for hanging with us and for being willing to really look at yourself and consider this work in your life. And I will see you back again next week as I always do with another great episode of the *Design You* podcast. Bye for now.

Thank you so much for listening to the *Design You* podcast, and if you are ready to dig deep and do the important work we talk about here on the podcast of transforming your mindset and creating a scalable online business model, there has never been a more important time than right now. So join me and the incredible creative entrepreneurs in my *Design You* coaching program today. You can get all the details at TobiFairley.com.