

Episode: Clarifying Questions



With Natalie Bacon, JD, CFP[®], Certified Life Coach

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Welcome to the Design Your Dream Life podcast where it's all about designing your life on your terms and now your host, Natalie Bacon.

Hello my friend. How are you? I was driving in a car yesterday. Well actually I was riding in a car. I was not driving. I pretty much never drive anymore. I was riding in a car and I was looking out the window and it's freezing in Chicago and I saw the skyline and there was this outline of this beautiful big church kind of in the distance. And I just had the thought, I love my life so much and I was overwhelmed with joy and gratitude and appreciation. And I'm telling you that because it's totally available to you to do and to think about your life. And I highly recommend it. It feels pretty good. A lot of other people might find reasons to not appreciate or love or find joy in the middle of downtown Chicago in January. But I just really am so in love with this city and that includes the winter. Um, I just love all of it. And maybe it's because I decided to commit ahead of time and decided to move here and go all in. It's really served me so well.

So I hope that you are falling in love with your life as much as I am and that includes your goals and your year ahead. And that doesn't mean it's going to be easy or without challenges or obstacles. But I like to remind myself at the end of every experience is just a negative emotion and I can handle it. So today what I want to share with you, it is something that is a new tool and it's called clarifying questions and it's going to help you achieve your goal because it is going to help you flip things around and look within you to find the inner wisdom that you already have.

So what I love about life coaching and why I have a one on one coach and why I'm in a couple other group membership programs and why I have Grow You is because when you have a life coach, you have someone to show you your own wisdom. I show my clients how to find their own answers in ways that they are blocking or completely unaware of. And what clarifying questions is, it's a set of questions for you to use to bring more awareness to what you might be missing. Because of what I know for sure is that we all love to sit in, I don't know, and confusion and it feels bad, but it also kind of feels good because it feels very safe and we know that your brain loves safe. When you answer these questions, you will help yourself move forward. I remember the first time I did this, and I could not believe the power of them. I was blown away by my own answers. I was like, oh my gosh. Why haven't I always been asking myself these questions and answering them.

So the first time I ever did this exercise and kind of came up with it, I wrote down everything. So I highly recommend doing it. I'll go through all the questions. I'm going to go through an example, a personal example. I'm gonna use my business as an example, and then I will go through another example as well. And you can do this for any goal. I like to think of it as using your impossible goal. Right now it's January, so if you've just set a big impossible goal, ask these questions with respect to that goal. But it can be for any goal that you have or anything that you want a new result for.

So that's the first step is to kind of pick the result you want. It's your big impossible goal. And then what you do is you ask yourself everything you want to know. So what usually happens is our brains are scanning for what's negative and what's wrong and what's not gonna work about what we want because we have a survival brain that's just trying to keep us alive. So of course it's scanning for the negative because it wants to make sure that you're not going to be attacked and that it can keep you alive. So that's fine. If we're out, you know, fighting animals, getting

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outside of the cave, not so fine when we're talking about making more money, quitting our job, building a business, losing weight, stopping drinking, whatever the case is for your big impossible goal this year, it's very unlikely that it's something that relates to your survival as a human being.

So when you ask yourself everything you want to know, you flip it around instead of focusing on all of the negative and having your brain tell you all the negative answers you solve those answers, you solve the problems that you think you're going to have. And there is just something so powerful about this. I wouldn't have believed you if you would have told me it. Um, and I highly recommend sitting down, doing the questions, writing the questions down, and then writing the answers down and having these questions to ask yourself you know, whether it's every month, every quarter, um, every year for sure. Because as you experience more, you'll have new information and things will work and they won't work and you'll be able to use these questions to move you forward.

So I'm going to give you the questions and then I'm going to talk about my experience with my business right now and how I'm using it this year for my impossible goal. So here are the questions. The first question is why do you want this result? The second question is where will you find this result? Now sometimes there is an actual location of where you'll find it, but other times there might not be. So if your impossible goal is to quit drinking, there might not be a location, but other times there will be a location. So I like to put that as number two. Where will you find your result?

Number three, when will you find your result? And then as a sub question I have, do you need to be in a rush? It is so crazy. I'm telling you, we love to rush and hurry and kind of be frantic about our goals and it. It's coming from this urgency and this place of wanting instead of a place of receiving and already having and when you ask yourself do you need to be in a rush to get this result? Usually you'll find that the answer is no, but it's so powerful for you to bring awareness to this because until you bring awareness to it, you will continue to rush unnecessarily by the way.

Number four, the fourth question is what is the person who has this result thinking? Of course this is one of my favorite questions on the list because it will get you in the mindset of the person who has the result already, which is what you need to be thinking in order to be aligned with getting that result and that's how you create it.

Number five is what is the person who has this result feeling? And you can name a few feelings but make sure that you name it in one word, right? Committed, loving, whatever like those one word emotions. And then as a sub set of questions to what is the person who has this result feeling I have do you need to worry about getting this result? And then do you need to be afraid about getting this result? So fascinating how much we worry about the result we want. And then when we truly use our prefrontal cortex to ask ourselves these questions and then answer them, the answer is usually no right? Cause you're using your highest self instead of your toddler primitive brain. And that's really what this is all about. It's like your primitive toddler brain is always trying to get you to survive. So it's telling you things like hurry, rush, you're going to die. You're never going to get this or make this happen. And what these questions do is they allow

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you to use your prefrontal cortex and talk to yourself and tell yourself the truth about it from your most human adult advanced part of your brain, your prefrontal cortex.

Okay. So number six, what is the person who has this result doing? And I haven't parentheses the actions. And then the three sub questions to this main question are, how will you create this result? What obstacles will be in your way and how can you solve each obstacle and what can you do this week to move you closer toward achieving your result? This question is so good. I was doing this exercise recently and I was amazed with how many useful actions I came up with that were already in me and I already knew that I needed to be doing and it totally got me out of confusion, right? Because your, your primitive, your fight or flight brain is going to be like, well what about this? What if I fail? What if it doesn't work out and you're fearful and you're afraid and you have doubts and it just shuts up all of that unnecessary chatter when you say, okay, how am I going to create this result? And you're like, oh, here we go. That's how I'm going to create it. You're gonna write it down and it doesn't matter if you're right or wrong. What matters is that you come up with one way, couple possible ways, and then you move forward because if you're wrong you'll be like, huh, thought it was going to be this way. Turns out it's not, let me do it this other way and try that. It's very different than the kind of cycle of being hard on yourself, beating yourself up and all of that, which kind of keeps you stuck or taking breaks or quitting or making your failures or obstacles mean something, which is why it's so important to ask yourself ahead of time, what are these obstacles going to be? How can you solve them?

All right. Number seven is really powerful. What will it be different about your life when you achieve this result? And then the sub question is what will be the same? So often so many of my students and clients will be in a rush and it's when you're in a rush, it's a sign that you think that over there with the result is going to be so different than right now and when you do question seven it brings it to reality. You can think about what will actually be different in your life and what will be the same. You're going to be the same person. You're going to have negative emotion, you're going to have your primitive brain with these thoughts. We tend to think that, oh, well, if I just had millions of dollars and was thin, I would, you know, be blissed out and happy and loving all the time, right?

And no, no, no. That's not how it works. And you don't want to be that way. You want to be someone who's disappointed when you fail or you know, sad or heartbroken when the relationship doesn't work out, right? You want to be a human being. And we forget that, right? Especially when I see parents, when I'm coaching moms with kids, they want their kids to never experience any sort of emotional pain, right? And when you bring awareness to it, as a parent, you can see, oh, wait a minute, that's actually part of their human experience. I can guide them. I can have rules. I can love them and support them. But by me trying to interfere with them and their lives, it's actually doing more harm than good.

So those are the questions. Now I want to go through my example of my online business, but I want you to do this for whatever your impossible goal is, whether it's losing weight, whether it's quitting drinking, whether it's meeting the man of your dreams, whether it is, you know, paying off all your debt, whether it is getting your dream job and working less and making more, or having more flexibility. Whatever it is, I want you to just decide to want it, decide that you can

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have it. And then when your brain starts to freak out, use these clarifying questions to get that inner wisdom and to calm your toddler brain the f down. Okay?

So the first thing that I want you to do is kind of write down the result that you want, that we're going to do this exercise with. So for me, I put down, make seven figures in one year from my online business. That's my impossible goal. And then number one, that the question is, why do you want this result? And I wrote down a few because I want to help and as much unnecessary suffering as possible, particularly for women because I want to inspire women to make as much money as they can, because I want women to know that their lives don't have to be this hard, and I want to be an amazing example of creating money and creating a business and creating a life on my own terms so that other people are inspired to do that as well.

And honestly, one of the main reasons why I want this result is because I think it's fun and that might sound trivial, but I think when you can get to a really clean place of just wanting it because you just want it without more, it's actually very compelling because your in reality with respect to what's going to be the same and what's going to be different about your life, you don't think that over there all your problems are solved, your problem free, life is so easy. Okay. So I really love that reason and I just wrote that down. There are other reasons, but that's the gist of it.

Number two, where will I find this result? The first thing I put was on the internet, with my clients, with my students in my coaching practice, selling um, self paced programs and live events. So those are kind of the three legs of my business. Right? I have membership coaching Grow You, I sell self-paced courses. You just pay for one time. And then I also have live events. Okay. That's kind of the where.

When will you find this result? The first thing that came to my mind was in two years I have this idea that I'll make one and a half times my income next year, which would be just over \$400k and then the next year I'll make a million. Now notice that I'm answering this based on what I think. It's okay if it ends up not being true. I'm not going to go and beat myself up. I'm not going to say, see, you were wrong. You did this wrong, like be, you know, be mean to myself. I'll just be curious and say, oh, that's so interesting, I thought it was going to be two years instead. It was three or four or one, right, like it's okay to be wrong, but I want you to be courageous enough to write down when you think that you'll find this result.

The next question, that sub question, do you need to be in a rush? I put definitely not. Something that I've noticed about myself and my business in the last year is that I have slowed the F down. I don't really work more than 40 hours a week ever, but I'm really committed, so I will check my phone, I'll check Slack. I will always make sure that my team has access to me. I'm all in, but I'm not overworking. I'm very chill about it and I've been able to compartmentalize that in a way that I wasn't able to do so when I was working full time and building the business and sort of hustling and I was more rushed so I don't feel rushed at all and I definitely don't need to be in a rush to get to seven figures.

The next question, question number four, what is the person who has this result thinking? This was really fun for me because I noticed some of these thoughts I have in some I don't, which makes sense because I don't have this result yet. So some of the thoughts I came up with where I know how to make \$1 million in revenue pretty easily in one year. I'm the CEO of a small

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company. I can do really hard things. Business is really fun. Making money is easy. I love my clients and students so much. I manage a small team. Okay. Those are some of the thoughts that I came up with. When you do this exercise, make sure that you get into the place where you are thinking you already have the result, not that you want it, but that you actually already have it.

I did this with money so I used to think about what it was like to be out of debt and I would think about getting out of debt and making payments and I realized that the person who's debt free isn't thinking about those things. They're thinking about how much to save and where to put their money and how to have more money and create more money and invest more like debt isn't even something they're thinking about. And this is often the case. So just notice this about yourself and really do this exercise from the place of having the result. So if I already was making seven figures and I was already making \$83,333 in revenue every month, what would I be thinking? Right? And those are the thoughts that you want to write down.

The next question, question five, what is the person who has result feeling and remember to do it in one word? So for me, when I think about having a seven figure business and making the \$83k per month in revenue, the feelings that come up for me when I think about the person who has that results are steady, committed, focused, serious, professional, powerful and loving.

So commitment and love. I've talked about a lot. I think they are underrated and they, um, when you can make them a present in whatever you are doing, life is just better. So for me it might seem weird that love would be one, but I think that at seven figures I will love my business even more. I'll love my clients even more. I'll love my team even more and I'll just operate from a place of love and even a higher capacity than I already do.

The sub questions, do I need to worry about the result? I put no, definitely not. I feel like it's here. Like I'm a seven figure coach. I'm a seven figure entrepreneur. Don't need to worry about it happening. I know it's as good as done. Do I need to be afraid about it? Afraid that it won't happen. No. Like it's, it's not even a question to me. This is happening, right? And notice even how I said this is happening, notice the tense that you speak about your goal in. Are you saying this will happen, this could happen, this might happen or this is happening or this has happened.

So when I talk about being a multiple six figure business owner, I talk about it in a slightly different way and I have to catch myself on this because it matters. So to me I'm very comfortable making multiple six figures. I truly just feel like I could do it in my sleep. Like I know how to get a six figure business up and running pretty easily. Feel very steady about it. There's no drama, I'm just, you know, in there doing it, it's totally fine. But that is different than how I feel about seven figures. So there's still alignment work that I need to be doing. So I want you to notice this with respect to something you've already created in your life versus whatever your impossible goal is that you have not yet created.

Okay? Number six, of what is the person who has this result doing? So I asked myself this question. The person who has a seven figure business as a coach, as a life and business coach, she is working three days per week in her business. She is reading a lot on her off days and she is managing a team of five people. Three of them are probably close to full time. She's really in a place where she's working from her own office and has up-leveled in a way that is all about service and a real business in a way that is not kind of this online influencer space. It's more of

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um, a serious life and business coach who is expensive, who is professional, who creates this revenue pretty easily.

So all of the things that the person is doing with this result you want to write down. It doesn't necessarily have to be how they created it. So notice that I said I'm working three days per week, I have a team like all of those things like that I'm taking action as having that result count. And then the sub question is how will you create the result? This was really fun for me cause I like rattled off exactly how to do it. It was amazing. Instead of my brain freaking out and thinking, I can't do this. It's impossible. When I just flipped it around and said, how will I create this result? And I was like, huh, I just know how, and I wrote down all these things, you know, I'll have 2000 members in Grow You and I will launch my programs monthly. I'll use Facebook ads. My email list will be much bigger. I will report on my stats weekly and be very, very carefully evaluating the numbers of what's working and what's not. I'll have a lot more free trainings and webinars. I will be focusing on my own zone of genius, which is content creation and sales and marketing, and I'll be hiring out the rest. And that's kind of where my managerial role will step up in terms of being a CEO. What obstacles will be in my way, um the ad spend for Facebook ads and really getting Facebook ads to be profitable with my offer being less expensive on the front end of the \$49. That can be kind of tricky if you know anything about Facebook ads. Um, you know what I'm talking about. If not, it doesn't matter. This was just for me to identify what the obstacles are going to be.

I want to grow my email list pretty quickly. Right? How is that going to be solvable? Um, I want to reduce any churn rate that I have. In a membership site you always have people coming in, but then there's like a little leak. So people are always leaving and I want to do whatever I can to reduce that and there are tons of ways I can do this. So then I wrote down how I can solve this. I can set aside a budget for my ad spend. I can schedule time to work on Facebook ads myself every single day. So I'm a big believer in you learn the program and the software before you ever hire it out. So I want to make sure I'm in there. I'm doing it all first and then I can work with someone.

I want to make sure that I'm scheduling time to plan and evaluate my freebies, my webinars, my funnels, and make sure what's not working. I'm kind of getting rid of and adding new ones to kind of always be testing to optimize for growth. So these are just some of the things that I wrote down for how I can solve each obstacle that will come up.

The next sub question was what can I do this week to move me closer to achieving that result? And I put down, create a plan and schedule for Facebook ads, freebies, and any Grow You changes, right? So simple. So you want to write down what can you do this week to move you closer?

Okay. Question number seven, what will be different about your life when you achieve this result? This, I want you to really go to the place of any changes you'll make. So I do coach a lot of business owners and they will want to coach these women who are really successful and who show up looking their best every day. Maybe they're in corporate or CEO's or something. And these business owners will be in yoga pants and haven't done their hair and forever. And the reason that that's a problem, it's what I teach in Online Business For Her is your who has to be a match. So you have to be positioned properly to attract the right person. And the reason I'm

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bringing this up now is when you think about what you will be doing in your life and what will be different about your life when you achieve this result. If you're going to attract that six or seven figure woman to pay you, you're going to be showing up very differently. How are you going to be showing up? What's going to be different about your life? Maybe you get up and do your hair and put on an outfit every single day no matter what. So that's something that will be different about your life.

So for me, I put things in my life that will be different when I'm at seven figures. I'll have a personal trainer, I'll be in a bigger home with an office specifically for working. I will have a personal assistant in Chicago so she can kind of do some of the tasks that I'm using my time for. So I can spend that time, you know, more aligned with what I want to be doing. Whether that's time off, reading or in my business I will work less. I will create at a higher level and I'll have more responsibilities as a CEO, including more managerial responsibilities. I'll have weekly meetings with my team and probably more of a human resources department or a COO instead of trying to do all of that, I will spend more time reading and thinking more. I will grow at a faster rate and I'll probably travel more.

So these are just things that I think will be different about, um, my life when I achieve the result. So go to every area of your life and then start making decisions from that. So if you're like the person who has the result gets ready every day. So just start getting ready every day. This is kind of why I got a puppy originally and why I quit drinking. My highest self, my future self had a puppy and she didn't drink. So I was like, okay, I could do that now. So that's what I do. And by bringing awareness to what you want to create and how you can create it and how your life will be different or similar when you get the result, you will actually go about creating the result instead of trying to force the result, um, by doing things like incrementally, if that makes sense.

So what will be the same? I will still have problems. I'll still have negative emotions. I'll still have this present moment that will not be better or worse. I'll probably be the same weight and eat the same types of food. I'll still wear neutrals. I'll still have the same friends and the same awesome boyfriend. I'll still live in Chicago. I think identifying what will be the same will be really helpful for you so that you get out of this fantasy lala land that isn't useful. You can achieve your impossible goal, but you're still going to have problems and your life is not just going to be one blissed out party. So the multimillionaires, the skinny people, the people in the happiest marriages, they all still have problems. They all still have negative emotions. And the way that, you know this is that they have a primitive brain.

And even if they are using, let's say, like their money to over pleasure with false pleasures. So let's say you have a lot of money and that's an impossible goal, or you're looking at someone who's like a multimillionaire and you're thinking their life is so much better, even if they're using their money to um, to spend on false pleasures, like over eating, over drinking, over like vacationing, all of that. When you seek external stuff to make you feel good, there's always a downside, right? It's like the drinking feels really good in the moment, but then there's always a downswing the next day with the hangover. So if you're using external things to kind of use false pleasures, it's not as awesome as it sounds because you always have to be seeking more of it to get the same kind of high, for lack of a better word.

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And what I teach and what I help my students do is to find the internal happiness and balance and wellbeing so that you learn how to process the negative emotions and you set goals because it's fun and you want a different experience of life, not because you think that over there is somehow so much better and that you're going to be problem free and happy all of the time because you still have that toddler, primitive brain. No matter who you are, no matter how much money you have, no matter what you weigh, no matter what your relationship status is.

fOkay? So that was my example. This works for anything. If you want to double your income and work less. If you want to get married or have kids or pay off your debt or lose weight, you know, quit drinking, do this exercise and answer these questions and I'm just gonna run through them one more time for you.

Question number one, why do you want this result? Question number two, where will you find the result? Question number three, when will you find the result and do you need to be in a rush? Question number four, what is the person who has this result thinking? Question number five, what is the person who has this result feeling? Do you need to worry about the result? Do you need to be afraid about the result? Question number six, what is the person who has this result doing? How will you create the result? What obstacles will be in your way? How can you solve each obstacle? What can you do this week to move you closer to achieving this result? And then question number seven, what will be different about your life when you achieve this result? And what will be the same?

Do this exercise and actually write it down. I'm telling you, it's so powerful. You will bring awareness to yourself and to the inner wisdom that you have and you will move forward toward achieving your impossible goal. Okay. I love you. I will talk with you next week.

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