

Episode: Direction Vs. Intention



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.

Hey, how is your summer going? Mine is going so well and so fast and wow, Chicago is amazing in the summer it really is even better than I thought it would be. So that's been really, really fun for me. Uh, last week I kind of had a rough week and I just have to say that I was really proud of myself for just kind of allowing the negative emotion and kind of just being down for a couple of days and owning that responsibility and not blaming my circumstances.

And, and I guess that is my hope for you if you are going through anything or whenever you are next. Right. Cause it always comes, it always happens that you just allow it and you don't beat yourself up and that you go through the podcasts episodes that I've done for you about, you know, what to do when something sucks and that sort of thing because they really will help you.

You know, when you're in it, it's kinda hard to see, but it's so worth it. So when you do it the right way and you take responsibility for how you feel and you just allow the negative emotion, when you kind of get through it, you just feel so much more confident because you did it the right way. Right?

It's like you're building that skillset of emotional intelligence and it really, really does pay off. So I want that for you. And I am just cranking away at work and I am working less, which has been super fun. But I have redone my free courses. So if you have not taken the Personal Development Free Course, if you are not a student of Personal Development For Her, I really suggest that you hop on over to nataliebacon.com/personal-development-course, [personal-development-course](https://nataliebacon.com/personal-development-course) and you will jump into the free course.

That just gives you free content and I just redid the entire course and it's so, so, so good. So if you want a little taste of the thought work and taking this podcast work to a deeper level, I highly recommend going through it since I just redid it.

Today's episode, I am so excited to share with you. I get inspired so easily. Sometimes people ask me how I always come up with ideas and create new content and it's honestly hard for me not to right because when you get in the habit of thinking and creating content, it's kind of an obsession, right? I just want to teach you new concepts all the time. Then I have to be really organized about it and make sure that I don't just hide behind my content and make sure that I'm actually growing my business because the content part is so, so, so fun.

But it's just one part of it. So today's content is so good. It is inspired by Andy Stanley. If you don't know him, he is amazing. He has a podcast called Your Move and it's a Christian podcast, but it's definitely heavily personal development. So just kind of putting that out there, depending on your beliefs and your religion, you may or may not like it, but I am obsessed with it.

And he talked about this concept that I'm going to talk about with you today in a three part series. And I'm going to do it in one episode and I think it's going to cover everything. And it's called direction versus intention. And the basic principle is that the action you take today is the

Episode: Direction Vs. Intention

direction you're heading in and it will predict your future. So what does this mean? It means that your direction, the actions you take, everything that you're doing leads to the ultimate end destination, not what you intend, right?

Not what your desire is. So if you think about, you know, I intend to get out of debt, but you're proactively getting into more debt, right? That's kind of like a good example, an easy one to see. It's what you are doing today determines the direction you're actually taking and that direction will lead to a destination that result versus what you actually intend. You actually want to get out of debt.

That's your vision, that's your desire. But what you are doing, the path that you're on, the direction that you're headed today is actually leading in the complete opposite direction. So when I'm talking about direction, I'm talking about where you're headed right now. It's like the action that you're taking and the path that you're on. It's literally like where you're moving. I love the analogy for goal setting and all of this work for creating your future in terms of a GPS and getting in the car because it's something we can all relate to, right?

It's like you get in your car and you have an end destination in mind. So you get out your GPS on your phone or your car and you put that end destination and then the GPS or the car gives you directions to take and you take that path and then you know exactly where you're going to end up. Right?

So that's kind of how I like to think about goals or results. You are headed in a direction and you will end up at a destination. The direction you're headed are all of the actions you're taking. It's not necessarily where you intend. If you haven't done this work, if you're not, you know, being intentional. If you're not setting goals, if you are just driving, if you are just taking action without a specific set of directions, without that intentionality, then you will end up somewhere you don't want to go.

Think about what you're doing today, right and tomorrow. And think about what you did yesterday and what you're going to do the rest of the week. That is the direction that you're headed. So how are you going to spend your time today? How are you going to spend your time tomorrow? What are you filling your calendar with, right? Are you working out or are you eating healthy? Who are you dating? Are you dating? How are you relating to people? Are you even setting goals or not? Right? What are you spending your money on? Are you cooking? What are you doing to save money or invest your money or make money or work on your business?

So just think about all of the things you're going to do this week or not do, and that's the direction that you're headed right now. Contrast this with intention. Intention is your desired end destination. It's kind of like the someday thing, right? It's like I plan to get out of debt. I plan to get married. I plan to have a good marriage. You know, I plan to build a business. I plan to work less. I plan to make six figures or seven figures. I plan to eat healthier. I plan to have a job I love, a career I love. I really want to lose weight.

Episode: Direction Vs. Intention

I plan to only really date good guys, right? Whatever your intention is, that's like your desire for the future. That's kind of what you want. This is what people kind of talk about. Yeah. Someday I'm gonna work less and get out of debt and have a career I love and spend time with my family. It's kind of like this up in the air thing that's like really far away, but it's your values, it's what you intend for the future.

And the problem is that you may not be headed in the direction of your intentions and I just want you to have awareness of this. This is what today's podcast is all about, so we have a desire for our intention, but we're not taking action on that right now. That's the problem. So we'll put it off, you know, we'll say I'm going to do that and then we'll head in a completely different direction. And what you do today, what you do right now, really, really matters. It is determinative of where you're going to end up and what makes this problem even more challenging is that what you're doing today and the direction that you're headed right now? It might not feel that bad. It might feel actually amazing, but you still might not be headed in the right direction. It still might be the wrong direction.

It's kind of like if you are lost driving but you don't really know you're lost yet, you could just be like enjoying the ride until you realize you're lost, right? So think of it that way.

Here's another example. If you want to meet someone and date them seriously, but you spend all of your nights and weekends partying and you're not really taking it seriously at all, but you think that one day you will, or let's say you want to build a six figure business, but you're spending all of your free time traveling.

Or another example would be like you really want to prioritize your relationships, like that's your intention, but on a day to day basis, you're filling up all of your free time and all of your calendar with like work and extra work activities and no one would really fault you for that, right?

Like you're advancing in your career and you're accepting networking events, or you're traveling and you're not working in your business. And it seems like you're doing all the right quote unquote right. Things like nothing is bad. But I just want you to bring awareness to the fact that what you're doing right now, the actions you're taking right now in the direction that you're heading today really, really matter, even if no one else knows, you know, and you know that every little action you take in one direction takes you further away from the direction that you intend and that you want.

So actions are always going to create your results. Remember I've talked about this before, like your beliefs will create how you feel and how you feel determines what actions you take, and then your actions create your results. So the actions that you're taking today are going to determine your results because of how you're thinking about it.

So you might be thinking, Oh yeah, someday I'm going to get out of debt, or someday I'm going to have great relationships and settle down and work less. Or someday I'm going to build that six figure business, but I want to travel right now. I want to feel good, I want to work really hard in my career, whatever it is.

Episode: Direction Vs. Intention

Like you're having this set of beliefs where there's this tension and you're not moving in the direction that will lead to the result that you want. And I just want you to know that intention and desire for something in the future is not enough. It's actually not going to do anything for you. It actually might just cause more suffering if you don't actually change direction because you are going to think of it as something that you'll do one day. But if you don't actually start to head in that direction, you're just procrastinating your dreams and you can do that for years or into eternity.

Eventually there will be consequences for the direction that you're headed. So if you are taking a bunch of action right now and you're filling up all of your free time with extracurricular activities or networking events or whatever else, instead of filling up your free time with working on your side hustle, right?

A year from now, you will be one year further away from getting the result that you want with your side hustle. And you know what this looks like and the examples that I've given are kind of ones that I think are positive and harder to identify, right? It's like if you're filling your free time with traveling or friends, it's, it's not something that most people would give you a hard time about, or even you would give yourself a hard time about, even though it's in the wrong direction, but there are examples of this where the consequences are much worse, right?

I like to think of the example of, you know, it's like a stereotype, right? The guy or the dad who says he wants the family to be really, really close and spend lots of time together, but he's filling up all of his free time and nights and weekends with every single opportunity he can for his career.

From the outside, you can like see this pretty easily that like he's headed in the wrong direction and that he's not doing himself any favors by taking on all these extracurriculars and filling up his time when in reality what he really, really wants is to have a really close family. And sometimes it's kind of heartbreaking to watch from afar, right? Because time is just going to keep going and once time has gone, it's gone. So like you can't get that time back. What makes something the wrong direction is simply you deciding it's wrong.

If you have an intention that you desire, if you want a close family, if you want a close relationship, if you want to lose weight, if you want to get out of debt, if you want to make six figures, whatever your intention is, right? That's the right intention for you.

What makes you headed in the wrong direction is heading in a direction that is opposite of that intention. So what do you do? What do you do if you are intending for something, if you desire something, if you really want something in your future, you want to lose weight, you want to meet the guy, you want a fulfilling relationship, you want to make six figures or seven figures. What is it that you want that you desire so much? Right? And you know this, this is in your heart, right? It can just be simple too.

It doesn't have to be, Oh, I want to change the world and make millions of dollars, whatever it can be. It doesn't have to be, it's up to you. It can just be, I want a fulfilling career. I want

Episode: Direction Vs. Intention

whatever it is. And by the way, a fulfilling career is inside of you, but if you're spending all of your time escaping and filling it with friends and not doing the work to figure out what it means to become a person who has a fulfilling career, then you're headed in the wrong direction.

So the solution here for this problem, for the problem of heading in a direction that is opposite of your intentions, where you want to be is that you have to change direction. I love the visualization of like being in the car and realizing you're lost. You have to change the direction and go the other way.

You cannot fix it. This is a really, really good point that I really want to make because so often it's like we think that having the desire and the intended result is enough. Right? It's like, Oh, I all of a sudden got really clear about what I want. And that's important, right? Like you can't just get in the car and you know, magically end up somewhere that you want to be.

You have to know exactly what you want. You have to know the result that you want in the future. So there is value in being clear about the result that you want, but that's not enough and you can't just jump to that result. You have to change direction and you have to take action to get there.

So getting clarity about what you want is the result is the first step, right? It's like putting in the end destination into the GPS. Then you actually have to follow the steps to change direction to go toward that destination. You cannot just fix it. If you've ended up on the East coast and you realize you want to be on the West coast, you can't just say, okay now I'm going to fix it because I ended up here and I want to be there.

You have to actually start that journey from the East coast and go all the way to the West coast and you may have started in the middle of the country, right? But now you're all the way on the East coast cause you were headed in the wrong direction for the last few years. Now you have to go all the way and it takes double you know, the time. And that's the point that I want to make is that we want to just fix it and that's not how it works.

You might want to build an online business and make six figures and work from home and do it on your own terms. And this is your intention and it's your desire and you're really clear about it. But if you're spending all your time doing other things, if you're in a whole bunch of other hobbies, if you're planning all these trips with your friends, if you're working full time and you're prioritizing your relationships and your health and workout classes, you know it's going to feel really, really good.

But you are not going to end up with the results of building an online business and making six figures because you haven't been spending the time and taking the action to move toward that goal. So you're headed in the wrong direction. You're not heading in the direction of building that six figure business. You're heading in a completely different direction.

Episode: Direction Vs. Intention

So look at your calendar right now. Look at how you're spending your time and the actions you're taking. Look at what you're producing to see if you are headed in the right direction. It doesn't mean that you have to have the exact result, but you will have new and different results.

It's like weight loss. If you want to lose 50 pounds and you're gaining weight, right? It's like, and you're not doing anything else and you're just thinking, Oh, I want to lose weight. You're not headed in that direction. Now contrast this with you want to lose the weight and you're heading in that direction, but you do have some ups and downs, you know and you know the difference, right? There is a difference. You're headed in the right direction, but you have some failures and some obstacles along the way. That's a very different than having a desire and being headed in the wrong direction.

So just notice this. Notice that your actions today will create your future. You know that you create all the results in your life and I think this is the best news ever because if someone else creates our results, then we don't have control over our future results and you do have control over your future results.

Of course there's going to be things that happen, unforeseen circumstances, tragedies, but that is not why I see people heading in the wrong direction. You know? I see people heading in the wrong direction because it's short term pleasure and it feels really good to just do what's comfortable and it takes a lot of discipline and self love to change direction and head down a path and take action outside your comfort zone and in a way that's new and different, but that leads to the intended results. It's, it takes a lot.

It takes that discomfort and it's going to take a long time potentially. Right? Maybe, maybe not. I don't know how long it will take for you, but the point is like you created the results that you have now, right? You took that journey, you started somewhere and you're taking all of these actions and it's leading to a destination. It's leading to a result and you can't just fix it and jump across the country. You have to start that journey all over again. You have to have new thoughts, new feelings, and take new actions and you have to give up the short term pleasures and all of that fun, right? It's like a lot of fun sometimes to be headed in the wrong direction, but it is worth it to give up that short term pleasure, that false pleasure for long term satisfaction to get the desired result.

And the best news that I have for you is that if you change direction, things will eventually change. Like let me just repeat that. How good is that? If you change direction, things will eventually change. I love this thought and I really say it a lot for whatever I'm working on because sometimes it's hard to believe new thoughts, especially if you're just starting on a new goal, right?

Let's say you want to build a six figure business and you're really not making any money and you want to believe that you'll make six figures and you believe that someday you could, but it's not happening right now, right? You have not made money today. You're guessing that you're not going to make money tomorrow and you want to believe new and different things, but it's a journey, right? You have to move to different thoughts.

Episode: Direction Vs. Intention

I really like the thought if I change direction, things will eventually change. It's like, okay, what am I doing today? That moves me a little bit closer. I don't know all of the exact steps, but I do know that if I take one step in the right direction towards my intended result, that's one step closer. If I change my direction, things will eventually change and I'm not in a rush. I'm in alignment and I can start right now. I don't have to hurry.

I don't have to have that desperate feeling or that neediness, right? I can be myself. I can create the result that I want by taking one action in the right direction that I intend. Instead of saying, well, it's not going to make a difference anyways, right, I might as well go to hang out with my friends tonight or go to whatever else because it's not like I would make money from my side hustle anyways today or tomorrow.

So it doesn't really matter. It matters. It matters a lot. What you do today, the action that you take right now going forward, all leads to a certain result. All of that little action compounds. So what you're thinking and what you're feeling and what you're doing today will determine the end result that you create. It will determine your destination.

So if you want to create your future with as much certainty as possible, you know, but for some unforeseen circumstance happening, right? To the extent that it's humanly possible to create your future from your future, you have to start today by moving in the direction that you intend to end up. And not everyone is going to understand this and it's totally okay. Lately a lot of people have been asking me what to do and someone doesn't just support you or they don't get it.

Or like there's all this thought drama about other people and it's totally fine. They're just humans and they probably love you and it's coming from a good place and they don't have to understand, even if it's not coming from a good place, it's okay.

You have to let the humans be humans, let them be them. And you don't have to try to get them to understand what you're doing. You don't have to, you know, do anything. I remember people constantly would tell me, I worked too much. I was a workaholic. I, you know, it wasn't worth it. I got to live a little, whatever the whatever they said. I honestly don't even remember because I just blocked it all out.

When I was working full time, getting up at 4:00 AM working on my side hustle. Right? You could not tell me anything. I mean you could tell me, but I wasn't it was in one ear out the other because my belief was so strong that I was headed in the direction that I intended to get a result in.

When you do that, you will get results. If you change direction, things will eventually change. This is magic. I love it. So start today, and this is everything that I teach in my personal development programs. So if you want more, come join me in Personal Development For Her at personaldevelopmentforher.com. Okay. I will talk with you next week. Have an amazing week.

Episode: Direction Vs. Intention

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