

## Episode: How To Change Your Past



**With Natalie Bacon, JD, CFP ®, Certified Life Coach**

Full Episode Transcript

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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, I am really, really pumped today. It's getting warm in Chicago and that is so fun. This is my first summer in Chicago and I have to say I love this city. I am so glad that I moved here. I have not been here a year yet and it's already just so amazing. I really feel like I have roots here. I, you know, uh, really got settled here. I, I created my business entity here. I moved everything over. Like I'm very official and I hope to stay here. Like I, I'm, I'm in, I'm committed.

It feels really good and it's crazy to think that. A year ago at this time I was living in Columbus, Ohio just goes to show that you can create whatever you want in your future. But today I am so excited for this episode. We're going to talk about how to change your past.

I get emails from readers all the time about how their past is the reason why they cannot do whatever they want to do in their future. And it's totally not true. And this is really, really good news and I want to show you how you can actually change your past.

So what I like to start with is to tell you that the past is over. So yesterday is over. Last week is over, last month is over. Your childhood is over. Your past only exists as sentences in your head. Let that sit for a minute. Right? It's just the thoughts that you have about the past that exist. The actual events of the past are over. I still, I will have students and clients say, well I have old pain or you know, because of my past, you know, I have old wounds or I'm suffering from the past and that is actually not true, which is really good news.

And I'll tell you why. There is no such thing as like old pain. So there is the pain that you had when the thing happened. Let's say it was childhood. You had to pain in that moment and that is over. And then there is the feeling, the pain that you have right now and the feeling that you have right now is caused by a current thought that you're having right now that's causing a current feeling.

Now, the current thought you might be having is related to events of your past and the pain may be a similar or the same emotion that you had in the past, but it's new pain. You cannot experience pain from the past. What happened in the past is over, and this is so, so good. It's really, really useful to know. It's not blaming the victim or anything. It's actually the exact opposite.

So when you feel pain and blame a past event for it, you're giving your power away to that event or to that person. If someone abused you in your past, let's say for example, and you had pain, right? And now you're experiencing pain today, even if this was years ago, and even if that person is dead now you may think that that person is still causing you pain, but that person is actually dead or you know, not in your life, right?

So the pain that you're causing is from the thoughts that you have about whatever happened. And this is really, really good news because it means that the pain you're feeling is optional. It doesn't mean that you have to like get away from it and escape it and not feeling it anymore. But what I

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want you to do is just notice the difference. Separate out the pain that you're feeling right now from the pain that you had, whenever whatever happened happened, whether it was last month in college or as a child.

You don't have to feel how you're feeling anymore if you don't want to, you can totally take your power back because your thoughts are what causes you to feel a certain way. It's always your thoughts. So the way that the mind works, you're always telling a story. Your brain loves stories. This just makes your brain be able to like make sense of the world. So you're telling a story about your life with sentences in your head and this includes about your past and you're making it all up. You're putting things together and you're trying to make sense of it based on your experiences, socialization, all that stuff. Your brain loves stories. You have a choice about what story you want to tell. The story you tell of your childhood is actually probably changed a little bit since you've gotten older, right? And this is such a good exercise.

It's like what story were you telling about your childhood when you were a teenager, right? Were your parents, just like the worst parents ever. That story may have changed now as an adult, but the events of the past are exactly the same. It's just the frame that you're telling the story is completely different and if you asked your mom to tell the story of your past, she would give a different story with a different angle.

If you asked your dad or your brother or your sister, they would also give different angles, right? They are making up stories with sentences in their heads about past events. So people will say that the past is gonna predict what's going to happen in your future. And this is just one way of looking at it. This is because you're going to recycle those old thoughts and that's super easy for your brain to do, right?

It's really efficient. Your brain loves repeating the past. This is a survival mechanism. It wants to keep you alive. Even if you've been through horrible, horrible things in the past, you survived. So your brain wants to do more of the past in the future cause it thinks she'll stay alive. This is just your brain doing what your brain does.

What I want you to know is that the past is completely over, right? So like if you had amnesia and you just woke up like you're the same person physically, but your brain is like different, you would not have all of those old thoughts. You would have new thoughts and you can create whatever you want. You can create whatever you want from your future. I've talked about this in other episodes. Make sure you listen to those, right? So when you think about creating new things from your future, you're probably pulling from your past if you're like most of my students, but you don't have to.

So I love thinking of really big things like the creation of electricity before electricity, no one was flicking on a light switch before airplanes and no one was going to the airport to jump on a plane to go across the country. Before the iPhone, no one was going into Apple, right? Someone had to create those things from the future. And you've also done this on a smaller scale too not life changing for the world, but for your own life. You learned how to walk, you learn how to read, you learn how to drive. You may have gone to college and graduated. You got your first

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job. You may have started a business all from your future, never having done it before. So I bring this up because it's not only that you can create your future from your future, but you can also rewrite your past so that it supports the future that you want.

This applies to your childhood and it applies to 10 minutes ago. I love remembering this because I think it's easy for us to disconnect from our childhood, maybe for most of us, but think about it like in terms of World War II. World War II is as over as your childhood is as over as what happened last week. But we don't think this is true. We think we can change last week if we just think really hard about it. Isn't that so funny? It's like such a waste of time. We spend so much mental energy on what happened in our recent past.

Why? Because we think that by thinking about our past harder or longer, we can change it and that we can make sense of it so we can see what's going to happen in our future. So the actual events that have happened in the past are done right.

You cannot change those events. What you can change is the story you're telling about them today. And that story matters a lot because the story you tell about your past will determine what you create in your future. The past means nothing about you or your future.

The past only exists as sentences in your head. So if you keep telling the story from like a victim mentality, you are going to create your life as a victim in the future. Now, I'm not talking about actually being a victim. You may have been a victim of terrible things in the past that is totally true and valid. I'm not saying to say it was different, but what I'm saying is to reframe it now so that you're not causing yourself to suffer today because of it and so that it doesn't impact your future negatively.

So telling yourself your past is the reason why you can't create the exact future you want is a complete lie. It will keep you stuck. Your brain will keep thinking old thought patterns, and you'll create your future just like your past. I see this from my readers all the time. They will write to me and they will tell me the reason why they can't create a successful business or the reason why they can't have a loving relationships or the reason why they can't lose weight. Or the reason why they can't make more money and it's like, paragraphs like this story has been refined.

You haven't been thinking old thoughts over and over and over and repeating them and refining them. So here are some examples like landing your dream job, let's say that's what you want to do and you're thinking that because you have a certain degree, you are limited in what job you can take in the future or thinking that because you had a certain job in the past, you're limited in the career choices that you have in the future.

So you're using your past education and job choices to predict your future. I love using health and weight loss, um, as examples because they're really easy to see. I think we can all relate. In one sense. I'm actually a certified weight loss coach, but I don't, um, I don't teach that or offer programs on it, but I am certified in it as part of my life coach school training. So I know a lot about it and I'm around a lot of weight loss coaches and I hear examples and stories from students because it's just something that I think we can all kind of relate to.

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So with weight loss, it's thinking that because you've never lost weight before, you'll never be able to lose weight again. Right? It's like, Oh, well I've never lost weight in the past so I'll never be able to do it in the future.

It's just not going to happen. Thinking that you want to get back to the weight that you weighed when you were 18 years old is another one. Instead of saying, I want to lose weight and be the current age and look in, you know myself at this current age, right? It's like we're , we're always looking to our past for what we want to create with health, with weight, with everything in the future.

It's thinking that what happened in your past relationship is going to tell you what's going to happen in your next relationship. Right? This can be with friends, this can be with your spouse or a boyfriend or a partner. Any relationship thinking that a past relationship tells you what a future relationship will be like? Right. That's just more repeating the past, building a business. Same thing. Thinking that because you've never started a business, you can't make money online.

I never started a business before I started one. I wasn't in a family of entrepreneurs. I knew nothing, nothing or I'll hear a lot like thinking that you're not good at technology or haven't been good at technology is a reason for why you can't be good at online business. I'm like, I was helping my brother with some technology the other day and it was really funny.

We were just laughing because he's like, like you know the nerd smart guy who's just like really good at technology or at least that's my story. Right and it's just funny cause I'm over here, um helping him with tech making money is one I hear all the time and if you pay attention to how people talk about money, like people really talk about money in a negative way. It's usually like as a joke, but they're serious. Right?

People think that because they make a certain amount of money now and that's the money that they'll create in the future. I even heard someone say the other day, he was an attorney and he's like, yeah, like I make a ridiculous amount of money right now. And I have to remember like that's just not normal. If I, if I want to leave law firm life, I can't expect to make that much money.

And I, you know, you're in that moment and you're like, do I engage? Do I not engage? Sometimes you're just like, Oh yeah, for sure. And then other times I'm like, well, let's think about that. You know, that's just the story that you're telling, right? You can quit being a lawyer and make a lot of money. Right? I am proof of that.

The biggest one for sure is the childhood. That's the example I hear the most because my childhood was a certain way. That means something about my future. I hear this all the time. People always love to tell me that.

So when you're using your past to dictate your future, you will create more of your past. And that is why it's really important for you to understand this because especially if you were a victim in

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your past, you will likely have a thought pattern that keeps you thinking in that way. And that victim mentality will perpetuate into the future.

So what I want you to do is forget the history bias and try to wipe out that story and retell the story. Ask yourself, if you were starting completely over right now with whatever area in your life, what would you do? So I was at a conference recently speaking and someone raised her and she asked me what she should do about her current job. She kept going back and forth about whether to quit or not.

She really was grateful for what she had learned so far, but she really did not see this job in the future. And she was like, she had this whole story about like how this was like a really big problem, right? It's like how it always is. We're telling the story that this is like a really big problem and I asked her, I said, would you retake the job right now as a new job if it were offered to you?

And instantly she said no. And I said, there's your answer, right? But we make a story about why we should hold onto a decision just because we've done it in the past. Sticking with something because you did it in the past is not a good reason to do something, remake all of your decisions. So I never tell my clients or students what to do.

I always say, you can make any decision you want. You just need to like your reason for making that decision. Sticking with something because of the history bias is a really terrible reason to do something because you're intentionally creating more of the past in your future when you actually want a different future.

I did this with my courses, so I have three courses out right now and I'm watching a coaching program soon. The three courses. I asked myself at the beginning of the year, would I recreate them and the answer was I would recreate the content, the contents really, really good, but I would do it in a different way. I would package it differently. What that meant was I needed to make the decision to repackage them, right? Rebrand them, reposition them, and so that's what I did and I had to be really careful to watch my mind to not let like the history bias creep in of, you know, anchoring where it's like just because I created them last year, that means that I should keep them right.

I already went through product creation mode. They're selling really well. I'm already at six figures. Why would I do that? Right? It's like, no, if I want to create the future, I want, I need to make that decision. Right? I love this.

My mentor Brooke Castillo does this for her business every single year. Question everything. Would you remake that decision? Do this with your relationships? Would you start that friendship over? Would you start that romantic relationship over today? Right? It might mean that you have to make a decision where you leave the relationship and you might feel pain because of that. But if you don't, if you stay in a relationship, just because you've been in it for so long, you will literally be recreating more of a bad relationship in the future that you actually don't even want. So just be really, really careful.

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The way that the world works, and I've talked about this a little bit before, is that there is contrast. So there's like the good and bad and I love thinking that everything happened in the past, exactly how it was supposed to happen. Even all the bad stuff, right? How do we know it happened exactly how it was supposed to happen because it wouldn't have happened that way.

Now this is very different from, and does not mean that everything happened for a reason. I don't like that thought. I don't think it's useful, especially when terrible things happen in the world, but I want to think are terrible. I don't want to think someone I loved died like for a reason, right? So you can make any circumstance mean whatever you want. What I like to think is that everything happened exactly how it was supposed to happen. So everyone died at the exact moment they were supposed to die. This doesn't mean don't feel pain about it.

This means feel the pain of someone dying, right? Maybe you're devastated, but it does not mean add suffering on top of it. So the difference is, you know, someone died and I'm really devastated and sad versus something has gone wrong. That person should not have died. So for death, I like to think that there's no way you can change when someone dies. That person was always going to die. Then me, like as the outsider, I just didn't know that that's when they were going to die.

So this is really useful because you can kind of see like, Oh yes, this was the way of it. This was always the way of it. It's going to be a lot of negative emotion and I have to experience that and learn how to experience that. But what I don't need to do is add the suffering on top of it, which is something has gone wrong.

Again, this is not mean to be like apathetic or not care about the world or not stand up for what you want to be different in the world, but it just means that there's always going to be bad things happening. There's always going to be death. There's always going to be problems in the world. How do we know? Because this is literally how it's always been forever. There's never been a time where there just haven't been problems. You know?

Listen to that episode about problems are forever and knowing this, at least for me, it helps me just be at peace. So when bad things have happened in your past, you experienced them exactly how you needed to experience them. You did what you needed to do or you didn't do what you didn't want to do. Right. It was perfect. It happened exactly. Even if you were a victim in the past, right?

You're not a victim now the event is over. Right. And the difference here is really, really important. It's everything. And especially if you've ever been a victim in the past, you're likely to have victim thinking, right? And people will not blame you for this. And so just have to be really, really careful cause it just won't serve you for your future.

You can have had a horrible things happen to you in your past and not make them mean anything about your future. When you are a victim and you hold onto the victim mentality, you give your power away to that person who victimized you for so much longer, right than the event actually happened. And it's the exact opposite of what you'd want to do if someone victimized you. If you

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were a victim in some way, you don't want to continue to give your power away to that person, but that's exactly what you're doing by perpetuating the thought that you're still a victim and thinking that into the future.

And then you create more of that in your future. You had the exact past to support the future that you want to create. I really love using examples of people who have like been through it, right? Oprah is such a good example. If you have not read anything about her story, you absolutely should. She was born into poverty by a teen mom. She was molested as a teenager herself. She gave birth to a baby at age 14 and that baby died in infancy, right? You would never know that about Oprah.

Tony Robbins is another one. He grew up poor to a single mom. His mom abused him, right? Tony Robbins is helping end suffering for millions of people. He's in New York times best seller, right. Brooke Castillo, alcoholic father. She joined a cult and now trains life coaches to be life coaches. She's who I got my life coach training from, owns \$1 million business.

All these people's pasts have not created their future. They have told the story of their past being the reason why they can create the perfect future for themselves. I often talk about the support that I had from my parents, right in my careers. I say they were always so supportive. You know, they've always told me to go after my goals and people will write to me about this, right?

And they're like, well, I didn't have that as if that's like a reason for them not to create in their future. I even had someone write to me that I was really lucky for having \$206,000 student loan debt because it gave me something to create a business about and I just had to laugh. I'm like, yes, I think I am lucky too. But it's because I believe I am lucky I'm creating that luck. Yeah.

So my past actually is very different than just having a supportive parents. Right. My dad was a dentist growing up, but he was also an alcoholic. He was in and out of jail during my childhood. We lost everything. At one point, you know, my mom had been a stay at home mom and she had to start working and they got divorced and you know, my dad was a very high functioning and brilliant man. But if you know anything about alcoholism and just like slowly destroys everything in its sight, right?

I have never met anyone like my dad and I've done so much work around my childhood that it doesn't negatively affect me. I think I had the perfect childhood, right? I could choose to look at my parents and say, poor me and I didn't have a stable childhood and my dad didn't care for me in a way that I think a dad should care for children.

But you know, when I think that I feel very disempowered and upset. Instead, I think I had the perfect parents that inspired me and that motivated me and that required me to figure out life pretty early on. I had to have curiosity and maturity and grit and thank God I had the parents that I did. They prepared me for this life. Now when challenges come up, I know how to handle them.

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I'm so thankful for my past. I never would have had the courage to, you know, quit my jobs without that past. I have so much love for my dad and I still consider him my best friend. Right? This is my choice. So if you've done a lot of work on your childhood, you kind of get to this place of feeling really good about it and how it's like the best thing that ever happened.

Regardless of how bad it was, you're like, Oh, this is the setup. But what I noticed is you have to make sure you're doing this for your more recent past. So not only do I have to do this or did I do this for my childhood, but I had to do it for the breakup I went through two years ago.

Oh my gosh, y'all. When I went through that breakup, long time listeners and followers know this, it was so traumatic at the time I thought I was going to get engaged and married and all this and it did not happen that way and it's so funny because it literally could not have been a better thing to happen in my life. Everything in my life has improved since then. Everything like you know what you're talking about, the different life categories or I talked about the different life categories, everything might help is better.

Like other relationships are better. I have so much love and connection in my life that's better. Right? The things that you wouldn't even think relate to it, but do are better. My business is better. My money is better. Like everything is better. The last two years I've had more growth in my life. Then like all of the other years, it happens so fast and I'm choosing to tell that story.

I'm always like, Oh my God, thank God that happened no matter what it was at the time, I thought that was like the worst thing that could've ever happened to me. Right? It wasn't like the breakup in the past, like where you know, I broke up with the guy. This was not that breakup. This was the breakup where like I thought my life was over. I was just like very blindsided by it. So I say that because I want you to know like it wasn't like I just decided to end it and I was fine.

Right? It was a very, very much a big deal at the time. So I'm telling you this because I, first of all, I want you to know like I get it. I will have people. I'm really surprised when I share that. I was at a conference earlier this year and someone was talking about her brother being in and out of jail and all this stuff. And, and I, um, told her about my dad and she was like shocked.

She was like, what? Like she couldn't even believe it. And she thought like, I had this perfect life and she's just, you know, it's funny, we make up these stories about other people and how they had the perfect life, right? But we don't do that for ourselves. So what I want you to do, I want you to tell two stories of your childhood, right? And if you had a really good childhood, then tell the tale of two stories of a different time in your life that you didn't think was perfect, whether it was college or whatever.

Tell the story from the victim mentality where your life happened to you and it wasn't supposed to happen that way. And you know, that's the reason why you can't achieve your dream future. Get what you want and then do the opposite and tell the story of your childhood or whatever event from a place of abundance, from a place where you had the exact childhood that you had to have in order for you to be you in order for you to create this future that you want. Right?

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When you think about your childhood, when you think about college, when you think about your first job, your first boyfriend, what are you choosing to think about? I love um, Dan Sullivan and he says that you can take from your past whatever you want and leave whatever you want. This is true. I love it. You can think whatever you want.

Like, remember, you couldn't believe anything. I just think that's like life changing. People just tell me stuff and I'm just like, I have like a block up. I'm like, okay, like I don't have to believe you if I don't want to. It's totally optional. You have a hundred percent control over what you think and feel right now in this moment. And that includes everything you think and feel about your past.

No one can tell you or make you feel anything about your past. It's totally up to you. And I want you to keep doing this exercise for more recent events because I think it's easy to learn this and then of course apply it to the most obvious thing in your life. Like maybe that's your childhood, but I want you to do it to last year or last month instead of spinning out and thinking that this is horrible.

Like think about how it could be happening for you. Uh, whenever I am going for a new opportunity and I have a little bit of doubt, I'm like, okay, well if it doesn't work out, then that's probably just going to work out better in some way that I can't see yet.

This is literally what I'm constantly telling myself. And you will reprogram your brain to default to that and it's really, really empowering and you will change your future when you do this. And just remember that even if you feel justified in thinking a certain way about the past, it's not going to necessarily serve you and it may hold you back. I think that the people who love us the most can often be the most hurtful in this way because they will say, I don't blame you at all. I would do the same thing.

I'd be the same way. Like of course it's like we call it jumping in the pool as coaches, right? They're like having a pity party with you. You know, when I went through my breakup, everyone did that for me. And of course like that was amazing to have so much support.

That's why I think coaching is so powerful. You need someone who you trust, who can hold the space, who can, you know, not jump down to where you are, but help bring you up out of it. Right? They can help you see that it's your thoughts recreating new pain. So just be careful if you feel really justified because you might be justified, but that might not serve you. And if you continue to use your past as a reason why you can't create your future, you will find evidence for that. You will recreate that in your future.

You will suffer more unnecessarily. So the past can only impact you in so far as you believe thoughts about the past and take action on those thoughts. The past itself cannot impact you at all. So your past is totally over. It's just your current thoughts about those facts that impact you. So I want to leave you with what story are you telling and what story do you want to tell? All right, I love you and I will talk to you next week. Bye bye.

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