

Episode: Intentional Imagination



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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.

Hi friend. How is your day going? How is your week going? How is your month going? And how would you answer these questions? How do you answer these questions to people who ask you? Do you say you are fine and okay or worried about, you know, the next thing in the news or are you really intentional about your response? I love to think about this and just know that you can always answer with, I'm amazing. I am happy, right? It's like, we don't do this. We're like, oh, I'm fine. How are you?

Anyway, I want to talk with you today about imagination. It's going to be so great, but before I do that, I want to talk with you about money and I want to do this right now because it's on the top of my mind because I recently hired some new team members, which has been amazing. My team is incredible. I 100% could not do this without them. I have been able to work 40 hours or less per week because I have a team and the reason I can have a team is because I have money that I can pay them. I pay them money and they provide value to my business. I want you to think about however you create money in your life, whether you are a full time employee, a part time employee, an entrepreneur, a freelancer, something else, you're selling things in some way. However you create money, you do that by providing value. So when you are looking for a new job, what you are doing is you are looking for a company that has money that they can give you in exchange for the value you're going to provide. There's a value exchange. That's all the trade of money is. We, the humans have decided that money equals certain numbers and the higher the number, you know the more value. So if you want money, you provide more value.

I'm telling you this because I had just so many applications for the positions that I was hiring for and 90% of them were very well-intended applicants who focused so much on themselves that they didn't even get, you know, past sort of the initial application. What I mean by that is they sent an email and they talked about themselves and their dreams or their intentions for their life or what would work in their schedule and it was really all about them. And if you want someone to give you money, you give them value. So the only thing that mattered to me was the type of value this person can provide in my company. So anyone who replied with, I can help you in this way. I can solve this problem for you. If I don't know how to solve a problem, I can figure it out. Anyone who showed me that mindset made it to the next round.

This is true for any job. I promise you your mindset comes through. And while not all employers will describe themselves as a mindset coach, they will be able to tell how you think about yourself. And how you think about their company. So someone had emailed and said, well, I know I have a full time job and that isn't ideal, but...right. What she told me there was her thoughts about her working full time and doing this. Which is totally just made up in her head. I wasn't thinking that at all. She could have said, she could have just left that part out, but if she wanted to say it, she could have said, I work full time and I'm so excited and passionate about having a side gig and I'm all in on this as well. You know, I have the time for it, like whatever the case may be. And then I would have been on board with believing her thoughts. So just know that if you want to create more money in your life, you do that by providing more value.

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I wrote a blog post a while back about how I worked for my mentor Brooke Castillo in exchange for getting into her coaching program. I basically provided working like my time up to \$18,000 to take her coaching certification and become a certified life coach and the way that I got that job, I talk about in the blog post and I cannot tell you how many people email me and say, I want to do for you what you did for Brooke. And they miss the biggest point of the entire blog post. That is what got me that job. When I emailed her, I had created an entire ebook for all of her podcast listeners ahead of time. I emailed her and I requested a job from her and I sent her that ebook and she actually still turned it down ahead of time. Right. But I said, okay, I'll keep thinking. Right. All I was doing was looking for ways to provide value to her company. No one has done that. Now this is not intended for you to go out and start creating things and sending them to me. I genuinely want you to do this in your life.

I can't remember which book it was that I was reading where the author talks about, you know, to get a job. He or one of his students went into the store and asked if he could just help out. And so he started folding the clothes and eventually after folding so many clothes, the, you know, store manager offered him a job. Right? It's the same thing. It's like you don't go in and say, well what are your hours and when do I get off? And like all of these things, you go in and you're all in and you commit and you provide value. That's what makes someone want to give you money. Like I have a team who over-delivers so much that I just can't wait to create more money in my business so that I can pay them more. Right? And we're all working together and we're not overworking, but we're producing at a really high rate, at a high quality. So that is not what today's episode is about. But I just think that this information is not out there and I think it'll serve you really, really well. That is my intention anyway.

So now let's talk about today's episode, which is intentional imagination. This is a new concept that I've become really passionate about and I've been thinking about a lot, especially with some things that I've been hearing about in the news lately and I've just been noticing how much worry and fear we all create and feed off of each other.

So before I go into how that relates to your imagination, I want to talk with you about how you're already using your imagination. So from birth to about age 30 we are given some sort of pre-frame for our imagination. We are given the blueprint for our future. When we are younger in school and in high school we imagine going to college and then when we're in college we imagine maybe going onto more college. Like for me it was going on to law school. After college, after law school you might imagine getting a job and you're really future focused and this is your imagination, right? You also are probably maybe imagining getting married, finding a partner, and maybe also having children. So that's kind of been the blueprint for us through childhood. And of course there are variations. Maybe you imagined being a professional athlete, maybe you imagine being an artist. But typically from the time we were born through our schooling, up to, you know, age 30 we imagine pretty hard.

And I'm talking about using your mind. So I actually looked up the definition of imagination and the definition, which I just love, is the action of forming new ideas. It's an action, meaning it's an action that you take. It's something you do, you forming new ideas in your mind is your imagination. It's your ability to be creative and also resourceful. And what I think is that from 30

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onward, we imagine very small. We're realistic at best, right? So maybe we imagine getting a new job or getting a 10% raise or you know, working fewer hours or becoming a stay at home mom. You know, getting out of 5k of credit card debt. You know, we imagine going on one vacation, like we imagine the peaks that we can have given our current circumstances.

So if you are maybe lower middle class, you're going to imagine maybe getting up to somewhere like mid middle class or upper middle class at best you might imagine buying a house or if your upper middle class, you know maybe you're imagining paying off your house or maybe you are imagining losing 10 pounds. I find that even in the media we're talking about retirement and that's a form of imagination. A lot of times I think imagination gets a bad rap because it doesn't seem very practical, but we're doing it all the time.

So when I was a financial planner and we were doing projections, retirement projections, and helping people plan for their futures, that was using our imagination and their imagination. Right now we were using software to do it, but it all started from what does the client want, what's their goal? When do they want to retire? And that's based on their thoughts that they created. They have an idea, okay, I want to retire at 55 that's their imagination at work and some of us don't even do that. Right? That's kind of I think at best.

I think most of us after 30 aren't really using our imagination at all. If anything, we might, you know, think we're going to retire some day and decide on some things we're going to do right now to help make that happen. Such as, you know, okay, we're going to contribute 10% of our income to a 401k so we go to the financial planner or we do it ourselves and then we're kind of done with it. Like we don't sit around every day thinking about our retirement, right? Unless you're near retirement, which when I was a financial planner, I saw this a lot, right? Those last five years in your job, typically you are imagining being retired so much. Right? And it's the thinking that over there is better. And of course what happens with a lot of retirees is that they kind of feel lost without purpose. Like they wanted to quote unquote arrive so much and they thought over there would be better. And of course it's not because it's your mind always creating your reality.

What I find is that we are not using our imagination in a way that serves us. And what we do instead is kind of set those small, realistic future goals with our imagination. And then we fill the rest of our time with worry. And it's subtle. We worry about getting sick, we worry about missing our flights, we worry about not getting the job. We worry about our relationship ending or our marriage ending or not meeting the right person. We worry about not having kids or being too old to have kids. We worry about not being able to afford our lives or get out of debt. We worry about our kids being okay and healthy and getting into the right daycare or you know, making the team or getting into the college. We worry about if we work too much, if we're a good enough friend, a good enough wife, a good enough partner, we worry about what other people think about us. We spend so much mental energy worrying and to worry is not necessary at all. Okay? It does not help you solve your problems. It kind of creates this added suffering unnecessarily.

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So if you are worried about not getting a job that you really want, you will either get the job or you won't get the job, but worrying ahead of time does not help you get the job. It only adds this suffering ahead of time because if you don't get the job, you don't get the job like you don't need to worry about it in advance. And most things that we're worrying about never happen. Have you noticed that? I remember when I was quitting my full time job, I was so worried about health insurance and interestingly most of our worries kind of come culturally so it's pretty common to worry about going out on your own and what insurance will be like. Right. And I'm healthy. I'm not married, I don't have kids. So like the worry wasn't due to me having some sort of condition and my medical bills being astronomical. The worry was just because it was something new and different that I didn't know how to do. And it is just your brains programming on default. Your brain is designed for survival. It just wants to keep you alive, which is really useful, right? It got us to this point, but it is not useful to have these irrational fears without managing your mind.

What I mean by that is it's useful for you to be afraid of driving while being drunk, right? If you're not afraid of that and you drive drunk, right, there's like a really high likelihood that either you're going to get hurt, you're going to hurt other people, or if you don't hurt anyone else, you could get arrested and go to jail. Like there's good reasons to have fear in some cases because it keeps us safe, right? We don't jump out of windows and things like that, but most of the fear that we have is irrational and that's where the worry comes in. Your brain knows that what you've done in the past has kept you alive, so it wants you to do more of what you've done in the past so you can stay alive.

If you do the work that I teach you will have a lot of fear that you will need to learn how to manage. So the fear of quitting your job or ending a relationship is this emotional fear that you're creating with your thoughts. It's normal to have that fear initially, but then you can manage your mind. So the next time that you are worried or really afraid, write down everything you are worried about or afraid of, write it all down and then look at that list of things that you just wrote down and notice that those are all just thoughts. They are not facts, right? The only thing that is real is what you look around and see. It's your reality right now. And if you notice right now you are just fine. You are okay. Everything is okay. Your brain will like to freak out about everything because it wants you to stay alive. And when you understand this, you can kind of dismiss the little worries and fears that enter into your mind.

So for example, I don't really watch the news, but I do like to be informed. So sometimes I'll listen to like really short podcasts that give you a summary of what's going on. Like I just want the facts. I want to be informed and I want to know if there's anything going on that I want to do something about. Okay. I don't want to overindulge and use my imagination on worrying and being afraid of things that I'm actually not going to do anything about. And I think this is what a lot of adults do because they don't really know better. They don't have an awareness that the list of worries and fears are actually just thoughts that they have control over. So remember you have 60,000 thoughts over 60,000 thoughts a day and you can think anything.

So I was hearing people talk about a recession and I just immediately did not want to engage in that conversation like it is not useful for my brain to worry about a recession. Okay, I really want you to understand this because it seems so responsible and it seems intellectual to discuss what's

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going on in the economy. And it feels very elitist almost if you're really into politics and you have to watch yourself because if you get obsessed with things that you think could negatively impact your life, you're focusing on the negative and that's what you're going to create more of in your life. You can't control whether there is a recession or not. Now you might want to know how the economy's doing and then you might make some changes to your own portfolio and your investment strategy, saving strategy, but then it's done. Then we don't need to talk about it.

So recently I was traveling and someone messaged me and they said, oh my gosh, are you nervous about traveling? How are you feeling? You know? And the whole like intro was like riddled with fear and worry because of the coronavirus. And I just, I find it so interesting that that's what you want to lead with, right? So we like to kind of connect based on our problems. And you have to be careful with this because what you spend your time imagining is what you're magnifying in your life. Now again, be informed to the extent that it's useful for society and for you. So for example, if you want to volunteer and you want to donate money and you want to do something to make a change, right? Get as much information as you need. But what I find, this is true kind of in every industry I've been in, whether I was a financial planner, whether I was a lawyer, and now as a life coach, I just find that people tend to kind of connect about their problems and also the worries that the media spends a lot of time on. So if the media is talking a lot about Corona virus and you put the news on every morning and then you spend the rest of the day worrying about coronavirus, but you're not actually doing anything with that information other than worrying, it's not useful for you or for the world.

So get your information, right, decide on purpose that you're not going to worry, and that you are going to solve the problems that you have in front of you that you're going to, you know, do or not do whatever it is that you want to help solve the problem on a larger scale, right? Maybe you want to donate money, maybe you want to donate your time, something like that. And then it's done. Cut it out. Like I just, I want you to know how important this is. If you spend time worrying about your money, you're always going to worry about your money. If you spend time worrying about your health, you're always gonna worry about your health, what you believe will become your reality. So you have over 60,000 thoughts a day and those thoughts practiced over time. Whichever ones you're practicing will become your beliefs and those beliefs will create results.

So I thought a lot about creating a business and I believed in it and I took action from that place. And over the last five years, that's what I've created. Contrast that to believing you are stuck in debt and burned out and it's the system's fault and there's no solution to your problem, right? You're going to create more stress and more worry than is necessary at all. Like none of that is necessary and it's optional. I think that's the biggest thing that's missing in society is this awareness that your thoughts are optional. Okay? We're all okay.

That is why I created, this is all the lead up to intentional imagination. I want you to think on purpose. Use your imagination intentionally. Imagine positivity. Imagine wealth, imagine success. Imagine getting the job, right? Imagine what you could say to someone who's hiring to convince them that you are the perfect candidate, right? Yes, I have a full time job and yes, I'm all in with you and yes, I can figure this out. I can make this happen. I can provide value for you

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in this, this, and this way. Imagine getting that job and making twice as much money and working less. Imagine having the best, healthiest relationship, you know? Imagine having inner peace.

Now I say all this because I think that we are stuck in worry and fear and self-loathing, but I don't want you to imagine that there is this place over there where there aren't any problems. But imagine what is true, which is you can always solve the problem in front of you, right? You can create the exact life you want. You can create crazy, amazing, wonderful things in your future, right? I, you know, lost 25 pounds after college and kept it off, right? I kind of gave up this whole single identity and I now have an amazing relationship. It's the best relationship I've ever been in. I make tons of money online. I work for myself. I had to imagine that this was possible for me. Okay? I want you to spend time imagining that you have the exact life you want, that you meet the guy, right?

I was just having brunch with some girls recently. One of the girls is newly single and she started talking about, you know like if she ends up single for the rest of her life and she wants to buy a house now and just the whole conversation had this kind of low grade, I'm trying to be realistic attitude and those are all thoughts that are going to create her reality. She could just as much have been committed to what she really desired, which was to meet someone and get married. Now neither option is better than the other if she was all in and truly desired to be single and live in her own home, it's amazing. But that's kind of not what she was doing. She was saying, well, realistically if I don't meet someone, that's not going to happen for me. Like I need to have plan B.

I never have a plan B. Plan B is the death of your dreams. Okay, seriously. You know what? You will figure out another plan. A, if your first plan a doesn't work. There's always another business to start. There's always another home to buy. There's always another man to meet. Okay? Like that sounds bad, but I just want you to know that if you're kind of living in this place of low grade disappointment and thinking that you can't have what you actually want, that's the energy that you're going to create your life with. You have over 60,000 thoughts a day that you get to decide what you want to do with. So instead of, you know, talking with people about your worries and your fears in an incessant way where you're kind of obsessed with just the latest worry in the media. Talk about your dreams.

Talk about what's exciting you right now, right? And it doesn't have to be big and lavish, right? I just got a new espresso machine. I'm so excited that I get to create amazing coffee every morning. I just love it. It's such a better conversation to have than the worry and the fear that just kind of snowballs out of control that isn't useful. So I want you to use your imagination intentionally. Clean out your mind. It's kind of like having a dirty home. It needs to be cleaned every week or two, right? My cleaning ladies come every two weeks because after two weeks, the home needs to be clean. Same as true for your mind. You don't just clean it once. You have to consistently coach yourself and manage your mind. This is the beauty of life coaching. You can train yourself to imagine the exact life you want because what you imagine will become your reality.

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So go to Grow You's coaching page, which is NatalieBacon.com/coaching and scroll down to the bottom and click on the new download. You don't have to put in any information and you will just be able to see what Grow You's about. I get a lot of questions. We get a lot of emails. Customer Service is always happy to answer them, but this will really help you see the value of life coaching. I don't want you to unnecessarily worry and be fear stricken while your life is kind of going by. It's unnecessary. You can intentionally imagine the exact life that you want. That's what I want for you. All right, I will talk with you next week. Bye bye.

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