

Episode: Uncertainty



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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 are you today? We are in the middle of, at the end of, in the midst of Covid 19, stay and shelter, coronavirus, all of the things. Sometimes it feels like we are coming out of it and everything is going to be starting new in this new vibrance and sometimes it feels like this is going to last forever. So I want you to know that no matter where you are right now in your life and no matter what your circumstances are, you are stronger than you think. Just remember that. It's true. You are stronger than you think and I love talking about covid 19 and seeing this as a really great example that we all are experiencing together because all of our brains kind of did a 180, they had to decide how to think about this circumstance that was happening for all of us.

Some people handled it very well, others didn't. And there's no right or wrong. I just think it's a really good example to use, especially with topics of transition and anxiety and uncertainty because we can all really relate to it. Even if you were someone who didn't experience the feeling of being uncertain during covid 19 and stay and shelter, you definitely can relate to it by thinking about other times when you felt uncertain. And what I want to encourage you to do today and anytime you have circumstances that are changing is I want you to decide on purpose how you want to think and feel about it from a much broader perspective than the day to day kind of struggles that you might be feeling.

So what I mean by that is a lot of times it feels like what we're going through is impossible and unsolvable. And then once we get a broader perspective and once we work through it, we see how that was a hard time, but we were able to handle it. I find this with everything. I went through a breakup years ago and I remember thinking that it was the worst thing that ever happened to me. I really felt like I was a victim of my circumstances. Meaning I just didn't see it coming. I thought we were going to get engaged and I felt very blindsided and that it was the end of the world. And that's just an example for me, right? You might have experienced a diagnosis or an unexpected job loss or you know, a pet running away or a child not getting into the school that you wanted them to go to. Could be anything. It doesn't matter what other people think about it. If you are experiencing, um, uncertainty or a circumstance change that puts you in a transition, I want you to have the resources and know that you don't have to handle this alone. That these tools that I'm teaching and life coaching is really the solution to it.

When I went through that breakup, I did not have these tools and it caused so much more suffering than was necessary. My dad's passing is such an example of the difference in how I was able to experience both of those. Right? Totally different. And my dad's passing so much worse. Right? Um, but I was able to go through that in such a better way where I didn't suffer. I felt the clean pain that I teach and grow you, not the dirty pain. I felt the devastation and heartbreak without thinking that something had gone wrong and that this shouldn't be happening. And that's kind of the suffering that we add on top of our thoughts.

And that's kind of what I want to teach you today with uncertainty is accepting it and allowing it while understanding where it's coming from. So your primitive brain is a survival brain. I talk about it a lot on the podcast, but I find that with circumstances changing, we tend to forget the

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basics. So I always repeat it because myself included. We think that it's really our circumstances that are causing us to think and feel a certain way when really it's our brain. So I'm always trying to show you the cause of the problem and show you your brain. So your primitive brain is a survival brain, meaning its job is to keep you alive. And so it's always trying to make sense of the world and get you to avoid pain, seek pleasure, and be really efficient. That's called the motivational triad. So for example, it makes sure you run away from the bad guy. It makes sure you get food that keeps you healthy and that feels good to you and it makes sure that you are procreating and it makes sure that you're a conservative enough energy.

That's why we have to watch ourselves in modern society because hundreds of years ago, thousands of years ago, we really had to avoid the lion and we had to find the berries, right? We had to hunt for our food, we had to make sure our physical beings were protected. Most of us, especially if you are listening to this podcast, do not have those same problems in modern society. You're not going out and hunting for food and you are not being held up at gunpoint. So, but you still have that same primitive brain that's seeking survival. So we really have to watch how we experience the world and what we're thinking and feeling because now we have air conditioning. Now we have food in our refrigerator. Now the type of pain we're experiencing is a lot of emotional pain, like the discomfort that we're experiencing with disappointment, with heartbreak, with fear, with uncertainty.

So knowing that it's normal to feel uncertain is life changing. Your brain hates uncertainty and you just didn't know that before listening to this podcast. It's a survival brain. Your brain just wants to keep you alive and it knows that if it can predict the future, meaning if you keep doing what you've done in the past, you're really likely to stay alive. So your brain would just love it if everything would just stay the same and you just keep doing what you've done in the past. It likes this so much at your own expense, meaning your primitive brain would rather have you stay in that job that you've decided you don't like because it knows that you'll live. It's so much scarier for your brain for you to quit that job and get a new job or start the business because your brain can't predict the future.

And this is why, you know, uncertainty triggers that anxiety that I taught you about last week. When you understand that the cause of that uncertainty is simply your brain being unable to predict the future, I think there's this level of relief because then you can say to yourself, oh brain, you can calm down. Nothing has gone wrong here. This is life. This is the way it's supposed to be. Yes, this happened. No, it's not exactly what I wanted to happen, but that's okay. Or I don't know what's going to happen. And that's okay because while our brain is doing its best to make sure everything is the same and that it can predict everything in the best way possible, uncertainty is inevitable. That's why I love the stay and shelter, coronavirus, covid 19 examples because it was something that we did not see coming, right.

A year ago if I would have told you that this was happening a year later, you would have been very surprised. You would have thought maybe I was crazy. You would have thought the odds of that happening are so unlikely. You would have maybe even said it was impossible that the government would shut everything down and that the hospitals would be overwhelmed and that we had this pandemic, right? We wouldn't even two years ago we would have really not seen that

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coming. So we think we know when things are certain, but the truth is especially given what's just happened, you can see, that we actually never know and it's all just an illusion. It's our imagination.

We think we know how the world is going to be. We think we know how our marriages will be. We think we know how our jobs and careers will go. We think we know when we'll be able to retire or go on vacation. We think we know how much we're going to weigh and what our physical health will be like. We think we know who our kids should be, how they should behave, who they should marry, right? I coach a lot of women with their kids and how they are making decisions and turning out to be humans that the parents that the moms don't want. And there's so much resistance there and we can do our best to, you know, make it happen and make whatever we want happen. We can manage our minds, we can manage our emotions, and we can take the best actions to get the best results that are possible for us.

But, circumstances are always outside of our control. We may get injured, we may get ill, we may have a spouse who ends the marriage. We may have kids who take a completely different path than we want. There may be an earthquake, there may be a burglary, there may be coronavirus. And we are terrified of this, right? But knowing this I think can actually help you have a different perspective so you can feel differently about the unknown going forward. And I love this, what's happened in the last couple months, I love it for being an example of uncertainty in the world and the feeling of uncertainty that you create with your mind and how you can reframe it going forward for the rest of your life. And I think that that's the solution here. I think that if you decide that uncertainty is part of life and that there are always going to be circumstances outside of your control, but that you're the one who gets to decide how to think and feel about it, then you have so much power, you have so much strength, and then it becomes a little bit less scary, right? You're a little bit less attached to the outcome.

So I always say I could lose all of it. All the money, the business, everything I've created and I still have me, I'm still okay. I'm not attached to it in a way that it defines me. It's just for fun, right? While I'm here and the only thing that's certain for sure is death, right? From our first breath. That's the only thing that's certain, right? Crazy bad things happen all the time. And I don't want this to be depressing. I want it to be a little bit of relief. Like when you really know that, that all of the certainty that we had three months ago, six months ago, pre coronavirus was just certainty that we had decided to think and kind of make up. And that's okay. But just know that when things get uncertain, it's life and nothing has gone wrong. And even when you feel uncertain as the emotion in your body, you can know that you can feel the emotion without thinking something has gone wrong. You can accept that feeling of being unsure and you can know that you're stronger than you think.

So what I want you to do is get out ahead of it. Right, I hear Abraham Hicks say that, get out ahead of it. Decide on purpose, what you want to think about the uncertainty in the world and about feeling uncertain, right, about the state of you know, the unknown about being unsure. So Byron Katie teaches, there's your business, other people's business and God's business. God's business what she means is earthquakes, coronavirus things in the world. Other people's business is what they're thinking and what they're feeling and what they're doing, the actions other people

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are taking and your business is how your thinking and how your feeling. So you get to decide how you want to think about God's business, about the uncertainty that is in the world. You get to decide how you want to think about the feeling of uncertainty that you experience in your body.

Meaning, let's just say that your husband wants a divorce and you didn't see it coming and you are shocked and devastated and trying to manage your mind around it and among other things you realize how uncertain everything is, right? You can decide that that was always supposed to happen, that life is supposed to be uncertain. This was always going to be the way of it and you want to feel devastated and you want to feel heartbroken, but that nothing has gone wrong, that you are strong and capable and that even though you feel uncertain about your future, that's not a problem.

I think we make it a problem when we beat ourselves up. So if we know what's ahead of us, then we can make decisions that later on we can say was the right decision. But what if you're always doing your best in the moment and making the best decision given your circumstances. And then if things change down the road and that turns out to be a decision you want to make differently in the future, you still have your own back.

So let me give you an example. I coach a lot of women on money and debt and they want to get out of debt, but they'll beat themselves up for getting into debt in the first place. And I say, why? That's so unnecessary. You can love yourself and decide, hey, you know what, five years ago when I got into that credit card debt or that business debt, or took out that auto loan or whatever the case, when I got into debt five years ago, I was doing the best I could at that time. Would I get into that debt again today? No. I've grown so much. I've changed so much. I don't want to be in debt anymore, but I'm still going to have my own back from five years ago. You don't have to hate yourself or think that it was a wrong decision. You can say, Hey, that was a right decision and now what? Now I'm going to make a different decision going forward. I think that when you have your own back about feeling uncertain, when you have your own back about your decisions, you are more willing to let go of controlling the world. So things don't have to be perfect in your circumstances because you know you're always doing your best and that you can always redesign later on.

So when you think about getting out ahead of it, right, what do you want to think and feel about whatever it is in your life, whether it's stay in shelter, whether it's a job loss or money uncertainty or your business or weight loss or your marriage or your kids. What do you want to think and feel about the uncertainty? So what if uncertainty wasn't a problem at all and you could still be responsible and prepared and feel safe and secure about whatever it is in your life, knowing that you're doing your best, knowing that when you feel uncertain, that's okay too. That's the 50/50. So I really believe that uncertainty is only a problem if you think it's a problem.

I have had so much uncertainty in my life and I kind of think that that's why I had so much resilience with stay and shelter and covid 19 and everything it changing so abruptly was that I had so much changing in my childhood all of the time. My dad was an alcoholic and he was a dentist and the primary breadwinner, the person who made the money before my parents got

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divorced and he was in and out of jail for DUI's and I have memories of, you know, on Christmas going over to the neighbors because my dad was drunk. And when you're a kid, like you don't really think that something has gone wrong and this isn't the way it's supposed to be, right? You might have some fears or you might be a little scared, but I was never thinking like about my friends Christmas mornings or if I was never feeling sorry for myself and I think that that helped me so much because I was able to see that life changes so quickly and that life is supposed to be uncertain and that I can double down and I can decide to think about the uncertainty in a way that serves me. I decided to allow all of it. Of course this happened. Bad things happen all the time. Tragedies happen all the time. I want to feel sad and negative emotion about them. It's okay, right?

Because if there is no uncertainty than everything's vanilla, right? It doesn't mean that we create uncertainty on purpose, but it means that we are allowing all of it when it happens and not thinking that life is supposed to be this walk in the park where nothing changes because if you are resistant to change and transition and think that something's gone wrong, then it's going to be so much harder in your life. Instead, if you accept the transitions, if you accept the uncertainty, if you accept the disappointment and the tragedy and the loss, you can remind yourself, oh yeah, this is supposed to happen. Always.

I remind myself of that all the time with my dad's passing, right? I got to such a clean place with him and had so much unconditional love for him and when he passed, I would remind myself, oh yeah, right. Lives are supposed to end. Of course I want to be sad, right? We were best friends. That was my number one. Best friends and no one can ever take that away from me. I had such a great relationship with him, even though it was so unconventional, especially if you compare it to other people's, you know, father-daughter relationships. So I bring it back to me and my thoughts and reminding myself that life is uncertain. Things like this are supposed to happen and nothing has gone wrong. And I can feel those emotions without blame, without that added suffering.

So start thinking thoughts that show you how uncertainty is not a problem. And I want to give you a few thoughts that might help you. This is uncertainty and it's not a problem. Nothing has gone wrong. I can feel any emotion. Today, I have everything I need. I find that with uncertainty often we're so far into the future and trying to solve problems of the future that aren't even problems yet. So whenever you do that, bring your brain back to today and remind yourself, I have enough food for today. I have enough clothing for today. I am healthy enough for today. I can take care of myself today. I have enough money for today. Another thought is this is how it's supposed to feel, right? We're not supposed to be blissed out and happy all the time. We want to have that contrast because without it, right, there's no good or bad, it's just all the same. So remind yourself that you're strong enough to feel any emotion. Remind yourself that you can figure it out. You can always figure it out. How do I know this about you? Because you always have, right? Look at the last however many years of your life that you've been alive. You've always figured it out. I like to say this is the part of my life that's supposed to be uncomfortable, that's supposed to be uncertain.

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And finally, uncertainty is not a problem. I don't need to know what's coming next. I can figure it out today and every day in the future. Any one of these thoughts can change your life. So think about how you're thinking and feeling, and notice that the world is full of uncertainty and that that's okay. And that when you create the feeling of uncertainty in your body, that's okay too. And instead of thinking it's a problem, allow it. Allow it to feel a little messy and a little uncomfortable and remind yourself that this is the way it's supposed to be, that you're a human being, doing your best and that uncertainty is not a problem. And always remember that you are stronger than you think and nothing has gone wrong. All right. That's what I have for you today, friend. I will talk with you next week.

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