

Ep #29: How to Feel Better



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With Your Host

Tobi Fairley

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Ep #29: How to Feel Better

You are listening to *The Design You Podcast* with Tobi Fairley, episode number 29.

Welcome to *The Design You Podcast*, a show where interior designers and creatives learn to say no to busy and say yes to more health, wealth, and joy. Here is your host, Tobi Fairley.

Hello, beautiful friends. How are you feeling today? I'm feeling spectacular. I mean, seriously amazing. This year, I have made so much progress towards taking care of myself. I mean, seriously, I have, and I laugh because of all the people that it takes to take care of me the way I want to be cared for.

So it's not just me. I mean, let's think about this for a minute, okay? Just caring for me personally, not my work team, the way I want to be cared for, takes - let me tell you how many people. There's my life coach Suzy, there's my massage therapist, Julieanne, there's my private yoga instructor, Farida, there's my naturopath, Dr. Judy, and there's my amazing personal assistant, Amy.

And these women all change my life for the better every single week. And of course, then there's me. Then there's all the stuff I'm doing to show up for myself so that I actually can afford to pay for all these people. And then when I do pay for them, that I actually go to my appointments and do what they tell me to.

That's probably the biggest change for me because I can have all these amazing women in my life but if I operated now like I did for years, I'd just constantly be canceling yoga or canceling massage because I didn't have time or something came up, you know what I'm talking about. And I would have a whole bag of supplements down in my kitchen and like, protocols for my health and wellness from Dr. Judy but I wouldn't be following any of it correctly. And I would have been making excuse after excuse after excuse or even canceling my life coach appointments with Suzy back in the day but not anymore.

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So now I show up for myself all the time and man, does it ever feel good. If you haven't listened to my podcast on showing up for yourself, please go listen to that one because it is a game changer. And even if you did already listen to it, you might want to listen to it again because that episode is so important for helping you feel your best and helping you be the person you want to be. So that's podcast number 18, so definitely go back and listen to that one.

But today, the reason I'm feeling so amazing is because I'm showing up for myself and that has a lot to do with feelings. So today, on this podcast, we're digging into our feelings because we got to know what we're feeling because our feelings lead to our actions. So if you've heard my podcast much at all, you've heard me talk about the Model. The thought model. It's that framework I learned at The Life Coach School when I was certified as a life coach and it's a game changer too. I mean like, seriously amazing.

It's a framework that we can use to understand our thoughts and how our thoughts about any circumstance cause our feelings because it's our feelings that cause our actions, and if you aren't showing up for yourself consistently and creating the life that you want, it's really because of your feelings.

So it's very important that we understand this and this is what we're going to dig into for this whole episode today. So when we understand our feelings and how we're processing our feelings or if we're not processing them at all, and what thoughts we're having that are causing those feelings, if we get all of that, then if we want to change some piece of that puzzle to change our results, then we totally can. And we can do this consistently to feel better. We can do this consistently to feel spectacular, like I feel today.

So let's dig into this concept. So first, most people aren't even aware of their thoughts or their feelings. Either one. And you might think of your feelings as emotions, it's the same thing. Feelings and emotions. Most people don't even know that they're having them or what they are, and a lot of times you might know your feelings but you don't know your thoughts.

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And most people do not realize that it is their thoughts that are creating their feelings, and then their feelings that are creating their actions. So the Model, as I mentioned, teaches us this. We think a thought about a particular circumstance in our life and that thought creates the feeling and then the feeling makes us take an action or might make us choose an inaction like consciously decide not to show up for ourselves because we don't feel good. And then from that action or inaction, we get every single result in our entire life.

So our thoughts ultimately result in our life. But most of the time, it's the feeling that's going to make a huge difference for you because you're going to be able to clue into that. A lot of times you're going to even think the feeling comes first. You just don't know there was a thought that created it. And if it's the feeling that's the thing that makes us do or not do something, it's so important - in fact, it's critical that you start to understand your feelings and learn what to do with them, and I'm going to teach you how to do that today.

So think about this for a minute: how many times have you said, I know I should do this thing, like I know I should do this thing for my health or I know I should do this thing for my business or I know I should do this thing for my relationship, but I don't feel like it. I don't feel like working out, I don't feel like calling that client back or doing what I told them I would do. I don't feel like making time for my spouse. I don't feel like getting out of bed today.

Our feelings are so powerful and we do this millions of times in our lives. We stop short of what we could be and even what we say we want because of how we feel. In fact, how we feel is the very reason that we either have the life we want or that we don't already have the life we want because it's our feelings that are stopping us from taking action.

So when people first start to learn this typically and learn about the Model and understand how this all works, one of the first things that they or you typically are going to want to do is you're going to want to change all the

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thoughts that are making you have a bad feeling. If it makes you feel bad you're like, get rid of that thought, I don't like to feel bad.

So they literally want to go through their brain with like a thought extinguisher, kind of like a fire extinguisher and just get rid of every bad thought, wipe them out so they never have to feel bad again. And that sounds like a good idea in theory, but that's actually a terrible idea. And I'm going to tell you why. Do you want to know why?

Here we go. This is why. Because we are supposed to have negative feelings. Those are not by accident. They're there for a reason. The human experience is 50% negative emotion on average, right? Like, it's half and half. Half good, half bad. So no matter how hard you work, you will not eventually arrive at a place where you'll have 90% positive emotions all the time and 90% positive life situations all the time and only 10% negative.

Now, this realization for me when I realized that I couldn't work, work, work to arrive at the 90% happy place, that was probably the biggest a-ha moment, A, of my life coach training, but really B, maybe the biggest a-ha moment of my entire life. Because I was always striving and working and fighting to get to the place where 90% happiness lives, where life would be 90% great.

And it drove my decisions for years and I had extreme frustration when no matter how hard I tried, I still had issues with my employees, with my family, with my own feelings, with my diet, with anything in my business, anything in life. I was like, why? Why can I not fix these problems? Why are there always issues everywhere?

And even if they weren't major problems, which usually they weren't, just always inconveniences. You know what I'm talking about like, just daily, the stuff that was a pain in the neck, and it drove me crazy trying to fix everything all the time so I could just be 90% happy. I mean, I wasn't even asking for 100%, right? Which I thought that was so reasonable of me. I only wanted to be 90% happy.

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And no one ever told me that this 90/10 option didn't exist. No one ever said just get good at dealing with the feelings of 50% negative in your life because it's not going to kill you and you can't get rid of it anyway. Plus, the 50% bad in our life will make the other 50% so much sweeter, right? So if you can't have bad, then you can't feel the good. And so nobody ever stopped and said that, Tobi, just stop striving for that almost perfect place. Just get okay with dealing with the fact that 50% of the time you're going to have some crud happening in your life. It's not going to kill you and you can't get rid of it.

I wish they had because I literally spent so many years killing myself trying to arrive at like, what would you call it? The end of the rainbow? The secret place where I was going to pretty much be happy all the time. But I now know that negative emotions are the reason that we can feel positive ones. We couldn't be happy without sad. We couldn't feel love without hate. We couldn't feel abundance without scarcity. We couldn't feel joy without pain, and we couldn't feel security without fear.

The negative emotions create the contrast that we need so that we can feel the most glorious feelings in our lives. So if we get rid of the negative, we're really in a sense, getting rid of also the positive. And the contrast isn't the only important reason for our negative emotions either. They play a really important role in our lives, specifically in our decisions. Because the negative feelings help us figure out what we don't want in our lives.

And when we know what we don't want, it's a whole lot easier to find what we want. I mean, I have people all the time that I'm talking to. Clients, my mom, you know, friends, and they're like, I just don't know what I want, I just don't know what I want in my life. Well, it's the negative stuff in our life that helps us know what we don't want. And as we learn more about what we don't want, what we do want becomes so much more clear.

So if we just get rid of all our negative emotions, we're actually interrupting our path to success. And y'all, I accidentally did this for years because I tried to get rid of all of those emotions. So it's really important for us to learn which negative emotions exist in us so that we can learn from them, and they all

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teach us something but there's some specifically I think that are there so that they help us grow and we can reach our potentials, and then there's other negative feelings that aren't so helpful.

So we've got to decide which negative feelings we should hang on to for at least a little while because they're driving us forward or lighting a fire under us, and then we also need to identify the ones that create unnecessary suffering, that hold us back. Because a lot of us have a pattern of just staying in our pain because it's familiar and staying in our pain because it's - our familiar pain is less scary than the pain we might go through if we actually grow, right? So it holds us back.

So we want to know which ones to get rid of and we want to know which ones to use to power us forward and move us to where we want to go. So I have completely reframed the way I think about negative emotions in my life. Now that I know how important they are and how they help me get the future I truly want, I think about them in a very positive way.

I think I and we should be grateful for our negative emotions because when I step back and take a look, it's really the negative emotions and experiences that help me grow and change so much more than the positive ones ever did. So they're our teachers.

So just because a thought gives us discomfort doesn't mean we need to get rid of that thought or the discomfort. Please realize that that practice or habit of just automatically getting rid of discomfort could automatically kill your goals and your dreams without you even knowing it. So think of negative emotions sort of like sandpaper. They may feel rough and scratchy and maybe even painful, they may leave a mark, but when we're finished with them, the right ones can make us smooth and polished and beautiful like our best selves. It's those emotions that help us make our life into one with more ease and joy when we're on the other side of them.

So just getting rid of them keeps you from getting on the other side of them. So it's important that before we go extinguishing a lot of our thoughts that create negative emotions, that we instead become aware of our feelings

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and the thoughts that are creating those feelings. It's critical. If we want to reach our highest level of success, our best selves, that we learn how to truly feel our feelings without resistance, without buffering, which we'll talk about that in a minute, so we can learn really what we're truly capable of instead of just getting rid of them without doing the hard work.

So they're there for a reason. The negative emotions are a signal that says to me, hey Tobi, you got some work to do, let's figure out what it is. And yes, it may feel a little painful over here but man, is it going to feel sweet when you get on the other side of that hard work.

So understanding our thoughts and feelings is easier said than done. I get that. It's not an easy thing to do at first or at least it doesn't happen overnight. It takes practice to become aware of your thoughts. And it's easy to think that your feelings come first, like I said, because that's what you may notice first. And you may never have noticed that a thought was causing those feelings. You thought something outside of you or somebody else was causing those feelings, but feelings always, always, always, with no exceptions come from our own thoughts. Whether we are conscious of those thoughts or not.

So let me tell you why this work, this practicing awareness of your feelings and your thoughts essentially too is so important. So most of our desires, our wishes, our bucket list, they all exist because we want a feeling. Not because we want those things. We're not like, oh, my life won't be complete unless I have this car. Well, that's not true. It's our life won't be complete unless I have the feeling that I think the car is going to give me.

So often we're looking for things we think are experiences or a job or a person, a vacation, a purse, something that we think is so important that we just have to have it, but I want you to start to realize that it's not the thing you're after, it's what you think those things will make you feel. That's what you're looking for.

And what happens is often after we experience those things, a dream, or we achieve a goal, we go on a vacation, we get this fancy purse or a car or

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something else that we thought we so wanted, then we don't end up feeling the way we thought those things would make us feel. And sometimes we're frustrated that it didn't work and that we wasted a lot of time and energy and money into getting what we thought we wanted but then we're like, I guess I didn't really want that thing.

Well, I want you to see that it's not the thing you ever wanted. It's the feeling you thought that thing would make you have. This has definitely happened to me several times, like, really many times. So hopefully you're getting the picture that we aren't taught to feel our emotions. No one teaches us that in school, no one tells us this stuff. No one tells us it's not the stuff that we're after, that it's the feeling we're after.

And it's a skill that we have to develop and I hope you start learning it and practicing it today if you haven't already, if this is your first time that you've really recognized this information. Because we are actually taught the opposite of this. We're taught and we're programmed to escape our emotions. Think about our culture. Every part of our culture, our social conditioning, the media, they reinforce this idea of escaping our emotions all the time, every single day, right?

Think about - just think about commercials. Escape with a Bud Light, escape with a vacation. You know the advertisements, there's all these things that if you just do this thing, then you'll feel so good, you'll feel successful. You'll have friends and that'll feel good. You know the commercials, it's almost like brainwashing.

And we're even taught in a sense through those commercials and advertisements and that social conditioning that just positive emotions alone, just being happy because you are is not enough. You can't just be happy. No, you have to buy something to be happy, right? A fancy car, new furniture, expensive makeup, a bottle of wine, some kind of coffee in the morning. You have to buy something to really make your life worth living and to show yourself and other people that you have arrived and to feel like you have arrived at the place where happiness and adventure or peace or all that good stuff lives, right?

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So we're conditioned to get rid of the bad emotion and create the good emotion. And that in a sense is okay but it's the wrong way of going about it. In fact, this way of going about it is really just sad. Just the feeling and the experience of living and having joy should be enough, and it could be enough if we weren't programmed otherwise and didn't notice it.

So that message of you've got to buy something to be happy mixed with oh yeah, and you're supposed to be happy all the time, at least 90% of the time, when you put those two things together, it is so confusing. And it leads us to do really three main things, particularly with our negative emotions. Because we think, well, we have to have happy emotions because we saw all the commercials and really happy, successful people are doing all that stuff. And it's our problem or something wrong with us if we're not 90% happy.

So what do we do? We resist or we react or we avoid those negative emotions but rarely do we just feel them. So let's talk about these three things. So first we resist emotions. And this is kind of confusing because resistance sort of seems like the same things as feeling them, but it's not. Resistance is being determined to not let the emotion affect us, right? Like, to keep it at arm's length, to push it away.

And what happens when we resist a negative emotion is usually the opposite of what we want to happen because when we resist instead of allow, what happens? When you resist, you create tension and stress. And just allowing the emotion to be there, like hey, I see your sadness, you're okay, you're over there but that's fine, that doesn't create any tension or stress. That's not resistance. That's allowing the emotion.

But we don't do that. We resist it. We think we're supposed to, right? And we manufacture so much suffering in our lives every single day by resisting emotions. We actually make them worse. And I did this for so long. It's like, why are you here? I want you gone, get away from me. Not just like, hey, I see you, we're fine, let's just hang out together for a while and you'll get bored later and you'll leave. That would have been great, but no, I was

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going to power through it and resist them and I caused so much suffering in my life. So that's resisting.

Then the next option you might try, which I did this too, was reacting. So a lot of times we react to our negative emotions in the way that we act out. Like crying or yelling or some other way of acting out. So reacting like resisting, also creates unnecessary suffering. And here's what I want you to realize: that's kind of an oxymoron what I just said or actually I guess it's redundant is what I'm trying to say because all suffering is unnecessary because all suffering is optional. It's always optional because suffering is always caused by our thoughts, even when it's justified.

And there is a sad situation. The emotion may not be optional but the suffering is optional. So reacting can feel like we're releasing these emotions too and even like it's healthy. Like, it's healthy something to just blow our tops, to let the steam out. I think of it like a pressure cooker and I used to think oh, that thing's just rattling around on the top of the pressure cooker like it did when I was a kid and my mom was making stew or something in the pressure cooker and the steam needed to come out. And I would think, well, it's healthy for me to just let all that steam out and have a meltdown or a fit or cry or whatever.

Well, that's not really processing emotions. That's just reacting to them. And when you don't process them, when you don't feel the emotion and you instead react, it's a problem. Because usually it's going to come back. You didn't really feel it or process it. So what's the difference? What would it look like if we were feeling it instead of reacting?

Well, feeling an emotion would be more like sitting in a chair, just like I am right now with this podcast. And just acknowledging that the feeling is there and a feeling is just a vibration in your body. It's not going to kill you, it's not anything other than truly just a vibration. And so if you're sitting there in the chair and you're acknowledging that vibration of sadness, say, you're like, oh yeah, I feel sad, I feel it, it's there, but not crying or having a meltdown or reacting, just feeling it, then that is processing the emotion.

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Now, this is not to say we should never cry. There's a reason that our bodies make tears. But I'm just saying if on a regular basis you see yourself reacting, yelling, screaming, crying, having meltdowns, feeling out of control, that is reacting instead of processing. So processing or feeling an emotion is kind of more like we're on the outside of our body looking in and we can see the emotion and we see it there but we don't judge it and we don't act on it. It's just in there and it's creating this vibration in our body that maybe feels a little wonky or weird or uncomfortable and we don't especially like it, but maybe one of the reasons we don't like it is because it's so unfamiliar to us because the minute we feel it, usually we just get rid of it and we've never just gotten okay with feeling it.

So that's what reacting is like. And then the third thing we do is we avoid the feeling altogether, and I got really good at this and I bet a lot of you know how to do this really well too. In fact, this is really what our culture makes so easy for us and society actually condones avoiding feelings. In fact, it kind of promotes avoidance, right?

Because here's the thing: do you know what the two most common ways people avoid their feelings are or their emotions are? Let me tell you. They're number one, by what we put in our mouth. So overeating or overdrinking. And then the second most common way is by overworking. And I did both of those really, really well for years. I'm like, I'm an expert at overeating and overworking. I probably didn't feel an emotion for you know, like, the majority of my life and I didn't even know it.

So when you avoid emotions, here's the problem: you cut yourself off from yourself. You prevent yourself from learning what that message you were trying to tell yourself was. So it's kind of like thinking that you cut yourself off from hearing the universe or god or however you want to think about it. What they intended for you to learn. It's built in, our bodies are so smart and our minds are so smart. Our feelings are part of that system and it's intended to tell us something but if we just cover it up all the time, if we avoid it, then you're not learning what you're supposed to be learning.

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And you prolong your suffering with avoidance because avoiding emotions is for sure just delaying them. They always come back later. And you can spend your entire life trying to avoid them but you will eventually have to deal with them unless you just buffer all the way to your grave, okay?

So here's what I want you to see. It's so much easier to just deal with the feelings the first time instead of dealing with the many, many, many times. That's where the suffering comes in. It's like I could have just felt them and dealt with it to begin with and gotten on the other side of them but because I keep stuffing it down and they're really stubborn and they keep coming back, then I have suffering all the time.

And a lot of negative things that go with the suffering because if we're overworking, we're causing negative problems with our relationships, right? And if we're overeating or overdrinking, we're causing negative situations with our health and our wellness. So it's not just the problem that we don't deal with the emotions but it's the other problems that we create trying to avoid them a lot of times that makes us really unhappy and even unhealthy.

So like most people, for me, overeating and overworking were my go-to avoidance system for years, for absolutely for years. And first of all, it always makes me smile when I realize that I'm not as unique as I thought I was. I was a textbook case of avoiding my emotions for all those years, and why? Because I was working far past healthy all in the name of trying to feel a different feeling, right?

So it's so confusing because I would work so I didn't feel a bad feeling but I was telling myself I'm working this hard to try to create a good feeling, because if I just get a certain level of success or prove myself at a certain level then it'll feel so good and amazing and successful. And I was wrong on both ends of that spectrum.

What really alarmed me is when I became aware of all of this and I realized all of those great lessons and really even gifts that I potentially kept myself from learning for years and years and years by avoiding emotions and numbing those emotions with work and with food. I would think, ooh, that

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feels bad, go away, go away. I didn't think, ooh, that feels bad, that's a lesson and if I learn it, man, is this going to push me to place I've never been before in the best sort of way. Wasn't thinking that at all. Nobody told me to think that, right?

So what if everything I was asking for in those moments was trying to show up for me? It was just on the other side of feeling the emotion. But feeling the emotion was the one thing I wasn't willing to do. I mean, I was willing to work myself to death. But I wouldn't just feel the emotion and get the gift, the joy, the arrival, the place that I was supposed to get to on the other side of feeling the feeling.

So what if I kept myself from my own success and prolonged my suffering all that time? And you know what? I suspect I did. And that's a really deep and heavy realization. Now, I don't beat myself up about it because as you've also learned in other podcasts from me, that doesn't help either. Because if you think the thought well, I'm a moron, I kept myself from my gifts for so long, then that's going to make you feel bad and it starts the whole process over again. Then you got to numb that feeling, right?

So don't beat yourself up over it but just to me now the realization and the fact that because I stopped doing that, I have stepped into so many gifts and such an amazing life that I wanted for so long, it's here now because I stopped doing that. That is huge. So please don't beat yourself up, A, but also please don't do this to yourself. At least not any longer. The resisting and the avoiding and the reacting. Don't make your life so much harder than it has to be. Don't be the reason that you can't fully accept and experience the gifts that are trying to reach you in your life. Don't be standing in the way of that.

Now that I know it's the feeling that I was after the whole time and not those things that I really wanted, that I was striving for, that I was overworking to try to get, it changed everything. And so if you start to see that in your own life, here's what you're going to want to do: you're going to want to start to ask different questions. So if it's not the things that I'm upset that I don't have yet or that I'm striving for, that I'm killing me and my family to get, if it's

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not those things that I really want and I can see that now, then what question do I ask myself? I ask this: what is it that I want to feel and how do I think those things that I thought I wanted will make me feel?

And once you know the feeling you're after, man, can it ever save you a lot of time and energy and misery when you realize that you can get that feeling right now today. Not by achieving the thing, but by changing your thoughts. Because every feeling comes from our thoughts, y'all, and all thoughts are optional.

So you can choose the thoughts that give you the feeling that you want to have. So let me give you an example. When I was a young designer and a business owner, here's some of the things that I did that I thought would make me feel a certain way. So I thought that I needed a great big office and a great big business and a whole lot of employees to make me feel like a legitimate business owner. And I also wrongly believed that by having all that big stuff it would also make me a lot of money. None of that was true.

I thought all these things really would give me the confidence to make it to the next level of my career. If I wanted to feel good enough about myself, to go put myself out there, then I needed this confidence that comes with a big office, a big business, and a lot of employees. I had no idea I could just create the confidence with my thoughts. That's the first thing that I did this wrong.

Then I thought that when I got published in magazines nationally, especially nationally, then and only then would I have enough street cred and confidence again, to really charge what I'm worth and get the clients that I really thought I wanted, which I thought, then that would produce again, the amount of money I was really after. But again, it was not because I wanted money but it was because I wanted the feelings that I thought having the money would give me and essentially, I wanted to feel free.

So I was creating a life that was the opposite of free. In fact, I couldn't have been more trapped in this great big business, trying to get free. Which

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made no sense at all. So again, I did that wrong too. And then next, I thought okay, when I have product lines, like furniture lines like I have now, or maybe a book, which I don't have yet but I could have one day, or if I got these big major speaking engagements and had a great big following online and I felt validated, then I would be and feel truly successful. And when I got there, then I could make different decisions and I could be free.

But guess what? The more product lines I piled on because I got five or six of them, the more speaking engagements, the more big following online, guess how free I felt? Basically not at all. I felt more trapped than ever. And you know what? Although these experiences were amazing in so many ways and I'm not saying that you can't go have amazing experiences at all, and I'm really glad I achieved a lot of that stuff and I experienced a lot of them, here's the thing: the feeling that I got after having most of these things was not at all the feeling I thought it would be.

And I have done almost everything that I put my mind to. Yeah, I haven't written a book yet but maybe one day. Only if I feel free to do it, right? And if it's not, you know, because I'm trying to feel a certain way. But anyway, that's the only thing that's on my list that I haven't really achieved yet but at the end of all of that stuff, I didn't feel super successful and I felt the opposite of free. I felt super trapped.

And you know what else? I felt super tired and overworked and underpaid and unappreciated, and I felt like so many of the connections I had made were not really about substance but maybe more kind of like Project Runway, that if the next day I wasn't the newest or hottest designer then those people or companies might just drop me like a hot potato, which some of them did, which is fine. But that was really lonely.

So when I got through all of that stuff that I was killing myself to do, instead of feeling great about all my successes and feeling like they were really benefiting my family, which was my intention and always said was the reason I was doing it, at the end of all of that, I really just felt guilty for not being as present with my family as I wanted. And I felt lonely when traveling and disconnected from my daughter or from my husband, and I

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felt upset that my marriage wasn't thriving because I hadn't given it enough because I was giving all of that to work, right?

And instead of giving to my husband who was there for me all the time, I was out striving for this other stuff. And I had made all of those choices because of how I thought it would make me feel and really because I thought I was giving it to my family. And that's the last thing they really wanted. They just wanted me.

So what I know now first is that feelings are super powerful because look at what all they drove me to do. And now that I finally have the money that I was searching for because it showed up when I stopped striving, and finally have the fulfillment that I was looking for and all the feelings that I wanted all along, including freedom, not because I checked all those things off my list, my bucket list, but because I just changed my thoughts, finally.

It is so shocking to me now, a lot of times that I still think about it and I think I was striving to make a lot of money and feel worthy, yet I literally could have put millions of dollars in my pocket that I spent trying to create all that stuff. I spent so much time, energy, and money trying to create a feeling for myself through that expensive office and I even at one point had a second location out of state and lots of employees that weren't a fit. A few were, a lot weren't. And a lot of work and publicity trips that didn't really matter to me and it didn't make me any more money, and so many other things I chose to say yes to in my quest to feel something that I could have just created all along, just inside my own brain, y'all. It's crazy.

So many of the things that led me to burnout twice would have been a no if I had known they wouldn't bring me the feeling I was looking for. I did them out of obligation and because what if, what if this trip is the one that's going to make a difference? What if this project is the one that's going to make a difference? What if this licensing partner will be the one that finally makes me rich and happy?

How ironic that what makes me rich and happy was right inside of me all along and no amount of anything outside of me was ever going to give me

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the feeling that I was looking for. Crazy, isn't it? And I bet you will find this is so true for you. Even more crazy was that in the back of my mind, all through this proving and striving, I knew these things were taking a toll on me. I knew I was covering up those feelings that were trying to wave a white flag at me and say please surrender Tobi, please. I just covered them up with food and work, right?

I knew my body and my mind were physically tired. And I still kept pushing and hustling anyway in the quest for those feelings that I wanted. I would buffer with more work and more food just so I could get that big warm fuzzy hit of dopamine that would make me forget how miserable I was and that I was overworking. And when you think about it y'all, that is called self-abuse and I became really good at it. All in the name of searching for those feelings that I wanted. I became a pro at covering up all the bad feelings and they were coming up for a reason, and I kept telling them to shut up.

This is the danger of getting rid of bad feelings, y'all, instead of processing them. If I had listened to my negative feelings sooner, I would have stopped the madness years earlier. But when you buffer feelings, you can't hear what they're trying to tell you and I did this for years and you've probably been doing it too.

So finally and thankfully, I reached a point that I was convinced that no amount of work, accolades, publicity, success, product lines, magazine features or anything else would give me the feelings I was looking for. That was an inside job. It was when I couldn't go on this way another day that I finally surrendered and learned to manage my thoughts and therefore my feelings. And then all the things and all the feelings, really just the feelings because we don't want the things, we want the feelings, so then all the feelings I had been expecting from all of that stuff and all that hustling started showing up with so much ease and they brought with them so much joy.

So just to be clear, let me be clear for a minute. There is no problem wanting stuff. There is no problem setting goals, there is no problem growing your business, there's no problem in getting publicity or buying a

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new house or a new car or going on a fabulous trip or getting a licensing deal. There is no problem with those things. They're wonderful things. A lot of wonderful stuff comes with all of that. I love some of the things that came with getting published and creating product lines and partnering with successful businesses and some really amazing people and getting better clients.

But all of those things aren't going to give you the feeling you want. Not by themselves. They don't make you feel the way you think they will. You do that simply by thinking the right thoughts. So first, realize the feeling that you're looking to create and create it inside. Not with things outside of you. Create the peace, the calm, the happiness, the contentment right there inside of you.

And if you learn to tap into those feelings first, they actually help you get the accomplishments, the things that you really do want to experience. The house, the vacation and stuff you can share with other people. But you got to get the feeling first. It's the way to get the experiences without the misery. So it's actually getting the feeling that makes those dreams really come to life.

So in other words, when you can create the positive emotions this way, just with your thoughts, and that leads you to effective actions, then you can create the life of your dreams. You can create the life exactly the way you want it, and really manifest all the stuff that you want to have by feeling the feelings first and then achieving the dream. And I call that a major win-win.

So thank you for listening to me today about feelings. This was a little bit of a long one and I get it but some of these messages, these ideas, and especially sharing my own story and experiences with you I think are so important to help you make your life easier, to not have to learn everything the hard way. So I hope that this message today just helped you in some small way start to tap into your feelings so that you can use those to create the life that you really truly want and I'll see you next time on *The Design You Podcast*. Bye guys.

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Thank you so much for joining me for this episode of *The Design You Podcast*. And if you'd like even more support for designing a business and a life that you love, then check out my exclusive monthly coaching program Design You at tobifairley.com.