

Ep #30: Why Do You Care What People Think of You?



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Tobi Fairley

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You are listening to *The Design You Podcast* with Tobi Fairley, episode number 30.

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.

Hey friends, how is life today? You know what I'm doing? Of course, you don't know what I'm doing, but I'm going to tell you what I'm doing. I'm coaching myself this week on dealing with my teenager. Well, more accurately, I'm coaching myself so that I make sure I'm not putting responsibility for my emotions on her.

It's what I'm doing because guess what? As a teenager, I believe they already have a lot to deal with emotionally all by themselves. The last thing she needs is to try to keep me happy. But still, I find myself sometimes feeling frustration or even loneliness for her when she thinks my words and my actions are the dumbest thing she's ever seen and I sometimes find myself thinking that she hurt my feelings or ironically, that I could have more time with her even though when I'm with her, she's not exactly always happy to be with me.

You know what I'm talking about if you have a teenager, right? But here's what I know, and also what I've taught you is that no one else can hurt our feelings. Only we can hurt our own feelings with our own thoughts. And no one else can make us feel bad. Only we can make us feel bad with our own thoughts.

So I'm doing some thought work on me this week because I know that I can be 100% happy all just because I decide to, even on the days that she's her normal and amazing teenage self and she thinks I'm an idiot, right? I can still be happy. And on the days when she thinks I'm awesome, then I'm happy too. It's just perfect, right?

So I have to remind myself that it doesn't matter what she thinks of me. It only matters what I think of me. And so making sure that I think I'm

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amazing and reminding myself when I argue with her, fuss with her, that it's not her problem, it's my problem. I'm the one acting like an emotional child in that situation. And to me, that feels the opposite of amazing.

So I coach myself to stop doing that and that's exactly what I've been doing this week. So emotional adulthood all the way, friends. We've got this, right? Yeah, we do. We definitely do. And that's a great way to segue into our topic for today anyway, which is why do I care what people think about me?

So this is a great question. I mean, it's just a fabulous question. Why do I care what people think about me? And whether it's me wanting my teen to like me or my teen wanting everyone to like her, or you wanting everyone to like you, even though you aren't a teen anymore, we need to dig into this and see why we care so much about what others think of us.

So I've been podcasting now for about six months, but I wrote a blog and I still write one occasionally, for 10 years. Or even 11 years maybe now. And multiple times on my blog over the years, I wrote posts along the lines of one of my favorite book titles. I didn't read the book, I just heard about the title one time from one of my gurus, called What People Think of Me is None of My Business. And I've always loved that. It just resonates with me.

What people think of me is none of my business, okay? So I used to write about that a lot and now after going through life coaching, here's what I know on this topic, which is even more than I used to know: the number one thing to realize in our lives and with regard to other people is that we cannot control other people's opinions of us. Period.

No matter how smart, kind, pretty, generous, loving people we are, even if we're people pleasers, it doesn't matter. There's still about a 50% chance or greater that we're not going to be liked by somebody. So in other words, 50% of the people in the world or more don't like us, and that's okay. Completely okay.

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Now, when I think of this, it reminds me of a story I heard one time, and like him or not, this is not an endorsement, although I do like of like him, but like him or not, one time I heard Joel Osteen talking about this, and he said that a lot of people don't like him just because he smiles too much. People say nobody can be that happy. That must be fake. He smiles all the time.

Seriously, y'all. He has haters because he's too happy and he smiles too much. This is hilarious to me that people don't like him because he smiles too much. But seriously, that just goes to show you no matter what you do or who you are, you can't control what other people think of you.

So I want you to see right now, if you haven't seen it before, that no amount of success or beauty or anything else will help you control the opinion of other people. And a lot of times, it's even because you do have those things, those wonderful qualities about you that makes people not like you.

But here's the thing I want you to know: that whole idea of people not liking you, it's completely okay. I don't know about you, but if people are going to not like me anyway, if they're going to judge me anyway, whether I'm my best self or my worst self, then I sure prefer to be my best self.

And so to take this even a step deeper, it's not just that we can't control if people like us or not. We can't even control how they interpret us and our actions. And a lot of times they're interpreting our actions that we believe are the actions of being our best self, and they still don't like that either.

You see, let's just take me for example. There are many people out in the world who think I'm amazing and generous and have the patience of Job. They think I'm the best mentor they could ever ask for and I've changed their homes or their businesses or their lives in ways they could never have done on their own. And yes, that feels totally amazing when they tell me that.

But on the other hand, there's a whole lot of people out there who are exactly the opposite with their opinion of me. There's a lot of people who think I'm bossy and a know-it-all and aggressive and that I talk a lot and

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that I only think about myself or I'm a flake or I'm sales-y, or I'm too focused on money or that my personality is too intense, or that I only coach beginners or that I only coach advanced people, or that I'm too expensive or that I'm too busy for them or that I'm selfish or that I have no patience, or a whole lot of other things that are completely the opposite of what those other people think about me.

And you know what? If I thought about all of that stuff, if I thought about all those people who didn't like me, that could make me feel bad if I let it. But I realize that is just their interpretation of me and that's totally okay for them to be wrong about me. I am okay if people don't like me because I like me. And in fact, I like me more than I ever have liked me because I'm showing up for myself now in every way that is super authentic to me, and that feels so good. And it's healthy and it's balanced and the work I'm doing these days is definitely in my sweet spot.

And you know what? I can choose not to think about or care about what others think of me if they don't get me. And I can focus on those people that do get me and that I'm helping and that I'm changing their lives. I can focus on them instead. And that's not being Pollyanna or just rose-colored glasses. I'm not pretending that everybody likes me. I'm just choosing to be with the people where I make the most difference and where I get the most joy.

And I call that another win-win. I'm always looking for these win-win situations in my life and that's definitely one of them. So think about this in your life. How much would it change your life if you didn't care what people thought about you?

And are you letting other people's opinions, like your mom's opinion, your family's opinion, your ex's opinion, or your children, the world, your industry, or anyone else keep you from putting yourself out there? From becoming the best version of you?

Because it's time you decide not to let this worry of what other people think about you limit you anymore. Because as you've likely heard, most people,

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most of the time aren't thinking about you anyway. They're probably thinking about what you're thinking about them and what everyone else is thinking about them too.

So when you edit yourself or when you edit your behavior because someone else might not like it, you know what happens? You stop being authentic and a lot of times, you stop liking yourself because of it. So understand, other people that judge you, they don't even really know you. But that's totally okay too.

You have to be okay with other people being wrong about you and not try to fix their opinion of you if you want to be happy in your life. Just let them be wrong. It's okay. It doesn't matter. And a lot of you will think, "Well Tobi, if I stop caring about what other people think about me and I only care what I think about me, won't I then be selfish or bitchy or rude?"

And I find this really funny that we think this, our mind goes to this place. Because here's the thing: would you choose to be any of those things? Because if you're trying to please yourself and like yourself, would you like you if you were bitchy and selfish and rude all the time? I don't think so.

So that's really not what happens. It's not what happens to me at least. I hold myself to a high standard. So I think I'm even nicer and I'm even more kind and caring when I'm worrying about what I think of me. But I don't let what other people think of me stop me from doing the things that I really want in my life, okay?

So yeah, it's the opposite of that. We don't suddenly become selfish just because we're only trying to please ourselves. It's not how it works. So we're not suddenly just selfish because we're trying to approve of ourselves. That's not how it works.

So anyway, let's dig in and take a look at you. Let's look and see who you're living for right now because this is going to tell you a lot about yourself. So think about who's opinion matters the most to you in your life.

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Is it your mom? Is it your spouse? Is it your children? Is it somebody else? Or is it you?

Do you live for yourself or do you live for other people? Because living for other people is not living in integrity. It's not living in alignment with your true self. Pretending to be anything that you are not to be accepted by other people is not living as your best self either. So it's time you start to understand what opinion you even want to have of yourself. Does what is on the inside of you match the way you're living on the outside of you?

And do you like the way that looks or do you want to make a change? Do you need to become and step into the person you've always wanted to be? Because that's when you'll really start to like yourself. And if you're not doing that, why? Are you afraid to be you? And are you afraid of being judged?

Because here's what I want to tell you about being judged. Guess what? Everyone is already judging you. Even if you are being the pretend you and not showing up the way you want to, they're still already judging you. No matter what you do and no matter how you change, people are still going to judge you. We all do this. We all judge each other.

Even when we don't mean it as being judgmental, it's just part of our humanness. So as I said before, in the last couple of years, I've really started showing up for myself. I've even talked about it on previous podcasts. And I get better at showing up as my true self all the time. I get better at not feeling obligated to please someone else, and I feel better at not doing stuff because of how it's going to make other people think about me.

Only doing stuff because it really makes me happy. I even did a whole podcast about showing up for yourself, and I want you to go listen to that episode again. I'll put it in the show notes, and I mentioned it even in the last episode. So apparently that's a really important episode about showing up for yourself.

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But if you can do this, if you can learn to really show up as the true authentic you, then it doesn't matter what other people think about you. So I want you to think about this. Would you rather show up for yourself or would you rather not show up at all in an effort not to be judged and does your answer change now that you know that they're judging you anyway whether you show up or not?

I hope that it does change. I hope that you think what am I hiding from? I can't control them. I'm going to step into being the best me I can be. So what I have learned recently is that life is so much more fun when you're truly yourself and when you are truly okay with half or more of the people in the world not liking you.

I teach in marketing and in my business courses that you want to either attract people by your marketing or repel people. You don't want to be indifferent. You don't want people to be indifferent to you is what I'm trying to say. You want potential clients to either love you or hate you. You don't want them on the fence. That's the worst place to be is straddling the fence in indecision because then you're like, well, what do I do? Do they like me? Do they not like me? Do I sell to them? Do I not sell to them?

Well, that's kind of the same thing in friendship and in life. It's how I see my life now. I would rather attract my tribe of people or really in a sense, repel everybody else. And that sounds kind of harsh but it just makes life make so much more sense to me when I'm like, I'm okay if you don't like me. You don't have to like me but now I know where you stand and where I stand.

And so then I can choose to spend time with people who are like me because the people who are like me and who relate to me and who relate to my struggles and who relate to my successes, those are my people. Everyone who relates to me loves me and everyone who I relate to, I love them.

And we like working together and we like spending time together and we like talking on social media together. So life is really great when you know who your people are. And those who don't like you, that's totally fine. The

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people who don't like me aren't in my tribe, as I call it. They're not following all my social media, they're not buying into my programs, they're not listening to this podcast, most likely. They're not coming over for dinner, they're not working on my team, and that's completely and perfectly okay.

In fact, that's equally great for them and for me. We know who we are and we know who we're supposed to be with, and it's so great. So I think it's important that if we have a belief that everyone is supposed to like us and that everyone is really even supposed to like each other, that we notice it. And I think it's probably one of those beliefs that you're going to want to change.

We don't expect everyone to like broccoli in the world. We don't hold it against them if they don't, do we? Or to like sushi or to like raw oysters, right? We don't get mad at those people like, "How could you be so mean to the oyster?" But those people who like those things, they're very clear that they like them. They're like, I love broccoli, I love sushi, I love raw oysters. That's so hard to say. Raw oysters. Let's say oysters on the half shell, but you get the point.

And frankly, I love all three of those things. So the people that love them are super clear and the people who don't are pretty dang clear too. Like, you know or not whether you want to eat a slimy raw oyster, right? And I love them.

So in that same way, they may not have a taste for that stuff, those foods, but they also may not have a taste for me, or I might not have a taste for them and that's completely fine because guess what, friends? There are eight billion people on the planet and we only need a small fraction of those people to have more than enough friends, to have more than enough clients, to have more than enough followers and to have more than enough fans, and all the other categories that we can think of that we need people in, right?

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So be okay with knowing that that's how the world works. And instead of trying to be all things to all people, how about being an amazing thing for yourself and for the people that are like you? It's so, so good, right?

So I want to leave you with this today on this topic. If you like all of your choices, no one else has to. If you have your own back, no one else has to. If you love yourself, no one else has to. If you agree with yourself, no one else has to. If your opinion is the only one that matters to you, then you can dream big and you can show up for yourself and you can fail and nobody will care because you don't care.

Brené Brown often talks about the famous Teddy Roosevelt quote. You know the one where it's like, being in the arena and basically she says if you're not in the arena then it's irrelevant to me what you think about me or those people who are in the arena. If you're not putting yourself out there, then it doesn't matter to me your opinion about those who do put themselves out there. It's sort of like being an armchair quarterback or a backseat driver.

Well, that's the same with us. People are not in the same arena as us. They're not making the same choices as us, so why do we care what they think about our choices? You just have to be your own best friend. Put yourself in the arena and be your own biggest cheerleader. But also make sure that you are your own support system.

So know if it's not other's opinions of you that bothers you but really, it's your own opinion of you that bothers you. Now, that does matter. If the reason it upsets you when people don't like you is because you believe there's some truth to what they're saying, that's a completely different story. It may not be true but if you think it is, let's get into that and see why.

So when you hear or feel like others don't like you, it's not whether it's true or not that usually gets to us. It's what we make it mean about ourselves, isn't it? We make it mean, well if they don't like me then I must not be likeable, or if they don't love me I must not be loveable. I don't want you to do this to yourself.

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Remember, I just said have your own back, be your own cheerleader. And if part of believes what they say and if you make it mean you have a problem, then I want you to realize that they're not making you feel bad and them not liking you is the problem. It's your thoughts about yourself that's the problem. It's the thoughts about yourself that's making you feel bad. It's the thoughts about yourself that's creating the pain and suffering.

So the more you speak kindly and loving and approving of yourself, the more you will come to believe it and the more others will believe it too. And even if they don't, when you show up for yourself, when you honor your true self, that's when you know that you're the only person whose opinion really matters. That's that moment when you do have your own back.

There will always be haters, y'all. Always. Especially now that we live in such a public way and social media and online, but that's totally okay too. I once heard a quote that said haters are just fans with frowns, meaning that if they didn't like you, they really maybe wanted to be like you. And if they didn't like what you were doing partially or weren't at least interested in seeing, then they wouldn't be paying attention to you or having an opinion of you anyway, right?

So who knows if that's true or not. There are all kinds of reasons for haters, there are all kinds of reasons people don't like you, and it's their own thoughts that are making them hate. Not yours. And there's nothing you can do about it so it's time to approve of yourself and to start to notice if you're part of the problem or if you're part of the solution.

If you believe what they say and you take it and make it mean something or if, as I just said, you have your own back, you like your own choices, you love yourself, you agree with yourself, you're your own cheerleader, be all of those things for yourself. You deserve all of those things.

Be the person who can channel your own approval as the only thing you need to take action. And stop doing all the things that you're doing only because you think it will make other people like you. If you do only these two things, y'all, it will change your whole life.

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So that's everything for today. That's all I've got to say on this topic. Be your own BFF. Have your own back. Like yourself because that's all that really matters. And what other people think of you is none of your business.

Now, I do want to know what you think of me because I actually really dig you so if you dig me and you dig this podcast, would you go leave me a rating and a review? Because when you do that, it helps other people like us find my podcast. It helps us all basically come to the mothership. We come in there together like a set and we hang out and we love the heck out of each other and it's so much fun.

So if you want to leave me a rating and a review so other people can find us and where we're hanging out here on the podcast together, then you do that by going to iTunes and searching for *The Design You Podcast* and then you got to subscribe to it, and then you click on the little button that says rating and review, and you can leave me both. You can click how many stars you're giving me and you can leave me a little - basically a comment, which is the review.

And I would love to see it and see what you think about me. So if you have time and if you feel so inclined, go do that. And if you need help, just go to tobifairley.com/itunes and we'll tell you exactly how to make that happen. So go out now and be the person that you approve of and your life's going to be amazing and I'll see you back here next week friends, and we'll talk about another fantastic topic on *The Design You Podcast*. Bye for now.

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.