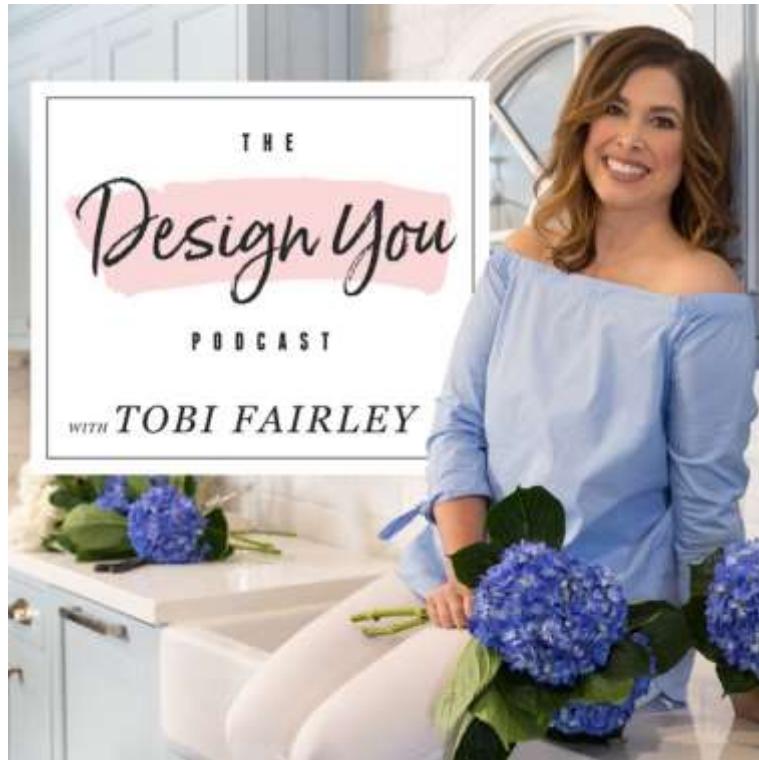


Ep #44: Falling Off the Wagon



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Tobi Fairley

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Ep #44: Falling Off the Wagon

You are listening to *The Design You Podcast* with Tobi Fairley, episode number 44.

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's your week going? Are you still crushing your goals this year or like many, are you falling off the wagon of your goals? But wait, did you know there isn't really a wagon? Yeah, there's no wagon. But our minds are so powerful. When we believe there's a wagon, then we're constantly falling off that dang thing, aren't we?

But when we realize there's no wagon but there are just meals or workouts or business goals or whatever the thing is we want to do and when we realize that with those things we won't be perfect every time and the objective is to just do our best, moment to moment, and some moments are going to be better than others, when we realize that, it somehow takes a lot of the drama out of showing up for ourselves now, doesn't it?

Because falling off the wagon is all about drama. And without the wagon, there's no more of that, well I ate pizza for supper so I'm off the wagon so I might as well eat the ice cream too and I'll start back Monday, right? Nope. Without a wagon, it's more like, well, I ate pizza and wasn't my favorite choice and really wasn't what I was planning to do, but that's okay because that was the best I could do in that moment and now I can show up for myself again in the very next moment without having to go through that whole starting over mentality. I'll start over on Monday, right?

Because any time we fall into starting over mentality, there's usually some sort of extra carnage, as I call it, that happens, right? It's sort of like we're saying, well, I'm starting over next week anyway so I might as well make as many bad decisions as absolutely possible before I get to Monday, right? It doesn't make a lot of sense.

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We make life so much harder than it has to be when we do this, and it would be far better when we do something we weren't planning to do like eat pizza and maybe that was not on our list, to just get back on track the very next opportunity we have, which if we're talking about eating, is our next meal. They come around a lot, y'all.

So why all this talk about the wagon or lack of one? Tobi, why are you on the wagon soapbox today? Well, because I want to talk about it in relation to time in our schedules. This week, I started working with a small group of members in my *Design You* coaching program as a test project that we're going to do for the whole year on health, wellness, and weight loss.

So there's about 30 of us in the group. We have a little private group inside of the *Design You* coaching program and we're working on showing up for ourselves and doing what we say that we're going to do with our health and wellness. And clearly the reason most of us are in there is because we often don't do what we say we're going to do.

Now, I've talked to many of you about my relationship with time and how time used to look like with me and for me. It was my nemesis. You may have heard that episode. If you haven't, we'll link to that one about scheduling and time management in the show notes but I was constantly overworking and not leaving any room for anything, including taking care of myself.

There was no margin, there was no white space at all. So this week I'm taking my beta test group through a practice of really understanding our schedules, including planning what food we're going to eat and when we're going to eat it every day, when we're going to exercise, when we're going to drink water, all the stuff that makes us healthy that we need to be putting into our schedule and showing up for ourselves.

Now, I'm not telling anyone what to eat. In fact, I'm telling them, put on your schedule what you're actually going to eat, even if that means pizza one night because you know you're going out with friends. Because the whole

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goal of this first step is for us to actually do what we say we're going to do. Because so many of us don't do that, right?

So I'm showing us that some enormous awareness comes from starting to schedule things in advance, making decisions ahead of time and sticking to those decisions, whether it's meals or exercise or when we're going to stop work or anything else. Whatever it takes to keep us healthy and get us healthy and keep us there.

Now, making decisions ahead of time is something that I've been practicing for about two years with regard to my schedule as far as work goes. So deciding ahead of time what every workday is going to look like and blocking it out on my calendar, and I've gotten really good at it with work.

Now, work is my comfort zone. It's the go-to for me. And if it's on my calendar, then I do what I say I'll do. I get it done when I say it will get done in the time I say it will get done. And if for some reason that doesn't happen, I move it to another block and it doesn't just go into the black hole of a to-do list.

So I completely block out everything and I follow it pretty much to the letter. I've gotten great at it. And when I did this, it really increased my success with achieving goals, it drastically changed my financial position in the best sort of way, so I know that this works. But now adding in or shifting to a focus on health and wellness and starting this process of scheduling that and those decisions ahead of time all over again was not even close to as easy as I thought it would be.

I'm like, oh, I've got this, I've got this in the bag, I've been doing it for two years, I know how to do this with my work, I'll just do this with my health and wellness and it will be no big deal. But even though I am in the habit of this with work, it's not exactly the same successes, not what that looked like for me with this new goal, with this new sort of focus, and that's what I want to talk about today.

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So most of us are unrealistic about how much time stuff, you know, all the things we put on our list, actually take. And some of the ladies in my beta test group are calling this being time optimistic, which I love this description because I'm a total optimist in my life anyway. And pretty much in every way I'm an optimist.

And like them, when starting to put new types of activities and habits into my schedule, I greatly underestimated how much time I needed to be successful. So this week when I started adding in all my food planning and my exercise, which I started my exercise a couple of weeks ago but you know, really this month I started this but this week I started putting it on the calendar so I could see it, and making very specific decisions ahead of time, guess what?

I realized that I didn't really take anything out of my schedule to make room for this new stuff. And guess what else? It equaled a bit giant fail. I failed miserably. And it wasn't just that I needed time blocks for those activities of working out or eating or drinking my water or whatever I wanted to start new habits around. But I didn't realize I needed a lot of other stuff in the calendar to be a success.

I needed thinking time, I needed transition time between activities to be successful, which I knew this. I learned this with my work schedule, but I forgot all those little parts and pieces and it snuck up on me. Because creating change in our lives doesn't just take the time that the actions themselves take, right?

As I know very well, after getting my life coaching certification and after learning the thought model that I learned to manage my mind at The Life Coach School, I now know that working on positive shifts in our lives requires time for thought downloads, as we call them, over at The Life Coach School, which is journaling, essentially.

We need time to see what obstacle thoughts are going to come up because they're going to, we need space to have awareness of what we're thinking and how to deal with that thinking, whether it be urges or negative self-talk.

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And there's just all these shenanigans that go on with our brain and we need time to notice them and really create a strategy so that they don't knock us off the plan.

So yes, I would consider my planning this week a total fail. But actually, it's a failure that is a major success. So sometimes I really love failure and you're like, "Tobi, that's weird. Why would anybody want to fail?" But I know and I've learned that failure is really the only time we grow. And without seeing and feeling the stress and the pressure and the pain of being completely overbooked this week and really not setting myself up for success and being frustrated with myself that I did that, I can see so clearly now what next week needs to look like to get right back on track.

No wagon here, friends. No falling off of anything. Just getting back on track so that I can give this another go. And I'm onto myself about the thoughts that could have completely derailed my one key goal for this year, which is optimal health, and it could have happened in less than a month, before the end of January, which is what happens to so many of you and so many other people and why gyms are usually empty by mid-February, right?

Because we start and we don't do a good job, just like I didn't this week, but we succumb to all the thinking that we aren't making a space to become aware of and that we're not managing our minds about, and before we know it, we've quit. So let's look at my thoughts from this week and let's break them down a little bit and see where it could have gone really wrong and how I shifted to make it really right.

So I could have thought, and I probably did at some point, "Here I am it's only the third week of January and you are already falling off healthy eating and I'm off the wagon and this is just the latest attempt to get healthy, who am I fooling?" I could have thought that, and maybe I did at one point.

I also probably thought, "I'm too tired." I know I thought this. "I'm too tired to make this happen. What was I thinking? I've got all this work to do and my coaching program's thriving and I have these design clients that we've got

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to get their projects installed and I have all this other family stuff coming up and I'm just too tired to think about me." Definitely thought that.

And I'm sure I thought, "Clearly I don't have time to do this. I don't have time to do this and work too, and I can't just not work." And you know what, I thought a whole lot of other obstacle thoughts, I am sure. If we go back and look at my journal this week, had I had time for it, had I left a space to journal, which I do every week, but somehow, I didn't do this week because I overscheduled myself, if we had been able to look at that, we would have seen all of these thoughts and I would have noticed them.

But what I still believe is that even though I had myself overscheduled to the max, this was actually a win because I now have the awareness to feel the feelings that come up, feel the pressure, and notice I'm creating this for myself. So instead of "falling off the wagon" that doesn't really exist, here's what I did. I framed my thoughts in a different way.

I framed it as thank goodness I'm taking this group of women through this scheduling exercise because as part of going through it with them, guess what, I did for me, exactly what I wanted to do for those other 29 women. Isn't it great when you're teaching somebody else something and you think it's about them and the main person you teach is you?

Yes. So I noticed this and I was like, this is fantastic because in this process of teaching and leading them, I led myself right to the solution for how to be successful on my goals all year. So what I learned this week and I want to share with you so you don't start thinking you're off the wagon and quit once again, is a few things that I've now sort of outlined and recognized and no matter what your goals are, even if it's not health and wellness, even if it's something in business or something with your relationships, scheduling is going to be your best friend and it goes hand in hand with some major mindset work that you are going to have to do on yourself to really reach your goals like never before, to not quit before the middle of February.

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So I want to share with you these really eight or 10 things that I discovered. It's not eight or 10 necessarily new activities because we don't want to just keep piling more work on. We're trying to set a habit at a time, but just eight or 10 things. A lot of it is awareness that I discovered this week in overscheduling myself that I have to do to be a success next week so that I can really make progress towards my goal.

So you may want to try some of these too. So number one, I realized and learned that we're not going to be perfect. And you're like, well duh, duh Tobi, we're human. And yeah, we know this but somehow we don't really embrace this imperfection without quitting, right?

Imperfection is not a signal to give up, but we use it that way so often. So if it does mean giving up for you right now, if anytime you're not perfect you quit, you've got to realize this about yourself and you've got to create a strategy for not quitting or you're never going to have the life that you want.

So first and foremost, before you do anything else, learn this about yourself and start to practice continuing to move forward even when you do something that wasn't exactly the perfect version that you envisioned. So this is really that idea of noticing there is no wagon, noticing if you constantly do starting over behavior, and creating a strategy so that you don't think and operate that way moving forward.

Number two, it takes way more time to achieve any goal than we think it will. So if you notice like I noticed and the ladies in my test group noticed, that we're time optimistic, you have to also create a strategy for this. One of the things that helps this is having that one key goal at a time, and I've done a whole podcast on that. We will also link to that in the show notes.

But when you have one goal and you're focused on that one goal like I was this week, when you run up against a conflict or some poor planning like I did this week, at least I knew that the one key goal has to win out for me if I want to get the results that I say I want.

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So next week, my one key goal of optimal health will be put in a position to succeed. I'll put in a lot more white space so that I can succeed, but it was knowing and having that clarity of what my one key goal was, so when I was being time optimistic and the schedule wasn't working, the math wasn't working of my 24 hours in the day, I could say okay, well work seems really important right now but I have made a clear decision that the one thing I want to do this year is optimal health. How do I create a strategy for that?

And along that line, several of these are really kind of not maybe their own number even though I'm going to give them to you that way so we can really see them, they're really kind of just a piece or a part of that. So the next thing I realized is that we need a lot of thinking time.

And again, I knew this in business. I have put in thinking time for creating vision and strategy for my business, but I didn't plan any thinking time in for this one key goal. It needs its own block on the schedule, or several of them a week because we need the time to see what's working to notice if we need to change anything, to do that planning ahead and deciding ahead of time so that we are better prepared for obstacles when they come up because they always will.

And if we don't have a strategy in place, it's going to derail us, we're going to quit, and this week I had zero thinking time planned in the schedule. Not a single moment of it. And so when obstacles came up, they did derail me on several occasions because I had not thought through the strategy, even though I know better than this. But I still didn't do it, right? So we might know what to do, but we don't always do it. So this is where that awareness that we need thinking time is huge.

We also need, number four, downtime and rest time. They're really kind of the same thing for me, but if you are a workaholic, for sure, or a recovering workaholic as I like to call myself, you may have a hard time just resting and just having downtime. Because we can't keep a ridiculously focused schedule all the time and still succeed at our goals.

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We're going to get too tired, we're going to burn out all our willpower, we're going to burn out all our energy, and it takes a lot of energy to change, right? So downtime and rest time does not mean what I sometimes pretend like it means, which is having my laptop open and still working while I'm "relaxing" and watching TV or while I'm "spending time with my family" where I'm basically pretend to unplug while I'm still working on my laptop. That is not rest or downtime.

So next week, I'm putting in very specific parameters about my workday and when it will end no matter what. Even if my work is not done. In fact, I'm going to end even earlier than I probably think I should or that I need to because I've got to show myself that I've got to get super strategic about how I use my time during the day and how anything that is going to push me over my stop time at the end of the day absolutely must be delegated or delayed or deleted.

And it's way more stuff that I probably think because again, I'm sure I'm going to be time optimistic, right? So I'm going to force myself to be super conservative about what I can actually get done. And then yeah, the other stuff, if it still has to be done, that's fine, it just doesn't have to be done by me, right? I got to figure out what that means and who's going to do it.

Okay, the next thing is we need doing time. Now, I have a lot of doing time in my schedule and last week my doing time actually absorbed my thinking time and my resting time. But it wasn't on purpose and I only noticed when I was looking backwards in hindsight, which is the beauty of writing it on a schedule. Because if I hadn't taken the time to actually block it all in my schedule like I'm teaching my test beta group to do, we wouldn't have known what was going wrong.

Because most of us, we just keep all this in our head and we get to the end of the week and we're exhausted and we know it didn't work but we don't know why it didn't work. So when it's on the schedule, I can see where I said I was going to stop the workday and then I can see where I instead blew right through that and kept working.

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So this week, when I was really failing, I had scheduled myself with back to back to back meetings and events and a webinar and I left no time for the doing of the stuff, executing the things that I said I would do, especially every time I'd go into a meeting, guess what? My list would grow of to-dos. Oh yeah, I'll do that, oh yeah, I'll do that.

But where did I expect all of that doing to happen? There wasn't any space on my calendar that said do all the stuff from the meeting you just came out of. And that's so true for a lot of us, and so it did happen because my go-to response, my old behavior is to put work before my health or even sometimes my family, and so yeah, the doing happened. It's just when I should have been thinking and when I should have been resting. So no wonder my week didn't work.

So when these old habits show up again, I've got to have some space to notice uh-oh, Tobi, there you go doing that thing again where you're throwing away what you said you want to work. And when I'm back to back to back to back to back meetings and it was actually that back to back this week, that was not an exaggeration, when I'm in that position, can I notice to be aware of anything? Of course not, and you can't either.

So you got to have the spots in the calendar to do the stuff and how many of us don't do this, right? And that's when we work all nights and all weekends and there's never an end to that. So can't do that. Got to put the meeting time and the thinking time and the resting time and the doing time and when you think of all those things that have to go on your schedule, it's not going to take long for your schedule to fill up.

So putting it in the actual schedule and seeing those time blocks is what really helps. And I don't mean putting it in a written calendar, even though a lot of us creatives like to write little pretty notes and have our beautiful planners, that doesn't really work for this. You really need to get yourself accustomed to using a digital calendar so you can see it and if something doesn't get done, you can move it around next week or at other times.

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Okay, so number six, the next thing I learned is that I have to be really strategic about fitting all this stuff that does have to happen in my day, especially my workday in at really at the most efficient level. It means I have to learn to do the things that really matter only and to do them in the shortest amount of time possible to get the results I need.

So a lot of us are perfectionists and we do things to the nth degree when we could have done it a lot quicker. So for me, what that's going to look like next week is I'm going to put all of my work in every single day of next week in only six hours of the day.

And think about it, a lot of times we don't get even six efficient hours of work because we're talking to people around the "water cooler," we're chit-chatting, we're wasting time, we're procrastinating, we're checking and clearing out our email inbox, we're having lunch. Six hours is actually a lot of work if it's six focused hours.

But if it doesn't fit in that, which trust me, a lot of what I want to do won't, then it's got to be somebody else's job or I have to say no or not right now. So that's going to take us back to the thinking that I talked to you about in last week's episode that was called Letting Go to Grow. You're going to have to let go of some stuff, either perfectionism or let go of doing it yourself or just let go of it altogether.

Because for me, I really, really want optimal health to happen this year. I'm going to achieve it. And that is what my schedule will have to look like, six hours of work only if I want to have time to meet my goal. Now, I don't have to do this, but I'm choosing to do this. So this is what you have to become aware of. What choices am I going to have to make to get the goal I say I want?

And we have to be honest and say which do I want, because if I want to work eight or nine or 12 hours a day, I probably don't really want optimal health because those two things probably don't go together. At least not if you have any other obligations at all and responsibilities to family or

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anything else. There's just not the option of working that long of a workday and still getting everything else in.

So choosing for me, to work only six hours a day at work next week, it's going to bring up some stuff and it's going to be exciting to see what happens but I know with planning ahead of time that that's what it has to look like to leave room for everything else that I really say I want to do.

Now, number seven is about an identity or a belief about myself, and so is number eight. These are the last two things that I want you to think about. So as much as I've been telling myself for years that I'm not a good manager, that's a label I've created for myself, and really a belief. I'm terrible at managing. Guess what? I've got to change that belief.

I'm like, I'm a great visionary, I'm a terrible manager, that's why I have to hire other people to manage. But this tricky little belief that I have that kind of snuck in on me and my brain, guess what? It could be the very thing that is keeping me from managing my schedule, right? Or managing my mindset.

This is a terrible label that I have created for myself because clearly we've got to become great managers, at least of our own time if we want to succeed, and we have to become great managers of our thoughts and our mindsets, right? And I have to manage at least one person on my team and have them manage everybody else, but I've got 11 or 12 team members now, mostly virtual team members.

And if I believe I'm a terrible manager, then a lot of our processes are going to be a train wreck. Now, what I did do this year that I'm super excited about is I hired an integrator named Amalie, and she's fantastic, and we're just getting started with her this month. But her whole job is to step in between me and the rest of the team so she manages them.

And she's a great manager. But I can't still hold onto this belief that I'm a terrible one because at the very least I have to manage me and I have to manage her, or this absolutely will not work. So what kind of beliefs are

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sneaking in that you have about yourself that are going to keep you from creating your goals and keep you from using the schedule and your mindset to go where you want to go? Well, trust me, believing you're a terrible manager is not the way to do that.

And then finally, another belief that I have, and I've known I've had this one for a little while and I've been working on it for about two years, and I'm mostly good at it, but it takes a long time to undo these beliefs that we've had for a lifetime. And this belief was that you have to work really hard to make a lot of money.

So you have to figure out what one or two things you do that makes you the most money and do a lot of that and say no to everything else. But what I believed my whole life was that really, really hard work and money were married to each other.

And even to be more clear, I think I defined hard work as busyness. So being really busy, basically having a schedule that looked like the one I had this week, which was really a train wreck and so overbooked, I have a belief that that's what hard work looks like. And sometimes it sneaks back up on me. And so I had to divorce hard work and money in my head.

Now, this doesn't mean that I don't do my best at the stuff I do. I definitely do that. In fact, I probably do even better work. I know I do, at the one or two or three things that really are my zone of genius, my jam, the things I should be doing, but when I was trying to do many, many, many things, what I ended up doing is doing most of them in a pretty mediocre way.

And so I had to un-believe that that's what hard work looked like and I had to un-believe that I had to have those "hardworking" behaviors to make a lot of money because what I found is for me they were really kind of mutually exclusive. When I did that behavior, the money didn't come.

And so I just want you to see, maybe you have this belief too and sometimes we're confusing busyness with hard work and they're not the same thing. So when I go down to my six hours of work or less per day this

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week, I'm going to have to do a whole lot of mind management around this belief that's still in there, even though it doesn't have quite as much of a strong hold on me, I'm loosening it a lot, but it still creeps up sometimes that I should be doing something all the time.

So what's going to happen? Well, when I'm in thinking time or I'm in rest time, I'm going to start to believe I should be doing something, and that is not going to be the way to success for my one key goal of optimal health. So think about that and make sure that this isn't happening to you.

And thankfully I have some amazing mentors that I can look to, one of which is Brooke, my mentor at The Life Coach School, and some other big really successful business people that I see that have really changed this thinking. And she went from making just around \$300,000 a few years ago, like two or three, to literally making 15 million dollars last year and guess what, she works three days a week for six hours a day.

Now, that doesn't mean she's never working on her business the rest of the time. Obviously to create 15 million dollars you have to, but the rest of her time she spends in that thinking visionary mode or the taking care of herself mode so she can really grow, and her next goal is 100 million. I cannot wait to see her - I know she'll do it - hit 100 million with three six hour workdays a week.

So you have to get really good at managing your mindset and you have to get really good at managing what other people are going to do, even though you're not maybe the manager of all of them. Amalie, my integrator's going to manage my people, but I got to manage she and I and what the vision looks like and my thinking around it so that I can both hit my goal of optimal wellness and hit my financial goals.

So they can go hand in hand, but only if we're thinking in the right way. So lots of things to think about this week. I hope you can learn a lot from my experiment with adding a whole new goal into my schedule. That's why I wanted to just be totally transparent about how I really stunk it up this week, but it was so helpful to do that and to have awareness around it.

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And what I want you to see if you can't just lop on a bunch of new stuff or even one goal on top of what you're already doing without making room to succeed. So if you haven't hit your goals in the past, it's likely that you weren't noticing how much space and time and thinking and strategy it really takes to tackle something new and to make a big change in your life and to really make it happen.

So I'm going to report back really soon on how all my changes are going, but in the meantime, would you do me a favor and please let me know what you think of this episode and all the others that you've listened to on *The Design You Podcast* by leaving me a rating and review on iTunes?

Because guess what friends, only eight more episodes until we hit the one-year mark. 52 episodes of *The Design You Podcast*, and I know I'm changing lives, I'm changing my own, and a lot of you have told me that I'm really helping you change yours, which I love. It's the whole reason I'm here.

But I want to know how and why I'm helping you and what I can do even more of in the next year, in year two of *The Design You Podcast*. So please leave me a review by going over to iTunes and searching for *The Design You Podcast* and subscribing if you haven't already, and then you just click on ratings and reviews and you can leave me a rating.

We're lucky to have a five-star rating because so many of you have given me wonderful feedback, but I just also want you to leave a comment. That's where the review is, and tell me what you think and what I can do to help you move forward in a big way all year long.

So thanks so much for doing that, I really appreciate that. I can't wait to hear from you and I will see you all again really soon, next week as always, and we'll tackle another big idea of how to be our best in 2019. So bye for now, friends, see you really soon.

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

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