

Ep #48: How to Find More Joy



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With Your Host

Tobi Fairley

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You are listening to *The Design You Podcast* with Tobi Fairley, episode number 48.

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 friends. We have been chatting so much this month about health and wellness and weight loss, and this is definitely an area I've struggled to make a priority. So I'm preaching to the choir when I'm talking about this because this year, every bit of that struggling is changing for me.

And it's not just about losing weight. I just want to feel good all the time. I want to be at my best because if I can be at my best personally, then there's so much more good I can do in the world. So my number one goal has been to put my health and wellness first, before my business.

And I have done that by adding some non-negotiables to my week, including doing regular workouts with a personal trainer and going for walks and journaling and other stuff, and I'm seeing a huge difference, especially in my energy. Really, it's off the charts and I love it because as you can probably tell, I'm a go-getter. I like to pack a lot of stuff in my days and I don't want to be too tired to do it all.

So, we're going to talk about more stuff to do with this concept today. We're really going to talk about joy today, and you know how Marie Kondo says, does that bring you joy? In fact, are you all watching Marie's Netflix show? I'm hearing all about it. I'm starting it right now this week. I'm convinced. Last week I told you to not buffer with Netflix, but it doesn't mean you can't watch Netflix.

So you can watch as long as you're not buffering with it, and I think maybe we should all go watch this Marie Kondo show and see what brings us joy. But today we're going to talk about finding joy in a lot of cool stuff, and I'm going to talk to you about that in just a second.

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But before we do that, I wanted to highlight one of our listener spotlights or reviews of the week, and this week it's coming from Vicky and she says, "I find Tobi's podcast to be the highlight of my week."

Aww, I love that. Thank you, Vicky. She says, "It's amazing the wealth of information that Tobi includes and the issues she addresses. It's as if she's talking directly to me." I've heard that a lot of times and Vicky, you know why, because I'm talking directly to myself.

Vicky goes on to say, "While she targets creatives, many of the topics covered could pertain to almost anyone who is interested in overcoming self-limiting beliefs and self-doubt. I listened to many of her podcasts at least two to three times as I always find new insights the second or third time that I missed during the first listen. Tobi's *Design You* coaching program is phenomenal as well and I especially love the book club picks" - in *Design You* coaching program she means.

She says, "It's outstanding," so thank you so much Vicky, I love to hear that feedback. And yes, I've heard it many times that I'm talking directly to you and today, I might be talking directly to you. So let me tell you what we're going to talk about.

So, as I've said about some of the stuff this month that I'm talking to you about, it might be because you need to lose weight that you love this information. It might be that you just want to be healthier than ever, and both of those are a good thing.

But specifically, I want you to start to think about how you use food in your life today and every day, but on today's podcast I want you to think about that. How you use food as far as one of your sources or a main source of joy.

So, what we eat is just as important as how we move our bodies or how we treat ourselves with self-care, or any of the other stuff that pertains to optimal health and wellness. But sometimes we put way too much pressure on eating the right way or on the flipside, what we really do a lot of times is

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we make food the main thing that we look forward to in our days. Am I talking to you today? Are you like, yup, she just spoke directly to me?

Well again, the reason I come up with all my podcast topics because I'm pretty much always talking to myself as well, or maybe my family or both of us, so maybe you do know what I'm talking about today. So what does that look like in our lives?

Well, if you're like my husband and I sometimes or my daughter, I hate to admit this but it's true, sometimes we might wake up and we are already looking forward to our breakfast and at breakfast we're literally already thinking about what we're going to have for lunch or throughout the morning, or even what kind of snack we're going to have today or often, even at breakfast, we're already talking about what we're going to have for dinner.

And not just as a means of logistics and organization, which we do talk about sometimes, but literally about what sounds good, right? Because we get so much joy from our food, especially as good Southerners like me. We just get so much joy from our food. And so we're thinking about that or maybe what we're going to eat afterwards like maybe the ice cream, the cake, whatever it is that you want to eat before you go to bed.

And all of this focus on food takes up so much energy. And really, it can rob us of our joy if we don't realize it, if we're not paying attention, but it really can become kind of our only source of true joy. So that brings me to today's topic about finding joy outside of food.

So if food is the main thing that we look forward to and it's where so many of us find our joy, then we have to take the emphasis off of food as our main BFF if we want to be free from food and from emotional eating and from buffering, like we talked about last week and from overeating from all of that stuff.

So first, I want to start with some awareness of what's really going on with all of those things and why we turn to food for joy because so many of us

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do. And I know people that don't. Like, there's some people in my family. My nephew, my niece, they weigh like, eight pounds and they're grown. Okay, so maybe not eight, but they just don't care about food. Eating is kind of an inconvenience to them. They eat because they have to stay alive, and trust me, they don't eat that much.

But then there's so many of the rest of us, and it just tastes good, right? And emotional eating and overeating and buffering, they all go hand in hand when we really have so much of our lives revolving around food. And again, our culture makes all of this so easy to really get in the habit of because being a foodie is cool, right?

And there's TV shows about food all the time and baking and Top Chef and there's amazing restaurants and man, does it really taste good. But we have to be careful that we don't use that as an excuse to eat more than we should because a lot of times we do that, especially like we talked about last week when we're feeling emotional. We do that buffering.

Our buffering of our thoughts and our feelings and our emotions with food to numb us from feeling and dealing with our real problems, and we went way into that last week. So if you weren't here last week, go listen to the episode on cravings, urges, and buffering.

But the real problem is never what it looks like our problem is. Our real problem really isn't our weight or our health or poor health. It's really not even the food. Those are challenges that happen, but they're really just symptoms of us hiding what we really need to deal with.

And it's likely that there is a problem or several that you're hiding from when you use food to cover them up. But I want you to think of this. Not only should we be looking at what the true issue is, the true feeling, our emotion that maybe we're covering up, but possibly our issue comes from a lack of true joy in our lives.

For me, I had a habit of overworking, overachieving, both of those things in an effort to prove my worth and worthiness for years. And the only joy I

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really had in my life many days besides my daughter, who I've always been crazy about, and family, you know, that joy, but besides those things, when I would go to the office and work for hours and hours and hours on end, a ridiculous amount of working, the only joy I had in my life a lot of those days was eating.

Like, eating sugary stuff or carby foods, things to reward myself for overworking. Or maybe I would drink wine to relax at the end of those long days and I'd get joy from wine and a lot of you get joy from wine, right? You're like, oh no, don't go there, Tobi, don't take away my wine. And I'm not trying to take away your food or your wine.

But I want you to see that if that's the most joy in your life, it's a problem, right? So neither the overworking or the eating of the stuff I was rewarding myself with, I'm like, well, if I have to be here for 16 hours today, the least I can do is eat some cheese dip, right? I deserve it.

But that was a terrible habit that I created and even my own coach, Brooke, says if eating is the most joy you get each day, then your life sucks. And hey, she's kind of right, but I don't notice that - I didn't notice that when I was in the middle of it. And a lot of times we don't notice it.

My husband and I or my family and I, when we travel all these places, we kind of don't notice - well, I do now, but I didn't use to, that we get so excited about all the food. That's a problem, y'all. And it's so easy. Again, especially if you're a good Southern girl like me and one who loves to travel and have food be the focus for all those trips.

And I mean, heck, food's the focus for everything, right? Every entertaining thing that we do, every birthday, every dinner party, every everything. Going on a trip, we're like, ooh fun, where and what are we going to eat? I mean, I literally have noticed how much my family thinks about food.

And it doesn't mean everybody in my family is all overweight or anything like that. I mean gosh, like I said, I got plenty of people that are on the

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skinny skinny side too. My dad's super fit and he still loves to eat, but just food is so important and our society just continually reinforces it.

So god forbid we think about planning a trip around exercise, right? Some of you people that don't have trouble with this definitely do. You're all out there hiking and kayaking and like, climbing a mountain and that's awesome, and that's what I want more of in my life because I hadn't noticed for years that as Brooke said, in a sense, my life kind of sucked because we spent so much thinking about food.

So, let's be honest about this. Have you done this too? Because I have for years. And instead of focusing on what really truly brought me joy, we were often focused on food. Now, there were moments, little moments where I can think about now that I had so much joy. I remember going to a fabulous yoga retreat. I went to it about three years in a row and it was so just life giving.

And we went hiking in the woods every day and we did yoga for multiple hours a day and we did meditation and it just felt so connected to everything. God, myself, life, these other people. Like, really, really huge piece of joy. As Marie Kondo does say, that really sparked joy in my life.

But it's so easy to not make time for that and I think that's one of the reasons food gets so much kind of playtime in our life. It gets so much airtime because food is easy. We have to eat to live, or at least we think we do, we eat multiple times a day, it's just all around us everywhere. Just driving home from work we pass multiple places that we can pull in to eat or to drink, and so it just becomes over-important in our lives.

So, a couple years ago, joy was my word of the year and for an entire year, I was focused on rediscovered or creating new joys in my life, literally for an entire year. This is when I started to notice. This is exactly when I had been going through The Life Coach School and all of that mindset training. I started to notice, wow, Brooke really is right. There's way too much food focused in our lives.

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So it became a daily practice for me to focus on joy and believe me, it's not easy. It's not really as easy as it sounds to find things that bring you joy. Now, there's dozens of reasons for this because every day, all kinds of stuff zaps our joy, right? If we're not vigilant about managing our thoughts and our habits, joy can be hard to come by.

And we can even kind of get cynical about it, right? And we can just go buffer with the wine or the cheese dip and forget about the whole thing, which is what so many of us do. But once I started figuring out what joy meant to me, I was able to take the emphasis off of food and wine and find joy outside of what I'm eating or drinking.

So let's talk a little bit about what joy is and how we find more of it in our lives because the first step to finding joy is as usual, I always go do this, don't I? Guess what? Guess where you find joy. In your thoughts. Absolutely in your thoughts.

It's a mindset. If you want more joy in your life, you want to find the thoughts that lead to feelings of joy, and that also lead to the results you're after in life like maybe more health and more vitality. So our thoughts can be the real enemy of finding joy every day in our own lives. We can just as easily choose a thought that serves us as one that brings us down, but we don't.

We don't take the time to notice even what we're thinking, and a lot of us are in habits of thinking the same thoughts or creating the same feelings over and over. Feelings like confusion or overwhelm or worry and there's not a lot of joy in any of those feelings, right?

So we could choose to even find joy in our day to day, like we could choose to think of our to-do items as fun or joyful or rewarding or exciting. We can just as easily do that as think of them as stressful or tiring and overwhelming, but do we? Not real often.

And guess what, stress and overwhelm, as I just said, they're caused by our thoughts because all feelings are, but so is joy. So when we find

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ourselves constantly in a state that's not so joyful, like overwhelm, we've got to ask ourselves, what was I thinking that made me feel this way? Because so many of us unconsciously run through the same thoughts over and over and over again.

Stopping the practice of overwhelm, just that one thing was key for me to stay on my joy train for that whole year and even since then. And another thing that really helped me was reminding myself of all my successes. All my successes in business and life because so often, we're just thinking about the things that we haven't done, that we should do, right?

But we're not sitting around thinking of all the stuff we did do that was amazing because there's a whole lot of joy in that and I'm so guilty so often of not stopping and celebrating. I get so caught up in the grinding away at everything that I have to do or just thinking about all that is a problem or a pain and I forget to stop and say hey, I just did a big thing today, and I don't stop and celebrate with something besides food or a cocktail.

Let's be clear, we do stop and celebrate that stuff. We're like, let's go out for a drink, let's go out for a big meal and a dessert, and that's not the only way to celebrate, y'all. Maybe you want to make a list of all your successes and start practicing this. I highly recommend it. Put it somewhere where you can see it all the time and add to it.

Like, maybe it's on your bathroom mirror on one of those big sticky Post-Its that looks like a notepad, and you add to the list so you can see it all the time. But when you do see it and you do celebrate, I want you to celebrate with something that doesn't have a negative consequence like food and wine and other things can have on us.

So what could that be? Could it be like when I went on my yoga retreats? Could it be a hike with your girlfriends? Or could it be the reward that I love most? A massage? Or maybe it's a fabulous pair of shoes? Especially if you can afford them, not if you're overspending, which is also a negative consequence.

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Whatever you have to do and however you have to do it, set a routine to celebrate all of your accomplishments and create joy from them. The small ones to the really big ones. This type of thinking really leads to the feelings and the actions that bring more and more joy into our lives.

So just like when I talked about last week, if you feed an urge, the urge gets stronger, well guess what. If you feed joy, joy gets stronger too. The more feelings and actions we create about joy, we get more joy every single day. It's kind of like a gratitude practice. A joy practice. It's so similar. The more you do it, the more you think that way, the more you practice it, the more joy you have.

And there's a difference in joy and happiness, and to me, joy is really even deeper. Happiness sort of comes and goes and like anything can happen and we can go straight from happy to unhappy. But when you really cultivate real joy in your life, which again to me, does go hand in hand with gratitude, it's more lasting.

So now that we know a little bit about what leads to joy, which is our thoughts, and what holds us back from joy, which is also our thoughts, how can we begin to cultivate more of it? More joy-filled thoughts like celebrating our accomplishments really, how can we do that?

Well, we can practice it every day like we talked about, but I want to talk about another of the main ways that I really have brought more joy into my life, that's really a game changer, and it makes me feel different every single day than I used to when I was overwhelmed. So what is that thing?

Well, it's inspiration. So, you may need more inspiration in your life if you want more joy. Inspiration really does lead to joy. So I want you to start thinking about not just practicing your thoughts so you feel more joyful about the stuff that you do every day, but I also want you to plan in more time in your schedule for inspiration.

So if you need to go to a museum or read a book or take a day trip somewhere or go to the spa, even in the middle of the day when you think

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you should be working, to find inspiration so you can relax enough to be inspired and joyful. Then do that. Whatever it takes. I want you to think, I want you to sit with a notepad literally, and map out what you could do to be more inspired. Find ways to bring inspiration back into both your personal and your work life.

Inspiration leads to thoughts that lead to joy. They really do. It works that way. And as problematic as it can seem to watch all those fabulous photos and amazing destinations and incredible projects that everyone's posting on social media because it can make us envious if we're not managing our thoughts or like we're doing something wrong, guess what, if you are managing your thoughts around those things, it can be so inspiring and so motivating.

Yes, comparison is the thief of joy. Don't compare. But it can also light a fire under you and really inspire you to do something in your life. Something that you dream of, something that's going to really create more joy than you've had in a long time.

So every time you see those picture-perfect visions, whether it's out at a museum or on a trip somewhere or literally just looking at the picture-perfect version of someone else's life or work online, ask yourself what it makes you think and how it makes you feel and what that makes you do. If you think your life is miserable and that you don't measure up, then it will be and there will be no joy.

But if you think you really are inspired by that and it gives you ideas for what your life could be and things that you want to try, especially things in the way of travel or experiences, then that is a totally different story. And this is exactly how I use books and Instagram and other beautiful things that people are doing and creating in my own life. I use them to inspire what I want for me.

Not to keep up with the Jones' because I don't like everything that's on there. I take it in and I kind of try it on for size. I'm like, oh, that's so

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fascinating. They went to that place; do I want to go there? They tried that thing; do I want to try it?

And I've really trained myself to be aware of what thoughts come up when I see inspiring images and if I think a negative thought, then I really dig in and go why? Why did that have that impact on me? Why didn't that serve me? But most of the time anymore, I don't feel that way. I don't feel jealous, I don't feel envious, I don't feel less than. I feel inspired of the possibilities.

I think, what would I have to do to get that result in my life? Would I have to travel somewhere? Would I have to plan for it? Would I have to have more money? Would I have to have more time? And that, y'all, that is major motivation in the most fun sort of way.

We're creatives here on this podcast. We love to create, so why not use the world around you to inspire you, to create a life that's full of health and full of wellness and full of success and reaching your personal and business goals and all of that stuff. It's so much fun.

So here's your homework for today. This is your homework. Yes, I'm giving you homework. Teacher Tobi is giving you homework. I want you to stop - if you're driving in the car, do it when you get home or when you can pull over or when you get back to the office. Don't try to put it on your phone or text yourself or anything like that. Keep your eyes on the road.

But if you are sitting where you have a notepad, I want you to write down, start to make a list of all the things that bring you joy besides food or alcohol in your life. And besides scrolling Facebook too or anything else that's buffering. If it's like, binge-watching Netflix for 24 hours makes me really, really joyful, that's probably not the one we're looking for.

I just want you to find that stuff that lights you up, that is just so fulfilling and fun and all of that stuff that you're looking for. That joyful feeling. And yeah, just make sure that whatever they are, they don't have other negative consequences in your life.

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For example, if shopping brings you a ton of joy but you're constantly purchasing things that you can't really afford on your credit card, that's equally problematic as food or wine. It's just another form of it. It's just another form of buffering.

So I want you to figure out all the things that just bring you pure joy without any negative consequences. So we're looking for things that we can really get into and get excited about that have only positive impacts on you and your life. So for you, what is that?

It could be painting or some other craft or hobby. Maybe it's photography, maybe it's jewelry making. Maybe it's some kind of exercise or activity like hiking or biking or tennis or yoga. Maybe it's travel. Travel in general maybe, or maybe very specific travel like a bucket list of trips that you're trying to check off. Maybe that brings you tons of joy.

I have friends that I've seen that try to go all the major league baseball stadiums with their kids or some certain kind of sporting event with their family because they can connect with the people they love in the process, and that brings them joy. Or even cooking really is great for this.

So make sure it's not about cooking foods that you then use for buffering, but maybe it's learning a new style of cooking. Healthy cooking or some sort of ethnic cooking or something that's really something you've never tried before. A certain style, or maybe it's making sushi or something else that's fun and it brings you joy.

Maybe it's attending courses or visiting the culinary schools in the US. Hey, there's one in Napa Valley that I keep eyeing. It's definitely on my list because I love to cook. So whatever it is, I want it on your list. It's really about creating habits and experiences and ultimately thoughts that bring us more of the feeling of joy without it revolving particularly around food or anything else that brings us those negative consequences.

So what habits, experiences, or thoughts do you need to practice to get more joy in your life this year? Whatever it is, whatever's on that paper,

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you're ready. It's time to go do it. So I really encourage you to spend more time focusing on true joy and I guarantee that that joyfulness will trickle into every area of your life, including your health and wellness, weight loss if you need that, your business, your family, relationships, all of it because I tried it and it feels so darn good.

So go out and create that joyful life and I'm going to see you again right here next week, but until then, I wish you a very, very joyful week. Bye for now, friends.

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.