

Ep #97: How to Feel at Home in Your Life and Your Business with Amber Lilyestrom



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Tobi Fairley

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You are listening to *The Design You* podcast with Tobi Fairley, episode number 97!

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's your host, Tobi Fairley.

Hey, friends! Episode 97! Almost 100. That blows my mind, that we've been doing this together for almost 100 episodes and I'm so grateful that you're here listening.

Today, I have a beautiful gift for you. It is an interview with Amber Lilyestrom. Amber is an incredible human being and entrepreneur. To tell you a little bit about her official bio, it says 'Amber is a transformational branding strategist and business coach, author, and speaker'. But that really doesn't describe the magnitude of what Amber's genius really is and you're going to hear all about it in this episode.

I love in her bio where it says her mission is to empower women to position themselves as sought-after experts and thought leaders through the creation of an online brand presence. Wow. If that's not right up our alley, I don't know what is. So many of my listeners are women, probably you, right? That's really what we're here for so often, trying to create that unique presence of who we really are. If that is you, you are going to love this episode with Amber.

She gives us so much insight into how she's done this work for herself, how she's helped other people, and how you can really figure out really what is authentically you and build your brand around that. I think you're absolutely going to love this episode, get out your pen and paper, it's a note-taking episode for sure.

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As an added bonus, Amber's really into all things about the home, so for those of you who are interior designers, you're going to love that part too. She just finished a major remodel. This whole episode is everything about her physical home and then all the ways she helps you come home to yourself and your brand. I hope you enjoy.

Tobi: Hey Amber! Welcome to the Design You podcast. I'm so glad you're here today, and I'm really excited about this conversation we're going to have all about the home.

Amber: Yes, ma'am. Tobi, I'm so glad to be here. Thanks for having me.

Tobi: You're so welcome. Before we get into some really fun stories about your own home and stuff you do to make people feel at home in their life and in their business, tell us what that looks like, your business, your brand. You have some genius in this area and I want everybody to know what that is before we dive into the meaty stuff.

Amber: Thank you. I'm a mom and I'm a wife and I live in the woods of New Hampshire on the lake. Every single day, I get to help people bring their dreams to life and take those inspired ideas and the powerful stories that they have endured in their life, the things they've overcome, the traumas that they've survived and connect the dots on why their purpose is their purpose and then help them translate that purpose into an actual business, into an actual brand and way for them to express to the world what they're here for, what they stand for, what they've learned, and how they can make an impact.

Tobi: Oh my gosh. That is so incredible. With so many people out trying to find their passion and figure out if they're in the right spot. You basically help people meld that whole thing. So interesting. We're going to get into that, for sure, today. We're

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going to talk about how to feel at home in your life and your business, but before we do that, I wanted to start talking about the home in general, the physical home. You recently went through a renovation, and unlike a lot of people, you had a different perspective on how to really make your home work for you and your home office and your family. Tell us about that process, and maybe what you learned and some of the choices you made. Let's dig into it, because it sounds super exciting.

Amber: Yeah. It's literally been one of the greatest thrills of my life and when I think about building this business, what was it that I wanted the most? It was to be more present for my life and the people in it. At the heartbeat of that vision, it's always about home.

I grew up with a mom who, every night, even when she was working multiple jobs, made sure that we had a candlelit dinner with music on in the background. I'm a mom myself now with one child, I have no idea how she did that. I work from home and that's hard for me some days. I was so blessed. My mom always wanted us to feel like home was the safe haven for us and it was a place where we could just be ourselves and we could relax at the end of the day and just have it be this safe harbor. Inevitably, I wanted to create that for my family as well.

The other piece was, I grew up going to Lake Winnepesaukee in New Hampshire, it's one of the biggest lakes here in our state and my grandfather had a cottage up there. It was in our family for 50 years and it was this super rustic cabin where the water that came out of the sink was literally being drawn from the lake. It was rustic. It was beautiful and right on the water. We grew up listening to the sounds of the loons in the morning and just being out there in nature for those seasons when it wasn't frozen. It was so sacred and so special to me.

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My family unfortunately had to sell it just recently, actually, and I knew I wanted to create that legacy for my family and I wanted to find a lake home where I could grow and I could work every day and I could look out and have that kind of piece.

I'm speaking to all these little details because they really are the guidepost that lead us. Sometimes, it doesn't make sense. Jeez, you want to find a lake house but you're not going to live up in the mountains, you're going to live in a more rural area where it's more established. How are you going to find this?

Ten-is years ago, my husband and I were just dating and we were paddling on this pond that we now live on with some friends, we were out kayaking and we happened upon this house and we weren't in a time and space in our lives where we could actually purchase it. The people that were outside saw us and we said, "Is your house for sale?". They said, "Yes," and they said, "Do you want a tour?". We came up on the shore and they offered us a hot dog and all these things, "Come have a barbeque with us".

They gave us a walking tour of the house at the time, which was an 1100 square foot expanded cottage, essentially, lake cottage, and I remember the moment I walked through the door just... My whole body just felt chills. I looked at this giant fireplace, we have this big fireplace in the middle of the home and these natural wood floors. I thought, "This is our house". It made no sense. I had actually just gone through a divorce and for my first marriage that I had been in for about a year, I was in my mid-twenties and everything felt like a mess, but I'm walking in and I'm with my new boyfriend, I love him so much, I know he's going to be the person that I marry. I walk in this house and I know this is our home.

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Fast forward, needless to say, we did not buy the house. We were not in a position to do that, but we did buy a different home later that year in a sort of serendipitous way. We lived there and that was our starter home and we had our baby and all this. In that timeframe, I was in my corporate career, I transitioned out of that and launched my business from home. My daughter was nine months old when I left my corporate career which was a ten-year career in collegiate athletics marketing and branding, and I was doing the nap time hustle and building my business. In my mind, the whole time, was that house. I just know that's our house. It makes no sense.

Tobi: I love this story! It's so exciting!

Amber: I knew it was our house. One day, we're sitting on the couch, the baby's asleep, I'm scrolling through my iPad and I love to look at real estate. It's just one of those things. Anybody else listening right now, I just love to look at homes, I love to just look at what's available. Again, we were newly self-employed, we're on my husband's income in terms of being able to finance anything. I had been in my business for about a year and a half. I'm sitting on the couch, I'm scrolling through and looking at houses that are way out of our price range because I like to dream really big and I love to be inspired. I'm looking at the homes over by the ocean in Maine and in New Hampshire on the sea coast. And then all of a sudden, Tobi, I'm scrolling and I lose track of where I am and the price ranges, and guess what house is for sale.

Tobi: That give me chills! It's so exciting. I feel like I'm watching a movie like *The Holiday* or something! It's amazing.

Amber: So I screamed, and I said, "It's our house!". My husband was like, "What?". He's just sitting over there on his phone or something. I'm like, "It's our house, it's our house, it's our

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house!". I said, "This is it. We have to go now. We have to do this. I don't know what we have to do, but we have to do this".

I had a client at the time who was a mortgage person. I texted her, I said, "Can you talk to us at 8am tomorrow morning?". It was Saturday morning. We all got on a FaceTime together, we all looked really rough, she's taking information from us. She's applying for a mortgage for us to try and go get this house.

Long story short, a lot of crazy things happened in that timeframe, but we sold our home in nine days. This was back in 2015. We sold our house in nine days. Mind you, we also had two bathrooms that had had a flood, and so there were no floors down. My husband worked his buns off to put tile down in those bathrooms to get them all fixed up and get our house ready to be sold.

We put in a full-price offer, no contingencies, no inspection. My mother in law was freaking out: "What if it's an Indian burial ground? What if there's a viper pit?". We don't care. We literally don't care. The heating system for this house when we moved in was like a glorified space heater. I mean, literally, we had a Rinnai heater in our living room that heat the whole house. When we did the addition and when we expanded, I'll get to that. I woke up one night and I went in to go check on my daughter and make sure she was all set and she had heating in her room and I started crying because I didn't realise what it was like to live... Literally, we had lived in the house for three years with no heat in New Hampshire!

We knew it was our house. We knew it, and we knew that this is the place that we were supposed to be. We bought it, we moved in. 1100 square feet, we had gone from a 2000 square foot home down to a 1100 square feet with no storage, a

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crawlspace basement that's on dirt. All of our stuff is in these random sheds in our yard. It was a show.

Tobi: It's great though!

Amber: It was heaven. I wake up every morning and I get to watch the sun rise over the water and I get to see wildlife. We have otters in our backyard. I mean, who has otters in their backyard?

Tobi: I love everything about this story! There's so much there. There's so many reasons why you could have said no to it: "No heat, it's smaller, it's a big job, the money, the selling of our house, the tile". All of it! And not a single piece of that stopped you because you just knew that this is where you were supposed to be. I love that so much.

Amber: The beautiful thing is that the whole time, my business was funding all of these things. It was growing. The vision was pushing me to continue to expand, to push myself further, to make more money in my business, to expand myself and my impact in a bigger way. In a way, the house and I have been growing together all throughout.

In 2018, we met with a contractor and he came over and we said, "We got approval from the town to build, and we want to build this pretty mama jama size addition, 1100 square foot addition so we can really make this our forever home and we can have our dream kitchen and have our dream bedroom and bathroom, all the things". Anna can have her pink bedroom with her little chandelier. We were so vivid in our desires of what we wanted. We had Pinterest boards and the whole thing.

Again, the process was... As you all know listening, construction. The bills that come in every couple of weeks and your whole nervous system is like, "Oh my God! I've never seen

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bills this big in my life!". Just navigating that whole process... We did it, and we finished just actually around the time that we're recording this at the end of January of 2019. It's been about a year that we've been in it. We still haven't painted some of the trim and the fronts of the stairs. There's still some things that need to be done, but it's magnificent and it's expansive and it's been this sacred container for us to do our work in the world.

Ben works from home now, he was a former police officer, we retired him in 2017 from that job, and now he does podcast production. Our old master bedroom is now my office and I get to see the lake just sitting here talking to you right now from this little bird's eye view up here. My brother and his wife got married here.

There's just been so much magic that has come as a result of listening and trusting and being brave enough to say, "Yes. I don't have all the details figured out. I have no idea how we're going to do all this, but we're doing it. We're going to figure it out as we go."

Tobi: So incredible. As you were saying that, it's so interesting... You have such an eye for detail, even just describing it on audio, I'm with you, I'm following. I feel like I can envision already parts of your home. I think what I was noticing that was so clear to me, because it's the way I think is that you actually were thinking about how you're going to use every space, how it's going to play a role in your life. I know you said you wanted to be more present and you wanted to connect with your family, your daughter. Talk a little bit about that.

You did all the planning and the Pinterest stuff, but on a different level, tell us what you were thinking about. Not just, "I need this paint color, or this is the perfect shade of pink," but

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really, how is my environment going to play a role in me building my business, and my husband building his business, and those family moments and being that perfect backdrop? Anything that comes to mind that you notice? I love that. I think it's being that intentional that really creates the environments that help us step into exactly who we're supposed to be.

Amber: Yeah. What a beautiful way to say that, Tobi. I think every little choice was such an act of devotion for us. One story that I think really characterizes this was that... It makes me emotional just talking about it.

We're so grateful for the people who shepherded this space and made this home as sacred as it is. We're essentially the keepers of it, the creators of it. There was an addition that was put on this home in 2005 which is this room I'm sitting in talking to you right now in my daughter's bedroom in what used to be our main bathroom. It really was this little cabin on a lake and it's built out in tremendous ways.

When they were taking the siding off of the old part of the house... It used to be this light grey Cape Cod look, the shakes. They were kind of taking the shakes off and underneath it was this beautiful sage olive-y green color that was the original wood siding on the home. What was so cool in that moment was knowing that we might not ever know that. Because we were brave enough to do this project and to go for it, we got to discover the choice that was made on the original home to choose that color. I wanted to really weave that color into a part of the house. We ended up making our center island that color to match it. We have the white quartz on top, but the cabinetry underneath is that color.

Bringing that in and honoring the home, keeping the fireplace as it is, this big, beautiful... With its open ceiling, it just goes all

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the way up and keeping the beams that are in there, keeping the original floors and the original part of the house and tying that in and adding hickory into the other part of the home. All of those little touches, all of those little pieces, paying homage, honestly, to the people that came before us that lived their life in this space and birthed babies and raised them and watched them go off and graduate and lives occurring in this really, really sacred space. Every choice we've made has been in honor of that but also in honor of, "What do we need in order to make this place better than when we came?"

I try to do that in everything that I do in my life. It's just a core way of showing up. I think that you can do that. I think we can design our businesses to the beat of our hearts and create offerings in what we provide to the world and the ways that we earn an income that really feel authentic to us. I think that's really what the world is craving, more of that authenticity, more of that genuine creativity and expression and I believe that it takes a lot of courage to do that, but that courage is always worthwhile.

Tobi: That is all so, so inspiring in every way. Thinking about how to really show up creative. Our audience is a ton of creatives, yet so often in our day-to-day life and crafting our business and crafting and designing our days, we don't really feel like we have the space for that or the permission for that. We're so busy and there's so much to do and we have all these obligations. I think it squelches every bit of what you're talking about. It truly is so inspiring to hear you talk about this. I can tell that it is all so true to how you live your life and run your business.

I want to talk about that a little bit. Let's start digging into that whole concept, and helping people start to see how can they do

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this in their lives and in their business. How can they get off the treadmill, stop all the stories in their head of why this isn't an option, and truly start to operate from that creative space in their life every single day?

Amber: Well, what I do with my clients is really get in the time machine and go back in time to look at the stories that have molded who we are in so many ways. It really invites us into an opportunity to reignite some of those stories and to reframe them. When we're stuck in those stories because they hurt, or because we're still longing for that love that maybe we weren't able to get from that person that we craved it from the most, we can kind of stunt our expansion and stunt our growth in some ways.

For me, it's always about, "Let's start with the excavation process". Once we excavate, then we can illuminate the places where we're stuck, the places where you're maybe feeling a sensation of suffering. I would imagine people listening to your podcast, they're really positive people, they have a really positive outlook on life. Even that, we're all human and we all bring a lot to our life experience here.

I love to hold that space and to go in there and say, "Let's unearth some of these patterns, and let's reframe them so that they can be an opportunity for celebration and we can then activate them and operate in our businesses in a way that now feels really innovative and we can allow ourselves to be super, super free". That's the process that I bring people through and I just don't think we spend enough time there. We start the business and we kind of have our 'why', but there's always a 'why' that lives underneath the 'why'. The work that I do with my clients is to help them identify that 'why' that lives beneath that 'why', the deep 'why'.

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Tobi: Can you give us an example of what that might look like? Just so we can really get in touch with that for ourselves and start to do that excavation process like you were talking about.

Amber: Yeah, I'll share my personal story. As a really young child, in fact, my earliest memory, which was traumatic, I was actually molested when I was three years old. What life looked like after that for the early years of my life was testifying in court at six, a lot of group therapy, a lot of work, my mom's family basically siding with my abuser and abandoning us, and feeling emotions that are very complex for a very young child. Growing up super-fast because that was just the deck of cards that I was dealt in my life. I have done extensive work to reframe that story. There's a really important part of that story that just in the last, I would say maybe, five to six years I've really been able to more deeply understand.

My mom was an entrepreneur. She was a published photographer, she was published in Powder magazine, and she had built this agency for sending photographers to do corporate work. She was just extremely talented and extremely bright. At that time, this was back in the early eighties, my mom was doing this as a female entrepreneur. She sold her business almost immediately. She sold her business and basically didn't pick up her camera again after this happened.

I was in childcare at an extended family member's home when this occurred and the shame and the guilt and the pain and the regret my mom felt, even though it was not her fault at all. I understand that as a mother. I can't even imagine what that had to have been like for her. She was a mom, and that was her passion. She said, "My number one dream was you".

I think that it's really important to go back in the time machine with ourselves, to understand why we do what we do. Of

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course, I became a mom and I'm in this corporate career and my child arrives and there's no way. I thought I was going to work. I thought, "I'm going to stay in my job. I'm ambitious". I loved my job. Annie arrived and there was no way, there was no way I was going to continue going to that job and leaving her in childcare. I couldn't have understood that until I did that excavation work to look at that and see, "Of course. Of course I need to be with my child. Look at my own life journey."

We've done that, we've created that. The cool part is... My mom's suffering, my mom's pain, the things that she went through was not for naught. I learned so much from it and I'm so grateful. She was there for me. As you can tell, I'm resolved in that experience, I understood forgiveness and courage and the importance of sharing my voice and speaking my truth, even when I knew that people were going to be judging and doubting me, understanding that family members literally turned their backs on us after this experience happened. That was a lot to work through, but I think it's so, so important to get to the heartbeat of what this is really about.

In my work in the world, I want moms to be able to live out their dreams and their passion, to be able to create businesses that support their families, that really serve their ambition and their visions and their dreams while also being able to raise their babies and be present for them in the way they want to be. I don't want us to have to choose in the way that my mom had to choose. We live in a time-space reality now where we don't. I'm grateful for that. Our crowns were paid for. The women that came before us that didn't have the choices that we have now, they made it possible, and men as well, to make it so that we can be having a conversation on the internet right now, that we can be having these business and serving people all over the world. I never forsake that. I'm so grateful for that, and I know

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that it's a huge part of the reason why I do what I do. That's my 'why' under my 'why' that I weep for. You heard me get emotional there, because I don't want other women and other children to have to suffer in those ways in whatever degree that happens to look like. I want to empower people to see that if the dream is for them and they're being called to it for a reason and their fear doesn't have to stop them.

Tobi: That's so touching. Thank you for being so vulnerable. That's amazing. I can feel such a tug in my body listening to that story. I can relate, not in the story itself, just that I have such a pull and a passion for the work that I do and I love that we have permission to live intuitive as you're saying, but I also see a lot of creatives who don't really totally get in touch with that. I'm sure you know why. I'm not really sure I do. I would love to help give them some ways to think, "If I didn't have this traumatic story," or, "If my life seemed basically normal and I have the spouse and the kids and business and I'm searching for how to build this feeling, this purpose, this passion for what I do," what kind of advice can you give them to really get in touch with that?

Amber: One of the ways that help my clients do that is that we do different guided visualizations. I invite them... I'll share how to do that without being guided, without having a guided visualization. Getting in touch with the former versions of ourselves allows us to reveal wisdom that our conscious minds have a hard time accessing on their own. Very simply, putting on a song that's meaningful to you, typically one without words in it, an instrumental song of some sort that is meaningful to you and closing your eyes and dropping in. What I mean by that, is just breathing into your body and being really present with yourself and then giving yourself permission to just wander

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back in time to a former version of you, whomever comes up, and asking that former version of you for insights or wisdom.

It's going to be such an individual process for every person who's listening to this right now, but being able to go back in time and to seek out, "What was that moment? What was that part of my story?". Whether or not you've gone through physical trauma in the ways that I have, we all have gone through some sort of trauma in our life. It could be the simplest thing of being ignored as a child. There's no right or wrong or spectrum of trauma that one is worse or better than another. We're all going to experience it the way that we experience it.

I invite you to go back in time to find those moments that felt hard and look at what's there. Be brave enough to go back in your own timeline and to see. I promise you, there will be a connection point. It might not even be the hard stuff, it could just be the stuff that inspired you the most. What made you feel most alive as a child? What made you feel most excited as a child? Maybe you were just so into flowers and you couldn't really understand or explain that, but there was some wisdom and some magic in there, and then you realize, "Oh, my grandmother used to have these beautiful flower arrangements and she would talk to me about them and she would teach me about it". That's what your story is.

Having the courage to just get quiet. I know how hard that can be with these very full, busy lives that we have, but all of the wisdom and all of the things that you need to know, it's already within you, it's already contained right there. That's going to be the thing that you then can share in an Instagram post that's going to be really inspiring and it's going to connect people to you. At the end of the day, the work that you do is so important and it's so beautiful, but what really connects people to that

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work is you and your purpose, and the ways in which you tell your stories through whether it's the work that you create or the ways you talk about the work that you create and the imagery and the words that you choose to use.

I just want you to be your own biggest fan, and to get excited about the nuances and to start expressing those things in more bold way and how you're showing up in your brand, specifically in the online space as well.

Tobi: Honestly, I'm so inspired by this conversation. I knew you would be an amazing guest. You've literally taken me in this conversation to those places. I feel it in my bones and in my body. You're so right, it's so seldom that we give ourselves permission to be still and be quiet and hold space for whatever it is that we need to see or hear or those little nudges that we ignore all the time. I think it's just so beautiful to think about doing that and I love, then, how you make it meaningful by bringing every little piece of that into your business. That's exactly what you do, right? You take that, not just, "I want to be an interior designer," or, "I would love to be a realtor," or, "I've always wanted to design furniture," or whatever those things may be. You're bringing the essence of who you are to the business at a whole other level, it sounds like.

Amber: I really believe that branding is our sacred opportunity to be who we really are. I would imagine, those of you guys listening to this, you guys who do home design or any kind of design, even website design, that's the truth. It's an opportunity to put our imprint and put our little flair on whatever it is that we're doing and the ways that we serve. No two people are going to do it the same way.

Tobi: Do you have advice for the people that.. I find so often that people get in touch with that piece of them, they're afraid and

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so they start telling themselves things like, “Why would anybody want to know this about me? Why am I important? Why should I show up in their feed? This is just ordinary or boring, I’m not creative”. We do that whole negative self-talk thing. Of course, it’s a protection, a safety mechanism to not feel vulnerable, but all the good stuff is on the other side of that, right?

Amber: The biggest part of my work, honestly, is spent in helping my clients address that worthiness story and really spend time with it. I say that quote all the time, ‘If the dream is in you, it’s for you’. Yes, to inspire, but most of all, to remind you that your dreams are a part of your personal curriculum. The way that you have envisioned your business and what it is you want to do in those moments and you just lose track of time and your heart is beating faster and you’re so excited about what it is that you’re creating, that is you in the flow. That is you in the purest essence of yourself. That’s the good stuff, that’s the point of life.

It’s to be in love with yourself and the way that you’re doing things in the world and showing up in that, and everybody else that is out there is just an opportunity to serve as a mirror to reflect back at you the brilliance of you. I always remind my clients that if they get into that comparison game or that jealousy, that envy, any of those things, just to remind them that you are being tapped by those people, you are being inspired by those people, because there’s some part of their genius that lives in you, too. They’re just a mirror to show you the possibilities for what you can create in your life, and fear is the thing that makes you go to envy and jealousy and judgement. Fear is the thing that holds you. You are being blinded from your own brilliance.

That’s the thing we have to do the deeper work on. This is why going back in the time machine, getting in the excavation

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process is so important. There is so much programming that many of us have had over the lifetime of getting to where we are on our journeys that we're using faulty scripts, old programming, and we are looking back at people who were doing the best that they could and using, sometimes, their disjointed efforts as proof as to whether or not we're worthy or good. I always remind my clients, as well, that they were doing the best that they could back then, too.

If you really get specific, if we really drill down, so many of us were raised by parents who were raised by those who survived the Great Depression, who survived World War One and Two, or at least Two. They came over here, many of them, my ancestors at least... My actual grandparents, not even just great grandparents, came over here on a boat. I think about that and I laugh to myself and say, "Hey, Amber. When was the last time you went across the Atlantic Ocean in a boat?".

Tobi: With nothing!

Amber: With nothing! No idea what you're going to experience when you arrive on the other side. Just talking about human trauma and stress and anxiety, and true, actual fear, that's been passed on. That's a little bit of a baton situation. We had our parents who were navigating that, and in the cases of both my parents, just vastly different experiences of how I was parented and they upgraded in a huge way.

My parents have both said to me, "My hope and prayer for your life is that you do better than I did. That you are just thriving in huge ways". I want that for my daughter. I want her to stand on my shoulders and to reach to a whole new height in her lifetime. If we can look at it that way and really connect those dots and understand it's not our fault, but now it's our responsibility to free ourselves from old patterns that are no longer working for

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us to get serious about what our impact is here on this planet, in this lifetime, in this body, and to do the best we can with it and to have fun while we're here and to leave our signature, to leave our mark, and to make things better than they were when we got here.

Tobi: Every bit of that is beyond inspirational. It's so personal to me. I know our listeners are going to feel the same way and I thank you so much for helping us go deeper than all of that surface level, the excuses and the stories that we're always telling ourselves for why we're not showing up in that way and just giving us permission to do that work. It's so, so important and beautiful. I am so grateful that you are here today.

Is there anything that you want to leave everybody with, and maybe also how they can get in touch with you or find your resources? I'm sure there's amazing things that help you on this journey. If they're standing at that point, inspired here by what you're saying and they're ready to do the work, anything else you need to know to jump in.

Amber: Yes, you guys can head over to amberlilyestrom.com and check it out, I have offerings for brand clarity sessions that I do and programs and things like that if you're wanting to do this deeper work, if you're wanting to have support and space held for you to do your on personal excavation work and to connect those dots on whatever you're feeling stuck around. It would be my honor to help you guys. You can go over to my website and check that out. I love Instagram, I'm over there a lot, just sharing myself and my story and I also have a podcast called the Amber Lilyestrom Show, and so you guys can check that out as well, and I go pretty deep with my guests. Tobi, we're going to have you on sometime in the next couple of months as

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well, which is super exciting. We'll be going deep together in that conversation.

I think the thing that I want to leave our listeners with today, and I'm looking at this post-it that I have sitting on my monitor, and the words are, 'let it be easy'. It's a reminder that it wasn't meant to be rugged and hard and impossible and painful. We are here to experience joy. The reason why you do the work that you do, if it really feels this way, is because it does bring you joy. If it doesn't, then that's great. That's an opportunity to say, "I'm ready to pivot, I'm ready to shift, I'm ready to do something differently". I want to invite everyone here to just carve out some time for yourself every day, to go for a walk, to sit with your journal, to get up a little bit earlier than your family, to have that quiet morning time, or to stay up a little bit later to have that quiet time to reflect and check in with yourself.

My most favorite journaling prompt that I do every day with myself is, "What does my soul need today?". Just so simple. Write it on the page. "What does my soul need today?". Close your eyes and you will get an answer. You can even ask yourselves now, what does my soul need today? I see so many of you saying, "I'm so tired of being in the race. I'm tired of the pressure. I'm tired of being pushed so hard". Okay, good. That's so good. Now, take a breath. What does that look like? Whatever it is you're craving in this moment, it might be, "I want to go and get a massage," or it might just be, "I just want to watch a show and veg out". Give yourself permission to do that.

The cool part is with that, when we give ourselves permission to meet our own cravings, our own soul's physical yearnings, that's when the creative inspiration comes through. That's when we let Jesus take the wheel. We stop the death grip of, "I have to control every single thing," and the miracles arrive, and

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things start to just land on the path that blow us away and then we're telling stories, "You won't believe this," but that's why. You allowed spirit, God, the universe, to come in and fill in those divine gaps, and that's the way that I live every day. I'm not death gripping anymore. Sometimes I do, I'm not going to pretend that that's not true, but I remind myself, as my friend, Rachel Canfield says, to hold on loosely but don't let go. Just try softer. I think I feel the collective exhale just as we're talking about this.

Tobi: Oh my gosh. So much wisdom. I just want to soak this up. I want to cancel the rest of my day speaking of what does your soul need, and just soak this in. It is so incredible and such a gift to all of us. Thank you so very much for sharing that. I've been following you for a little while, but I'm ready to literally soak up every nugget you have anywhere.

Everybody else, I know you're going to do the same, start taking in all of Amber's podcast and all the things. This is exactly what our soul needs. When we get just a taste of it, I think we want so much more. Thank you for taking us on that journey and sharing your stories. It's just truly, truly incredible at a level I wasn't even expecting today. I knew you would be great, but you took us to a whole other place, and I just want to thank you so much for doing that.

Amber: It's my honor, thank you for the opportunity to get to share myself and my heart today, and my story. Thank you for the work that you do in the world to bring these conversations to others and to be brave enough, Tobi, to keep showing up. The moments when you feel doubt or you feel fear for trusting your passion and your heart and for just going forth and being the light leader that you are.

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Tobi: Thank you, thank you. Can I just put you in my pocket and carry you with me everywhere I go? Woo-hood! Yay! Thank you so much, and I can't wait for our conversation on your podcast soon, and everybody will have all the links to everything that Amber mentioned in the show notes, and I know y'all are literally not even going to listen to the whole podcast because you're going to be already over on her site. Come back and listen again because there's a lot to take in here, and again, thank you. It was such a pleasure.

Amber: Thank you, Tobi.

Okay, was I right, or was I right? These women that I've had on the podcast since last fall are just absolutely blowing my mind. Not that there's not some incredible guys out there, and we need to maybe have some of them on the podcast too, but we've just literally had an incredible lineup of powerhouse women just like Amber. I feel so kindred with them. It's really just my favorite thing when I record an episode with a guest that's so good that I can't wait to go back and listen again, just as an audience member with my own notebook and apply all of their nuggets and wisdom to my own life. That's exactly what I'm going to do with this episode with Amber.

If you need anything else about Amber, want to know about what she does, how she coaches people, her live events, her podcast which is incredible, you can check all of that out at amberlilyestrom.com, that's A-M-B-E-R-L-I-L-Y-E-S-T-R-O-M.com, and we have that in the show notes, but go and check everything out about Amber. She is so incredible and I can't wait to be on her podcast really soon, and I'll for sure let you know when that is. Thank you so much for tuning in today. I can't wait to hear how this episode transformed your life. Be sure and tag me and tag Amber out on Instagram, tell us what you think. We're so happy you're here today, and I'll see you guys again next week for another amazing episode of *The Design You* podcast. Bye for now!

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Thank you so much for joining me for this episode of the Design You podcast. 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, designyou@tobyfairley.com.