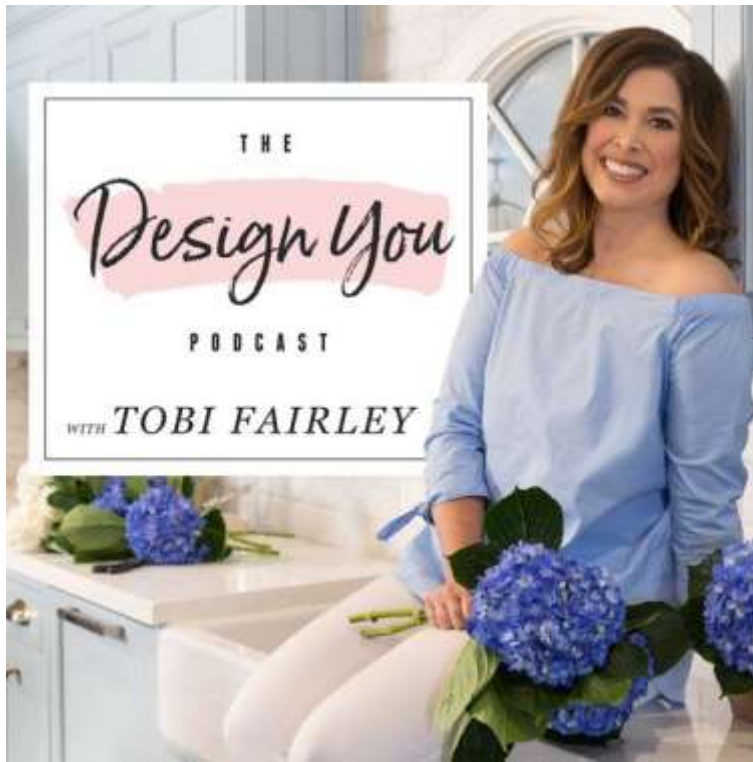


Ep #119: How to Get Paid to Be Yourself with Laura Belgray



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Tobi Fairley

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You are listening to the *Design You* podcast with Tobi Fairley, episode number 119.

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.

Hi, friends. It is the middle of summer, what is happening? It's the middle of the year, let's just be honest, Christmas is going to be here before we know it. Yes, I said it. Go ahead and send me a hate mail, but Christmas is going to be here soon. But that's okay because we can still do a lot this year in the six months that are left. In fact I think a lot of us are in a place, thanks to Covid and everything else that has happened in 2020, that we're just like, you know what, yeah, I think I want to reset, I think I want to start over.

And this is a perfect episode to help you do that because today I have Laura Belgray. And Laura is the founder of Talking Shrimp and co-creator of The Copy cure. And she's a copywriting expert, she helps entrepreneurs find the perfect words to express and sell what they do in a way that gets them paid for being themselves. So if you're like, I'm going to go kind of rewrite what I want for this year, in fact this whole Covid thing and all the racial stuff and everything that's happened this year has made me really rethink what is important to me.

So I'm going to re-decide what I want for the rest of 2020 and beyond. And then I'm going to use this episode with Laura to figure out how to talk about it and talk about myself, and what I want, and how to be me. If that's you, you're going to love this episode.

So, Laura has done this work with hundreds of clients, including biggies like Marie Forleo and Amy Porterfield. And she is really adept at helping you put yourself, you, y.o.u. into your copy and really doing that for people really has helped her create magic for their brands.

So I think you'll love this episode. I remember saying multiple times in this episode and afterwards, "Gosh, I've never heard anybody say that that

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way.” So I think you’re going to love how Laura thinks. It’s really different and refreshing to me. And I know that this episode’s going to help you talk about yourself, your business and what you want in a whole new way. So get out those notepads and those pens because I know you’re going to want to take notes, and I’ll see you on the other side of this show.

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Tobi: Hey, Laura. Welcome to the *Design You* podcast. I’m really, really excited you’re here today.

Laura: Thanks, Tobi. I’m so excited to be here, thanks for having me.

Tobi: You’re so welcome. Well, you are very much an expert in the topics we’re going to cover today, which is all around building an email list and sending emails. And one of my favorite things we’re going to get into is even just having a self-promotion mindset. But before we do all of that goodness, why don’t you tell everybody about you in case they haven’t heard of you and haven’t seen your brilliant work.

Laura: Sure. So I have a company called Talking Shrimp and I’ve always been known for copywriting for many years. I had a business writing promos for TV, for big TV networks like HBO and Fandango and other TV network brands also, and Nick At Nite and Nickelodeon. And then I segwayed into the online entrepreneur world, and have for many years been helping entrepreneurs find the right words to express themselves and put their full personality into their business.

My larger mission beyond copy and including copy is to help you get paid to be you. And I really believe that making your business a 100% expression of yourself and of your personality is the best way and the only way to get paid to be you or to get as close as humanly possible to that state. Because to me that is the Holy Grail, that’s what we all want in our work.

Tobi: I love this so much because it’s so funny, I think when we think about going into something like the online space, whether it’s social media or

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email marketing, our natural tendency, which doesn't make any sense is almost to try to be somebody else, or to be like the perfect version of us. It's rarely about just showing up as who we really are, don't you think?

Laura: Yes.

Tobi: And people – we're like there's a right way to do it, I just don't know what it is and there must be something better than how I would show up if I just showed up as me. And you're saying it's the exact opposite of that.

Laura: Yeah. Well, I think that the big problem, like the big conflict that you just expressed, well, is that people are torn between looking perfect and being as they are told to be, authentic. And they want a combination of being perfect and being authentic, and that doesn't exist. But they see other entrepreneurs, like the big ones that they follow and think that that person is the essence of authenticity and therefore you have to be like that person in order to be authentic and be yourself. And that's the opposite of authenticity, trying to be somebody else.

Tobi: Yeah. And I think this whole – I mean I'd love to even just kind of hang out in this word 'authenticity' for a minute, because I think like other words that we currently see kind of all the time. I think of some buzzwords like – I don't know, self-care and authenticity and there's certain words that we all – mindset, that we hear all the time. And we take for granted that we know what they mean but we really aren't exploring them. We're really not exploring what that means for us.

And I think it's fascinating because what you're saying is in a sense we're misunderstanding that whole concept of authenticity, because we're seeing something or someone outside of us and we're feeling like, well, if I could be them then I would be right. And that's not how authenticity works, we have to be ourselves. So how do we start to understand what that looks like for us, how to be authentic?

Laura: Yeah. I think that it comes from, especially in your copy, from being truthful. So it doesn't mean that you have to – like if we're talking about

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Instagram for instance, it doesn't mean that you have to always post the worst picture of yourself. By no means are my pictures fully authentic because I for sure filter out the ones that are taken from below where I have got a like a turkey puckered chin. And like oh my God, no one must ever see that, even though that's what they – even though that's what they're going to see in person, they're going to see me.

But hopefully I'm not going to stand over them when they're lying on the couch, [crosstalk] that angle. But I am truthful in my copy and I recommend that everyone do that, tell the whole story of what's going on in your life. Use the real details and it's, you know, being authentic isn't just – you might get this notion that being authentic means being sassy. Because somebody who seems so themselves happens to be sassy or speak like love hip hop and have a great rhythm. That's their version of authenticity.

If it is not yours don't worry and don't think that you have to be that. If you're not sassy, don't be sassy, just be you. You don't have to put on a perfect picture of your life. But again, let's go back to Instagram, I think show us the mess, and again, it doesn't have to be the picture. But you can talk about – if you're having like a mess of a day and you cannot get out of bed, or your cat just crawled on the counter and knocked your glass of diet coke on to your keyboard, that's the stuff we want to hear.

And we don't want to hear manufactured vulnerability, like a huge confession, sometimes I feel less than. There are times when I feel raw and ragged and don't want to show these parts of me. Don't talk that bullshit that everybody else uses, that's vague. I want to see that, so authenticity comes from the real truthful details. Concrete details are everything and you don't have to fake anything when you show us, when you paint a picture.

Tobi: That is so good and you're the first person that I've ever heard say that. But I think about it when – I'm a certified life coach actually, on top of many other things that I do. And one of the tools I use for managing my mind, we're very clear that if you're going to dig into how to kind of get

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underneath some problems or solve something. You can't put just like a vague statement in this framework. You have to put an exact scenario of at this moment this is what happened and this is the thought I had.

And that's essentially what you're saying; you're like don't just say sometimes I feel blue. You're like today when x was happening I felt this way. And that, I've never heard another person say this with regard to copy and I think that's so brilliant.

Laura: Yeah. I mean that is the thing, I don't hear other people talk about it a lot either. You'll hear them talk about it in creative writing. People will say, "The wisdom is show, don't tell." For instance instead of saying, "She was furious, her blood boiled," you say, "She picked up a sandwich and threw it at the window, trying to break it and then stormed out of the room and slammed the door."

Tobi: Yeah, that's so genius.

Laura: That tells us the emotion that is showing, instead of telling. Telling is saying, "She was mad." Showing is – so I like to give things the Steven Spielberg test is what I call it, which is if you handed this bit of copy, this bit of writing, these words to Steven Spielberg or to any director. Would they know what kind of scene to direct, how to set up the scene, what is happening in the scene? What do we see? What is the person saying? What is the person doing?

Tobi: Yeah, and it makes so much sense as I'm hearing you say this because of course what we all want when we start to write social captions or an email, which we'll get into email next. We want people to identify with the story and so much so that it's like they were there.

Yet as you're saying this, of course, when it's just something vague they kind of just keep scrolling or they delete because they've read a few sentences and they didn't immediately see themselves in that place or connect with that story. Which of course they wouldn't, if it was more

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surface level, or more vague, or more broad. And that makes a lot of sense.

So let's talk about email specifically because I think that a lot of the people that listen to this podcast and that I work with that are creatives, I think this stuff is really scary to us, which is so funny. We're like we can design an entire house or an entire garden, or put on a wedding for 500 people. Yet we can't write a three paragraph email to send out to our list without feeling intimidated, or scared, or like we don't know what to say. So how do you start that process?

I think there's two things here too, not only do we not know what to say; a lot of creatives haven't even built a list of people to talk to. So it's kind of this combination of who do I talk to and what do I say to them, which feels so foreign and out of our wheelhouse. So how do we start to open our mind to this being possible? So you've started as kind of – which is perfect for a creative, you've started our wheels turning of we can picture ourselves in a scene or a room or something else. But then how do we translate that onto our computers in the way of an email?

Laura: Yeah. Okay, well, the first thing to think about is that – okay, there are a couple of things. I'll start with why they should have a list.

Tobi: Okay, perfect.

Laura: Why email, because I'm sure, especially for people who work in visual forms like design, which is probably I think your background, where you come from. They're going to be told by lots of people, "You'll only need Instagram, don't even bother with email, you might not even need a website. All you need is Instagram."

And for one thing, Instagram, you don't know what's going to happen to it. You don't know what's going to happen to Mark Zuckerberg for one thing. They could yank that out from under you, you're building a platform on land, you know, building a house on land that you don't own. So that can be taken away at any time. What's more likely to be taken away is your

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reach, because they're always figuring out ways to take your reach away from you, to make sure that you have to pay money to be seen by more people.

So you can post something and post something to your followers, let's just say you have a 100 followers on Instagram, small, like a handful of followers, a 100 followers. You post something that you love and it's like the best work you've ever done or the smartest thing you've ever said. And then crickets, it's like wait, what's happening? Maybe something you posted yesterday did really well for some reason. And you're like, where are all those people now? And you keep checking and checking, it's like does everyone hate this post? Maybe I should take it down.

Way more likely they're just not seeing it, think how many people are going by in their feeds, they might be following thousands of people. And so their chances of seeing that one thing that you put there is so small and it's also a distraction. It's like the house of distraction, whenever you're in Instagram, scrolling in Instagram or scrolling in Facebook, or any of those platforms. You're going to get distracted by the next thing that pops up. That thing is not going to stay in front of you, your precious post is not going to stay in front of somebody for very long, that feed is going to move.

And then there is something – or a ding, they get a notification, it's like someone's talking to me or someone's talking about me. I'm going to go check that out.

Tobi: Yeah, or even how many times we scroll by it and we read it and we're like, oh yeah. But we don't even lift our finger to go up and hit a like or a heart or whatever. And we do it all the time. And sometimes I'll scroll by and because I am a business owner myself and I'm thinking of all the people out there trying to do this. I'll think, I'm going to go back up and like that because I try to be conscious of giving people validation, because I know how hard it is. But how many times, we're not even thinking about that, we're just, yeah, that's so cool.

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And like you said we go onto the next thing. So it doesn't even mean that our eyes weren't on it or that we didn't see it, but we just may not have taken the time to like it or to comment on it, which most of the time most people aren't, right?

Laura: Exactly. And also we're not seeing things in the order in which they were posted. It's not like you're next, you just posted. You're next in someone's feed. It's not that way anymore, I think it was when it started, but now it's just like whose stuff is doing really well, that's going to keep showing up in the feed. However, look in your inbox and those things appear in your inbox in the order in which they were sent. So you send a 100 people an email, it is going to go, you know, if things are working right, all 100 inboxes.

And you send it at 9:00am, they are all going to get it at maybe 9:01am, maybe 9:05am, sometimes it takes a little while. But they're all going to get it at the time that you sent it. And if you do things right they are going to open it, that's a thing in itself, there is an art to getting opened. But however, you are going to show up in their inbox and once they open an email of yours, that is the one thing that's in their face, it's not going to move. It's not going to ding or beep, like that's especially if they're looking on their phone, that's taking up the whole screen that email.

So you get opened and you've got somebody's attention. And it's also, think about it this way also, it is an intimate format just by nature. Email comes from mail; it comes from the art of sending a letter to somebody. It's a one-to-one thing. So it's intimate by nature, and you want to make it feel that way, you don't want to write things that sound like they were sent to a 100 people, or a 1,000 people or thousands of people. You want to make the person opening it feel like this is from that person to me, from one person to me.

Tobi: That's so good, there's so much goodness there and so many things I haven't thought of. I love your point of view, so that's the why. So, the how, we're already starting to learn it needs to be intimate; it needs to be

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written like you're talking directly to them. And I think we get that in theory, but when we're trying to say, "Okay, we have to be authentic and then we have to write exactly to this person." How do we start to connect those dots? We have to know who the person is, we have to know a lot about them in theory, I guess.

Laura: Well, when we're building a list, now we're talking about building a list. I mean if you're talking about writing truly to one person, that is a different thing, you do want to do a little digging.

If you're writing to one person saying, you know, because you have them in mind for a project that you want to sell them on. Or you want them to buy your coaching packages or something. And you really want to talk to that one person, absolutely, I recommend writing it as you would an email to a friend and as if that person was sitting right across from you.

And if it's to one person you have the luxury of doing a little digging and figuring out what would they like to hear? Start it off with a compliment, like, "I love the post that you just wrote. That actually made me think of," blah, blah, blah. Or, "Congratulations on your new house, it looks amazing," anything like that. So that's truly a one-to-one thing.

But what I'm talking about here is building a list, and writing to a bunch of people all at once. But you want the email that you send to feel like it is to one person. So I believe in making every email that I send, what I call an EFAB, which stands for Email From A Bestie.

Tobi: I love that.

Laura: Because think about how we go through our inboxes, it's the same way we go through actually a stack of mail, that we grab out of the mailbox. It's like junk mail, junk mail, junk mail, something for me, junk mail, junk mail, catalog, throw that out, rip that up. Something for me, like an actual card. And you want your email to feel that way, so that involves a couple of things. For one, the subject line and the whole email you want to be informal.

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The biggest mistake that I see people making in business is, especially around writing is mistaking formal for professional. They think if I'm not formal, if I'm not buttoned up, if I'm not corporate I won't be taken seriously, I won't look polished. And that simply isn't true anymore, and it's certainly not true in email. You want an email to feel like it's from a friend and your friend would never write a formal subject of an email to you. They would never write a subject line that is in title case, which is the first letter of each word is capitalized. "Here are three tips for you, Tobi," in the title.

If it were to a friend, if it were to you it would probably say – it probably wouldn't have any capital letters and it might say, "tips for you," without any punctuation at all.

Tobi: Right. Or it might say, "Hey. Hey."

Laura: "Hey." "Hey," or, "Are you okay," or, "Found this for you."

Tobi: Yes. So good, I love this.

Laura: I've thought of you, and it will be something personable and you want it to be intriguing and curiosity arousing. And so something like that will be. And then that's what it takes to get opened and to jump out at someone in their inbox is to be informal, and intimate, and curiosity provoking. And to make it feel like it was from a friend.

Tobi: Yeah, I love that. And I think the way you said there's authenticity or vulnerability and then there's the manufactured version. I think the same thing can happen in email. And we see people try to manufacture some curiosity or some – I don't know – what would the word be?

Laura: Click bait.

Tobi: Yeah, like trying to get your attention. And they'll say, "We have a big secret," or whatever. It drives me crazy even on Instagram when people are like, "We have a big secret we're announcing Friday." And then I'm like, "Well, why didn't you just wait till Friday to tell me about it?" Because you just really annoyed me, I'm not on the edge of my seat really wondering

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what it is. I'm already thinking it's really I'm not interested. And so I think you can manufacture that sort of curiosity that doesn't land.

Or like you're saying, you can be conversational like you are writing to a friend. And you're like, "Oh, what is that?" When somebody asks you a question or says this thing, "I found this for you." I think that's so true and you're immediately intrigued.

Laura: Yeah. And if it is a big secret, I mean you can say, "Secret," but I don't like that like, "Shh, I've got a secret, Tobi." I'd rather see something like, "I shouldn't tell you this," or, "I can't tell you yet." I want to see something that feels like it's from a friend, not from a marketer.

And then also the preview text, those few lines that, you know, this is where people also – this is something that people ignore, it's not even where they get tripped up. But leaving it as the default preview text which is that stuff that comes up like, "View this in your browser, copyright, all rights reserved, 2020." That stuff, you don't have to leave that there, you can adjust, depending on the platform you use, you can adjust it.

This is a little bit advanced so we won't dwell on this for too long. But you can put something in there that gives someone a sneak peak of what's in the email and makes them really want to read it and open it, along - paired with the subject line.

But then as for like what to write, there is, especially in the online world and the digital world, there's so much emphasis on this idea of value. Every one of our emails has to deliver value, deliver massive value, send them value bombs. And we get the notion that value equates with actionable takeaways or actionable tips. And that's not the only form of value. There are many forms of value. You're delivering value if you tell a quick story that makes me feel less alone in the world.

You're delivering value if you make me see something differently or if you entertain me, or if you ask me a question. If you tell me something about

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yourself and then ask me a question I feel engaged with, and that is a form of value, anything that makes us feel less alone is of value.

Tobi: Yeah. And I love that because the other alternative, the original thing you said of actionable tips, which of course there's a place for that as well. But if that's all you send, you kind of get exhausted with those emails. Because you're like every time they talk to me I'm supposed to do something, I have enough jobs already.

And I mean I'm a learner and I'm a personal development self-help junkie. But at the same time there are sometimes where like you, I just want to read a story or I want to be entertained. Or I want to feel like somebody connected with me and moved me in another way. That it doesn't require me to then go watch a webinar or something, which again, I love those at times but you don't want everything to be that is what you're saying.

And so I think when people are expecting themselves to perform or deliver at that level, that's what really gets in their way and they can really kind of bore their customer, or shoot themselves in the foot is what you're saying. Because it doesn't all – and it's kind of like you said, with the friend, you're not always going to show up the same way with them every time. Sometimes you're going to be talking about a problem, sometimes you're going to be telling them something cool you learned or saw.

Sometimes you're just going to kind of hangout and have a glass of wine or a dinner and chitchat or whatever. And I guess, if you're thinking of these people as your bestie, there's some equivalent to all of those things that show up in that relationship.

Laura: Yes, right, exactly. I mean when I write emails to my list, I switch it up all the time because, really because that's what I want to write about that day. It's like I just discovered a trick to do something. The other day I figured out how to make a GIF of myself, because there was none with the expression that I wanted, and then I think I'll make one of myself. And then I wrote an email that said, "I made a blank of myself." And it was about how I made a GIF of myself. And I just showed quickly how I did it.

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But I'm definitely not always instructional, in fact I'm rarely instructional, most of the time I will tell a story about how I broke my husband's favorite little bowl that he keeps garlic in, that we got on a trip to Portugal. Just after he said, "I love that bowl so much," I broke it, washing dishes. And just talk about how I had a little meltdown over it, and was this, you know, I convinced myself it was because the pandemic was getting to me and it was just all the pressure.

And then I was like, no, because I'm embarrassed that I broke the bowl. And I think that just led – the call to action was the question, I was asking my reader, "How has your week been? Have you done anything that – have you been having meltdowns and making it all about the pandemic when it wasn't?" Or just ask them to relate back to me, like what [crosstalk]." So sometimes that is the value that I'm giving.

Sometimes I will teach a business lesson, tell a story that teaches a lesson, or sometimes I'm recommending something. People love it when you just recommend one thing, like, "Got nothing really to say today but I am obsessed with this book and I really want to get back to it, so here's the book, here's the link to buy the book, and enjoy, alright, got to go run and read."

Tobi: I love it. And as you're saying all of these things it's clear that I'm sure on the ones that are more actionable, you probably don't get near the feedback because people are like, "Got it, I'm going to go do the thing." And then on the ones where you're like, "Has anybody had a meltdown today?" I'm sure you get tons of engagement, like, "Oh my gosh, yes, totally. Thank goodness you said." Like, "Thanks for being real in saying that you did that. Here's what I did today." And it becomes this cathartic process for them to be able to connect with you about this thing.

That's so good, okay. So when people are starting to do this, I love seeing those different ways. But then we also have to make a living and sell things piece of this puzzle too. So how do you start to find the mix between how often we're selling? How often we're just saying, "Hey, did you have a

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meltdown this week,” or, “Here’s a book I love.” Is there a formula? Is there a rule of thumb? How do you know when to do what?

Laura: Yeah, okay. So I think it really depends what business you’re in, what kind of business you’re in. For instance, if you’re an ecommerce business and people signed up for a discount or for 15% off or free shipping. They’re probably not expecting more content than just what you’re selling. That doesn’t mean don’t deliver them more content than that. I believe in making these personal and talking to them and getting them to let you into their lives and that kind of thing.

But I think that it is fine to sell them something every single day or every single email that you send in that case. Say you’re selling jewelry or you’re selling coaching, I don’t think the main thrust of the email wants to be a sale every single time.

However, you can remind them at the bottom of every email, you can tell a story, engage with them. Do whatever the call to action is. And then at the bottom of the email, if you didn’t say anything about what you do and what you offer, you can always, “PS, if you’re ready, here’s some ways we can work together. Sign up for this free thing.” Yeah, it can be free things. “Do group coaching with me or sign up, or hit reply if you’re interested in working one-on-one with me.” It’s simple, yeah.

Tobi: It’s so good. So one of the things that comes up for me in my business, because we’re much farther, I guess, down this path and we send a lot of emails and things, but is how many are too many emails? Because if we’re like, “Well, I’m in this magazine and I’m also selling this coaching thing, and here’s my weekly podcast. And here’s this like just book that I love.” And it’s all this combination. How do those things kind of play well together? And is there such thing as too much?

Laura: I think that if your emails are great, and that’s the aim is to make them great, that there’s no such thing as too much. There will be too much for some people. Some people will unsubscribe because they don’t want

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too many. If you send one every single day you will get more unsubscribes but you will also make more money.

Tobi: Yeah, so good, yeah.

Laura: I believe the more regular you are, the more prolific you are, the more you're in touch with people the more money you'll make, the more you'll be top of mind. If you send one email a week and say on the regular, you know, let's just say on the regular, a 100 people open each email. You send one a week and a 100 people open it, then a 100 people have gotten your message that week. If you send three emails a week, then maybe it goes down to say 90 people open each one because they get more emails from you.

But then what's 3 x 90, 270 people have seen you or you've had 270 impressions on people that week. And it's also a way of being top of mind is a huge money maker because when you think about it, especially if you do the same thing as somebody else or lots of other people. And you're the one who's been in somebody's inbox day after day, after day. And they're finally thinking, say you're a coach and they are finally thinking, you know what, I need a coach.

Who do I know who's a coach? Tobi, obviously, duh, she's the one in my, you know, I open her emails all the time, she's always talking about how she coaches. Or say it's an interior designer and you're finally like, "Well, we're finally ready to renovate and I need somebody to help me. And I've never spent a dime with this person. I just like their emails because I'm into design. But now this is the person I'm going to go to first and I'm going to check out their services finally."

Tobi: And I think that's so good and such a great point because I watch a lot of people go, whether it's social media or email, either one they're like, "Well, I sent x number of emails or I did an x number of posts and nobody clicked, nobody called, nobody bought anything." And I think what you're saying is so right, especially for something like interior design or a wedding

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or any of these creative ventures. It's not like people are starting a new home project every day. They might think about it for a year or two.

And the same thing for getting married or having a party or doing their landscaping or needing an architect, or anything in the creative sphere, even designing a website. You're not going to be doing that all the time but they may be thinking about it for days, or weeks, or months. And if you're not writing because you haven't seen all of the results yet that you are wanting. You're cutting off all your future results, is what you're saying, because they're watching, they're listening, they're thinking.

And I love that approach because it's so different than – I guess it kind of reminds me of how James Clear talks about it in Atomic Habits. He's like, "There's results based goals and there's process based goals." And this is more of the process, you follow through every day on the process and eventually the results take care of themselves. And I think what I watch a lot of people do especially is try something and immediately try to measure the results. And that's not really how it works in email or social for the most part with sales, right?

Laura: Right. And you won't always see the direct result, even if there is a direct result or most often there will be indirect results.

I mean it might also end up that the person on your list is just on it because they like you and they never spend a dime on you. However, after they've been on your list for a year, one of their friends says, "Do you happen to know any designers? I'm looking for a designer but I'm overwhelmed by Google and it's just I don't trust anyone." And you say, "Yeah, of course, Tobi, I love her, I've never worked with her before but I think this is the first person you should check out."

Tobi: That's so true, that's so true. Okay, I love those, as really answers to kind of the obstacle thoughts we put in our way about doing this. So let's talk about, before we wrap up, let's talk about this concept of self-promotion mindset. Because I do think that's also a huge problem for so many people. And I watch especially creatives that think if I'm good enough, if my work is

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good enough, people will find me, the press will find me, and an ideal client will find me, the millionaire with the unlimited budget wanting a huge house will find me. And that's just not the case.

We have to be willing to self-promote, so how do we really shut down sort of those thoughts that are getting in the way of us being our own best promoter?

Laura: Yeah. I mean I think the biggest thought that gets in the way is I don't want to be annoying. I don't want to be a turnoff. I don't want to be disliked. I don't want to annoy the crap out of my friends. Actually I know that there are people out there who need what I have to offer and they need to know about it and they need me to promote. But the thing is my friend that I used to work with, or my ex friend that I used to work with in corporate follows me and is always annoyed when I promote myself.

And that you've got to get over that because that person is not your buyer, for one thing, and for another thing, so what? I'm a pleaser, I like to be liked. I don't like the idea of people not liking me but I have realized that that is a big so what. And who bugs me a lot and who sometimes I don't like and I might roll my eyes at and talk crap about is Gwyneth Paltrow. Now, because I think she's missing a humility chip and sometimes she's tone deaf and she promotes words, her vagina candle, and so I'm just like, "Oh Jeeze, oh Gwyneth."

Now, is Gwyneth Paltrow sad about that? Has it stopped her, like the fact that Laura Belgray might be annoyed and talking shit about her and telling people like, "She's really so annoying. She's like the most conceited person on Earth and she thinks it's all easy for everyone," which it's not. She doesn't care.

Tobi: She's happy you're talking about her too, she's like, "Well, she might be talking smack but she's at least talking about me."

Laura: Exactly, exactly, I'm talking smack and that's only a good thing. I'm promoting her candle on your podcast.

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Tobi: Right. You just said, yeah, everybody's going to rush over that doesn't already know that and search the vagina candle right at this moment on Google or whatever.

Laura: Yeah, exactly, they're all sold out, let me tell you. It's already a done deal. But the thing is I stand by this, nobody who has ever created anything great, any great work of art, or a TV show, or a book, or a speech, or anything that we put out in the world of any worth lived by the motto, "Don't be annoying."

Tobi: Right, yes.

Laura: If you live to not be annoying, you are not going to produce anything of worth in this world.

Tobi: That is genius. That is totally genius because honestly, I mean it's impossible obviously to not be annoying. No matter what you do you will be annoying to someone. So just even by having that as your goal, you're shutting yourself down. You're hiding your gifts and talents. You're not serving the people who need you. You're being inauthentic by way of trying to be something that you're not or perfect or controlling the message in a way, yeah, that the world will be happy, which we know is not possible. So yeah, it's so crazy.

And we don't even notice that, just it seems like a worthy thing to do or be, "Well, just don't be annoying," or, "Don't be obnoxious," or, "People are busy, don't be in their inbox every day." And I think, yeah, it's that whole idea of us taking responsibility for other people's emotions or other people's lives. And we have to leave them to that, they can decide if they want to opt out. They can decide if they want to delete, any of those things. But it's doing a disservice to both them and us when we're deciding for them ahead of time because we don't want to be annoying, that is so true.

And I agree, it is, the two things you mentioned, don't be annoying, and then what are all of these people, and every time they name that list, like you said, it's never their buyers ever. It's like my friends from high school,

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people at my old job, my husband's ex wife, and it's all these people that are not the people that are going to ever be your customers. But it's the ones that you feel like you will be humiliated if they judge you or reject you or whatever. And the funny thing is, most of the time that group of people is already doing all of those things in some capacity, right?

Laura: Right. They are anyway. And also, you want to think about like anyone that you judge and roll your eyes at, are you, first of all, is that a problem for them for real, does it make any iota of difference? Second, are you doing that because you feel a little bit less than, because you're comparing yourself to them? Because you don't have the nerves to do that, and often especially when it comes to say if we talk about business coaches who show off big money numbers.

And by the way, I would say don't show off your returns. Don't show off your big numbers unless they are true. That's my only caveat when it comes to this because sometimes they do it and you can tell it's bull. But when it comes to those big brags, we often roll our eyes and we're like, "It's so crass," or, "So show off," etc, etc. But the thing is it also – if you're like me, it makes you want to know more. It's like, "Well, actually I'm glad that you showed me that possibility because," yeah.

Tobi: Right. What's possible for you might be possible for me, yeah, definitely when I think of my mentor in life coaching, Brooke Castillo, and she's like, "I made 27 million last year." I'm like, "Well, I want that, let's go."

Laura: I love Brooke Castillo, yes.

Tobi: Yeah, I'm just finishing, in fact yesterday I just turned in my master coach training project. I've been going through master – I did coach training three years ago and then just I'm finishing master coach training, which is fabulous and terrifying all at the same time. But she's such a perfect example of what you're saying. She's on her way to reaching a goal of 100 million dollars in a single year in the next 10 years, which she will for sure hit, I have no doubt.

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But even though she talks about how so many people send her all these emails of, “Don’t talk about money. And I hate when you say, “I love money,” and it’s so crude and distasteful. And didn’t your mom teach you that you aren’t supposed to talk about that?” And she’s like, “I’m just going to keep talking about it.” Because it shows so many people who thought before that life coaches made 40,000 a year, that they could make 27 million. You’re like, “Wow, this is inspiring.” And it opens up my mind of what’s possible.

So it might be uncomfortable and we might even be judging that at first and going, “That’s not possible,” or, “That’s not real.” But then after listening to it for a while you’re kind of like, “I don’t know, maybe it is real. I don’t know, maybe there is something else possible for me.” So I love when people – like you said, if it is true when they have the guts to sort of be provocative, push the envelope, stretch you, potentially repel you, which is – because it’s in that process that it can also really elevate your thinking and your own way of showing up, right?

Laura: Yeah. That’s so true. And you’ve got to think about how totally self-promotional that is, what she’s doing. It is so self-promotional and aren’t you so glad? If she never promoted herself you wouldn’t have found her.

Tobi: I’ve said that I don’t know how many times over the last four years, like a 1,000 I feel like.

There’s so many ways my life and my business would not have been changed for the better if she didn’t want to annoy anybody, because she annoys the heck out of a whole lot of people, including me sometimes. But in the best sort of way, like that it moves me, even when I’m aggravated, like damn it, okay, fine, I’ll step up to the next level of myself. I hear you, I hear you loud and clear. You can still be frustrated but it’s so important that like you’re saying, that she’s willing to self-promote and that’s such a beautiful example of it, I agree. Wow.

Laura: Yeah, like my friend and mentor, Marie Forleo, I get messages about her all the time, especially when I’m promoting B-School as an

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affiliate. And I'm like, "I have to tell you something, please don't take offence but your friend, Marie Forleo is really annoying and self-promotional." And they're like, "Yes, she is and she knows. She knows that she annoys millions of people to the tune of an eight figure business. She annoys them all the way to her bank."

Tobi: Right. And she has no intention of stopping, and her goal is not to annoy. I mean I think she's such a beautiful example, like you said, of being authentic, because she is a hip hop dancer and she does do hilarious things in her videos, and she is super authentic. And last week I was watching her do yoga on Instagram Live in real time with a lady. And I was just like sitting – well, I was doing nothing, I was watching her and her beautiful body doing yoga with this lady, I watched the whole thing, which was fun.

But yeah, she's just showing up as herself and I mean we're going to be annoying to people, at least 50% of the people in the world don't like us just because, and that's okay. And we feel the same way about other people, we don't have to like everybody, we just have to find our people. And if we're not showing up and self-promoting there's no way for people to find us, which is what you're saying.

Laura: Right. And for everybody that you have found and follow, or buy from, or worship, or take advice from, are so glad that you – that, you know, anyone who you are so glad you found, you found them because they promoted themselves.

Tobi: Yes, totally, yeah. And it's a rare, rare, rare case that somebody was like under a rock and got discovered and somebody else promoted them, those are such a tiny piece of the people that we've come in contact with. And the majority of the people are self-promoting and you're right, we're so grateful that they did.

Well, this has been so enlightening. Thank you, I love your perspective, I can relate to so much, but there were just a million things that I had never thought about in the way that you shared them. So of course that is your

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genius and why you're so successful. But I do thank you for bringing that perspective, I think it's going to help so many people that listen to the show.

Laura: And I hope so, I'm so glad, thank you.

Tobi: So much fun, thank you.

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Okay. So, Laura, has a really cool way of thinking about things, she's so smart. You can tell she's so good at her job, and she's worked not only with those big names I talked about, but she's worked with television shows and networks like Bravo network and NBC and HBO and TBS and all these places. So if you've watched commercials, although we skip a lot of them these days, you may even have seen Laura's work there. She's really, really good at this. So if you want to learn more about her, check her out at talkingshrimp.com.

And thank you so much for listening to this episode. And you can always reach out to both Laura and me, Laura Belgray and Tobi Fairley, over on Instagram and know we both spend a good bit of time there and we're happy to hear your thoughts, your ideas and your questions in our DM. So message us there and thanks for listening. I'll see you again next week with another great episode of the *Design You* podcast. Bye for now.

Thank you so much for listening to the *Design You* podcast, and if you are ready to dig deep and do the important work we talk about here on the podcast of transforming your mindset and creating a scalable online business model, there has never been a more important time than right now. So join me and the incredible creative entrepreneurs in my *Design You* coaching program today. You can get all the details at TobiFairley.com.