

Ep #176: How Design You Changed My Life with Marina Case



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With Your Host

Tobi Fairley

[The Design You Podcast](#) with Tobi Fairley

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You are listening to the *Design You* podcast with Tobi Fairley, episode number 176.

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.

Hello, my friends, my interior designer friends, my creatives out there, how are you today? It's middle of August, what in the world, what is happening? Summer is ending, fall, which is my favorite season by the way is almost here. I say that every year. Christmas will be here in a blink. We're literally what, we have five months left to squeeze some amazingness out of this year 2021, which I think today's episode is going to help you do that. And yeah, here we are, another day but today is a fun one.

Not only are you getting this podcast episode if you're listening to it on the day it comes out, you're also potentially learning with me today because I'm doing a masterclass, a webinar today all about our brand new Design You launch, our new design system. I'm teaching you some things today. And whether you buy or not, come listen to the masterclass, I'm going to teach you a bunch of cool stuff that you should be thinking about and noticing about your design business, some lies you should stop telling yourself about your design business.

So, check that out, hopefully I'll see a lot of you today. But before we get there, let's just talk about this episode because it's so cool. So today I have Marina Case. She's a very successful interior designer and just one of our shining stars of Design You. And as you'll hear us talk about on the episode, which is so, so cool. Marina recently pitched me, pitched herself to me for her to be on this podcast which I absolutely loved.

First of all, I'm an Enneagram 8, bold, gutsy, go after my dreams, grab life by the horns kind of girl. And I love it when other people make bold moves. It just knocks my socks off actually. And so, I remember I was sitting right

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here at my desk right where I'm recording this podcast a few months ago and I get this email from Marina, who I love and we have worked with for many years and just enjoy as a friend. And I'm like, oh, okay, what's this? And I open it up and it is a formal pitch to be on The Design You Podcast.

I mean I think I was grinning from ear to ear and probably clapping by myself in a room because I'm like, hell, yes, Marina, you go for it. And what she even told me in the email was that she had been getting coached by one of our coaches in Design You and really talking to them about the fact that she wanted to increase her visibility. And get on more podcasts and get more exposure. And so top of her list was me and so she pitched me. And yeah, we had been friends for a long time and hopefully I'm not scary to be – well, maybe I am, that are my friends.

But it is kind of a scary thing I think when you're in a program or someone's your coach, you're the head coach of a program and you maybe put them on a pedestal a little bit. Or at least are a little intimidated because no one really likes to feel rejection. We don't want to hear a no of like, "No, I'm sorry, we're too busy or we're already booked for the whole year, or that topic's not good enough", or whatever. So yeah, she did it. She got coached in the program and she pitched me with the support of Carrie one of our Design You coaches.

And I said, yes, and of course I said yes, not only because I love Marina and she's so amazing, and confident, and successful, but also because she said she's speaking my language here. She's like, "Can I come on your podcast and tell people how The Design You coaching program has absolutely changed my life? I'm happier than I've ever been. I'm making three times the money I've ever made. I have a team. I have a life. I have a personal life and I truly have joy every single day and I want to come tell people about it."

And I'm like, "Yes, absolutely 100%, book it right now. Here's the link to get on the show." And it was a done deal. And so that's today's episode. And

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it's really fun interviewing Marina. A lot of times we have guests on the show that have been in the program because I always like to share what it's like in there and people's successes and give them the spotlight and let you know about their businesses. But it's even different when it's not me going out and saying, "Hey, I've seen you do amazing things, would you come on my show?"

This one is, "I'm dying to tell these people and the world what they're missing by not being in The Design You program. So, I'm going to be quiet. I'm going to let you hear Marina. I'll catch you back in a little while on the other side of this episode and remind you about some of the things that are happening in Design You and the program. But here's my episode with the fabulous, the confident, the successful, the beautiful, the amazing, and now joyful we can add to her description, Marina Case of The Red Shutters. Here we go.

Tobi: Hey, Marina, welcome to The Design You podcast. This is going to be a really special episode. So, thank you for being here.

Marina: Hi, Tobi. I'm so glad to be here. Thank you for hosting me.

Tobi: Oh, so fun. Okay, so first tell everybody about you, who you are, what you do, where you live, all the amazing things you do. And then we're going to get into why you're here, how you got here and really talk a lot about your experience in The Design You coaching program. But first tell us about you.

Marina: Thank you. My name is Marina Case and I live about an hour north of New York City. And I have an interior design firm that's been in business since 1950 called The Red Shutters. And we offer a series of offerings to our clients, including packages, which thanks to you and being in this program I have developed. And I'm launching a course later this year. And love to be part of your program.

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Tobi: Thank you so much. So, I was telling you when you came on. We have lots of happy customers and a lot of customers that get results. But it's not every day that you get an email from someone like I got from you recently that said, "I'm having such a transformational experience in your program. Can I come on your podcast and tell all your listeners about how amazing your program is?" And of course, I was like, "Are you kidding me? Yes."

So that's so fun because usually even though we can find plenty of happy customers and results it's usually us going to people and saying, "Hey, would you love to be on the show?" And there's a number of reasons for that, which we'll talk about, which is also something that's a credit to the program. But first of all, just thank you, thank you for offering. I can't wait to have this discussion with you. I can't wait for people to hear your experience.

But let's get into it, let's talk about that. What made you say that? What made you send that email? Both what compelled you to, the experience you were having? And then what gave you the confidence? Because those are even kind of two sides to this sort of coin of you asking, yeah.

Marina: Right. So, the coaching that we receive in Design You is amazing. And it was in a coaching session with Carrie that we talked about that. And so, she had said – I said, "I want to really build more, how do I do that?" And she encouraged me to collaborate more. So, I started reaching out to my colleagues and thinking, I can start collaborating. And you were of course number one on my list. I thought, I've really had tremendous success with this program. I've been in it for a few years, which I have loved. And it's not something for me that clicked right away.

I sort of had to roll with it and I would listen, and I would be curious. And I think that as you've grown I have grown. And the program has really become very refined in the last few years. And I just felt like I have accomplished so much, especially in the last year. And the messages that

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you teach, taking massive action, journaling, changing your mindset, all of those things have just clicked for me and I suddenly am on a trajectory. So, I'm very excited about that. The company is growing and we're taking all the steps to get us to the next level.

And it is because of this program that I attribute that growth. And my happiness, I have joy in my work. I pause now and make sure I'm not overdoing things or I'm running, running, running anymore. I really feel like I am enjoying my career, enjoying my personal life. And it's all coming into balance so much because of Design You.

Tobi: That just fills me to the brim. That makes my cup run. I'm so glad because I know exactly what you mean. And it was creating those type of results in my own life that really made me want to create this program, because I saw so many people not feeling that way, overworked, overwhelmed, underpaid, exhausted, burned out. Saying, "It's not even fun anymore." How many times did I say that? So many. I'm sure you said it a million times before you got here and so it's so relatable.

I want to go back to something you said first before we get into some more of the successes you've had. And that is you said it didn't click right away. It took some time. And I think that is so fascinating and also so true for me in a lot of the coaches, and mentors, and programs and things I've done personally. So, what was it do you think that kept you staying? Because what's different in what you're saying right there is it took a minute for it to click.

What's so different about that for most people is I think a lot of people who don't get results in programs, including ours are looking for instant gratification, are looking for the program to do the work for them. Are looking for the program to hold them accountable. And with any program it's about us doing the work ourselves.

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I even just heard something this week, another coach who teaches about your program. And she was like, “If someone says they need accountability, do not bring them into your membership or program because they’re just saying, “Hey, I don’t do what I say I’m going to do. I don’t have my own back. I don’t show up and do the work but I’d like you to try to mother me even though it’s probably not going to work.”” And none of that is what you’re saying. You’re saying, “I stuck with it. I listened. I got curious. I stayed there and at some point it clicked.”

So, tell us about that. How did it feel? What were you thinking? What was that evolution? What kept you from quitting? Because it’s that staying power that’s why you’re getting these results that you’re getting.

Marina: Right. And you have to be resilient. There was a particular coaching session and I think we take for granted the mindset work that you’re doing in this program. And you coached me on a session and I remember I was crying.

Tobi: I remember too, yeah.

Marina: Right. I was like, “Oh my gosh”, because I had this black and white thinking about if I start a course or I start other...

Tobi: Revenue streams.

Marina: Revenue streams, scaling my services, I’m not going to be able to do my interior design anymore and decorating, which I love. I’m not going to be able to work with my customers. I’ll have to worry so much about these other things. Well, and in fact it’s the opposite. Now I can enjoy my customers more. I have the time. So, I think that that moment of coaching really was a gamechanger for me. And I journaled quite a bit. And I think the encouragement to journal in our program is lifechanging. I had no idea how important journaling was. And I would encourage it for anyone.

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Once you start putting that pen to paper, and I also have a journal app called Journey that I love. And if I'm on the road and I can't do the writing in my journal I go to that app and get out whatever is on my mind. And it really is life transforming. So, I think you are surrounded in Design You by others that are in similar situations. And they spark you with ideas. We go into these groups and breakout sessions where you just suddenly hear everyone that is in similar situations. And you're leaning in. You're giving each other the encouragement you need to get to the next level.

Tobi: Yeah. And I think it's interesting that you said that you cried on that call because I think some of the biggest, not that we all have to get on and cry. Not like on, I think it was Jerry Maguire or one of those movies that they have one guy from, is it ESPN or Roy Firestone? He's like, "You make everybody cry. You make all the athletes cry. I don't want to cry. I'm not going to cry." And I feel like a lot of our members come in and they're that way. They're like, "I'm not going to cry. It's embarrassing to cry. If I start crying I'm going to leave, I'll be humiliated."

But of course, that's because they're afraid to be vulnerable, or afraid to be judged, or whatever. So, can you talk about even that a little bit? Because you're willing to go through that breakthrough and I was there with you. And I mean I'm a pretty tough coach. I don't let people off the hook. But I try to also create a safe space and hold space for you. So, what was that experience like when you were hitting that breakthrough moment? Which it is emotional, this stuff is hard as heck to build successful businesses. It's hard to change ourselves, our belief systems, our habits.

It is hard, hard, hard, so can you talk about that a little bit more of how you were feeling and what that experience was like.

Marina: Well, you said, I felt safe to do that. And I think I've seen other members do that also where we suddenly have these breakdowns and breakthroughs. That's not mostly what it is.

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Tobi: No, it's not.

Marina: 90% of the time we're laughing and we're kidding around. But once in a while we all do get vulnerable. And I think in those moments we learn from each other. And I think that's really important. I grew up with a mom that had mental illness and was very depressed. And it was a hard and sad childhood. And I had to grow up into and grow into myself in my 40s and 50s and with a lot of hard work and a lot of, you know, and this program really was part of what got me there. It's a program that doesn't – it's not just about business which it is in part, it's certainly the main part of it.

But you're also looking at your shadow side, the things that you need to work on in your own life that help you get to the next level in business. So, I think that that happened in that moment. I think you probably called me out in some way that was right.

Tobi: I'm like, "Why do you think you have to throw all your clients out with the bathwater? It's not an either or, it's a both and." And I remember that moment so well too and it's so beautiful. And how we can't even – it's so simple and commonsense a lot of times, but that's the role of a coach, whether it's me or one of our other coaches is to just show us what we're saying and what we're thinking. Because when we're thinking it and we're believing our own thoughts, we can't even see those blocks, or those blind spots, or those things that are keeping us stuck, right?

Marina: Right. And that happened I think in the fall of maybe the year before last. And then suddenly just a few months later I wouldn't say, within 90 days I was ready to move. It just shifted me. And then I was able to set my goals. And even though I had been in the program a few years and setting goals, they never really – I wasn't sticking to them. But then with the coaching that I was receiving on a regular basis, I was able. And now I look at my goals every day on my dry erase board, I go, "Okay, where am I with that?"

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And now I am just on a roll. I launched my new website. I launched my new products. I launched my new services. I'm writing my course. And we receive discovery calls every week with new opportunities for business. We say no to business now. So, it's great. It's really been lifechanging.

Tobi: I love that. And I love the confidence that you have now and the way you're talking about that. And I think there's a couple of things we talk about in the program and I'm wondering if these are some of the things that resonate for you. One of them is failing your way to success, being willing to fail and not make it mean something, not judge yourself about it, it's just data. It's just feedback. And when you're saying all those things you're saying to me. I'm like, she's got it. She's got the fact that it's just feedback.

And if it takes longer than she thought or nobody buys on the first time or whatever, it doesn't mean anything about her. It doesn't mean her course is horrible. It's just part of the process. And I can really see that in you. I can even see it, I'm looking at you, they can't see you, they can only hear you. But I'm looking at you and just your confidence about it. And you're just so calm, happy but calm. And you're like, "Yeah, I've got this and it's awesome. And who knows if it's going to work or not, but if not, it's going to work because we're going to fix it and take the feedback."

I can just see it in you. So, is that one of the tenants, is that one of the concepts that really resonates or is it something else that we talk about in Design You, do you think that's really allowed you to get to that place of not overthinking and being willing to try stuff?

Marina: Yeah, I think that being – realizing it was okay to fail, that was a big thing that I learned, it's okay. And I even have to, when I talk to my team I say, "Look, if it doesn't work out, it's okay, we tested it, we tried it. We're going to have to just kind of work our way through this." And so yeah, I think being okay with failing was huge. Also letting go of things that no longer served me. And making sure that things went into my calendar

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that did. Those are things that you help teach us, time blocking, time management.

And the other thing is really thinking about what gave me joy and then figuring out what was I going to be happy about doing in my work. Where exactly did I want to focus my and share my talents in serving others. And really learning that I wanted to serve others and not just the privileged population but also those that maybe couldn't afford me, I created packages for everyone. So, I felt really good about that.

Tobi: That's so fun. Yeah, and so can you share with us a little bit of some of those tweaks, say to your calendar or your services where you're like there wasn't joy in my calendar. I was doing all the stuff that feels like drudgery or all of that, and it's hard. What's the before sort of your calendar and the way you think about your services and then where are you now in those shifts that are more joyful, more fun?

Marina: So, the before calendar might have just had the doctor appointment and the client's name. And now the calendar, every morning I go through and lay out the day, what I want to accomplish, what are my goals for the day, what do I want to get done. I actually list all the things, even if they're on my to do list, I move them over from the to do list and say, this makes sense for today. And then I block out long term projects over the next week or over the next month to make sure those get done. And help my team do that as well.

So that has been super helpful to be able to really think about your calendar in a different way. I think that we don't do that enough.

Tobi: Yeah. I think what we do is if we're calendaring at all, it's just full of all the shoulds that we think would make us successful. And that's where we just engineer all the joy right out of our calendar. Because we're like, I've been a bad girl, I haven't done anything I'm supposed to but now I'm going to get serious again so I'm back on the wagon. And then we write 10

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hour days of misery. And then we wonder why by day four we want to quit and it's not fun anymore.

And I think the difference in what you're saying is you're looking at the day in a balanced way. What do I want to get done? What would feel good to get done? And even we can say what kind of energy do I have today? Do I want back to back meetings? Do I want some time for something else? So, is that more how you're approaching it, how do I want to feel?

Marina: Right. If I get overwhelmed or I don't feel good I actually sit down or lie down and take a break because I know that's what you should do now. You should recover and revive yourself. And if I'm feeling spent I go, "That's it." It's not worth it. It's okay to sit down and recover and give some time to myself. And then I always feel better. We just don't give that to ourselves enough. And so, I definitely do that.

And I think the other thing that happened over the course of being in Design You is developing really great habits. And those take time to change. It takes time to change your brain. And I love all of the book club things we do together. And I think we read, if I remember, Atomic Habits. And I remember that really clicking and resonating for me. And saying, "Oh." And it teaches you in that book how to really change your habits.

And then when you're talking about it with everyone in Design You, it just all of a sudden gels. And then over time you do develop better habits that are serving you and you're able to live a better life and serve your customers better. And work with your employees better, all of that.

Tobi: I love that so much. Book club is one of my favorite parts also because I love to read so much. But I think the other reason I like it is just like you said, sometimes we have people come that didn't even read the book. But they're like, "I want to get in this room of these other creatives, a lot of women, a lot of people doing the same work I'm doing, the same

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challenges. And I want to hear their takeaways. And I want to hear how they apply it to their business.” And so that’s really fun.

One of the things – so I was sharing with you before we started today. I mean you knew that some of this was coming but I was sharing with you a little more detail about some of the changes that are coming in this next version, iteration of Deign You, which happens basically the day this podcast goes live. Because we just try to keep making it better, we keep streamlining. I have a tendency to give even far more than you could ever consume. So, I’m cleaning it up a little bit but don’t worry, you’ll still be able to find it on the podcast or somewhere.

We’re not taking all the good stuff out but one of the things I’m doing is I’m now thinking about it, instead of courses and groups which is kind of how we’ve had it, courses and book club which was under groups. We’re now calling it Design School which is the courses and the learning and Design Lab which is where the coaching and the book club and where we’re – it’s like a laboratory, which is so fun. And that’s what I was thinking about when you were talking even about book club because that’s what it is.

We’re testing out ideas and different people are testing out ideas. And I’m testing out ideas. And sometimes I’m testing out ideas for you guys because you all bring a problem to me and I’m like, “Let me work on that for a while. And let me figure that one out. Everybody seems to be struggling with that.” So can you share a little bit in that kind of context, what it’s like to be in the program and how it’s impacted you because you do have the learning and the structure.

There’s all my signature courses, Designer MBA, Digital Marketing for Creatives, the brand new course we’re launching which is really just a template which is my whole design template, every single part of my design process, all that which is exciting. But then there is the coaching community, there’s the lab part of this. So how did those different things serve you? Because you’ve kind of spoken to some of both. And a lot of the

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questions people have is, “And how much time do I have to spend in there? How much time do I have to spend on that stuff to start to get results?”

Marina: Right. I mean I would many times, you know, the great thing about Design You is if you don't get to a particular book club or session you have the option to go back and listen to it on a replay. And so that can happen anytime. But when you're in those groups, there's just something that happens where you're just learning so much in that moment.

And you don't feel like you're – I think a big problem in the interior design business and probably others is that we feel so isolated and I felt like that very early on in my career like oh my gosh, how do I do this?

And how do I do that? And how do I get? And so, when you're with these groups you literally are handheld if you want to be, if you sign, you know, through a particular process like setting up writing a freebie for example. You're offering something on your website. You talk through that, you coach through that with the content writers, you have that option. So, I think all of that has made a big difference to just get and get to results.

Tobi: And part of what kind of is the lab side of this too, you just alluded to, about probably what, a year ago, I started bringing in other coaches into the program which was a really fun thing for me. And not that I had intentionally kept them out before. I just kind of hadn't had the aha moment around that yet. And then I'm like, “Why am I not bringing in other digital marketing experts or an OBM?” When I see people get bogged down in lodging a course or they don't know how to write their freebie or their email sequence or whatever.

I'm not an expert on everything, although I know a lot about a lot of that stuff. And I started bringing in other life coaches and that's been amazing. So how has that elevated the experience for you too? Because you just said, if you don't know how to do something there's always a call or

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something happening where you can totally get coached through how to do that, right?

Marina: Right. Life coaching has been a gamechanger. Every other week being able to talk to someone who really just shifts your mind and then you keep going. And you make notes and you keep going. And so, it just gets so exciting. I can't even tell you, and the last year has been my most joyful year. I've been just loving it.

And then there are the – in the mastermind groups where there's, you know, we do a Zoom call and maybe there is a dozen of us all talking about a particular topic by say a coach. That has been enlightening too to just learn from each other and watch someone maybe breakdown and struggle with something. And you're like, "Oh my gosh, I've been there, I get that." Or you can offer support and say, "I can help you, here's what I did." And so just all of that. And then there's the technical aspects, it's everything, it's mindset, it's the inner work that you do.

And then it's the technical aspects of getting your products or getting your business to another level. It's just all addressed in The Design You platform which is really great.

Tobi: I love that you're saying that. And the interesting thing too that I want to make people understand too is that it's not just all Tobi all the time. In fact, a lot of what you just described I'm not on those calls. I'm not on a call when Carrie, or Maisie, or Galia or a mastermind kind of group thing. I am in book club, at least at the moment because it's one of my – even if somebody else ever leads it on the team, I'll probably be there as a producer because I love to read so much.

I'm on two or three coaching calls a month, every month at least. And I'm in there a lot but it's not just me. And that's what we've really done over the last couple of years too, I think as we've helped people understand, it's not that just Tobi has some it factor. It's not Tobi you're relying on in this

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program, it's the processes, it's the structure, it's the systems like you're saying. It's the how to, it's the success path, it's the use this technology, it's this template, write it this way.

And that's what I like people to see too because I think a lot of times they may be like, "Well, I've heard Tobi before or I did her class one time, or I've done that thing." And it's so much more than that. It's the process itself I think that has or the program itself, it sort of is a living thing that has so much value. And yeah, I'm a piece of it and I may have come up with a lot of it. But it's far more than me. So, what would you say about that? Because a lot of times we might go a month or more before I even see you if you're not on one of my calls.

Yet you're like, "This is the best program ever. This is changing my life." So can you help people also understand what to expect there? I think a lot of people also make the mistake of thinking, well, I don't want other people, I just want Tobi. And I'm not always the expert on every area.

Marina: Well, and I love that you have integrated other coaches and talent into the program. I think that that has rounded it out and it's not that I don't miss you.

Tobi: But I don't need you.

Marina: I don't need you anymore, so it's okay. I hope you're okay with that.

Tobi: That's the best test ever. I mean I love you and I love that I created something. And I love that it also gives me the freedom. And that's how I want your business to feel. And that's what we're saying. That same concept you can translate into your business so your clients don't feel like they always need you anymore either because you create your own systems and courses and team.

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Marina: Right, [crosstalk] and things kind of flow and start to work on your own and that's the goal. And then I think we all come to Design You, you're not going to address everything at once. You'll choose what you address and then you'll fall into place in the program. But you'll be supported. You'll have many opportunities to meet your goals, so it's just, it's a wonderful program. I feel blessed to even be in it and know about it.

Tobi: Thank you. Well, you also said early on, you mentioned I think on this call, at least you mentioned it before to me and then I think you did say it since we've been recording that you were in for several years. And that you might even want to talk about that a little bit. And I think what you just said was sort of alluding to that. Because we do give you a structure.

We give you a success pack that if you wanted to it is possible for you to make it through all the content in a year. But that doesn't necessarily allow you the space to let things sit, and to let things resonate, and to let things sink in. And like you said earlier, let things click. And so, I love that you haven't had – and maybe you did initially, you can speak about it. Did you have money scarcity? Did you have time scarcity? Did you feel like you were behind?

And when was the moment when you're like, "I mean I don't have to be in a hurry, this program's here as long as I want it. I can keep signing up for it if I'm getting something out of it." I think that's probably what helped you so much really get to where you are because you've got to have some space to take on each course, or section, or habit, or whatever it is you're going to do at any given time, right?

Marina: Right. We all have things going on in our lives. And yes, in the beginning I was like oh my gosh, that's a lot of money. Wow. But I remember reading *You Are a Badass at Making Money*, Jen Sincero's book. And she's like, "Get a coach." And okay, I've got to just go for this. And I remember saying to myself in the first year, oh my gosh, that just paid

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for itself in triplicate, maybe more. So, it was so worth it. And every year it just, it gets better and better.

Tobi: So how do you think about it when there's so many things in there? Because that's kind of how the world is in general, whether you ever join Design You or not, which I hope they do. But you could stay out there on your own and try to navigate all the books, and the things, and the YouTube videos, and the stuff you see on Instagram. You could do it all by yourself. It's overwhelming.

But even in the program the number one thing we have to fight, and I think it's true for all good programs is getting our members overwhelmed. Because our thoughts get in the way and of course one of our tricks is that we also coach you on your thoughts. So, we're like, "What are you thinking that's making you overwhelmed?" But it's still a thing, it still can happen. So how did you either mitigate or manage when you would start feeling overwhelmed or behind?

And I'm sure it still comes up occasionally, it comes up for me, I feel kind of behind right now, I just got back from vacation. But what tools and concepts have you used from the program to really help with that?

Marina: I would say sitting down each day to write out my plan and my goals. And like you said, I just got back from a trip from a client. I'm in New York and I was in Florida. So, you come back and you can get overwhelmed. But I stop and say, you know, and I try to really plan out now my weeks and that time blocking, and the calendar work that you learn in Design You is really important. It's something that you sort of, in the beginning when you started talking about it, I'm like, "What's the big deal about the calendar? Does that really matter?"

But now that I do it I couldn't live without it, it's like, wow, it's a gamechanger. And you accomplish so much more and you're accomplishing what you should according to the goals that you set for

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yourself. So, I am so much less overwhelmed. I am so, you know, I said to myself yesterday, “Wow, I’m the happiest I’ve been in years. I actually, I’m doing what I want to do. I’m not taking on too much.” And it’s all working. So, I think that it’s been really planning things out, setting goals that are resonating with what you really want to be doing in your life.

And you learn to do all that and there’s plenty of opportunities to do it. And yes, there can be a lot, I was probably overwhelmed initially with the content. But that’s why I like to stay with it. I realize I come back to it and then I get really good at certain things, and better, and better, and better. So, I’m happy to have been a member of Design You since the beginning, it’s been great. And [inaudible] amplify my business.

Tobi: Well, I love a couple of the things that you keep touching on and people are probably like you, if they haven’t been in there. What’s the big deal about time blocking or journaling, and the mindset work? And I think something that’s interesting, just a little tip for people, a takeaway from this episode, whether they join us or not this time. Is that part of the success of all of those things, the mindset work, using the thought model that we use to look at your thoughts, journaling and time blocking is that we get it out of our head and we put it on paper. We look at it.

And I just want to point that out to people listening and I also would love for you to talk about that a little bit if there’s any piece of that. Because I could even just know, when you’re describing your schedule now, the reason why you’re not overbooked anymore, the reason why you have space in your schedule is because you put it all on paper and you could see it. And when we don’t do that we just always underestimate how long things take. We always underestimate how many things we can accomplish.

We accidentally say yes all the time because we’re not really looking at it. We’re not seeing it on paper and going, “Oh my gosh, I’m trying to do 80 hours of work in 40 hours or 30 hours.” So, in any of those, journaling you said was huge for you. They’ve all been huge for you. Were you always

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good at putting stuff down where you could see it? Were you always good at writing or did you have to shift into believing that it had to get out of your head, whether it was your calendar or your thoughts, and on paper for you to really work on them?

Marina: I definitely had to shift into writing everything down. I did not do that. I kept it all in my head and I think that's why I was overwhelmed. I actually invested, and I keep a lot of various ways of being organized. I use Microsoft to just make sure I get a task quickly that I know I need to get done. I use my next 90 days as a planner daily on my desk. I journal every morning. And then any specific dates I go into my Google Calendar. So, it's a combination of things.

And all those means of managing, getting what I want accomplished, done, have all been developed as part of Design You because I would say, "Okay, yes, you need to plan that out. And I know I'll be away next week so what do I need to prepare for the following week?" Things like that, your thinking changes.

And I think a lot of our colleagues just got completely overwhelmed. And maybe take on projects that sound great, like whole house projects, they always sound great. But you've got to have the systems in place to manage that and handle it. And we're still working on that. We're not always perfect at it. But you really have to have that organized.

Tobi: Well, wait until September 15th, we open cart on August 15th and then the doors to the new design system open on September 15th when all our new people are in, after they've made it through orientation and everybody will get to see. So whatever part of your design system is not buttoned up, it will be soon. So that's exciting. But I'd love to switch gears just a little bit and talk about your scalable products. And you didn't even start just with the course that you're about to launch.

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The first thing you did, which is my favorite path for people to take, it's not everybody's path is you just started with something that was more limited than your full service. That was akin to a strategy day or a package because I was starting to talk to you all about how we're so bad as designers and decorators of promising we can do it all. And the client's like, "Well, what can you help me with?" And we're like, "All of it, every room, every detail, every everything." And I'm like, it's just even so overwhelming for the customer to know should they buy, should they not buy, what do they get?

And I remember talking and teaching a lot on have a beginning and an end to something. Have a certain list of deliverables they're going to get. And you were one of the people in the program that really latched onto that idea and really you kind of did that? You were an early adopter in those packages and those have really, really paid off for you. So, can you speak about those? You're welcome to also talk about the course.

And just how this concept of something, even the packages which aren't quite scalable yet, if they're just done by you, they could be if you have them done by other people or if you make them digital. But even that, even just constraining, even just breaking things into smaller bites, making things more cut and dried, where the client didn't get fatigued and you don't get fatigued. All of that's been a major gamechanger for you and for you financially. And I'd love for you to talk about that.

Marina: Right. So, the first thing I did was create a strategy session. So, there is three boxes of services a client can buy now on my website. One is a strategy session, one is a style emersion session, and then a full service design package. So, the first is a one hour, a power hour some people like to call it. And that session which I sell over, and over, and over, can be on Zoom or in person. And that session we go through and we create a strategy because the client usually is in overwhelm in the beginning, that's why they're calling you.

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So, it's a time to get together and I usually do them in the home. But I do also offer them on Zoom. It's a time to really, let's talk about what we want to accomplish. After 20 years of doing this I can walk through a house and very quickly discern what your priority should be, what needs to be done, what's a good game plan. And that is the strategy session. So that has been very successful. And I would say nine out of ten times they become a client when you do those.

Tobi: And just to be clear, you're not charging one hour, hourly rate for this hour session, you are charging...

Marina: A premium.

Tobi: Yeah, because you bring all of your 20 years of expertise, and all of your competitive advantage, and your skills, and everything to the table. Are you willing to share what you charge, is it on your website?

Marina: I charge 750, yes.

Tobi: Okay, \$750 for this hour.

Marina: Hour, hour, right.

Tobi: Yeah, hour and a little maybe. Are you 60 minutes on the nose?

Marina: No, it goes over sometimes.

Tobi: Over an hour?

Marina: Right, I may go to an hour and a half tops, but I'm very clear that I have to be out at a certain time because it can't go on and on. And I don't have the capacity to go...

Tobi: And not only do your clients that buy it, not freak out and think it's not worth it. They're like, "It's absolutely worth that money", because you help them get a gameplan. And you reduce their overwhelm. But then like you

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said, more often than not then they upgrade into one of your other packages because they want more help, right?

Marina: Right, exactly. So, the second package we offer is a style immersion session, which is really a half day package. And that breaks down into the first hour being a strategy discussion session. What are the things we want to accomplish? What are your goals for a particular area or space in your home? And then the second two hours of the style immersion session are either at home or in a showroom. And so, I can walk through, say they're doing their kitchen, I can walk through and do tile selections, cabinet selections, that sort of thing.

And then the final hour of that half day session or style immersion session is the follow-up and then pulling it all together and buttoning it up. And so, I just launched that this year and have been selling them, so that's exciting. And it's a great package for somebody that can't afford maybe to hire me for full service or is scared about getting too deep in, that sort of thing. So that's been great.

Tobi: And it's a few thousand dollars?

Marina: That's 2,000, 1995.

Tobi: Okay. And so, they get a lot for their money but you also get a lot for – a lot of bang for the buck of putting that time in with people. And you enjoy them. One of the things, when you were building these I remember we were talking about it and I was like, "Don't just make it transactional." Because there were some things, you're like, "I don't know if I want to do this part or that might be hard and not fun." And I'm like, "This is your package, put in the stuff that fills you up."

And I think to your point earlier, you're like, "All the work I'm doing for the most part brings me more joy than ever." So, when you designed that package you really leaned on your strengths and the things that you like to do, right?

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Marina: Exactly. So, right, because I can very quickly see a room, even if it's on Zoom and know what to do with it. It just comes very quickly to me and I can ravel it off and talk about a gameplan. And then listen to what the customer wants to accomplish because that's important. And then take – so my perspective, their perspective, fuse them and come up with real solutions for the customer. And that brings great joy, you're like, "Wow, they love it, great."

Tobi: It's so fun and it kind of does go back to the instant gratification a little bit there because you get to do the whole thing and then you're done with it and they're happy and you move on. And if they want another one, great. But it's not this exhaustive thing that we have with full service projects where they're never ending and where everybody's tired of the project by the time the project's done. At least it turns out great most of the time. And so that brings us all back to joy.

But there are some touch and go moments in those long term projects, that this solution doesn't put you through, which I think is great, yeah.

Marina: And I like the variety, I don't like to be so deep in for so long. And I like moving around and seeing different things. I think I have a bit of anxiety so it's fun for me to be in different places.

Tobi: Yeah, right. I was going to ask you real quick about that particular, or even both of the ones you've described so far. So, I hear a lot of people when they're thinking about these types of things, these types of services, they worry the client won't think it's enough. They worry the client won't feel like it's a good experience if it's on Zoom. They can't imagine they could charge that much money for something. And I watch people try to just take a full service thing and cram it into this small package.

And that's not what you're talking about it, is very curated and a lot of constraint used in what you promise. You're not promising that we're going to have a full whole house design in a half of a day.

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Marina: Right. There are no drawings, there are no specifications. This is a plan to move forward and really feel confident about your next steps. And I think that, people take for granted what goes into designing a room. It's comprehensive and you more than anyone would know that. It's a process. And that process gets kickstarted with a professional with our services. And I think that's exciting and they love it.

Tobi: It's almost like creating an outline for the project with some detail added in which is cool because then they can see what to do next, or where to go next, or how the process works.

Marina: Right. And some people, I find a lot of even my existing clients love to do things themselves. And a lot of homeowners love to do things themselves. Packages like these allow that. They allow freedom to say, "Oh, I can do a lot of it. That will save me money. I enjoy it. And I can hire her to consult with." So, it's a win/win for everybody.

Tobi: And I remember one day we were running the math, you and I of like, well, if you did x number of these. And it was kind of mindboggling how quickly that really adds up. Where we have designers that are struggling to pay themselves what they would want, which might be at least a figure six salary. But it's a lot easier than you think if you get over the mindsets of all those fears and can it break it down, the math on packages like these. And how many you can do in a day or a week.

I remember us even one day, do you remember, we were like, "You could even work part-time and make," I think we did 150,000 or \$200,000 math.

Marina: If you sold a certain amount, right.

Tobi: Yeah. If you sell a certain amount of these and didn't even do the other.

Marina: I was like, "What?"

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Tobi: If you wanted to, you could work part-time and make over a six figure salary which was a really fun realization. So, did you have those fears like the client will be unhappy, this won't be enough, they'll think it's too expensive? Did you have those and then did we coach you through that in Design You? Or did you just naturally already feel confident about the value of what you were putting together?

Marina: I mean I'm pretty confident because I can walk into a room and feel so – and almost immediately in my mind know what to do. I feel very graced with that talent. But then Design You helped me formulate a package and structure. And then gave me the confidence to present it in a way that was very friendly. And now I've sold so many more of them than I would have had I not been in the program I think. I think that it's, you know, it really helped me multiply the benefits of it. So it was, I think, a collaboration.

Tobi: Awesome. And then you were going to say you have your one other service which is your full service. And tell us about that and did anything about that change because of your work in Design You?

Marina: Well, yes, I would say. So full service can mean a whole house. But I also if I'm doing one room, two rooms or three rooms, call that full service as well because it's a higher level fee. And what I do is I'll listen to the customer, take exactly what they want to accomplish and then design a package. It could be called a decorating package. It could be called a room refresh package. It could be called a new home starter package, it all depends.

And that gives them – they love it, the customers love it because they're like, "That's exactly what I need. I'm moving into this new home and I really can only focus on these two or three rooms, so yes, that's what I need." And we sell a lot of those.

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Tobi: That's so fun. So, you don't have 20 different packages listed by name on your website, you have...

Marina: I used to.

Tobi: Yeah. You have full service design. But what you're saying is you customize it to the client so they feel heard and they get super excited. And they're like, "Oh my gosh, this is exactly what I needed and maybe didn't even know it's what I needed." Because you're being creative and clever about what you call it, and how you name it, and how you present it back to them. It's so fun. I knew you did some clever stuff like this because you're always saying I have all these packages. So, it's so fun to hear that, I love it.

And I can see how especially in the affluent market the customer would love, but everybody would love to be like, "Oh my gosh. All the little things I wanted, she's got all listed, we're checking every one of those boxes and it has this clever name." And it makes it make sense for them instead of this long open ended fatiguing thing that we so often accidentally do.

Marina: Right. And we'll only take on one to two full service a year, if that. I mean one is definitely plenty where we're doing, working on a whole house, supporting a customer. It's a lot of work. You're worried about their kitchens, or their bathrooms, or their bedrooms, all their living spaces. You know, you've done many. It's a lot of work.

So, I think I've realized that I enjoy the shortened, you know, the packages that are more concise. They're just more interesting to me. They're more, you know, it allows me more variety of work, you're not so deep in. And it's just, it's fun to help everybody and I think it works for everybody.

Tobi: Well, and that's the very reason why you have all this balance and you have more of a social life now and a personal life, and a dating life. And all the things that you have in your life that are bringing you so much joy because you're no longer believing I have to take on seven new home

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construction projects at one time and believe that's what all designers do or that's what it takes to make money. Or that that's what it takes to be successful because you're making, how much more money have you made since you went to this type of an approach to your business than what you were making before?

Marina: Three times.

Tobi: Yeah, three times, awesome.

Marina: Yeah, three times to me. Maybe the gross is the same but I am making more, so that's...

Tobi: Yeah, that's so good, yeah. And that's what people don't get. When we talk about that in Design You too, "I don't really care what your gross is, tell me what you're making. Tell me, are you paying yourself? How much do you want to be paying yourself? How do we close that gap? How do we pay for a team so that you can have more time?" And what you're doing is funding not only you to make a lot more money personally but it's funding your team as well, which not only helps other people but it also frees you up for this better life, so cool.

So, anything that you want to tell us before we wrap up about your course or anything else about Design You? This has been so fun. Thank you for letting me just pick your brain about all of this. I love it, it's so good. But what about the course or anything else you'd like to chat about?

Marina: Yes. I'd love to mention the course. So, my goal is to help women who want to help others decorate, or those that want to decorate their own home. And I'm going to teach the things they don't teach in school. There's plenty of interior design courses and decorating courses out there. But I want to teach them what the process is that I use to actually accomplish pulling a room together. So that's going to be my goal and focus. And I've been writing it and it's halfway there, so I'm excited.

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Tobi: That's so fun. So, it'll launch this year or early next year?

Marina: I would say late this year, early next year at the latest, yeah.

Tobi: Okay, awesome, so fun. And then have you decided yet how accessible it is? Is it in the hundreds of dollars? Is it more expensive? What's the investment for – and you may not even know that yet.

Marina: It's going to be 1995, I think, yeah.

Tobi: Okay, awesome, so a couple of thousand dollars.

Marina: Yeah, and it'll break down into modules. And I think it's really a great course for somebody that's already even been to school for design. But you come out of school and you don't really know. How do I do this? What's the process?

Tobi: It's so exciting, I love it. Well, thank you so much again. It's so fun to talk to you. I love to just see the physical change in you. And I remember a few years ago people were saying the same to me. They were like, "I have never seen you this happy." It was when I started Design You and I started something scalable online. And I wasn't doing just my live events and all those projects all at once anymore. I was doing fewer projects and the scalable product.

And I remember people just stopping me and saying, "My gosh, I don't know that I've ever seen you smile like that or you just look lighter, or you just look more joyful." And I would say that's how you look to me. Less serious and less...

Marina: Lighter.

Tobi: Yeah, just lighter.

Marina: I feel so much lighter and so much happier. I know, I remember thinking, Tobi's not going to Highpoint, what?

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Tobi: What, that's an option? I am going this time. I am going this time and in the spring. But yes, just...

Marina: Well, I think, and I love that you at a certain point, you just stopped and said, "My daughter's here", and you focused on your family. And I think that's a beautiful thing. I think that that's another thing I've learned in Design You, is how to balance my personal life and my business. And that's what keeps us happy.

Tobi: Yeah, absolutely. Well, again, thank you. If people want to find you, how do they find you? How do they find your website? Tell them where you are on the web.

Marina: Thank you. We're theredshutters.com and then we're on Instagram, we are at The Red Shutters. And same on Facebook, The Red Shutters and Marina Case on Facebook.

Tobi: Awesome, amazing. Well, again, so grateful for you. I'm so glad that you got coached in the program and had the courage. I mean and that is pretty – not a lot of our members, now, I hope I get some more now because they're like, "Now, I'm going to do that." But I love that you did that work and you had the courage. And you pitched yourself to me. And it was awesome. And of course, we've been friends for years and we've worked together for a long time.

But it was a cold pitch into my inbox. And I loved every bit of it. And it was so easy to say yes to you. And you told me exactly what you wanted to talk about and what your ideas were. And it was amazing.

Marina: Well, the journaling is helping to get my thoughts flowing.

Tobi: Bravo. Journaling helped you decide the topics and then talk yourself back off the ledge every time you get nervous, right?

Marina: Exactly.

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Tobi: Yeah. Well, it worked, it was amazing.

Marina: Thank you, Tobi, you've been amazing and I feel so blessed to know you and be part of your program, thank you. And anyone that joins will absolutely love it. There's nothing but everything to gain by joining it.

Tobi: Amazing, thank you.

Alright, are you ready? Are you ready to join us? Doors are open. Doors are open today, get in this program, create results like Marina. Get access to all our goodness. Like I've said on some of the recent podcasts, if you want to create something scalable like some of the ladies you heard a few episodes ago, I think it was episode 173, talk about their courses.

Or if you want the access to our all new, brand new design system that's launching in September, so you've got to get in right now in this round, in the next few days if you want to get access to that when the doors open with our full design system. The templates, the how to's, the worksheets, the timelines, the how we deal with contractors, clients, our Asana templates, our SOPs, all the things. You can get to see our contracts, all the stuff, you've got to get in now.

And I've never offered this. People have been asking me, "Can I see your contract? Can I see your system? How do you run this? How do you write specs? How do you do binders or boxes, or organize your clients projects? What software do you use? What systems do you use? How do you not let things fall through the cracks?" All the stuff, the whole toolkit you've been asking me for, I would say now for yeah, probably 12 years, maybe 15. And I finally did it. We put it together, we made it. Well, we always had it together. But we made it customer friendly, we made it a template.

We made it easy to download and digest, and it is launching in just a few weeks inside Design You, besides all the other incredible stuff. You get all

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the stuff Marina talked about, how to do my time blocking system, called 24 To Freedom. How to do the mindset work with the thought model and how we teach you that. Our digital marketing course, this new design system course, our Designer MBA courses, how to run your design business. All the stuff, it's all there.

And we've got coaching, and courses, and community, everything, just like Marina said and it's all there waiting for you. So, if the time's right for you, head over to tobifairley.com/designyou and check it out because we're waiting for you. And I hope to see you inside really soon.

Alright, that's what I've got for you today. I'll be back next week. I think doors will be closed to Design You by then, or maybe closing that day. I don't have all my dates on top of my head right now. But get in there fast before they close. And yeah, and I'll be back here with something else incredible, I promise, for you, that will serve you if you're an interior designer or a creative wanting to create more health, wealth and joy in your life. Okay, bye for now friends.

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.