

## Ep #215: How to Start Dreaming Again



### Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

**Tobi Fairley**

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## Ep #215: How to Start Dreaming Again

You are listening to the *Design You* podcast with Tobi Fairley, episode number 215.

Welcome to the *Design You* podcast. A show where interior designers and creatives learn to say no to busy and say yes to more health, wealth and joy, here's your host, Tobi Fairley.

Hey, friends, I hope you are ready to get pumped up, to get hyped, to think big, to dream. That's what we're doing today. It's time to start dreaming again. And I don't know about you but I noticed about myself at the beginning of this year that I was ready to feel alive again. I was ready to think about the future and what's possible again. And it didn't hurt that I turned 50. And there's always something about milestone moments in our lives that have us asking, what next.

But I think the bigger issue is just the fact that we are coming out of two years of unprecedented uncertainty in our lifetimes. The pandemic, the political and social unrest, wars. I mean all the stuff happening all at the same time and all happening during the age of social media which we've never seen or felt before, so it felt like so much. And though it sometimes is hard to hold the contradictory emotions of both sadness of the last two years and the joy of a lot of the silver linings that most of us have also experienced, it can be so confusing.

It can be confusing to our nervous system, to our brains, to our existence. And I think the most evident silver lining really is the fact that serious issues like death and destruction, and even when our freedoms are on the line, it has a way of bringing us back to the present moment. And I think the beauty from the ashes of these last two years is the number of us that got off the hustle bus and out of the rat race, and back to what really matters to us. For most of us that was our families and our health.

And we really saw a lot of joy from so many of us reigniting kind of some sparks in our present moments. We saw lots of people starting new hobbies. All that bread baking that everybody was doing, it was so fun to watch. But we also saw a lot of people get really honest with themselves.

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And maybe that was you, honest about your work and your relationships. I think the last two years brought the great resignation for a lot of us from jobs that we just weren't happy in or didn't love.

And it also brought us a lot of us to a place in our relationships that it seems like did one of two things, either brought us closer in them or helped us decide they had run their course and it was time to move on. So again, we saw a lot of this having to hold space for suffering and joy at the same time which can be so hard. And it can really get in the way of dreaming. So, we saw lots of people doing all of this stuff, leaving jobs, leaving marriages.

And I have zero judgment about people getting real with themselves, other than I think it's really a good thing but zero negative judgment about the choices that people have been making that are right for them. And I'm really thrilled that collectively we got back in touch with the present moment and back in touch with our values. Because so many of us have said, "We know what we value for years but our words and our actions were really out of alignment." It was really true for me.

I definitely saw this even as far back as my late 30s and early 40s. So even 10 years ago when I was saying that I valued my family above all else. But my actions really pointed to the fact that my work came first. And so, I think over these last two years for a lot of us we saw where we were out of alignment. And we were able to get back into alignment by getting back to the present and that was amazing. I mean how many stories did we hear about or even live personally that involved slowing down and cooking more, and going for walks in our neighborhoods?

Those of us who usually only drive everywhere, we're walking again, and checking in on our neighbors, and waving at people, and having Zoom calls with our family members that we couldn't see in person. And the stories were so heartwarming. And we were all changed for the better in so many ways from these stories, and from the connection and the love. But yeah, at the same time the connection and love were really undergirded I think is a

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word. They were kind of under-ridden with the news of so much death and suffering.

So, it was such an emotional time even though we were all there and present for it. So, I'm here not to declare that COVID is over or that we aren't all still emotional. I mean who knows, COVID or something similar is probably never over. There'll probably always be something like that in our lives. But what I am ready to declare is that it's time to dream again. And I want to point out a few of the reasons, including being in the present moment that may be challenging for some of us to start dreaming again even if we're ready.

So, here's what I was noticing. I was noticing the high number of people in my life in the last several months in my communities, in my programs, in the design industry and other creative industries, even just people in my day to day life talking about how burned out they are. And wow, I mean are there seriously a ton of creatives really burned out right now. And so, when I was thinking about this I started to realize that a lot of the problem is likely that we had given up on things to strive for, given up a target to shoot for, or a goal to reach for, or multiple goals to reach for.

And I don't want you to confuse what I'm saying here, this word 'striving' with the word 'hustle, or the idea of hustling. Because we've talked a lot this year about not hustling, about stopping the hustle, anti-hustle. And hustling really involves overworking essentially in an effort to prove our worth or worthiness. We're hustling to try to outrun our securities and try to prove something to other people.

But I want you to realize that you can strive for goals and you can create impact, and you can dream from a place of worthiness and a place of anti-hustle that doesn't create burnout. But it's just that most of us don't know how. We've never done it. So, when I was thinking about this dilemma of mass burnout I was remembering some valuable information about burnout that I learned when I was training to be a life coach. And this idea of

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burnout that most of us think comes from physical exhaustion but actually it doesn't.

Burnout comes from mental exhaustion. It's not that we're physically wearing ourselves out but it's that we're mentally wearing ourselves out with all the thoughts, and worries, and fear, and judgment, and the constant loop and narrative that's happening in our brain all the time. And the way we know this to be true, we can really kind of test this theory because many of us can recall and you may have heard me say this before.

But many of us can recall a point in our lives where we were working really hard, maybe even way harder than we worked during the pandemic. Because the pandemic kind of brought our physical work for a lot of us down quite a bit. But it was the mental stuff that was happening constantly, the worry, the fear. But a lot of us can think back to when we were working harder than we've worked during the pandemic but instead of creating burnout we were full of excitement. It was exhilarating. It was the opposite of burnout. We felt so alive.

Maybe that was when you first started your own business or got out of college. There is those moments where you're working hard without burnout which is so fascinating. So, burnout only sets in when you hit a point where you're thinking thoughts that create burnout. So, you may remember the beginning of your business, exhilarating. And then a few years in you started thinking things like this isn't really fun anymore. Or I thought I would be making more money than this by now.

Or why are clients so demanding? Can they not understand how this process works and that I don't only have one client? And when we start thinking those kinds of thoughts it's not the physical effort that we're doing that's burning us out, it's that narrative that's happening in our heads that creates the feeling of burnout. And that's not to say that burnout is 'all in our heads', meaning it doesn't exist. It's true, it's a real thing. And what we think can actually create physical symptoms of burnout, our thoughts can take a physical toll on us.

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But I just want us to see the difference between burnout being something that really originates in our brains and then takes a toll on our body instead of the opposite. But this is related, I promise, to dreaming. So, I want to tell you how. So, a few years ago, maybe a year or two I was listening to Tony Robbins on the Tim Ferriss podcast. And he was talking about when he coached Andre Agassi. And now I know some of you think Tony Robbins is problematic and I think sometimes too. I'm not endorsing everything Tony Robbins here.

But I do think he has a lot of really valuable concepts that I've learned from. So yeah, he may be questionable in his delivery sometimes, it's not even funny, it's a whole other podcast. But for right now hang with me just about this story because it's really important. So, Tony was telling a story about when he was working with Andre Agassi. And Andre had recently become the world champion in men's tennis at the time. He was the best in the whole world. He had hit every goal he had ever dreamed of.

And then all of a sudden Andre Agassi fell into a total slump, a complete funk. He was so confused about what was happening because how could he have just surpassed all of his competitors and reached every single one of his goals and become the champion of the entire world and now be struggling in every single way? And what Tony realized when coaching Andre is that Andre no longer had a vision for what was possible, for what would come next. He had come to the end of his vision. He had come to the end of his dream.

He had literally had this vision or this dream that he had held on for years, from the time he was really a child. And it was complete. He had checked every single box. And so, there was no target to shoot for anymore and his result or lack of results really proved this point. He didn't have a goal, a target, a north star, nothing to be shooting for. And you all, this is so important for us at this very moment. And you may be saying and I hear you, "But, Tobi, I haven't accomplished everything, I didn't check every box. I didn't fulfill my dream." And I get that.



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But let me tell you what I think happened because of the last two years because there's a few things to consider that killed our dreams, that closed down that list, that shut down our dreaming that I think is really important for us to understand. So first, as I mentioned earlier, the pandemic and all the other unrest of the last two years brought us 100% back to the present moment. And it needed to, frankly, because in the present moment is where we all needed to be to literally try to survive, to keep ourselves and our loved ones, and our businesses alive.

The future at that moment was the least of our worries. So, in the situation of the pandemic and all the other life threatening things that were happening in the world over these last two years, being in the now was the only thing that mattered. It was the most logical response, it made sense. But here's the thing that we have to know now. We can't be in the now in the present moment and also be in the future. And guess where dreaming happens? Yeah, in the future. Guess where goals live? In the future.

The whole point of dreaming, and goals, and striving, and having a target is that it's out there in the future and we're working towards it. So, when everything came back to the now, not knowing if we were even going to have a future, wondering what was going to happen next was the least of our concerns and rightly so. So, there was that. And then there was also the gravity of what was happening in our lives, especially for those of us who were dealing with illness, who were dealing with death. And then also for those of us who came out of this two years mostly unscathed.

We naturally felt a lot of guilt. We felt a lot of sympathy for those who had it so much worse than us, but a lot of guilt, survivors guilt essentially. And so, there's something about being in that mindset of comparing grief, or comparing doom, or comparing trauma with other people. And thinking we have it better than they do. That's still not helpful for dreaming because yeah, it does move us to a place of gratitude, which is a beautiful thing.

But this particular way of practicing gratitude, grateful that we have it better than other people can keep us stuck when it comes to dreaming. Because

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we feel like we shouldn't want more. That it's greedy or in bad taste to want to grow or to make more money, or to be successful when other people are suffering. Even when we've been suffering it still doesn't make sense to us a lot of times. We feel like we should just be grateful for all we do have and wanting more just doesn't seem right.

And then besides we also might think that when future plans are constantly upended with something like a pandemic, or the social and political unrest, or everything that we've seen happen in the last 24 months, it can make you afraid to dream. It can even give you the impression that dreaming doesn't even matter because it's all just going to be upended again anyway, it's for not, it's a waste of time. But I want you to know that it's not.

And I hope you're starting to see that when we are unwilling to dream, when we don't have a target, a north star to be aiming for, when we don't have things to get excited about, and we don't stretch ourselves. We're not trying to be an example of what's possible for ourselves or for other people. Our life a lot of times starts to have less meaning. It feels like we're just going through the motions and we don't really know why. So, at first when we came back into the present our life was full of meaning because we were in touch with the people we love the most and those values.

But over time when we got used to that and then we didn't have anything to strive for, that's when the day to day starts to feel boring and mundane, and really not full of meaning. Because a lot of times to create meaning and fulfillment, almost all the time honestly, it requires us to show up in our lives in a way that stretches us because most meaning comes through growth. So, when we were getting off the hustle bus and coming back into the present, that was growth, that was stretching us, that was creating meaning.

But when the realities of the pandemic, and staying at home, and doing less, and dreaming less, and not getting out of our PJs for days, and watching hours upon hours of Netflix, and all the things we did that were



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great in the beginning. Started to not stretch us, not create meaning, not create growth.

And so, I think it can be really helpful for us to remember that when we are willing to create success, and start to notice that the more success we create. And the more money we make the more challenges we can overcome, the more confident we can become. Then the more we can help others and the more we can change the world. So yeah, it changed the world for us to all be an example of slowing down and being in the present. That was beautiful.

But now it's time to do something different because staying here in what is our current comfort zone and keeping ourselves small or playing it safe, it's really not even helpful for those other people who are suffering. Back to that survivors guilt or just guilt when we should be grateful for what we have. Playing small doesn't help stop other people from suffering. It really just makes us both suffer.

I mean you can't fight poverty or injustice without money. And so, the more financial success we're willing to create the more we can actually help bring things like that, that matter the most to us, bring them to a different place. I also do want to stop for a minute here though because we're socialized to feel it's not okay to be successful unless there's an altruistic meaning for, or a purpose for it. We'll make all this money but we'll give it all away. And I do think it's important for us to remember that it's also okay for us to create success and wealth and benefit from it.

And this is an interesting sort of, I don't know if you want to call it like a parallel or a contrast to some of the podcasts that I did earlier this year about redefining success. But I don't really want this idea to be mutually exclusive to you because what I hope I didn't create in you was a thought that money doesn't matter at all or financial success doesn't matter at all. What I think we established is it's not the only thing that matters and that money doesn't create happiness. But guess what? Growth can create happiness.

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And growth can mean financial success. Growth can even mean creating wealth that we personally benefit from and we don't have to give it all away to charity. We can also benefit from it and grow from that. So, for many of us that can feel very uncomfortable. For us to be as successful as possible feels really uncomfortable. It's true for me, it feels uncomfortable. I have to really work on being able to be really successful and to receive all the benefits from being successful without feeling an extreme amount of guilt or pressure.

So especially those of us who are committed to antiracism or anti-oppression in ways, we can get confused and think, well, we also have to be anti-capitalist. So, we can't make money if we're for those things. But I want you to know there are various positions from the many diversity, and equity, and inclusion experts, and the antiracist educators and experts on this particular topic. Some people are both antiracist and anti-capitalist and others are not. Those are not two things that absolutely have to go hand in hand.

So, I want you to know and notice there's a lot of stuff that could be currently getting in the way of our willingness to dream again, our willingness to be really successful especially if that means financial success. And it's okay for you to be successful. My coach and my mentor, Trudi Lebron, who has been guiding me on this journey of antiracism for the last two years really helps me in this particular area of being willing to be financially successful. Not because I think it's going to fulfill me necessarily in and of itself.

Again, money doesn't buy happiness by itself. We're all clear on that. We found that out when we came back to the present moment and saw what we really valued. But money is a beautiful tool, a resource, to create impact and create change but it's also a measure for a lot of us of success. If we're making a lot of money it can be a way for us to show to ourselves what we've created in the world that we might want to consider success. So, Trudi's helped me with this because like me, Trudi is antiracist but she's not anti-capitalist.

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In fact, she is for something she calls just commerce, just, as in justice. And so that means being in integrity with how you make money and that you're not exploiting other people to make that money and then how you're using that money to live your own life and to help other people, and to run your business, especially if you're running it in an antiracist or equitable sort of way. Because you can make a lot of difference with things like racism or fighting the patriarchy because all of that takes money.

It takes money to hire other women and make other women wealthy through your own company. And that's one of the things that's important to me. So as Trudi says, we want that money in the hands of people who are going to make a difference, and in the hands of those who are going to employ more women and more people of color in their businesses and do things to advance those causes. So, I'm telling you all of these things because they're things that could be in the way of your dreaming and of your success.

And even Trudi believes in paying yourself really well and benefitting from the work you do. It's not about making money just to give it all away. It's not that we all should take a vow of poverty and any money we make has to go back into the world. You deserve to use money that you've created also just for your own pleasure. I agree wholeheartedly with her about this. And as she told me recently on a call, she was coaching me and she said, "Tobi, remember this is not a zero sum game this money thing, this money or financial success thing."

And she said to me, "Tobi, you getting your particular business up to five or 10 million, or every single other person on this call", and there were probably 10 of us on the call. "If every person on this call made five or 10 million, that's not going to be taking money away from those in poverty." She said, "In fact you are the very 10 people I would want to be making five or 10 million because I know you're doing this work and I know you're going to turn around and do amazing things with that money. You're going to change the world."

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So, this really helped me lean into dreaming big. What I realize now is that when I am able to dream big, when I'm able and willing to make as much money as possible for me. That I can use a portion of that money to make a big difference in the world and just be an example for everybody else. I'm willing to go first. I'm willing to take one for the team and go make a ton of money to show us what is possible my creative friends. I want you to see especially if you're a woman what is possible for all of us when we dream big, when we make impact happen this is a win/win.

So, all of these things could be getting in the way for you, it could be the survivor guilt, it could be the why dream because who knows when the other shoe was going to drop. It could be things like your thoughts about capitalism getting in the way. It could just be your discomfort with receiving a lot of money like me. But I want you to see what blocks specifically are related to you. And there's a ton of them and we couldn't possibly mention all of them. But these are some of the most common that I've noticed and I want to address one more quickly before we move on to how to dream differently.

So, here's one that a lot of us especially women, especially moms bump up against and that is that we believe if we go after our dreams again or for the first time even, it's going to be in conflict with our other roles in our life, our roles like mom, or wife, or friend, or daughter, or sister.

In other words, we only know how to reach our dreams by hustling. And hustling was the very thing that got us out of the present moment and had us misalign with our values before. And that was so true for me so I get it if that feels scary to you because I created success or what looked like success through hustling last time too. And it wasn't sustainable. But I've learned that there's another way to achieve big things without hustling.

And so, this time when you dream and when I dream I want to show you that you can dream from a completely different place, a different mindset with different awareness. And I promise you it is possible. But first you just have to be willing to allow the dream, allow it to be there and to be big, and

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to be scary, and to be real, to acknowledge it, to say it out loud and to decide to go for it. And I don't know about you but a lot of my confidence and a whole lot of my joy come from dreaming big and then doing the hard things to make those dreams come true.

So, when I was back in January thinking I want to feel alive again, I started to realize one of the reasons I was feeling less alive is because I had put a damper, like a cap, I had put a ceiling, like a governor, whatever word you choose on my dreams. I had tamped them down. I almost didn't feel like it was okay to dream anymore. And because of that I wasn't dreaming, and I wasn't striving, and I wasn't doing some of the hard things that could have been making me feel most alive. And I did a lot of hard things. I'm not saying I didn't do anything hard.

But with my own life and what's possible for me specifically, I put a cap on my dreams and I think you might have done that too. And though I don't want to go back to the fast pace that was pre pandemic that made me forget the present moment, I am ready to dream big again and to start stretching myself again to see what I want to do next in my life and my business.

And this time from this frame of reference, from all the awareness I have right now I think my dreaming will be better than it's ever been before because I'm just coming from the lens of seeing so clearly after the last two years, the things that I really value, the things that really matter. And so, I want to dream in this new way that avoids hustle, that includes rest, that helps me be more present in the journey on my way to my dreams. And this is a completely different place than I dreamed from before.

Every other dream I've ever created was from a place of proving my worth and I don't have to do that anymore. I know that I'm a 1,000% worthy. If I never reach another dream it's totally fine but I can want to dream and I can dream differently and I can do hard things from this place. And it's really, really different for me and I bet that's different for you too.

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Okay, so I say all of this just to say it's time friends. It is time to dream big again. So, let's do this. So here, let me be your hype woman. Let me be your one woman hype crew. In fact, I don't even have to be a one woman hype crew because my team and I, we're all your hype crew. And we want to show you how that we can dream differently this time.

So, here's step number one. I suggest that the very first thing you do is spend time, and you can go back and listen to this podcast again or you can look at the show notes so you can read it. And spend some time journaling about all of the obstacles and the things that I've presented so far in this podcast that are going to be potentially in the way of you dreaming big.

And get really clear on how any of those mindsets or thoughts, survivors guilt, fear of hustling, fear of abandoning your family, any of that stuff, worrying that it's pointless, that it's just going to all get messed up again by the next big thing that's coming our way. See what is in the way of you dreaming big. And what thoughts are you having around all of those obstacles? And then what feelings are they creating? Is it creating guilt? Is it creating fear? Is it creating sadness, some other emotion, overwhelm?

We want to know and be very clear on what we're dealing with because dreaming without kind of clearing those blocks and those emotions is going to hold us a lot smaller than we could possibly dream. We're not going to really be able to see what's possible when it's coming from that place of those negative emotions. So, first work through those on your own or with a coach, it can be really helpful. I always use a coach.

So, for those of you already in Design You or if you're thinking about joining us in Design You, this would be a very good time and a good reason to join us because these are the exact things we coach on every single week in our Wednesday coaching calls in Design You. And then you also get all the calls with your one-on-one coach. So, this is the perfect way to get unstuck from any of those thoughts that are limiting you or holding you back.



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Next, I think it can be really, really helpful to take an inventory of what has been working and what isn't working. Because typically when we feel something's broken or something's not working, I'm broken, I forgot how to dream, then we feel down, or bored, or unfulfilled. What we typically do is we start to accidentally assume that everything in our life is bad, that nothing is working but this is rarely true. And so, when we don't take note of what is working we end up changing a lot of things that weren't in need of change. We end up breaking things that weren't broken.

So yeah, we might fix some things but then we break other things that were already going well for us. And that's not really helpful. So, I want you to notice, and take note of, and make a list of what's working and what's not working. For example, I noticed about myself and my choices during the pandemic when I was considering what was working and what wasn't that there were some of both, quite a few of both. So, one of the first things that I realized was working is that I was really glad that I had stopped working a lot, all the time.

And I had made space for that quality time with my daughter, and my husband, and our pets. And I'm telling you, my dogs have never been so happy. They're like, thank goodness for whatever this thing is that kept mom and everybody home for two years because I got all the loving, and all the treats, and all the belly scratching. And it really filled my cup at a deeper level than before to have this much time.

So, when we were in lockdown or pretty close to lockdown the side-effect for me and for a lot of you is that I was giving myself permission to be with all of those people, to have all of that quality time. That pre pandemic I wanted to have it but I wouldn't let myself have it. In fact, some of you got more quality time with your kids and people, your spouse than you could even want. You're like, "That was way too much. I'm ready for those people to go back out into the world." And thankfully most of them have.

But the point being for me it really worked to give myself permission to rest and to have downtime. I loved it so much. So, in my column of what works

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on this list it says, giving myself permission for downtime both by myself and with those I love every day. So that's what works for me. Next I noticed some of the things that weren't working. So, I noticed that the way I had been thinking about a lot of my work pre pandemic was coming from a place of obligation.

And I can assure you that my best work and likely yours too does not come from that place of have to, or obligation. I have to do this. The number of times in my 30s and early 40s that I told my daughter, "Mommy has to work", when I really just wanted to be with her and when she was crying for me. I was miserable and I would work anyway out of obligation or deadlines. It was horrible and it left zero room for real creativity. It did not feel like fulfilling my purpose. It certainly was not coming from a place of joy and you know what I mean.

So, when I looked back after the pandemic had started and I noticed the number of things that were feeling like a chore to me, it included everything from my interior design work, or showing up on social media, or even working out. So many things my heart wasn't in anymore because I was telling myself a story about how I had to but I didn't want to. This kind of thinking was not helpful at all. So, one of the things that I now have on the side of the column that's the not working list is I no longer do things from obligation.

If I believe I have to work, or I have to work out, or I have to post this on social media the results of those efforts are going to be subpar anyway. And they're going to cause me burnout so I'm just not willing to do that anymore. So, I will not take on a dream that requires me to feel obligated. I'm only going to dream from a place of want to, where it's really my choice. And then one last thing I noticed over the last two years that I loved and that goes on the what is working list is my new morning routine.

So, prior to the pandemic I was constantly telling myself I had to get up at 5:30 or 6:00am because I was in hustle mentality. And I believed that I would, you know, better and more successful if I got up at that time of day.

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And yeah, I would get up sometimes and have some really great mornings and I liked them. But more often than not it felt terrible. I was usually tired. I was hitting the snooze multiple times. I would hit the ground running and already feel behind and I hated it.

So, with the pandemic my new wake up time really most of the pandemic was more like 8:00am which was very late compared to 5:30. But over time it really settled at around 7:00am which is what it is now. And I really, really like it because I would wake up at 7:00 and I would start my morning much slower and with a lot of joy and with a lot of pleasure baked into it. And I'm still doing this right now. So that absolutely goes in the what works category for me.

And I want to make sure that my new dreams can happen really between the hours if they're work dreams of 10:00 and 4:00pm because I want slow mornings. I want to wake up at 7:00. I want me time really all the way up till around 10:00am, time to journal, and read, and work out if I feel like it, and get dressed and all the things.

And so, if my dreams for business can't happen between 10:00am and 4:00pm then they're not the dreams I'm going to pick this time or I'm going to achieve them differently, or stretch out the timeline from them. Because that morning routine is something that really works for me. And for right now unless something changes in the future and I don't like it, or I get tired of it, or it's not working, I'm keeping that firmly in the what works column. So, for this step which is step number two, remember step number one was see what all those obstacles, and thoughts, and feelings were in our way.

Step number two is finish out this list of your own with the what works and what's not working. And there may be a whole bunch of things in both columns. Or there may be a few in the what works and a whole bunch in the what doesn't work, or it may be the opposite. There only may be one or two things that really aren't working for you. But when you fix those you're going to really be able to create the life that you dream of, that is possible for you. So, make that list of what works and what doesn't.

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But then I want you to set it aside completely. Forget about steps one and two for a bit. They're there, they're going to be there waiting for you. You're not going to forget them. They're all written down. And this is why I always encourage you to actually write this stuff down and not just think it in your head. So, then we want to move to dreaming. And the reason we want to park that stuff is because we want to dream from a place without parameters, without limits.

So, after you dream then we'll be able to pick back up both the list of what works and what doesn't, and both the obstacles that are getting in our way. And we'll have to be able to match those up and to see what works so that we can shift into this new version of dreaming without going back into those old patterns of hustling or ignoring the things you value. But for this dreaming portion I want you to do what I call, sometimes I call it white box dreaming or white page dreaming but meaning that anything is possible, like a white clean sheet of paper.

Or if you imagine those design shows and they give someone a white box with nothing in it. And you're allowed to do anything to that space. So that's what I call white boxing something, just going crazy with the possibilities because it's just an empty blank slate. And so, with this kind of white box dreaming I usually ask myself a couple of questions first. I ask myself if I knew I couldn't fail, what would I do? And if money and time were not an issue, what I would do?

Because failure and time and money seem to be the three things that most get in my way of really dreaming big and seeing what's really possible. So, for me I like to ask myself those. And then I also after doing some dreaming and writing some things down, seeing what comes out, I like to then say, "What have I not thought of?" Because most of us only dream within the guardrails of what we've seen other people do in our industry, or what some of the people we love or idolize have done.

And so, I like to ask myself, "What is possible that I could create or do, or some impact I could make on the world that I've never even seen before?"

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And at first my brain will kind of get stuck because it doesn't like to think that I know anything that I haven't seen before, but I absolutely do and so do you. It's where all innovation happens. No one had ever dreamed of the iPhone until Steve Jobs did and then we're all working from them 24/7. So, what could you do to stretch yourself that is not within the realm of things you've seen before?

And to do this kind of work we have to ask ourselves some of these questions. There's a few more really hard questions that I also bring in at the end of this white box thinking. And that is, where have I typically held myself back or limited myself before? You can even ask some other people in your life, ask them, "Where do you see me being really good at things and where do you see me holding myself back?" Because it's really important, sometimes we have blind spots and we don't know that they are just a pattern repeating itself to hold our dreams really small.

And then you might ask, "What is currently really comfortable that I might have to give up to go to the next level of success?" So, this might even have you looking back at the what works column and say, "Is there anything on this what works column that I would be willing to change for my dreams?" Would I be willing to get up at 6:30 instead of seven? Maybe. Or would I be willing to sleep till 8:00 if I needed more rest to dream bigger? Maybe. What is it that is a belief that feels like a truth and it's really currently comfortable and we're loving it?

It doesn't mean you have to give it up but I want you to at least just be curious. Is there anything on this what works or what doesn't work list that actually is holding me back? And then ask yourself, "What am I willing to feel to become the new version or the next version of me? And what am I willing to feel that I might not have wanted to feel in the past?" Because it can be really difficult to become the next version of us because sometimes that means either giving up things that got us here or giving up some of our current success to create new success and this can feel really uncomfortable.

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An example of this might even be that people that have helped you get here, maybe your current clients or your current team members, they may not be the people that are going to get you to the next level. And you might have to feel really uncomfortable to make those changes. A lot of times we hold ourselves where we are because we're not willing to risk losing something we currently have even if the new version would be better. And we're certainly not willing to feel the feelings we would have to feel to make those changes.

So, I want you to think really hard about what this may mean for you because in theory, dreaming sounds fun. When you just hear, "I want to dream again." You're like, "Yeah, that would be so fun." But it's actually usually pretty dang uncomfortable. And this is why most people don't end up fully doing it or we don't end up taking action on our dreams after we did the dreaming part because we know that to get to the next version of us will require discomfort and growth, which are really to me, one and the same thing.

So let me just give you a quick example of what I might have to go through for one of my dreams and hopefully this will kind of help you see what I'm talking about. So, I'm going to start writing my first book and I've decided I'm going to start doing that this fall. And it's going to be hard. It's going to be a hard process. Now, why is it going to be hard? Well, I've never done it before. I'm going to have to stretch myself. I'm going to have to make time for writing even when I don't feel like it.

I'm going to have to write consistently as in maybe even every day when I'm telling myself there's other things I need to be doing instead. I'll likely have a lot of harsh criticism and self-judgment about my writing, or my thoughts, or my ideas that'll come up that I'll have to really coach myself around and get coached about.

And I'll also probably have a lot of fear about the vulnerability of putting my words, my book, my story, my personal, probably even my deeply personal stories. Maybe even things I've never told you out into the world if I'm going



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to make the book really, really good. And then when the book pitch and concept is ready and some sample chapters have been completed then I will have to pitch it out to a book agent. Now, I'm going to hire a coach to help me do this.

But still, I still have to feel vulnerable to pitch it to an agent or several because I have to be prepared to get both honest feedback, maybe very critical feedback and some rejection. Maybe a little rejection, maybe a lot of rejection. I may be rejected multiple times from multiple agents, you never know, until I find the right book agent. And then that agent will give me all their feedback and we'll change everything and we'll get it just right which will also feel very uncomfortable, and vulnerable, and hard, and even more work. And I'll probably be over it by that time.

And maybe telling myself, "But I have to finish this." So that might feel like hustling and proving a little bit. So, I have to watch for that. And then the agent when we get it right will go start pitching it again to publishing houses to try to get the book deal. And so, this book I'm talking about that I'm writing is not an interior design book. It's an actual non-fiction book, kind of more in the self-help business kind of realm. And this is how that process works.

So, then my agent will go out and I might get potential negative feedback or really critical feedback. I could potentially get rejection from one, or many, or all of the publishing houses. And I have to be willing to go through that rejection all over again. So, I have heard from my friends who have been through this process that it is both grueling and rewarding. And guess what? I'm here for it. I'm signing up for it. It's part of my dreams for the next version of me but that doesn't mean it's going to be easy or comfortable.

And I'm choosing to believe it will be worth it and that I can do hard things but I'm definitely going to have to give some stuff up. What if for six months or a year I have to move my wake up time back to 5:30am in to fit in the writing, would I be willing to consider it even though I'm loving 7:00am? That might be a decision I have to make if that's the only time I can find to

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write. So, you see how it's going to not be easy but we still want to do it within the parameters of anti-hustle.

So, if I notice I'm feeling like I'm having to prove myself I'll get coached. I will coach myself. I'll potentially pull back a little bit. I'll question and try to understand why those feelings are coming up and that's definitely a different place to dream from than I did in the past when I was just forcing and kind of ramming my dreams through at any cost. But it doesn't mean it's not going to be grueling. Dreaming is exciting and exhilarating but it's also terrifying.

Staying in our comfort zone is way easier than dreaming. But there's not a lot to strive for in our comfort zone. Rarely does growth happen in our comfort zone which means rarely does the really, really deep meaning come from our comfort zone either. So, are you ready? Are you ready to dream, friends? Are you ready to sign up for what it looks like to dream so that you can feel more alive than ever? Because believe me, sometimes terrifying is the thing that makes you feel alive. It's not just positive emotions that make us feel alive.

But it's really about who we become in the process of showing ourselves what we're capable of, that's where all the fulfillment, and all the growth, and all of the joy comes from. And I'm ready to start dreaming. So, are you ready? Let's start dreaming together, friends.

Here's one more thing I have for you. If you want some live coaching from me on this concept on how to start dreaming, guess what? I'm coaching for free a live round of coaching like I love to do. You've heard me do it before. And it's just exactly like the coaching we do in Design You, so if you're not in Design You yet or sometimes our members even come to these free calls which is really fun also.

But if you want to be coached and you're ready to dream big and you are feeling stuck, any of this stuff today resonated with you but also terrified you, then absolutely sign up for my free coaching call. And even if you don't want to get coached it's worth signing up because you are going to get

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huge takeaways just from watching other people get coached. And this free live coaching call is on Tuesday May 17<sup>th</sup> at 11:00am Central Time. And this is the perfect place to come get coached about your big scary dreams and how to get there.

So, you can register for the free coaching call by going to [tobifairley.com/freecall](http://tobifairley.com/freecall) and get signed up and I cannot wait to see you there. I can't wait to coach you. I can't wait to help you dream really big. I can't wait to get some of you into Design You with us because you're going to want to get coached this whole next year for 12 months from the day you join on creating the big new version of yourself. That's what we're there for.

So, I'll see you either on that call, or in Design You, or both, and I'll definitely see you back here next week with another great episode of the *Design You* podcast. Okay friends, that's it for today, 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](http://TobiFairley.com).