

Ep #225: Who Do You Trust?



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With Your Host

Tobi Fairley

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You are listening to *The Design You Podcast* with Tobi Fairley, episode number 225.

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. How are you? So, we thought about last week when I sent you to an encore episode because I was recovering from COVID about our annual awareness check-in, just like, what do we need to be thinking about? We're halfway through the year. Christmas will be here in a blink. I always say this in July. And then it is always here in a blink. And I just wanted to have you start thinking about sort of where you are, what you've been doing, how much progress you've made this year.

And today I'm going to follow up with some very specific things that I have been thinking about. So, as I told you briefly last week I have had an interesting three weeks or so. I had a big birthday bash for my daughter's 17th birthday at home. Then we went for a weekend Disney then we came home and had a terrible week of COVID. And then I got well thankfully. I had 10 days, five of COVID, five testing negative to then follow that right up with a really fun event we had at my house called thinktank with a handful of our creative entrepreneurs.

And we really worked very, very deeply and specifically with them about the next version of their business which was so fun. And so, if you would have been here we would have had you really thinking about your own business at this next level. And so, I want to follow up that sort of midyear check-in that I mentioned last week with some things that have been on my mind. So, while I was laying around really dealing with COVID which as I mentioned was a bitch, let me say that again with a capital B-i-t-c-h because it kicked my butt.

I'm a terrible patient. I'm not good at resting, first of all, but if I am resting I at least often want to be thinking. And there was no thinking happening during COVID. I had vertigo. I had a terrible headache and so I did basically nothing for eight full days. And that's saying a lot about me and

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almost never happens. But I had some things that were popping into my head that I really wanted to be thinking about. And so, the moment I got better I really did start to dig into them and that's what I'm bringing to you today.

So yeah, I'm not usually one to talk about being sick. I'm transparent about almost everything but I just don't ever think you all really want to hear about other people being sick. So, I don't usually talk about it but it's relevant here just to the fact and to the point that you have to be well and healthy, and create space to be able to think about your business and that wasn't happening for me while I was sick. So, for any of you who did have COVID I have the deepest sympathies for you, it was terrible.

But let's move on to what I wanted to be thinking about and what I have since been thinking about because I want to bring you along with me in this process. So, I know that I have touched on some of these things over the last six months when we've talked about redefining success, we've talked about me turning 50. We've talked about what creative entrepreneurs are capable of. But I'm feeling this tug currently to dig even deeper for myself.

And this deeper thinking, this tug, or pull, or urge is mainly coming in the form of questioning things at a deeper level, or even questioning everything at a deeper level. And I do this quite often. I try to think this way on a daily basis, to really question things and to think critically but I make sure that any time I'm sort of feeling a little stuck or maybe not quite as motivated or as excited as I want to, or maybe I've checked a lot of goals off my list and my plan and I haven't made a new clear plan yet.

I really start to notice this urge to dig deeper. And I'm noticing right now sort of an interesting response or you might even call it a backlash to the status quo or the group think that has been happening for the last few years in pretty much every single area of life and business. So let me tell you kind of what I mean by that. So, in particular in the businesses that I work in, the segments I work in, coaching and design, and course creation I have been noticing for a little while that there's sort of an anti-coaching sentiment out in the world.

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There's also an anti-sales sentiment in general, people not really wanting to be sold to or not trusting sales, salespeople, online sales, online programs, courses. And then this is not exactly my industry but it's kind of an adjacent one, I'm also noticing very much an anti-health and wellness industry sentiment. So, people not trusting a lot of the gurus. There's a move back away from diet mentality and towards intuitive eating. And away from all the fad diets and sort of the white centered, thin centered beauty ideals. So, an anti-health and wellness sentiment.

There's some pushback against beauty and the beauty industry. And then really just kind of, I mentioned anti-sales but also sort of anti-marketing. So basically, anti everything. So, in general and you're probably seeing it too and this has come since the pandemic, since the fatigue of the pandemic, since Zoom fatigue, since politics fatigue, since the fatigue and the pain that has come with the racial injustices and all the things we've been through in the last two and a half years or so.

Also, the economic ups and downs so people are just in general tired I believe. And that is creating sort of just a negative sentiment and pushback and backlash against the status quo all the way around. So, in general people don't trust anyone or anything and that's the sentiment that we feel. So, in particular when I am out on social media and I'm reading threads, or reading articles in various categories that I follow, my own creative industries, politics, all the ones I've mentioned, health and wellness marketing, business, online business.

This is what I see. So, what does that mean? How does it impact my year in check-in? How does it impact where I want to go next? And what do I think about it? Because I think this is important you all, and these are really great questions. And you know that if I'm thinking about something I'm usually going to tell you about it and I'm usually going to expand upon it. So, I don't know if you've heard this anywhere else but you're hearing it here and this is what we're going to talk about today.

So, I believe that this anti everything sentiment, and a lot of influencers by the way who are the ones that were out there selling all of those things, are

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going to lose their luster if they haven't already. But a lot of people hopefully you and me included will come out of this phase trusting ourselves much, much more than ever before but not necessarily trusting influencers, spokespeople, salespeople, gurus. I think that's what I'm seeing.

And personally, this last two and a half years really led me on that journey for myself to really trust myself more than ever. That's the work I've been doing. And so, I want to give you some examples that I'm seeing out on the web and in the world. And then we'll really think about what that means for us. So first I think of the anti-health and wellness sentiment that I'm seeing. And so, for the first time in maybe my lifetime honestly.

Because my lifetime has been filled with diet influencers, diet mentality, patriarchal and misogynistic approaches, sexist approaches to women and our appearances and the way we look, and thinness. And I'm noticing for the first time really ever in my lifetime so many people pushing back against the popular influencers and icons in the health and wellness space, in the beauty space, in the diet space.

One thing I noticed recently in particular was a lot of pushback against Dr. Mark Hyman. And I have been to some of his conferences and I've read his books. So, he's not the only one and I'm not just singling him out but to just give you an example of the level of people that are being kind of called into question. And believe me, this is not to make you think he is bad or necessarily wrong. We all get to make our own opinions about people. But it just was interesting that when we see pushback on the web of people at higher levels it catches my attention.

So, there are so many more proponents of health at every size who are trying to fight against this anti-fat bias and anti-white thin beauty, you know, white, thin, blonde, beauty standard. And those are the types of people that are starting to call Dr. Mark Hyman and others out for their opinions. And holding them more to stringent research and standards. So, a lot of what I see is people saying, "Show me the study on this thing you're citing. Don't

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just tell me your opinion about what I should eat but show me the actual statistics, the real studies.”

And people want to see for themselves more than ever if these studies and statistics are based in truth or they're biased depending on the doctors and the gurus that have been sharing the information, who funded these studies. Because what we've been hearing for years, things about sugar, things about diabetes, things about carbs, certain restrictive diets like keto and so much more. A lot of what we're taught are truly just opinions of influencers. And this is true in every industry, including me talking on my own podcast which a lot of times is my opinion.

And so, the internet, social media, the world we live in, has really become a sort of a big melting pot of everyone's opinion and it's really difficult to figure out what is the truth and what is not the truth. This is what leads many of us to come back to ourselves which I think is a beautiful thing. Because we don't know what information we can trust and we end up turning to the only thing that we know to be true for us which is ourselves and our own knowing.

So, the anti-diet faction and people who are doing all the self-work to love our bodies no matter our size and to not confuse weight and health are just no longer willing to buy into all of the hype that a lot of the health and wellness information out there is selling us which is often just a disguise for diet culture. It's pretty much always about profit and money and power like in every other industry. And personally, I find it really, really refreshing to see the pushback which is fascinating because if there's pushback in that industry there's also going to be pushback in the industries that I work in.

And to me that's okay but it can be really confusing for a lot of people. Okay, so that's the health and wellness industry. But the people that I'm listening to the most right now in particular in that industry are those people that are saying things more like, as opposed to saying follow this exact diet and cut out all carbs or cut out all nightshades, or fruits, or do fasting, or all of these restrictive things, the people that I'm listening to are saying things like everybody is different. And all foods and programs affect us differently.

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And that the fearmongering against sugar or the advertisements for supplements or all the things that are just based in capitalism or not in science, all of those things, the people I'm listening to are saying question everything. Is sugar really bad for you? May be bad for some people, is it bad for you? Test it. What do you know about your own body? Listen to yourself, listen to your really wise bodies that tell us what works for us and what doesn't.

But any time anybody can have an opinion, or a framework, or a system and write a book on it and go sell it they can suddenly makes hordes of money saying their way is the only way. So again, what's refreshing to me right now are the people that are saying there's many, many different ways to do everything. And it's really important that you figure out the one that's right for you. And that's true in the health and wellness sector and every other sector as far as I'm concerned.

So, what does that mean now for us as creatives and how am I choosing to respond personally and as a business with this shift or this backlash that I'm seeing out on the web? Well, there's several things to think about. So, for me first and foremost for making my own decisions it's about knowing myself and trusting myself. And I've had to do some very conscious work about trusting myself because it's so much easier for us to trust other people.

And we want to trust gurus, and we want to buy in that their system works. Because if somebody else can just hand us an entire system whether for our health and wellness or our business to make money, to get skinny, to fill in the blank, then we don't have to think about it. We don't have to take risk and we don't have to feel uncomfortable. But the thing is almost never do any of those systems really work for us, which is what has us going from system, to system, to system paying loads and loads of money to buy the next thing that doesn't work at all or doesn't fully work for us.

So, knowing and trusting ourselves is really important and I pay a lot of attention on a daily basis to how I feel with my health and wellness, and to really think about whether I'm confused or not on what foods make me feel

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better, what give me the most energy, what things are a problem. And I'm really not confused. I know, I know when I eat something if it makes me feel good or not and I don't have to listen to a guru to scare me and say, "Well, you should be drinking less soft drinks or you should be eating more vegetables", to know if that's true for me or not.

I just have to test it out. And I would say that's true about all parts of my life. There's even a book out by Kelly McGonigal, I think that's right. She's written several books. She has a brand new book. But the book before her most recent book that's about stress is a book about how even stress is not bad for us the way we've been told. But it's rather our consistent attempt to resist stress because we have been so told to be so afraid of it is actually what causes more of the problem than the stress itself.

And I think that is so true across so many parts of our lives. I think this is why we are so tired of everything, including health and wellness information that just gives us one more thing to worry about and beat ourselves up over where we're not perfect. That has us really kind of over all of it. And I completely relate to that and feel it.

So, when I decide to do something like start intuitive eating which I did almost two years ago it was really more than anything for the freedom to stop listening to all the rules and stop worrying, and obsessing, and trying all the latest diet books, or buying into the latest science. That was usually just some bias study disguised as science. So, I just let myself be free from all of those diet conversations and stopped listening to the latest influencers about anything.

And it's been so liberating in that particular area, really two areas, both health and wellness and the beauty industry. I just stopped listening to all of it and leaned into listening to myself and accepting myself. So, if that's true for the diet industry, the health and wellness industry, and the beauty industry, and if success leaves clues which I think it does then I believe this is the exact path that is also currently working for me and other people in other areas and aspects of our life, including our own businesses.

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So, let's next think about that with regard to the work I do. So, I am a coach and a consultant, I create courses. And I do other things too. I'm a creative and a designer of course. But coaching, and consulting, and creating course content is one of the things I do. And so, we're also seeing an anti-coach, anti-course, anti-guru sentiment. And I completely agree with it, completely. Now, does this mean I have given up on all coaches, and all podcasts, and stopped reading books and taking courses? No.

But what I have given up is believing that any of the coaches and the gurus who tell me there's one way and that it's their way, and that that is the right way, I've given up believing in them. This sort of reminds me of the message that even no longer serves me in religion. So, it's in all parts of our life. And so, with regard to religion I was raised as a Methodist which is a Christian religion.

And if a group of religious people for me typically that's going to mean a group of Christians tells me that there is one way to be a Christian and it's their way, and they're the only ones with a lock on heaven or chosen by God or anything like that. I can assure you that I completely disregard their advice and counsel. So, I disregard coaches, and courses, and gurus, and religious folk, and health and wellness folk, and beauty industry folk if they tell me any of them that there is one right way and it is their way and they have the secret. And I have to come and follow their way.

You can absolutely bet that I am not up for that. I'm not onboard, I'm not on the bandwagon, I am off. And I'll say this is a pretty big shift for me now that I'm 50 especially from the way I was in my 30s and even up until my mid 40s or so when I finally started trusting myself more than I trusted all of the gurus, and experts, and influencers out in the world. But I think this is something we have to come to. Now, does this mean there are no good coaches, no good health and wellness people, no good influencers, no good religious folk?

No, it does not but it means that it is more important than ever that we each turn inward first, check in with ourselves, our gut, our intuition, our value system and then align with people that can help us potentially get to a goal

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faster. But if and only if those people are not trying to make decisions for us or tell us the only way but rather are supporting us as we figure out our way. So, this is what I love to do as a coach, this is what I love to do as an influencer, this is what I love to do as a podcaster.

You know that I'm not ever here saying do this exactly this way and only this way. You know I'm saying, here's something I learned, here's something I'm studying, here's something I'm trying. Here's something I tested and what results I got, that you need to test and see what results you get. It's sharing things with people in case it makes it easier or better for you but not having any attachment that you follow it or an agenda for you. The only person I have an agenda for is myself. The only person I can know what's best for is myself.

And this is really I think the healthiest response and a lot of the backlash that we're seeing in the world. So, is it going to change industries? Yes, and they needed to I think. I think that we're hitting a point where things were so far out of control in one direction that we had to a reset button. And so again it doesn't mean throwing out the baby with the bathwater in every single industry. It doesn't mean we all have to stop buying beauty products or trying to be healthy, it's not that at all. It's starting with ourselves first and trusting ourselves above other people that really matters.

So, this is really interesting I think. And I didn't intend to get on a soapbox or get into religion, or anything like that but I've kind of done a little bit of both, I guess more religion than soapboxing. But I think it's just fascinating to think about how we want to show up with regard to all of these parts of our lives in the coming weeks, and months, and years. And this all plays into it. And you might have heard that research shows that the more educated people become the more problems that they have things with like organized religion or religious traditions.

And that's true for organized businesses and business traditions, people start to question because they're exposed to a lot of other options. They become more educated so they can no longer believe or buy into a belief system that discourages them from questioning things, that discourages

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them from asking why or asking for information. And people are more unwilling to just follow along someone that says there's one way of doing something, trust me. And we don't, we don't trust people anymore, the more educated we become.

Now, again, I say this not to get religious here but my brain does always go to that analogy when it comes to coaches and gurus or when it comes to religion. Those of us who have tried all the ways that people suggest and that each one's going to be the right way and we keep getting disappointed whether it's in business, whether it's in diets, whether it's in religion we really start to understand there is never just one right way to do something. There are many, many, many right ways of doing things and we each get to decide for ourselves.

So, over the last two to three years if we've learned anything, and if I've learned anything, it's to question everything, to take the parts of coaches, or authors, or leaders, or gurus, or religious teachings, or politics that serve me or serve us if I'm talking collectively about us but this is my learning. So, I don't know if you feel the same way. But I take the part that serves me that resonates with me and I leave the rest. And I trust that I'm absolutely allowed to do this. And this is what I recommend in our coaching programs.

If you come to work with us we are here to help our clients reach their goals, the ones they want, not some goal we have for you. So, listen to what we have to say and if it serves you, by all means use it. If there's parts and pieces that don't resonate, by all means throw them away. There is not a one size fits all way to do life, way to grow, way to create success. But we can learn things from others' examples. I've learned many, many things over the years that have fast tracked me, or helped me, or moved me along, or motivated me.

And I've also heard 10 times that amount in bad advice, or bad ideas, or things that didn't resonate. And leaving all of that without guilt, or worry is the way to move forward. I'm here to share my wisdom. My team is here to share their wisdom and to let people pick and choose the parts that serve you. I don't ever want you to feel guilt or shame for ignoring any parts that

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don't serve you. You never have to explain to me which parts you like and don't like. As long as you feel aligned then that's what is right for you.

Even if you're in my coaching programs and I say, "Tell me about your time blocking or how that's working for you?" You can say, "I hate it and it doesn't work at all and I don't want to use it." Now, I might ask you, "Would you be willing to have a conversation so I could see if there's a way it might serve you better?" And you can say yes or no. And I'll take you at your word but at the very least you get to decide.

But if I have it I want to make it available to you and that's what I look for in other people, in other coaches, and other influencers that are willing, and sometimes it's free and sometimes it's paid. And I'm willing to pay. I'm not saying anybody owes me anything. But if I'm going to invest in you as a coach or a teacher, even if I have to pay for it or I'm choosing to pay for it I'm still going to only take the part that resonates with me. And for a long time that was hard for me to do. And I almost felt embarrassed and no wonder things maybe don't work because I didn't use the whole system.

But I've really learned to call BS on that because we're each different. For my clients and my members, I know that I want them to have that freedom and that safe space to choose what works for them because that's absolutely what I'm doing in my own life. And the main thing that needs to be cultivated in me, and in them, and in all of us is self-trust, a major dose of self-trust. So, am I anti-coach, or anti-course, or anti-book? No. Well, actually it depends. Sometimes.

Is that coach, or course, or book interested in helping me create a unique and customized formula for me that helps me move to the next step of my journey in a way that's aligned for me? Or do they want and expect me to ignore my own inner knowing and drop my own independence to pick up their way? If so, yeah, I'm anti that. If they're there for me, come on in and let's see how we can collaborate.

I recently heard of a life coach who has a contract that when you join her program you can't have any other coaches while you're working with them. You can't get coached about this particular coach if you have issues or

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problems with her or them. You can't talk disparagingly about them, or their program, or their mentor, or any other part of anything that's being done in their business. You can't question anything. And when I hear that this sounds a lot more like a cult than a healthy and supportive program to me.

And it's not like they have control over whether one of their members hires another coach, or gets coached about them. I mean they can tell them they can't but they have no power over them. But just the fact that they have that in their contract, or they state that, is problematic to me. So, if you ever are working with a coach or a person and you see a clause in their contract that says something about non-disparagement or that you can't work with anybody else, you have to be exclusive, or you can't even get coached about your problems with them.

You need to question everything about that from all sides. That is not customized to you, it's not safe, it's not inclusive. And it really borderlines on cult kind of thinking. And I don't know if any of you have read the book, *Cultish* but it's fascinating. It covers some specific cults like Jonestown, but it also talks about how basic marketing in things like the health and beauty industry and other industries really borderline on cult kind of mentality to get us to buy into a certain belief system and abandon our own discernment. And that's exactly what we're talking about here.

One of the things that I've been doing for the last two years in our diversity, and equity, and inclusion work with our coach, Trudi, Lebron is that from the very beginning, one of the first things she taught me was to make sure that I don't have a non-disparagement clause in any of our agreements for any of our programs. And we didn't. So, we didn't have to eliminate one. We never had one. But she taught me that if we're going to be equitable and we're going to be inclusive that this is a huge red flag for people.

So, if someone is trying to control what you say about them, or their course, or their program, or their product, and not letting you be open and honest about your experience that's a problem. None of us actually have control over unhappy clients. It's just part of being in business because as I've talked about many times here our own thoughts can only be controlled by

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us. So, our customers' thoughts are only controlled by them. So as much as we may like to control how our clients, or potential clients, or former clients speak about us and act with regard to us, we can't control it.

And any effort to legally manipulate or quiet their opinions of us is really in my opinion a major boundary violation. But it definitely goes against equity work. It is not equitable. The way to avoid most disparaging comments about your business or your program is to be aligned with your values and to be public about what those values are. And so, you see me in the last two years being really public about what I believe in because if I am clear then you can know what you're getting into.

I'll attract people that are aligned with me. And then when issues arise, because they sometimes will, it's usually then going to be in a relationship between two people that already are mostly in alignment. And then one thing that you can guarantee is that we're not always going to agree. But how I handle the situation through my values and with integrity, and compassion, and honesty, is going to go a long way in creating fewer people who want to disparage me.

So, I have a responsibility to put out the best content, create safe spaces, be inclusive, avoid cultish behavior, but also be clear about who I am publicly so you know what you're getting into when you align with me. And then when problems do arise I lean back on myself and my own values to show up with integrity and compassion, and honesty, to handle those problems. But what I don't try to do is to keep people legally from saying anything negative about me because I'm not going to be a fit for everyone.

And so, if someone had a bad experience, or a poor experience, or our programs weren't a fit then they absolutely have that right to share that with the people that they know and everybody can make their own decision. And I'm going to do this as well when I am the buyer, when I am the client. So, all of this to say I'm pro coach, I'm pro teacher, I'm pro expert, I'm even pro health expert or pro beauty expert if they are interested in providing me with information and skills but allowing me to then trust myself in the way I use and implement them, and which ones I don't use or implement.

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And so that even applies to all influencers in all other categories that we've discussed and even the ones we haven't discussed. If it feels like a cult where everyone practices the same group think and no one is allowed to disagree and someone is trying to control how you think and behave no matter the industry, that's a problem. And people are really onto this now which is why we're seeing so much backlash in every single area. Another one of those areas we're seeing it in is marketing and sales.

And I've really put a lot of energy into this, this year, studying ethical marketing, ethical sales for probably about 12 months or so now, if not a little longer. And there's so much still to learn and to figure out. This is a totally new area for me. And really it's new for a lot of people. It's just coming to the forefront as sort of the response or backlash to a lot of the unethical or manipulative marketing we've seen thanks to technology and social media over the last five or 10 years.

And again, that is because this backlash to marketing that's been happening recently is coming from people feeling like they're being brainwashed, people feeling like they don't have a choice in what they believe. People feeling like sort of like they're expected to be stupid or that they don't catch on to salesy things. And I'm not saying we haven't practiced some of those because as things in business work, some type of system, or marketing, or process catches on and starts working for some people and everybody jumps on the bandwagon.

And I've done it myself, I've been guilty of it. And so, it's only when enough people start feeling manipulated or uncomfortable and people get brave enough to speak out about it that there is a tipping point and things start going back the other direction. And we're seeing this collectively across all these industries we're talking about today including marketing. So, it's interesting how quick we are to trust other people more than we trust ourselves. And that has been happening for years in marketing, especially in marketing with courses, and programs, and other things.

And for me when I entered the online sales and marketing space about four or five years ago, I truly did just jump onboard or the bandwagon in many,

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many ways of what was working. I just looked for the experts that supposedly knew and did what they did. But like in all these other categories, when people, myself included started questioning things, especially since the pandemic, since George Floyd's murder, since we spent two years basically at home on the web all the time through the political unrest and all the things. We're no longer to willingly and blindly trust anybody and their messaging, which is I think a good thing.

So also, when we started working with Trudi on our diversity, equity and inclusion she started opening my eyes and our eyes as a company to a lot of very typical, very accepted sales and marketing tactics that weren't equitable, that weren't based in what is best for the client, or was, as we call it, client centric. And that we're just the sort of in way of doing things mostly learned from white male gurus and businesspeople, a lot of whom had a ton of privilege and we're making beaucoup of money this way.

And then they started telling everybody else to follow along but she was quick to show me where these things were not equitable, were not fair, were based in privilege, didn't work for everyone, could be manipulative, could be unsafe, could be problematic and I could see it thankfully.

So, most of us didn't know it was a problem if we were practicing some of these marketing tactics. But when the public, ourselves included starts having these negative experiences and starts comparing our notes, and noticing that this stuff doesn't feel aligned for us or out of integrity for us. And out of integrity with our values, that's when we start to see change happening.

I recently had a really interesting conversation and brainstorming session with our graphic designer, Nicole Yang. And Nicole's wise beyond her 30 something years. She's very progressive. Like me, she's always on the pulse of what's happening in the online space, and marketing, and all the things because they're so related to her graphic design business. And she said something that I thought was brilliant. And I completely agree with and I want to give her credit for here.

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She said that she thinks customers and clients today, and that includes us, ourselves as buyers but also the clients for our businesses, so us as sellers also. That we want a lot more showing and a lot less telling. And I think that's so true. Let's just think about that for a minute. People want a lot more showing, which would be more truthful, and a lot less telling. So do as I do not as I say. And that's what people do anyway. We've learned that for years, kids are doing as you do not as you say.

And so, people are tired of all the telling and they're like, "Show me. Show me what you've got. Show me what you mean. Show me the truth and then I'll consider whether I trust it or not." There's another person I often learn from named Maggie Patterson. And Maggie is going to be on the podcast soon, as is Nicole. And Maggie is an online sales strategist who's very committed to busting through a lot of the bro marketing and unethical online practices. And she's taught me so much from her podcast and her content.

But there's a ton of shady shit that goes on in marketing and sales and it's very important not only that we dig into where we may be getting it wrong but also show where our credibility and expertise actually do come in. And over the last five or 10 years or so there was such a push for anyone who had success at anything to suddenly present themselves as an expert, even if they've never gotten success for other people with it. It's kind of like, well, if I did this and it worked for me now I'm an expert and I'll sell it to you. And I've seen a lot of that too.

So, when you're being exposed to marketing on social media and in other spaces Maggie says and I really agree with her, notice how the marketing makes you feel and why. And also notice who is selling to you and what their credentials are. And so not that credentials and education are everything but do your due diligence on who you're learning from.

And does the marketing make you feel uncomfortable and are you not responding to it because you don't need what they're selling? Or are you not responding to it because it's really feeling icky and out of alignment with your values? Or do you just not trust that person has enough experience,

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education, expertise to be able to help create something for you that's not a one size fits all thing that worked for them once upon a time?

So don't be afraid to give feedback or ask questions to anybody that you're considering working with, myself included. And if some of their marketing isn't hitting the mark for you let them know, I especially want to know. If something that we're doing marketing wise isn't aligned for you, tell me. Because either if we think that you're our ideal client we're doing something wrong or if you're not at some level our ideal client then maybe our marketing is working the way it's designed because it's supposed to repel the people that aren't a fit.

But I absolutely want to hear it from all of you because I constantly check to make sure we're not only in alignment with our values but that we are not doing any sort of unethical, or sleazy, or uncomfortable marketing. Now, that doesn't mean no one else will ever be uncomfortable because it might not be aligned with their values. But that it's in alignment with our company values and that we're making conscious choices about it.

So, I would say that's the litmus test on everything and every category of your life to start to say, "What are my values and does this health guru, does this coach, does this book, does this personal trainer, does this consultant align with my values? Do they have my best interests at heart? Are they teaching me a one size fits all thing? Do they really have the credibility to be an expert in this area? Are they interested in my best results, my best experience?"

And if you are the coach with the expert are you doing all those things for your clients and customers? We always I think have to be open to learning, to learning as a company. We run every single thing we do through our values to decide if we want to keep doing it, or start doing it, or make a shift. And yeah, we're going to do some things that at one moment feel aligned and in hindsight a couple of years later we decide they're not a fit anymore and they do feel unethical or they do maybe if it's not that strong, they don't feel necessarily unethical but they just feel not right.

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We're going to make changes and I hope that as you move forward, as you're checking in at this midyear point in your business and with your life and deciding what you want to do moving forward, you're noticing all of these things. You're questioning things. You're questioning whether you're trusting yourself or others and you're thinking about all this as you decide your next steps for you.

And if this feels intriguing but a little confusing to you, don't worry because I'm going to have a whole lot of episodes coming up through the summer and into the fall with some incredible women that I've mentioned here, including Nicole Yang, Trudi Lebron, Maggie Patterson. So, stay tuned because we're going to dig deeper into every one of these examples I've given you really soon. And you can start to piece together what that means for you.

But what I really just wanted to do today is set the tone with you for what I've been thinking about, what I've been chewing on, the big ideas I've been questioning. And starting to give you not permission because you don't need that from me, you need that from yourself. But just plant the seed that you absolutely can and don't have to apologize for questioning everything before you enter into any kind of a contract with a coach or buy into someone's program, or plan, or diet, or anything else.

Run it through your system, run it through your values. And see, check yourself first and see are you trusting you or are you delegating the responsibility of your life over to these gurus and experts? Because none of us like uncertainty, I get it. And when we don't know something or haven't figured something out yet it feels like it would be just so much easier to buy into all the things someone else has already figured out for us and just do what they tell you to do. But often that's a recipe for disaster or disappointment, or worse.

So, spend some time maybe this week if it feels right for you, journaling and getting clear on your values and your goals and where maybe you want to go next in your business, or your life. And start to notice if you've been delegating your plan, and your path, and your wish list over to

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someone besides yourself. And notice that if parts of those systems, or programs, or plans, or diets, or whatever they are, workout plans, or marketing plans, don't feel aligned for you but you keep forcing yourself to try to do them anyway.

Because you're afraid not to trust that person or you aren't listening to your own heart or your own gut because you absolutely can take the parts that work for you and leave the rest. You are in charge of you. And I want you to notice that. Notice if someone's telling you the entire system must be done without exceptions or it won't work or any other kind of culty expectation or non-disparagement clause, or anything that would prevent you from showing up as your real self.

One last thing before I go. Another friend, Teri Moore, who's an interior designer and she is so fabulous, and interesting, and just progressive in her thinking. And I love the way her brain works. And we just had a conversation as I was thinking about this podcast episode about how much misinformation there is on the internet. And so, as we were having this conversation and she had shared something that was going around that was misinformation in her own community in Nashville, Tennessee.

And about that same time, I had shared something political and someone had sent me a post and response that said, "You need to fact check this." So, I did and so I thought that was so interesting because I fact checked it and part of the thing I shared was incorrect or it wasn't – I don't know if it was fully incorrect but it wasn't complete and it couldn't be proven. It was about an upcoming legislation somewhere and it was being blown out of proportion and exaggerated and sort of weaponized in favor of left leaning politics.

And I typically lean left but because I'm a person of my word and very direct I was really appreciative that she sent this to me. I took down the post and it reminded me to get back to fact checking things before I share things. But so much of the information online as we started this podcast with is either just the opinion of a guru or just the opinion of a layperson, or just a flat out false or exaggerated meme, or thought, or concept.

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And so, it's on all of us to check ourselves, to check what we're sharing, to check the work we're doing, to check what we're promising, both in our personal lives and in our professional lives. And I wanted to add that in that Teri just said, "It makes me not trust a lot of stuff that's on the internet." And so many of us are so quick to trust that as well. So, I'm not trying to make us all skeptics, I'm not trying to make us all miserable and feeling like we can't trust anyone. But I'm just asking us to practice trusting ourselves first, to run everything through our value system, to fact check things.

And when you get a visceral response in your body, in your gut, in your heart, in your chest, when you get a lump in your throat about something, don't ignore it. Lean into it and understand what your body is telling you that's not making sense to you, that you don't like about the situation. And then be willing to have conversations with people, whether it's your team, whether it's your coach, whether it's something you're considering, whether it's your spouse or your kids. Talk about things.

Think critically, look at all the other sides. If you need a book to help you do this I definitely recommend Adam Grant's Think Again. And he teaches you how to think all the way around issues. And it's very, very helpful. So, I've mentioned a couple of books here today, Cultish and Think Again, I think they're both very helpful in this work. But I hope I've planted a seed with you. And start noticing over the next week, not only if you have an anti anything or everything sentiment out in the world, and why.

And what about it's not aligning for you? And if that's making you think anything about your own business that you want to change or shift. And again, I'll be back again soon with some more episodes, some more teachers again, you can take what you need from them or from me and leave the rest. But just giving you some different perspectives on how to think about things, how to decide where you want to go next and how much help you need. Because I think we can all benefit from coaches and consultants at times.

But if we abandon our own self-trust or we've never really developed it then there's only so much that those coaches and consultants are even going to

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be help us do. Because at the end of the day it's going to always come back to you trusting you. And that's what I wanted you to think about today. So yes, I'm pro coach if it's the fit for me. I work with many of them and pay them a lot of money. I'm pro the right doctors that are aligned with me and my needs and wants but not their needs for me.

I'm pro authors and experts that deliver interesting and helpful ideas, with careful research and due diligence, that trust me to use their information in a way that's best for me but not in a culty way. And I'm pro marketing and sales that is ethical and equitable but not coercive and manipulative, and full of smoking mirrors. So more than ever before the main thing I am now is pro me. I believe in me. I trust me. And I do the work to make sure that those I'm working with are as aligned as possible for me. And I hope that you're able to practice that too.

I will see you next time with another episode and this one was a little deep, when I'm sometimes still developing ideas, when they're fresh off the top of my brain, when I'm still thinking about them, they don't always come as the most organized to you. But I think that's okay sometimes because I think it's in having real life in real time conversations that can really move the needle in our lives and our businesses and in the world. So, if this piqued your interest, if it resonated, if you didn't like it, if it brought up something for you, let me know.

DM me on Instagram I would love to hear, I would love to continue this conversation. I would love to have your input and I'll be back again soon. And I guarantee you, this is not the first, it is the first but not the only time we're going to be talking about this. So let me know what you think. I'll be back next week. Bye for now friends.

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