

## Ep #291: Ditch Overwhelm with the Start, Stop, Continue Method



### Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

**Tobi Fairley**

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## Ep #291: Ditch Overwhelm with the Start, Stop, Continue Method

You are listening to *The Design You Podcast* with Tobi Fairley, episode number 291.

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.

You all, there are nine episodes till we hit 300. That is a lot of dad gum podcasts, dad gum as we say in the south. How are you? I hope you're great. It's the fourth quarter. There's something about saying that, the fourth quarter, that we're supposed to finish strong. It just brings anxiety just the thought of it. I've been burning the candle at all the ends lately pretty much for the last six months, keeping a much faster and fuller pace than I like.

I told someone last week, I feel like I'm eating without tasting anything. If you know what I mean. Staying so busy, moving from one thing to the next. Checking the boxes that it's done, saying it's done, but not really being present or in the moment and experiencing things. And I don't like this pace. I don't like that frantic feeling, I don't like, I guess I'll say, I might like the pace, but I don't like the thoughts and feelings that go with it. There's a good life coach statement for you right there, but that's true.

I don't like the feelings. I don't like the feeling of urgency. I enjoy being busy. I enjoy doing a lot of things. I love to add new things into the mix, to create new ideas, new businesses, have new clients, all of that is really fun. But when I have allowed myself to get back on the pace of what I would call deadline focused, that deadline pace, you know what I'm talking about. A pace where it feels like I'm constantly behind. And there's so many things that I need to be doing that I can't relax. I can't sit around. I can't even take a breath. That is when it's not fun anymore.

It feels like pressure. And I hear a lot of words coming out of my mouth and sentences coming out of my mouth that I don't like, like I have to. I have to work. I have to finish this. I can't sit down. I can't rest. So if I say I have to or I can't, there's a problem. The other one that I say a lot is I don't have a

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choice or I believe that I don't have a choice, even if I'm not saying it out loud. And that is the one, that's the tipping point. That is the telltale sign of me needing a mindset adjustment and a schedule adjustment because I do have a choice.

I always have a choice and you have a choice too. I am the person signing up for all the things I sign up for. I am the person committing to all the things that I commit to. There's a part of the book, *The E-Myth*, that it's not very far in and I'll never forget reading this because it's talking about owning your own business. And it says something like you realize you're working for a lunatic, and the lunatic is you. And you all, the lunatic is me when I put all that stuff on my calendar and it's the same for you.

The lunatic is me when I commit to a deadline. A lot of times those are self-imposed deadlines about a belief I decided was acceptable or that a client wouldn't wait any longer than a certain time or date. I'm the one that is creating the frantic pace and I have a choice and that's so important to remember.

So with it being fourth quarter and only two months or so remaining in the year, this is the time that I always start to think about the new year and what I want it to look like. And it's always helpful when I'm in a place of over-committed or overworking in those moments because I am very clear when I'm planning the new year, all the things that I don't want to feel when the new year rolls around. So this is the time that I look ahead and I can start to decide what it is I want next year to look like and I get to choose and so do you, what I want that to look like.

I am in charge of my life and my schedule, I am the one saying yes to things. So about this time of year, I start asking myself what do I want to do next year? What do I want to accomplish? What do I want to do for fun? What do I want my days to look like? Where do I want to travel?

As I say that out loud, I notice that I'm in such a work mode right now that I can get into, I am very capable of getting hyper focused that even thinking

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about vacation and travel aren't very easy for me to access right now. They feel almost like they're not allowed at the moment, which again is really important awareness for me. Because that means I've been on this kind of treadmill pace of go, go, go now for months. And I don't quite know how to tap into the rest, the slower pace, any of that stuff.

So it's going to be really important that I do that right now. And if you're feeling the same way as me, it's going to be really important that you do that too. So starting to think about what I want it to look like next year for fun and travel included, not just for work. And even this is the time of the year that I start thinking about what's the word I will choose for next year. I don't wait till the end of December to pick my word of the year. I start thinking about that now because it's that word that I use to describe, to maybe even define how I show up next year.

And picking a word a lot of times helps me get focus and clarity about what it is I want to create with this year in my life. So this year my word was play and I did do some things that were much more aligned with play especially early in the year. But even some I've tapped into it a few other times getting into that creative side. I started painting again. I was doing a lot of needlepoint, which by the way I noticed I haven't let myself stop in needlepoint in weeks which is very important for me to notice.

We just let that stuff pass by and we're like, "Yeah, I've been busy." And I'm like, "Oh no, but I have been telling myself, I didn't have time to or I couldn't take a break or I couldn't allow that." And that's really an important thing to notice. So around June is when I completely lost control of my schedule this year. So it was pretty bad in April and May because I had committed to so many things, trying to get my ecommerce store launched and get Ellison graduated from high school and all the things.

But I was believing, at least in April and March, that there was an end to the madness. And that after we got the launch done, then I could take a breather in June, which was a complete big fat lie. If I'm being perfectly honest though, this happens a lot for me around June when other people

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are starting to pull back for summer and thinking about vacations and time off with their kiddos. It always feels like a time that I need to hustle. And I think that there's some sort of subconscious self-sabotage thing coming in there.

It feels like one of the busiest months and that I always need to make up funds or money or cash flow. There's always an urgent need around that time, especially when I'm supposed to be thinking about vacation. And there's always so many things that I'm telling myself I have to do in June. And this is, I'm not really sure I know all the underpinnings of this. But at least I have the awareness to know that this is not the first time June has looked like this for me. It's a regular occurrence.

So if I had to guess why, I would say that I have a habit of pushing really hard in the fourth quarter. So then maybe in January or February that kind of time period, I'm tired. I want to cuddle in, in the cool temperatures by the fire and not be hustling so much and nest a little bit. And even procrastinate some, which for me procrastinating may not look like everybody's procrastinating. I may still be doing a million things, just not two million things, but definitely pulling back a little bit. I ease up a little bit in those months.

And there's a concept called wintering that I like that says we should lay low during the winter months. It's when nature hibernates and allows rest and regeneration so it can prepare to bloom in the spring. And so I think that's my natural tendency to do that in January. But the problem is that I don't make it an intentional conscious effort. So I do slow up in those months but by summer I feel an urgency to play catch up probably with sales and other things.

And so I love this idea of wintering, but if I'm going to do it, I need to do it in a conscious, intentional, planned way. I need to give myself permission to 'winter'. It would be smarter and more fun and I would enjoy it and plan it, but that's not exactly how it's been going for most of my life or the last, while I've been in business the last 20 or so years. I just get tired. I burn

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myself out by the end of the year. And then I must slow to start sort of the new year, even though I love new year.

I love to sit around and think and plan and journal and have space. And a novel idea to make that part of the plan sounds amazing. So if I could be intentional about wintering, I could also be intentional about how I want my time to look in June. I can plan for that. I'm not a huge fan of this urgency that I seem to always create in June. So that's the time I would love to slow down a bit.

This year, my daughter will be coming home from her first year of college. And I know I'm going to want to be with her and have fun and do things and have some more leisurely days and a more of a laid back summer attitude because this year was the absolute opposite of laid back for both she and I. We launched Fairley Fancy, June 1<sup>st</sup>. I was getting her ready for college, for sorority rush. And you all, I have to admit, even talking about sorority rush makes me angry and resentful.

I'm just mad about the time that I spent gathering recommendations and doing all the things and getting her prepared for rush and she's mad about it too, because the whole rush experience is horrible. And I mean, of course, she's got it, she did it. It turned out great for her and she found her people and all of that. But instead of enjoying her during her last summer home, we were killing ourselves to get all the things done, to check all the boxes of the expectations around sorority rush.

So if you go through rush in the south, I mean, this is a whole episode. I probably need to do a whole episode on this sometime. But we probably spent 100 hours, both of us, so 200 combined asking for recommendations from people, messaging people, texting them, phone calling, Facebooking, all the things. Getting yeses, making resumé packets to email or drop off to them. Then Ellison had to write 200 thank you notes for all those people. I had to gather 200 addresses for the thank you notes and the packets and the things and it was brutal.



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It was brutal and it feels so unnecessary. And it's one of the many things that I believe is completely out of control in the south, again, hence why we should have a whole episode on that sometime. The whole Greek rush process to me is outdated. It's patriarchal. It's problematic in about a million different ways, but that's that discussion for that episode.

But the reason I'm telling you this now is rush and preparing my daughter for that and preparing her for college and all her dorm and all the things really added to our workload this summer and made it anything but relaxed. Made our days anything but intentional or laid back. So after all of that prep for rush for her dorm room, for moving her to college, all of those things, on top of launching a store that I've told you all probably about 20 times now is way bigger of an undertaking than I had imagined or was prepared for. So that sort of took me by surprise, both of those things really.

I underestimated the prepping her for college and rush. I underestimated launching the store. So they were sort of accidental over-commits on my part. But also because when you're moving so fast, you don't slow down enough to really get clear on what you're getting yourself into sometimes. Sometimes I leap and then figure it out on the way down. And that's okay to do that, but it can also create some carnage in the wake of something. And so definitely the ecommerce was way bigger than I was prepared for.

And then if that weren't enough, on top of that in the last week of June and the second week of August, while I was actually moving my daughter in. Two of my key team members, my lead designer on the design team and my see COO both left, gave their two weeks' notice. And so it was within three weeks of each other. Both were completely unexpected to me at least. They were for completely different reasons. One just wanted more, I mean, pretty much what I'm talking about, more downtime, more flexibility to be with her grandkids. One was sick of working from home.

But regardless of their reasons, I was left without two key team members that I was believing were going to carry us over the finish line on a bunch of things through the rest of this year. And a lot of those responsibilities also

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boomeranged back to me and that's what I always call that work. I know it's hard for a lot of you already to imagine getting team members. and this is one of the things that you all are most afraid of or frustrated about is training people, getting them on the team, getting them up to par and then they leave.

And then you're left kind of back at square one a little bit, maybe not square one, but several steps back. And that's definitely what happened to me this summer. It's going to happen. It happens if you run businesses. I'm not mad at those people for leaving or anything like that. But it was unexpected and it was another layer on top of me already being extremely over-committed and behind. So those staffing changes took the behind to a whole other level.

And I have to say, I've pretty much been in a dead run racing against the clock and against deadlines since around the end of March or early April. And it has not really let up since, in fact, it felt at times like it doubled down. And that's not a pace that I want to keep for 2024. So if I remind myself that I do have a choice, that I do get to decide what I'm going to choose to be my pace and my goals and my commitments for next year. Then what do I want that to look like? This is a tricky question for me, you all.

I'm happiest as the manifesting generator that I am, when I have a lot of irons in the fire, when I've started a lot of new things. But I'm the least happy when those irons have big deadlines and pressure attached to them. So how does one create and build and leap without adding on the timelines and the dates and the deadlines that the world tells us we must have? It's sort of the place where productivity culture lands on my creativity parade. So productivity culture says do, do, do, finish, finish, finish, check every box, let that to-do list run your life, get shit done.

And the creativity parade has to have space and room and it gets finished when it's finished. It will be done when it's done. And those two things are constantly at odds for me with my personality and with running my business. So how can I be multi-passionate and also leave white space



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and breathing room? That is the big question. And it's a really difficult one for me to answer. It's definitely a practice I would say, not just an answer because it's been something I've been trying to answer for years and I haven't answered it yet but I get closer and closer some years to figuring it out.

And in years when I accidentally overcommit like this year, all in an effort to do something fun and new and exciting. When a pace I loved starts looking like hustle culture again, that's when I really learn the most. So yes, those years that I am closer to the multi-passionate but with breathing space are great, but we don't learn a lot in those years. We learn the most in the hard. We learn the most in the hustle. Not that I recommend it, but it's when we do, we learn the most when we're learning all the things that we don't want to do anymore, what didn't work, how we don't want to feel.

So here's what I know. One thing I do know about 2023 and me taking on so much is that I do have a lot on my plate but I also have a lot more awareness than I used to have about being over busy. There were years that I was just so over busy, but I was believing my own thoughts about I don't have a choice or I have to or I can't. It's different now. I can see myself being busy. I can hear myself complaining about things that are hard. I can hear myself talking about what I love and what makes me joyful. I can hear the times that I say I can't or I have to or I don't have a choice.

And I'm really dialed into what I'm thinking in my current state, the feelings it's creating. So that's a good life coach answer for you but it's so true. I understand my thoughts and feelings more than I ever have. So when I did this in my late 30s, I believed all my own thoughts. I believed it was absolutely true that I didn't have a choice. Now, when I think that I'm like, "Oh, that's funny. You're doing that thing again and pretending you don't have a choice." But I'm absolutely clear that I do. I'm absolutely clear that I'm the lunatic I'm working for.

I'm absolutely clear that I'm the person signing up for all these things. And that's a different state to be in. That's looking at something through a

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different lens than I used to. And the old lens was 100% taking me straight to burnout every single time. This lens at least allows a little gap, a little space where I can see what I'm doing. I can see the choices I'm making. I can see that they would take me to burn out.

But there's enough of a little space in there, a little gap for me to be able to be the watcher of my thoughts and the watcher of my feelings. So that I can put the brakes on and say, "Okay, this is not working for you and you do have a choice, remember you do." And so it's kind of like me being outside myself, tapping on my shoulder saying, "Hey, Tobi, look what you're believing again and remember those thoughts don't serve you. Those thoughts lead you to burn out. Those don't feel good. What else could you choose instead?"

And it allows curiosity to creep in. And curiosity, you all, I've told you this before is probably the most important feeling that I ever have, get curious. Get curious about where you are, what you're doing, what you're thinking. It's so, so important. So in all my years of training and working as a life coach and managing my own brain it has shown me how to notice my thoughts when they're happening in the moment and get curious right there. I can be overwhelmed but at the same time the watcher of my thoughts and get curious while I'm watching.

It's like I'm being me and sort of this other version of me is sitting back with the popcorn, watching going, "This is going to be good. I wonder what's going to happen now. I wonder what she's going to do now." And so that can be very helpful. And it can be very helpful for you too if you can learn to be the watcher of your thoughts instead of just believing them all. So even though in those moments now I still may be stressed out, I still may be over-committed, there's something so helpful about being able to ask why.

Get so curious about why did you overcommit, why did you say yes to this? Why were you believing you could do more than you could do in these moments? Why did you think that you could do all this at once? Why did you set this deadline? I can get so curious. Why did I take it on is a really,

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really important question. What is the why? We talk so much about our whys, but in the moment do I know the why, why I took that on and does it align with my ultimate why? What are the thoughts I'm thinking that are causing me to commit to all this?

What thoughts are making me feel like I don't have a choice or that I must meet certain deadlines? Am I improving energy again? Because I tend to do that. I tend to fall into, let me prove to you I can do this. Let me prove I can succeed. Let me prove I can make money. Let me prove I can figure it out. Let me be the guinea pig. And if I'm improving energy, what am I proving, something about the shop, my design work, me as a boss, something else?

Old habits and thoughts creep back up for me all the time that drive me towards some of these behaviors that are unhealthy for me or habits that are unhealthy for me. But my tendency then is to just pull back completely and be all or nothing, to go from completely over-committed to completely under-committed. And that's not my place of happiness either. That's not how I work or thrive. So if I can get curious, I can start to answer these questions for myself in the moment. Why did you choose this? What were you thinking about? Without judgment.

Not like, what were you thinking, you idiot but like, what were you thinking in that moment? Let's figure this out. And it's really important for me to do this now while I'm also thinking about what I want for next year. Because if I keep practicing those same thoughts that led me to overcommit, that led me to prove, that led me to get stressed. Then I run the risk of just recreating the same frantic pace all over again next year and wondering why I never get off the treadmill. It's the way I accidentally created it this year and I will do it again if I'm not super aware and curious.

So the pace I'm currently keeping it's not sustainable, even though I really like all the things I've done during these last few months and it has been so much fun in so many ways. It's also been exhausting. Fun plus exhausting can live together at the same time. You can have both at the same time,

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which is confusing to our human brains. It's like it should either be fun or exhausted, but not both.

And when it's both, and it's confusing, then I have to kind of excavate and weed through all of the things and get so curious about all the things that led me there. So I can figure out how to untangle it and create something that is less exhausting and still fun for next year. So like I said, I don't want to go to nothing. I don't want to go to over-committed to completely laying around and doing nothing. I'm happiest when I'm busy and creating. But how do I create the busy creating fun version of Tobi that is not also simultaneously overwhelmed?

And it's a really big ask. It's a hard thing to do. But we can get closer and closer and closer with curiosity. So like I said a bit ago, I feel like I've been eating and not tasting in 2023. I want to taste 2024. I want to taste and savor a lot of the things. Life is so freaking short, you all. We never know how long we have or how long our loved ones have. And if we're just completely getting up and running ourselves into the ground every day, there's going to be some big regrets on the other side of that.

So what can I do to slow things down a bit in some ways to make 2024 a pace that feels good for me? I'm playing with a lot of ideas. I'm playing with the thought of shifting away from some of the ways I've run my company for years and trying things a different way and that feels terrifying, but also intriguing. I'm very intrigued by the idea of being a small company for a while, probably not all the way down to a one person show. I definitely have to have support for the things that I'm doing but how could it look different?

How could I be very small and nimble, me with a part-time person or two and a bunch of outsourced people that work for me on contracts so that I'm their client and not their boss? So does any of this mean that I will personally do a whole lot less and lay around? Probably not. I like to do a lot of things. But I can go about it in a different way. And while it feels curious to me and intriguing and fun, it also feels terrifying. I don't know

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how to be that person because I've only been being the other person for a long time.

But I've also been responsible for so many people and that's exhausting. I've been responsible for all the team members I've had, anywhere from three to 12 at any given moment over the last 25 years. Thankfully, not even close to 12 anymore but recently as many as six that I was responsible for them at some level. Ultimately the book stopped with me and did they get paid? Did their families get to eat because we made payroll as a company? So being responsible for six other people. It's a lot.

But I was also responsible for a whole bunch of other businesses. Because I'm a coach for a lot of people and running programs and feeling that I have to help all of those other people, dozens, sometimes even hundreds of people, also be successful in their business. And that is also a lot of pressure. It's been over 15 years since I started my coaching business. So for 15 years I've been thinking about dozens or even hundreds of businesses, not just my own every single year. So what would it look like and feel like to not do that? And what does that even mean?

It doesn't mean I stop coaching. This is not all or nothing. But maybe I stop running programs. We've already retired *Design You*, it finishes up this very last class of *Design You* members in March of 2024. So maybe I don't do another program like that for a while. I'm sort of enjoying teaching workshops and things that you just show up and leave. Those are kind of fun. There's so much less pressure. I'm not promising you that after a year of working together that you will have grown your business to a different level.

So how do I show up in my best way and give what I want to give without the pressures and the deadlines? That is a curious fun question. And maybe we just tapped into one of the answers. I don't know. I'm going to explore it. I'm going to think about it. I'm going to decide sometime between now and early next year what I'm offering. And I get to decide. So what would it look like if I was only responsible for me? Can't imagine that, don't

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even know. I have no clue. I've never seen that before. Don't know how to be that person. But I'm curious enough to explore it some more.

And I want you to think about what you should get curious about too because I think we're in a moment that we're all being called to rethink business right now. The economy is soft, technology is changing rapidly again, as it always does, AI, all the things are coming, the shifts in the design industry and creative industries. I mean, even all the changes that happened in COVID that we're really still the new version of us since COVID. It hasn't been that long.

And we're not going back to the way things were before, but we're not even slowing down with how much we're changing. Things are changing so rapidly at such a pace. And I think we're going to see some major big shifts and changes again to ourselves, our businesses, our peers, our industry in the coming year, year or two. So how do we reimagine our businesses moving forward? What does that mean for each of us individually if we're being called to rethink our business? And for me personally that is exactly what I'm doing. What do I want my business to look like?

That's a huge question for me and it's an exciting question for me. It's not just scary. It can be scary, but it's also exciting. What if things could be easier? What if I could be responsible for fewer people? What if I could take days off? Because I knew that there weren't two or three or five or six other people and their families depended on our business for them to eat. That's a great question that I'm very curious about and I don't know how to be that person, but I might want to be that person. I might want to explore that person.

There's some part of that person that is definitely coming to 2024 with me. And I'm going to keep you posted on what she looks like and what those plans are and we're ready to think differently. So what do I want to do? What do I want for next year? Well, do I want to write a book yet or does that just feel like another big project? Maybe some of both. I know I want to write a book at some point. I've been saying that for a while. But am I ready



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for that now? Not sure yet. I am absolutely enjoying doing more design projects right now. I have a lot going on right now.

So what are my dreams and my vision for my design work and my design business? I love my ecommerce shop. It's super fun. How do I grow that? What is my vision for that? And how might that look if it's not just me being responsible for six other people and their families? Can that be nimble? Can it be small? Can I grow it and have fun with it without the pressures and the deadline driven kind of hyper focus that I tend to put on everything? I don't know, we will see. I enjoy social media. I enjoy creating content. Do I want to create more content?

Do I want to show up more as an influencer and make money that way? I don't know. It is all fun to me. It is all exciting. Here's what I do know, that for me, it's probably more important to get clear on what I don't like than what I do like because I like a lot of stuff. I am that multi-passionate, manifesting generator in human design. And for manifesting generators we love so many things and we love starting new things. So I think knowing what I don't want may be more important than knowing what I do want.

So what about you? Do you need to know what you do want or what you don't want or both? I mean, you definitely need both, but are you struggling more to know what you don't want in your future or to know what you do want? I know a lot of us do disconnect from our own desires. We become mothers and become responsible for other people and employees and things. And we start to tell ourselves that we don't have a choice to think about us. That would be selfish to think just about what we want.

And so we train ourselves to push down our own wants, our own desires, and replace them with what other people want. So maybe you need to tap into what you want. But the time is now whichever one of those you need to figure out, or both, to start thinking about next year. Because the beautiful thing about starting to think about this now in October is that it puts you in a place of power.

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When you start this process in October instead of waiting till the last week of December or the third week of January when you already feel behind. Starting it now means there's less urgency. And that means there's more white space. There's more space for dreaming. There feels like more room to decide what could be fun or what you want to stop doing.

In fact, I have some homework for you. This is what I want you to do right now and this is a practice called start, stop, continue. And this is my homework too. It's not just for you. I'm preaching to the choir here, telling this to myself. But it's an exercise of writing down what you want to stop doing for next year and notice that it starts with stop. I think that's really important and by design. So what do you want to stop doing next year that you're currently doing or did this year?

What do you want to start doing next year that you didn't do this year? And what do you want to continue doing? So start, stop, continue. It's as simple as it sounds, but it's also very, very powerful. When I think about doing this exercise I get a little anxiety. Something rises up in my chest a bit, sort of like a fear or anxiety, which I know what it is. I can pretend I don't. I can pretend to be perplexed, but I know. I know that for me I have a really hard time quitting anything. And so the whole stop part of the exercise, which is the very first step, is really, really difficult for me.

So I have to remind myself that it's okay to get uncomfortable during this exercise. It's okay to feel anxiety. It doesn't have to feel good. But I know that I fear that I won't be completely honest with myself because I don't have trouble starting anything, that's my jam, but I do have a whole lot of trouble stopping things. So there's some underlying belief for me that stopping means quitting. And I was taught not to be a quitter. And there's some underlying belief that maybe stopping even means failure. The thing you stop, failed. Not like it was just a choice to stop but it feels like failure.

And so I got a good, good dose as I was growing up and probably for years after that of, don't be a quitter and failure is not an option. And so I would say that quitting anything may be my biggest life challenge. So I can start a

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whole bunch of stuff. I just keep adding to the mix, but I don't quit many things. Maybe, just maybe, my word for 2024 should be quit. And wow, that is terrifying to think about. It's powerful and terrifying. Because we have such a negative connotation with quit.

Quit to most of us means give up, roll over and die or maybe that's just me, that it means that to, but you. know what I'm saying. What if my word for 2024 is quit? It gives me chills. It makes me a little nauseous and usually that's a good sign, that's usually something I should lean towards if it's scaring the hell out of me. So yeah, I don't know if that's the word that it'll actually be. I will keep you posted at the end of this year, when I announce it. But something in this realm, I'm onto something you all, I'm onto something. And you might need to be onto this too.

We can absolutely do this together, you all. So here's our homework. I'm speaking to you. I'm speaking to me. It's our homework. It's time to do your stop, start and continue exercise for 2024 and be honest, be so honest. Get so excited. Dream big and for goodness sakes, give yourself permission to stop things. It's okay to be a quitter. It is okay to give up on something. I'm saying that for myself. So I can go back and listen to this over and over and over again, because I would give you that advice. But it's really hard for me to take it myself, you all.

So give yourself permission to stop things, stop, start, continue. Let me know how this exercise goes for you. Reach out on Instagram. DM me, your aha moments. I can't wait to learn from all of you as much as you learn from me. But this is a powerful exercise and don't put it off. Don't wait until late November or late December. The power is in doing it now when there's still space. I can tell you that 2024 is a year that's calling me to be brave and bold at a different level than I have been before. And usually brave and bold means go start something big.

And I think it's something different than that this year. I think it's the quitting thing for sure, quitting some things. I think it's being willing to be different and to be seen different and to show up different. I have to say just this

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week a couple of days ago I saw a designer that I greatly admire that has a super successful business, a beautiful book, all the success in the world. Her work is exquisite and so inspiring. And she just posted a couple of days ago that she is closing her business. And not because it's, I mean, I don't know.

I don't know what the reasons are, it could be that it's hard to make money this day and age like it is for all of us, but it really didn't feel like that. It was more just I want to do something different. And she said what she was going to do as her next career. She's going to move to a small town. Do a different career path. And you all, that is what I'm talking about, brave and bold things, being willing to do that. And I think that is so brave.

I admire her for being willing to quit the thing that she started and even go out while she's on top because, dang, it looks like everything's working for her and she's had so many successes. So if you have aha moments as you do this, stop, start and continue, let me know. I want to talk about it because I think 2024 is calling a lot of us to be brave in a new way and bold in a new way, to go where we haven't before. And that doesn't necessarily mean what it's meant for is in the past.

Bold and brave doesn't just mean doing more, more, more necessarily, I don't think, at least for me. So what does doing things differently look like for you? I can't wait to hear. What does doing things differently look like for me? I have no idea yet, but I will report back as soon as I decide, including what my word of the year is. And don't be surprised if it's quit or something similar which at the moment just saying that makes me kind of throw up a little bit in my mouth.

So that's what you want, a word of the year that makes you nauseous. But I get it. I feel it. It's calling to me. There is some big wisdom in this podcast, I hope for you. There's definitely some for myself here. Okay, friends, that's what I have for you. I'll see you next week with another great episode of *The Design You Podcast*. Bye for now.

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