

Ep #42: Change Your Thoughts to Reach Your Goals



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Tobi Fairley

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You are listening to *The Design You Podcast* with Tobi Fairley, episode number 42.

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 is your host, Tobi Fairley.

Hello friends, it's January. Welcome to 2019. What a fun time of the year. Do you love the new year as much as I do? Well, you've heard me say multiple times already how much I love it, and I hope you love it too, and hope you're off to a great start this year.

But the more important question that I want to ask you is not are you starting strong but will you still be crushing your goals in two weeks or six weeks or 12 weeks or 24 weeks from now, or even farther out than that. I mean when the gyms are empty and when business owners are back to doing their old unsuccessful habits and ways and when you're clean eating that you're starting this year has been abandoned because most people abandon it by the middle of February, friends.

When all that happens to everybody else, where will you be this year? So starting goals isn't usually the problem. It's sticking to them that is the thing that so many of us struggle with. And that is what I want to talk about on today's episode. So our brains are super fascinating, right? And often, they're like children. Emotional children, y'all, that's what a lot of us are in adult bodies.

And in the beginning of something new like a goal, like the new year, our thoughts are all in, right? It's this is the best idea ever, this is really going to work this time, this is genius, I'm so excited, let's do this. And then what happens? Things get hard because things always get hard if it's something that you're doing that is about making a lasting change or a huge shift. They always get hard, right?

And that's when our thoughts shift. Those pesky obstacle thoughts creep in in those moments, and you know those obstacle thoughts, right? The ones

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that then say this is a terrible idea, I never liked working out with weights, why did I think it would be different this time? Yes, I say I want to be healthy but I really want to eat cheese dip more than I want to be healthy, so I'm actually fine not being at my ideal weight.

And nobody can lose weight anyway, right? When focusing on work and all the stuff we have in our lives and we're so busy, and especially not when we're traveling. I'll just start this again next month when I'm back home from all the travel or when the birthday is over or when that wedding we have to go to is behind us or whatever your litany of excuses and obstacles thoughts happen to be.

So whatever your version of this is, and it doesn't have to be about health and wellness. It can be about anything. They're not just happening when we're trying to lose weight. Obstacle thoughts come up over any big goal or change, whether it's about our health, our finances, our business, if it's putting ourselves out into the world in a bigger way, if it's showing up for ourselves, if it's working on relationships that have struggled. Literally anything we try to do that is different than what we've been doing is going to trigger obstacle thoughts.

And I think this is such a big idea, this idea of how obstacle thoughts are roadblocks for us that I did a whole podcast previously just about obstacle thoughts and what to do about them, and I'll link to that in the show notes. But today I want to talk about our thoughts in reference to our new year's goals specifically.

So I'm a high achiever. I get tons of stuff done. Big stuff every single year. And last year was no different. In fact, last year actually, let me take a step back. Last year was different. Last year was no different in that I was still a high achiever, but last year was totally different in my thinking.

And one of the things I created last year was my *Design You* coaching program. One of the other things I did last year was I doubled my personal salary again. And I say again because I did this a few years ago. So these were huge things for me.

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But I changed in 2018 because my thoughts changed in 2018. Now, let me be honest first. Full disclosure. Business and finances are not the place that I typically struggle a whole lot in. Those are sort of my sweet spots. I'm really comfortable there, even when I'm uncomfortable. And sure, obstacle thoughts come up, but I love work and I love a challenge, and I don't really have a lot of fear around taking risk in that part of my life.

So I've been really effective at creating strategies to overcome the obstacle thoughts in those areas so I can meet my goals. Now, I wasn't originally that good in that area. I remember 20 years ago when I started my business, it was way scarier and I made way more mistakes and I quit a lot more stuff in the area of business and finance. So I've just worked that muscle a lot.

It was kind of like riding a bike. I've gotten really good at overcoming my obstacle thoughts in that area. But in the area of health and wellness, that is where I still struggle. And just this morning I was watching Good Morning America and they were talking about the January rush that goals and resolutions create, and Dan Harris, their weekend anchor who doesn't have weight to lose, he's very slim, and I don't think his wife does either, I think she's very slim, said that they went to this particular salad chain that they were talking about on the news in New York for dinner the night before and they had to abandon it because there were over 50 people waiting in line because everybody was all into the salads for January, right?

And come February, he's like, we'll just come back in February, no big deal. And you know what I realized when he was talking about this? And I realized this may be for the first time that there are actually people who do not have a New Years resolution to get fit or get healthy or lose weight because they don't need to. They either already did it or they've always been consistent in that area. They're already where they want to be, right?

And that just struck me, and you may be thinking, "Well Tobi, duh," but it really struck me. And maybe it's because that feels like the ultimate freedom to me because that's an area where I have struggled in the past, and especially since freedom is my word for 2019, it really got my attention

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because I was just thinking how freeing it would be to start a new year and not have to be thinking about my weight or my health anymore just because it's already done. It's taken care of, it's not a problem.

So again, you may be thinking, "Well duh, that's common sense, you're the master of the obvious, Tobi," but here's what I want you to realize. This blew my mind, and it's probably because for as long as I can remember, there has been some sort of goal in my life at the beginning of each year that had to do with weight and health and appearance.

For years, at least the last 10 or 15 years, probably longer that I either had a goal or at least was doing a lot of thinking and trying to make changes in this area of my life. And friends, let me tell you something. I am tired of that goal. I am over thinking those thoughts. I am tired of being that person who once again is tackling this thing.

And do you know why I am that person? Because year after year in this one particular area of my life, I do not show up for myself all the way. I don't finish the job, I don't consistently do the work to eliminate this goal, to crush this goal so that I can move on to different goals and a different focus and a new idea to get focused on in the next new year. I keep repeating the same one.

Can you relate? And it may not be that you like me are always needing to work on the area of health or lose weight, and of course every year it wasn't losing the same amount of weight. Sometimes it was losing five pounds, sometimes it was losing 25 pounds, but each year it was still around the same idea of getting healthy and fit.

So maybe you're not there in your health. Maybe it's financially. Maybe each year you start all over again thinking this is the year I will finally reach financial freedom or heck, just financial comfort. So maybe that's what you're working on or maybe each year for you it's this is the year that I will work on my relationships because you constantly struggle there and you're so tired of wanting to be closer with your mom or your dad or your daughter, or you're tired of looking for the right mate, or you're tired of

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feeling like your marriage isn't working or something to do with relationships.

You know, it doesn't matter what you aren't showing up for yourself about. Now, right now, January 2019 is the time to finish the dang job already, right? As it's trendy to say these days, do the dang thing already, right? That's how I feel about my health and wellness. Do the dang thing already.

And the way to do the dang thing, guess what, it's changing our mindset. That's 100% the way to do it. That's right, it's an inside job. It's always an inside job. It's always been an inside job.

Now, weight loss seems like it's about taking an action, right? Going to the gym, changing what we eat. So does money stuff or making money or our business. It's taking an action. We're like, I got to do this, this, this, and this. But you know what? Our unmet goals that seem like they're about action aren't.

And they never were about action because all action is a result of our thoughts and the problem has always been our thoughts. So if you have ever heard me talk about the thought model that I was trained on at The Life Coach School, then this might sound a little familiar with you. If not, I want you to know this, that our thoughts cause our feelings, and our feelings cause our actions or inactions like procrastination, like quitting.

And our actions or inactions cause our results. So though it looks like it's about the actions, that's three steps down the model. It's not the actions that we need to change. We already know what to do. We've got to change our thoughts so it changes our feelings so we consistently show up with the actions and stop quitting on ourselves.

So if we're not hitting our goals, it's not about taking more action, friends. It's about changing our thoughts when it comes to quitting. We've got to change our obstacle thoughts around the things that we're trying to achieve.

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So just this week I was at the gym and I have a completely new mindset than I have ever had before because I've been preparing for all of 2018, the whole year to make this year, 2019, the year that I once and for all reach my optimal health. So I knew last year when I set my goals that this year's goal - actually I only had one goal last year because you've probably heard me podcast on one key goal. If not, we'll link that in the show notes too.

But my goal last year was around business and my goal this year was around my health and I knew that's how I was going to tackle these things and I knew that it was in this order for a specific reason. That's right. I spent an entire year last year getting ready to crush this one goal of optimal health for 2019.

So what the heck did I need to do for a whole year to get ready, right? You're like, dude, you're slow, why did it take so long? Well actually, I needed to do a lot of things. So I started by writing down all the obstacle thoughts that have kept me at some level of wellness but not optimal wellness for years. Because I'm not unhealthy. I go to the doctor and I get my physical every year and he's like you couldn't be healthier.

But not at the level that I'm trying to achieve. Yeah, I can lose weight, yes, my joints hurt, yes, every year I start the year with something to work on in that area and I'm tired of it. So I have reached some level of wellness for a long time but not optimal wellness, meaning I didn't just cross the whole thing off my to-do list. There's not a big red line drawn all the way through health and wellness.

I didn't get to put that over to the side, and not that you can just stop doing the actions, but just stop thinking about it, stop having it on my to-do list. It's just done and continuing to be done, but it's not one of my to-dos. So last year knowing that I would need time to do this in 2019, I planned for a lot of obstacles.

I planned for the financial obstacle, I created a scalable business model with recurring revenue from my new coaching program so that I could take more time for me in 2019 without all my income coming to a screeching halt

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if I wasn't working. Now, a lot of you have those kinds of businesses. If you're not working, there's no money coming in because you are the money.

Well, I intentionally created a business model to free up more time because you know my word of 2019 is freedom so that I could get free of this to-do list item of health and wellness. I also did a ton of mindset work around a whole lot of things, including my health, including emotional eating, including exercise, including showing up for myself. Things that I have struggled with for years.

So back to my gym story. When I was there this week, I was on the stair master warming up for my personal trainer, and I was next to a lady that was talking out loud. She was actually talking to another person at the gym and I was on one next to her. A couple over. So she didn't really know I was listening to her and I certainly wasn't judging.

But she was saying, "I hate this machine. This is hard. Why am I doing this? I can't workout three times a week. It's just too much. I just need to workout two days a week." And a lot of other similar comments. Now again, I wasn't judging her because trust me, I have said those exact things pretty much every year for those last 10 or 15 or more years that I haven't reached optimal wellness. So many times have I said those things that I couldn't even count.

But what I was doing besides not judging her was listening and being aware of her words and her thoughts compared to my thoughts. So here's what I was not thinking. I was not thinking, "I know lady, you are right. Me too. This machine is brutal, why am I even here?" I was not thinking that for maybe the first time ever.

Let's be clear. I don't even know if I've been to the gym with a trainer on January the - what was that? - The second, ever. I've started close after but that was a new record already. But I was not thinking the same negative thoughts she was thinking.

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Now, thanks to all that work I did last year, here's what I was thinking. I was thinking, "Yeah this is hard. I feel this in my legs and my thighs as I'm walking on the stair master at three miles an hour, but it's supposed to be hard so that's cool." And I was thinking, "Doing anything that really matters isn't easy, right? If it was, everybody would be crushing it. We wouldn't even be having this conversation. So okay, that's cool."

And then I was thinking, "You know, I've actually got this. This is really not that bad. And I'm great at doing hard. Hard, honestly, is kind of my jam. Look at all the things I've done that are hard." And then I thought, "In fact, this isn't even really hard. Compared to the things I've been doing for 20 years or longer, this is not hard. One hour a day at the gym or doing cardio or clean eating or anything else that it takes to have optimal wellness is just not hard. Honestly. It takes time, it might feel a little painful to my muscles until they get in better shape and then if I push harder it'll still hurt but that's just part of it. But this kind of hard is actually a fraction of the hard that I've taken on when it comes to building Design You or when it comes to a whole lot of other things that I've done not only in 2018 but the last 20 years. So it's really not hard."

And then I thought, "I don't have to be perfect to be at the gym and to reach my optimal health. I just have to show up. I just have to show up at the gym for the next 52 weeks because the one thing I don't consistently do is show up. The one thing that I do consistently do in this area is quit on myself."

So I recognized that and I was like, Tobi, just show up. Show up on the days you don't feel good. Show up on the days you open your eyes and your first thoughts are I don't feel like working out. Do it anyway. Show up on the days when you don't feel like eating right and you're watching other people eat other things and you feel stressed and tired, do it anyway. It's just not that hard, friends.

People do it every day. People choose optimal health and wellness every day. People choose to make a lot of money in their business every day. People choose to put themselves out there in a bigger way, even though it's uncomfortable every day. It's not that hard.

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And I realized that I was thinking, if I'm just focused on showing up, I don't even have to focus on my weight. I don't even have to focus on a timeline. It's not like I have to do this in one month or three months or six months, or that there's a deadline because if I just keep showing up, I'm not stopping at the end of 52 weeks. This is the rest of my lifetime. I'm not stopping because optimal health does not come from fits and starts. It does not come from short timelines and then we go back to our old self, right?

It's just showing up. And so I realized that I don't have to do anything but that and that is probably one of the easiest things that I will do every single week is just show up. Show up for exercise, show up for clean eating, and the rest will take care of itself.

So I thought to myself, this is so doable, and why in the world have I been pretending for maybe even 20 years or longer like it's hard? Like it's not doable, like it was impossible for all those years? Well friends, let me tell you why. Because of what I was saying to myself.

What we tell ourselves matters. If we tell ourselves it's too hard, it's going to be. We're going to believe it. If we tell ourselves we can't do it, we will not be able to. We're going to believe that too. I want you to look at your thoughts and I want you to look at what you're believing. Our thoughts are not true. They are just thoughts.

But when we don't know that, when we don't know to question our thoughts, when we don't know that we should be calling ourselves out on our own BS, then what happens? We give into them. We quit. Every time we quit because we're looking for an easy way out in that moment it feels hard, we tell ourselves it's hard, we believe it's hard, and we justify the quitting, but that is the worst idea ever because then what happens?

At least every January, if not sooner, you got to start over again. And then you become exhausted of the starting over on the same goal for the umpteenth time, right? As we say in the south, umpteenth. And you're just over it. And the more over it you get, the more difficult it becomes.

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So I want you to look back at everything you have set out to accomplish in your life that you quit on. Because here's what I think you're going to find. You're going to find a whole lot of thoughts, a whole lot of beliefs that were the reason. It wasn't really too hard, it wasn't really because you were traveling or you were having a baby or you were building a business. It's because of the thoughts you were thinking.

It kind of blows your mind, right? It blows mine too. We could already have everything we want right now. So please join me in 2019 and let this be the year that you finally achieve the thing or things you've been attempting for years.

Now, remember my idea of one key goal at a time? If you try two or three of these at once, it's likely that you will get derailed because we need all of our focus and attention on every goal, one at a time, just to prevent these thoughts from knocking us off our game. They're sneaky. They sneak up on us and they seem like the truth, especially when we're tired or we're busy or distracted.

So I highly suggest you pick the one that you want to get rid of first that you've been attempting for years and join me over these next 12 months and let's kick this baby to the curb. I mean, are you with me? 12 months from now, let's stand on the other side of 2019 at the finish line.

For the one or two things you've struggle to accomplish for years, stand on the other side and look back and think, I did it, and feel the freedom - remember my 2019 word of the year, the freedom of getting to focus on something else. Please god, yes. For 2020 and beyond, please do not tackle the same goal again next year.

Dr. Wayne Dyer who I really love and followed since I was 12, back when my parents made me listen to him - yes, they did that, they really did, thank you mom and dad - here's what he said. He said a bunch of great things, but here's one of the most famous things he said. "Change your thoughts, change your life."

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And he was so right. So happy New Year, friends. Change your thoughts, change your life this year. Have a whole new place to start from next year. That's where I'm going. Let's go there together. And be sure to join me in the *Design You* podcast community on Facebook where you can follow along with my goals and my successes and my stumbles and my obstacles all year.

Through this podcast I'll be talking about it and we'll be doing some updates in there, but we'll also just be coming together as a community and holding each other accountable. So join us over there. So if you want to join, go to Facebook and then search the *Design You Podcast Community* and you just have to request to join. You're all welcome, but just to keep it kind of a safe place for us to communicate we do keep it as a closed group.

So we'll let you in really soon after you request, but request to join us and let's show up together because if we all hang out together, guess what? A rising tide lifts all boats. So let's rise up together in 2019. Thank you so much for listening and I'll see you again on *The Design You Podcast* next week, friends. Bye for now.

Thank you so much for joining me for this episode of *The Design You Podcast*. And if you'd like even more support for designing a business and a life that you love, then check out my exclusive monthly coaching program Design You at tobifairley.com.