

Ep #106: Take Back Control of Your Time with Kate Erickson



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Tobi Fairley

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

Ep #106: Take Back Control of Your Time with Kate Erickson

Tobi Fairley: You are listening to *The Design You Podcast* with Tobi Fairley, episode number 106 .

Female Announcer: 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.

Tobi Fairley: Hey, hey, friends. Are you ready to kick Netflix to the curb yet? No, I'm really kind of serious, are you? Are you ready to get your time management and productivity aligned? Because that's what we're talking about today and I know there's a lot of you out there who are thinking of all of the things you should be doing right now in your business, in your life, but somehow you're taking the path of least resistance.

You know the one that has you sleeping later or maybe staying up later or both and has you watching lots of Netflix and scrolling Instagram and maybe listening to the news way too much but is not really the one that has you overmaximizing your time, being super productive, and creating a business and a life that you're going to love a month from now or three months from now or six months from now.

Well, today, this episode is the one for you if you're ready to get your time management dialed in because I have Kate Erickson who is a time management and productivity expert and the host of the *Ditch Busy* podcast.

Now, I know Kate because she's also the partner of John Lee Dumas. So, I was John Lee Dumas' amazing *Entrepreneur on Fire* podcast last year and she and John Lee Dumas live in Puerto Rico. She has been part of his business for years, but now she is a business owner and podcaster in her own right.

So, in this episode Kate and I talk about so many amazing things about time management and productivity. We're so on the same page. We recorded this prior to even knowing what our reality would be today. We

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

Ep #106: Take Back Control of Your Time with Kate Erickson

recorded it about three weeks ago, but it could not be more timely for us right now and it really builds on all of the other episodes where I've taught you my own time management techniques, especially episode number 54 with all of my time management tools.

So, enjoy this episode with Kate and me. Get out a notepad, you're going to need, and I'll catch you on the other side of the episode to remind you of my other time management podcast episodes and resources and we'll get you getting your time management dialed in so you are using all of this extra time that suddenly landed in your lap for your highest and best benefit. Okay, so enjoy the show, see you in a few.

Hey, Kate, welcome to *The Design You Podcast*. I'm so excited about our conversation today.

Kate Erickson: Me, too, Tobi. Thank you so much for inviting me.

Tobi Fairley: So, you're in Puerto Rico, right?

Kate Erickson: Yes, Puerto Rico.

Tobi Fairley: Awesome. I kind of wish I was there right now because I just came back from an 8-day working trip at the beach and I have all of the catch-up to do which is a perfect reason for us to talk about productivity today and getting things done which is what our topic is. But before we do that, tell everybody a little bit about who you are, what you do, so they have some kind of basis for hearing what you're going to say today.

Kate Erickson: Yeah, so quick background about me. I grew up in corporate life through and through, went to college, graduated with a degree, started climbing the corporate ladder. Although when I got to corporate I actually wasn't climbing that ladder at all, was super frustrated, felt under-valued and I was in a position that was basically secretarial, but I literally ran the entire office. You know, one of those positions where they

Ep #106: Take Back Control of Your Time with Kate Erickson

expect the world of you and you give it to them, but then you're still sitting at the front desk greeting people?

So, I just got to the point where I was so frustrated that I was like, "There has to be something else." I didn't know what entrepreneurship was all about, but I knew that the rest of my life didn't have to be that way. So, I quit my job, I moved across the country to Maine to be with my newfound love, this guy named John Lee Dumas.

Within a year of all of that happening I tried to start my own business, failed, went back to corporate America and during that time John launched a podcast called *Entrepreneurs on Fire* and about six months into that he was gaining really great traction and momentum and he is like a true entrepreneur. Visionary, all these big ideas, loves working on the business as an entrepreneur should, and he was kind of missing that back-end component.

He's like, "Wait a second. These are all the things that you are amazing at. What do you think about coming and joining me on the team?" I was like, "Whoa, whoa, whoa." We were in a somewhat new relationship like still kind of getting to know each other. Again, my only experience with entrepreneurship was that I had tried and I had failed. So, I had a lot of reasons for resistance, but we worked through all of that. I joined the team and here we are seven years later.

Tobi Fairley: Wow.

Kate Erickson: Yeah.

Tobi Fairley: Okay, so I love that story and I love how sometimes we become accidental entrepreneurs ourselves which is kind of what you're saying. Which is so great and you're just really living in your zone of genius which is exactly what most people or everyone really needs to be doing, but a lot of times the to do list and all the things get in our way, right?

Ep #106: Take Back Control of Your Time with Kate Erickson

So, I think that's the perfect thing for us to start talking about today because you are a productivity expert, you're the get stuff done lady over at JLD, you make everything happen, all of the stuff that's really super important. We want to make sure that we can sort of bring that down to some steps that my audience, which is a whole lot of creatives and a lot of small business owners and entrepreneurs, where they can really start to put that into practice in their business because I talk a lot about time management and time blocking.

All of that is great, but I think that sometimes there's some mindset blocks and some other things that get in the way. So, how would you suggest we start this? Is it about setting our expectations for what we want to do in the day? How do we begin to really show up for ourselves and get stuff done?

Kate Erickson: Okay, this is at the very foundation of it. Like, you talked about working in your zone of genius and I think for a lot of us we tend to forget that the best and most productive and biggest revenue-generating and game changing things that we can be working on on our business are things within that zone.

So, first of all, embracing and knowing what your zone is because for me it took me a while to figure that out. To me, connected in my mind, what I was great at I associated with corporate America and all I knew is that I was running as fast as I could away from that.

So, it took me a while to understand that those skills, they can transfer over and make a huge impact in building and growing a business. I think a first step is really getting clear about what your zone is. Where do you make the biggest impact and I can guarantee you it's when you're working on your business and not in it.

I feel like a lot of the times we get stuck working in our business on tasks that honestly could really be delegated to somebody else. You shouldn't be spending your time that way. But how do you figure that out? My biggest thing is having clear goals that you're working towards in your business.

Ep #106: Take Back Control of Your Time with Kate Erickson

Whether that be a revenue, an audience, a goal of launching a podcast, a goal of building your website and getting your website up and running, whatever that goal might be it's so important to keep your eye on that and truly focus on that because when we're able to do that then we can get into the expectations you were talking about.

When we have a task list of 20 things that we want to accomplish in a day and we set out on our day and we're trying as hard as we possibly can to get through that list of 20 things and then at the end of the day we find out that maybe we were able to check 4 of them off, that just sets us up to be frustrated and annoyed that we weren't able to get as much done as we wanted to.

But you'll see if you start setting proper expectations and understanding how long, like you mentioned time blocking as well, when you start to understand how long it actually takes you to do a task or to do a project that can be so huge in helping you set yourself up for success because just dumping a list of 20 things that may or may not actually be helping you get towards the goal that you should be working towards and focused on, that's not going to help us.

So, setting those expectations is so critical and in order to do that properly we have to understand what our goals are and what we're working towards.

Tobi Fairley: I love that. So, I was literally taking notes as you were talking because there's so much there that you talked about including, I think a lot of times our zone of genius is the stuff we take for granted because that's pretty much what you were saying you were doing.

You're like, "I know I did that well, but I just thought that was the thing that either everybody did or went with this other job." So, I think that's an important thing to look at. All the things that we just assume everybody else can do or we just assume it's part of our business and we have to do it, I think looking at those tasks for sure and seeing what's there – and I love your comment about what we delegate.

Ep #106: Take Back Control of Your Time with Kate Erickson

Because I think a lot of times whether it's for our ego or some other reason we hang on to things that could easily be delegated to somebody else. I think about it in the interior design business that I've been in for 20 years. When I learned to delegate some of the pieces that in my mind originally were like, "Of course you couldn't let someone else pick out the sofa, you're the designer."

But the interesting thing is that's a skill that can easily be delegated for someone else to go gather things and present them back to me and help put it together. It doesn't mean it's not my design, but it's just a better use of my time when I could be out on the frontline selling or recording a podcast or doing something that's going to bring more awareness about the company to everybody else.

So, I think, you're right. We have to look at it really hard at what we delegate. Then, two other things you said that I think are important and I'd love to dig into those a little bit deeper is how long something takes because you're so right. We write down 20 things on our list and by the end of the day we've added 20 more and we're making the assumption that those 20 things can get done in a day or a couple of days. Sometimes it's months to finish those tasks.

So, they all feel like an A priority, like they're urgent. They all feel like they should have already been finished when we never gave them proper time or planning or allotment, didn't think through them.

Then, a lot of those things I think just shouldn't make our list at all. So, how do we start to get clear on how long something really does take and if something should be on our list? Because to your point with goals, I think a lot of times if we look at our to do list the tasks we're doing are taking us to a different goal or a means to a different end, a different result. Then we're confused why we're not getting the result we think we want which is the goal, but if we look at our list it's not stuff that takes us to the goal.

Ep #106: Take Back Control of Your Time with Kate Erickson

So, help us clarify a lot of that, of what goes on there, how long it takes and how to make sure that we're moving towards we want to move towards.

Kate Erickson: All the yesses. Yes to everything! So, when it comes to timing, understanding how long it takes you to do something, like as business owners there's a lot of repetitive things we do in our business, right? Parkinson's Law says that tasks will expand to the time that we allot. If I sit down and I give myself an hour to clean up my desk and file my papers or whatever it might be, I will probably take that hour.

But if I only give myself 20 minutes to do it, guess what, something in my mind and my focus changes and I know I only have 20 minutes so I better get to it, I better be focused, I better be disciplined, I better not get distracted.

So, first, we have no clue how long things take us, right? So, that idea of giving myself 20 minutes to do whatever, so you have to just start somewhere. If you're diving in and you're trying to put together, like – I can't think of what I'm trying to say, like a project plan for a new client, a proposal. That's what I was looking for.

Let's say you're putting together a proposal, 45 minutes. Give yourself 45 minutes and get as far as – literally set a timer. Use an online timer, use the timer on your phone, I don't care what type of timer it is, you have to have a time. Give yourself 45 minutes and truly focus and be so disciplined about that one task.

Don't have your email open. Don't be on social media. Don't have your phone dinging, notifications off. Truly give yourself the opportunity to focus. At the end of those 45 minutes when the timer goes off you're going to have a very clear picture of how long it takes you to put together a proposal.

Maybe you finish 10 minutes early and it only takes you 35 minutes. Maybe you're so close and you think, "You know what, I think I probably could do

Ep #106: Take Back Control of Your Time with Kate Erickson

this. I just need to have better systems in place to help me get this done in 45 minutes.” Maybe you’re like, “Whoa, I’m totally underestimating the amount of time that it takes me to do a proposal. It’s probably going to be more like 2 hours.”

Every single one of those scenarios is amazing feedback because guess what, now you know. Now you know exactly how long it takes you, but you have to be honest with yourself and give yourself that focused, disciplined time.

Then you start doing that with every task in your business. You start timing yourself for everything that you’re doing and every single day I have four focus sessions. I call them focus sessions, time blocks, however you want to name it. Those are four things that I’m going to work on that day, I time myself on every single one of them. I get more done before noon than I used to get all day by using these focus sessions.

So, start doing it with everything in your business. That goes into when you are actually working on the tasks and projects that are moving you closer to your goals and you’re using these time blocks, holy moly, you’re going to be getting to your goals so much faster than you ever thought possible.

Then, starting to determine what tasks you should and should not be working on and how to actually get to a point – we can move into that now, but I’ll stop talking for a second.

Tobi Fairley: I love it! That’s all so good and it’s exactly the way I work. I think you’re right. It’s so fascinating. People want to pretend like they’re so confused and we may be confused a little bit on the front end because we haven’t done it yet and we haven’t timed it yet, but once you try it once or twice you’re no longer confused.

I think one of the things to note, too, that I find people doing is they have maybe time blocks set the way I teach or something else that they’ve learned from another source and they get to that halfway point and say

Ep #106: Take Back Control of Your Time with Kate Erickson

their proposal and they allotted 45 minutes and they're like, okay, I need 2 hours and choose to just blow through whatever was on their next block.

So, what do you think about that? Because I think that's a terrible idea and for me it makes way more sense to go out and schedule another block in the future, but if we set ourselves up for being okay to constantly not do what we said we're going to do I find that's a huge problem, especially for creatives. We have all the legitimate excuses, and they are legit, like I need to get this done, but we can always justify ignoring the plan we set in place. So, do you have any comments or thoughts about how to not do that? Or if you agree that it's better to go ahead and stick to your time block as opposed to running through your next scheduled item?

Kate Erickson: I totally agree with you on like we need to show up and do what we say we're going to do. I think that it really becomes a matter of true priority. I know that right now you think 10 different things are the most important thing, it's just not true. That literally goes against the definition of what priority means. Priority means one single most important thing.

So, you have to stop pretending like priorities can actually be plural because it literally can't be.

Tobi Fairley: Right. I love that. I remember that from the book, *Essentialism* and that blew my mind when he said the whole definition came from one most important thing and yet we're like, for our company these are our 27 priorities, right, for the year and we think that's legit, but it's just confusing and it just leads us into the chaos that most of us live in, right?

Kate Erickson: Yeah, so I mean I think we have to step up, be adult business owners and say, "Okay, I gave myself 45 minutes, this is going to take 2 hours. Is this a proposal that I have promised to my client before noon today?" If so, to me, that's your priority and you need to show up to that the way that you promised your client.

Ep #106: Take Back Control of Your Time with Kate Erickson

However, if this is something that you have like a week to do, you should absolutely stop, learn from the fact that you just gave yourself 45 minutes and now you know it takes you way longer so you can better prepare in the future and you need to continue moving on to the other things that you've committed to doing that day?

Tobi Fairley: Yeah, I love that. So, that leads us into something I know that you like to talk about and that's saying yes to too many things. Because I think part of the problem with what you're talking about is we look at our schedule and we're like, "Yeah, I promised that proposal to someone today. Oh, and I also promised this other person I would do this other thing, and I promised my husband I would go get groceries for dinner, and I promised my kid I would take them to this event this afternoon." Every one of those takes twice as long as what you had estimated so in the beginning you're going to have some chaos that you're going to have to learn not to say yes to so many things until you figure out some of the timing.

So, how do we do that? How do we stop what you call the premature yes, and start figuring out what to say yes to?

Kate Erickson: Okay, so I know that everybody has experienced this. You say yes, and literally within two seconds you're like, "Maybe I shouldn't have said yes to that."

I'm huge on sticking with your commitment so even when I say yes to something and then I find out – we say yes to too many things is the bottom line and this goes back to expectations. If you say yes to all those things you just mentioned in your day again, you are going to end your day feeling underwhelmed by your progress, by your ability to provide for your family, by your ability to show up in your relationships, or your ability to make progress.

You set yourself up for that. So, first of all, call yourself out. It's time to start calling ourselves out on these things so that we can be better, so that we can improve in those areas.

Ep #106: Take Back Control of Your Time with Kate Erickson

For me, every time someone asks me if I would like to commit to something, I always say, and this is a script, you can borrow, steal, tweak, I say, “Thank you so much for the opportunity. Let me make sure that I can commit to this and I’ll get back to you in” whatever time frame you want to give.

Tobi Fairley: Like 24 hours or by the end of the week or something like that.

Kate Erickson: Exactly. That not only gives you the opportunity to truly consider whether it’s something you even want to do because a lot of the times we’re excited and we’re hanging out with our friends and they’re like, “Oh my gosh, we should do this again next week,” and you’re like, “Yes, let’s put it in the calendar.” Then, you wake up the next morning and you’re like, “Oh my gosh, that totally sets me up for failure because I already have all these other things planned.”

Tobi Fairley: This can go for any number of things, right? Anything you’re committing to in your life, in your business, in your relationships, whatever it might be. If you just give yourself that space to truly consider whether or not it’s something you want to commit to, one, that’s going to be a huge game changer right. Two, if it is something that you do truly want to commit to, but you actually look at your schedule which you’re using to go ahead and block off the times that you’re committing to things so that you can visually see, “Oh wow, I have a pretty packed week.”

I think this is another thing a lot of people don’t do is they’re not using some type of system to show themselves what they’ve committed to and that’s why we overcommit, because in our minds we’re like, “I’m Superwoman, I got that. I can totally do all that stuff.”

When you start giving yourself a visual cue of what you have actually committed to then it’s going to make that premature yes, we’re not going to say yes right away, we’re going to tell people, “Thank you so much for the opportunity. Thank you so much for the invite. This sounds like a ton of fun.

Ep #106: Take Back Control of Your Time with Kate Erickson

Let me just check my calendar and make sure I can commit to that. I'll get back to you."

That gives you the time and the space you need to truly consider if that's something that you want to do and if you do want to do it, can you actually commit to that? Look at your schedule and be realistic with yourself.

Tobi Fairley: Yeah, I love that. That's the very reason I use time blocking and I make mine all pretty colors and things that I want to look at because I'm a creative and I don't want to get bored with it, but at the same time you're right. Years ago, I think I probably got this on track probably four or five years ago, but before that I was always feeling like a failure. Just like we were talking. Getting to the end of the day and underdelivering and feeling like I was letting myself and everybody else down.

When I started putting things in a calendar and I could look at it, it's pretty dang clear if you put all of your stuff in it – now, a lot of people will just put a big meeting or just a doctor's appointment. I mean everything, when are you going work out? When are you going to sleep? All the things, it's very clear that you're like, I have literally 30 minutes left in this whole week that aren't spoken for and I think you're right.

Until then, if we aren't doing that we can lie to ourselves, we can accidentally not notice how much we've already committed to and I think that's what happens to so many people, especially as creatives and multi-faceted entrepreneurs who love everything and want to try a lot of different stuff, we're just saying yes all of the time and then we get to the day that we're supposed to be doing stuff and there's like 12 things on there.

That's when we panic, we have to stay up all night, we don't get any sleep, and that all, to me, leads to burnout for sure which is so interesting. Okay, so one of the things I was thinking about, two things actually, when you were talking is a lot of us have trouble deciding to say no to something because we're like, "But I want to do all of it. In my heart it feels like I really want to do all of it."

Ep #106: Take Back Control of Your Time with Kate Erickson

So, is it the time blocking and the visual cues that get your attention? Is it something else? Is there a litmus test? How do we start to constrain, which is a dirty word to a lot of us because we want to live life to the fullest? How do we start to constrain? Because when we say yes to everything, we don't have a full life at all. We have a stressed-out life.

But it seems in the moments when we're saying no to something that we're saying no to our dreams or our once in a lifetime opportunity or whatever story we tell ourselves in our head about why we want to say yes.

Kate Erickson: So, two things, one, I would take a step back and ask yourself, "How is that working out for you?" Is you saying yes to all of these things and having that stress and waking up in the middle of the night and not getting enough sleep and not taking care of yourself, how is that working out for you? That's the first thing I would ask yourself.

Number two, this goes back to having those clear goals. Because when you know exactly where you're headed and you know exactly what your business goal is, what your personal goal is, what your relationship goal is, these are different goal buckets that I have in my life personally, where I know what the most important thing is for me and my business right now.

I know what the most important thing for me, personally, is right now and that makes it really easy for me to decide what I'm going to say yes to and what I'm going to say no to. I'll give you an example of this. Just this past week I was invited to keynote a conference.

I was so honored. I love being on stage. I love spreading my message that way. I love being at events and chatting with people and meeting people in my audience and doing all of those things. I love it. My immediate reaction, "Oh my gosh, yes. I totally want to do this. It's as good as on my calendar."

Then, I looked at the other things I had committed to and literally that same weekend was the weekend of a cart close for a launch that I was doing. I had already committed to that launch and being present and being in my

Ep #106: Take Back Control of Your Time with Kate Erickson

zone of genius and helping my team. That's what I had committed to. Could I have also gotten on a plane and been at this event for 24 hours and gotten on stage and done the keynote? Sure, I could have, but to me, my personal health, it was not worth it. How I want to show up for people when I am at an event, I wasn't going to be able to do that because I don't want to be just in and out.

I want to be there and go to the parties and hang out with people and spend time with people. How I was going to show up for the launch was not going to be the same if I was preparing for a speech and going to be on stage and all of that. I had to say no.

It was something I wanted to do really bad and it did, in a lot of ways line up with my goals, but based on what I had already committed to and what my schedule was like it was a no for me. It can be so empowering to say no sometimes, too.

Tobi Fairley: Yeah. I mean, it's not that we're never going to feel disappointed when we say no, and I think that's what I'm getting from what you're saying. It's like, it's a choice and there's a cost to making a choice. I think, maybe, that's what trips some people up because they're like, "Oh, I said no and I feel bad about it."

That's part of the sacrifice, is kind of what you're saying to then have the beautiful weekend and the beautiful launch and set yourself up for success later. It might require you to not feel so wonderful in the short term by having to tell someone else no, by feeling like you're missing out, that whole FOMO thing. Some of that's going to happen. You can't avoid that, right? But you're going to be glad in the long run that you said no to it.

I felt that so many times. How many times I've thought, "Oh my gosh." I was considering being at like three places this weekend and now that I'm here and this is so much bigger and harder than I thought, thank goodness I said no.

Ep #106: Take Back Control of Your Time with Kate Erickson

Kate Erickson: I can guarantee you most scenarios will play out that way. I do that a lot, too, when I'm trying to decide if I should say yes to something. It's really easy to not be in that moment and think of all the amazing things of it, but if you stop and truly ask yourself, "What am I going to be feeling if I say yes to this in the moment that I doing it?"

If you can truly put yourself in the position of getting off a plane at 10am, speaking at 1pm, getting back on a plane at 4pm, being back home at 10pm, like I'm not going to feel great in that moment. You can be pretty honest with that kind of stuff. The people who truly support and are rallying for you will probably respect you more for saying no to something that you can't truly commit to.

Tobi Fairley: Yeah, it reminds me of a Warren Buffett quote I've seen that says, "The difference in successful people and really successful people is that really successful people say no to almost everything." That's so fascinating because you think about it, if you're going to really be great in an area or two of your life – or three or four, you have to say no to like 700 other things. That's so good.

So, one of the other things I was thinking about that I think comes up for my audience a lot, the people I work with, the creatives I work with is that once you get this serious about a system, a schedule, dialing in everything, a litmus test for your yesses, which are all amazing, by the way, and they work because I've tried them, too. I've even picked up new ones from you today, especially on this saying yes thing, what I find is a resistance really kind of like you said earlier.

Almost a resistance to the emotional adulthood piece because as soon as you actually commit to all of these things there's this resistance of I'm not going to want to actually follow through, I can't procrastinate any more. So, as much as it creates chaos for people. I think people also somehow believe that the spontaneity and the flexibility that they're maintaining, even though their life is total chaos, is better than having to commit to showing up all the time.

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

Ep #106: Take Back Control of Your Time with Kate Erickson

So, let's talk about that for a minute. Because I think it's a thought fallacy actually. Because what I've learned is the opposite and what I find is people think what we're asking them to do is to have meeting after meeting after meeting like 12 hours a day and what we're saying is, meeting, meeting, lunch break, afternoon nap if you need it, but it's planned in your schedule. Off work at 3pm because you had your four focus times in the morning.

We're talking about actually building in the life you want to live, right? It's not like we want everybody to go be these little productive robots and only work 24/7 and I think that's the fear that I see. So, people are like, "Ugh, if I start that I'm going to feel trapped. I'm never going to be able to procrastinate on anything or just kind of relax." I use the word relax which to me really they're thinking about being able to procrastinate.

So, what do you think about that? Because I know what I think about it which is planning in the kind of procrastination if they want to call it that way or the relaxing, but how do you go about making sure that you're not the little worker bee robot every day?

Kate Erickson: Everything that we've been talking about over this past half-hour is what has given me every freedom in my life. Being diligent about how I'm spending my time, John and I in the fall, we travelled Europe for 90 days. We put on a backpack and we were in Europe for 90 days. We worked for one hour per day and our business didn't skip a beat.

The systems that we have, the team that we have, the daily schedule that we put in place, the time blocks that we have, the batching that we do, this gives us so much freedom in our lives and maybe it's not 90 days in Europe for you. Maybe it's an entire week where you're just flying by the seat of your pants and doing whatever you want to do in the moment and all of that stuff. Whatever it is for you, this is how you get freedom. I can promise you that.

Ep #106: Take Back Control of Your Time with Kate Erickson

Tobi Fairley: I love that. I was following you on Instagram because I had been on John's podcast, probably only a couple – I was on his podcast mid-September and that was about the time you were gone, wasn't it?

Kate Erickson: Yep.

Tobi Fairley: So, I was watching y'all and I was sending messages about how cute you both were. I loved watching that which is so fun. I think that a lot of times we are sitting at our desk going, "I wish I could live that way." What we're not understanding is because we're not willing to commit to systems and processes we're actually keeping ourselves from that kind of lifestyle instead of the opposite. It feels like it's too structured, it's the opposite of that is what you're saying.

Kate Erickson: Absolutely. For me, for the longest time my schedule has been time blocking Monday to Thursday and Friday is like a day where I don't put a schedule on myself. You can do that. This is your life. This is your business. Yes, you do make up the rules, but if you're going to continue being afraid to commit because you don't want to show up at a certain time, again I ask you, how's that working out for you?

Like, if you were living the most amazing, best life ever and you're telling your schedule how you are doing it right now works for you, awesome. But I can guarantee you a lot of people probably ask themselves how's that working out for you, and they will not have that answer. They are not living their best lives.

Tobi Fairley: Yeah, because the problems they're bringing to try to fix are, "I feel exhausted. I feel like a failure. I feel like I never get anything done. I feel like I still don't have any money. My business is feast or famine all the time." All the list of all the problems actually can be remedied by this sort of system and I completely agree with that. That's so good.

Okay, so any final thoughts that you want to leave anybody with today as they're starting to really, hopefully, buy in at a whole other level. Because if

Ep #106: Take Back Control of Your Time with Kate Erickson

none of the other structured, nerdy talk – because you and I both nerd out on this stuff, if that didn't get them or it turned them off, the 90 days in Europe had to open their eyes.

I mean, that is amazing and just believing that that's even possible, that you can say take the whole month of July off if you have kids and be with them or just planning ahead for that, that in and of itself should get leverage on us to say, "I want that kind of life."

But beyond that, anything else that you want to leave everybody with today?

Kate Erickson: Well, Tobi, I'd love for you to weigh in on this, too, and I have a feeling that you agree with me. This is a choice. You, every day, are choosing how you show up, how you spend your time, how you take care of yourself, how you interact with your family, how you nurture your relationships, how you build your business. It's a choice. So, you just have to choose it. If that's what you want, go choose it.

Yes, that is going to mean you showing up at certain times for certain things, but on the other side of that is your freedom. It's your July off with your kids, it's your 90 days in Europe, it's whatever freedom is for you. That's what's on the other side of that.

Tobi Fairley: Yeah, I totally agree and I think that goes right back to that emotional adulthood because the flying by the seat of our pants is a really immature way to run our lives and our businesses and we're pretending like everything is happening to us.

What you're saying, and I firmly agree with, is that's not true at all. Whether you believe it or not, by not putting in a system you're still making a choice to show up in chaos. You're still choosing exactly the results you're getting and I love that. I think it's about taking responsibility for the fact that in lieu of having a system we're choosing chaos for ourselves and our family every single day.

Ep #106: Take Back Control of Your Time with Kate Erickson

That's a little bit hard to take when you think about it that way, but I think it's a really important distinction because we want to go around thinking that life happens to us and we all are so well-versed in the, "I'm so busy," and I remind myself all the time when I hear myself say, "I'm busy." I'm like, that's funny because you're the person who said yes to all the busy work.

You're often the person who can go move a lot of that off your schedule if you really don't want to feel the way you're feeling right now.

Kate Erickson: Exactly.

Tobi Fairley: Yeah, so good. Well, thank you so much for being here today. This was so great to build on a lot of what I've talked about to my audience before and I love having someone else come in and have the same experience. Because you know it's easy for them to say, "Oh, Tobi has the it factor," or, "She's just super structured," or, "She's more left-brained than right-brained and it just is easy for her." It's not easy for any of us to get started.

It's never going to be easy and you're always going to not want to do what's on your calendar, right? But you get to decide. Is it better to go ahead and follow through now and have the freedom later or is it better to – what's that saying? How do I not give in to what I want right now for what I want long-term? Or something like that, that's what you're really talking about.

Thank you so much for sharing that because it'll help people get more leverage on themselves.

Kate Erickson: Yeah, you're so welcome. It was really great to be here. I appreciate you inviting me on.

Tobi Fairley: So much fun.

Ep #106: Take Back Control of Your Time with Kate Erickson

Okay, really good, right? I love Kate's thinking. It's so aligned with mine. Now, remember go back and listen to my episode number 54 if you haven't already or you haven't in a while. It really gives you my basics about how I do time blocking and if you want to go a little deeper on the time thinking and how you might really want to make some shifts around it you can also listen to podcast episode 11 on *The Design You Podcast*. Both about time management and time thinking.

I think they will really help you and then if you want hand-holding accountability to get your schedule and your business on track check out the Design You Coaching Program at tobifairley.com/designyou. We want you in there. We're doing this work together right now to get our businesses thriving in spite of the current situation and we want to work with you, too.

So, check it out and I'll see you back next week with another episode because next week we're talking about money. Money, honey, the other thing, besides time, that you need to get really, really working for you right now. So, I'll see you here next week with another great episode. Bye for now.

Thank you so much for joining me for this episode of *The Design You Podcast*. 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.