

Ep #130: Enhancing the Mother-Daughter Relationship with Lynne Niehaus



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Tobi Fairley

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You are listening to the *Design You* podcast with Tobi Fairley, episode number 130.

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

Hey friends, welcome to episode 2 of our series with my *Design You* members. This has just been so much fun for me. Not only do I adore these ladies and I've just loved celebrating their success. I just even learn more about them when we get to have these fun conversations.

So today I'm bringing you Lynne Niehaus. So, Lynne is a proud mom, a yogi, an artist, a molecular biologist, an interior designer, an educator, a mediator as she calls it, who helps mothers and daughters forge lasting bonds through a blend of interior design and coaching in their spaces. So she helps these moms and daughters as you'll learn on the episode. She's created design camps for these creative girls. She's done such neat things. And we really get into so much of that.

We get into mindset a lot today, not only the mindsets that Lynne has embraced to create the business of her dreams, but also the mindset teachings and tools she's used to help these girls and their moms create successful spaces. And we get into a lot today including a lot of what's happening with kids right now with the pandemic and how they're feeling with all the things that are happening in school, or if they're not able to go to school.

And I love that we get to speak to that and how our environments can really make a difference and nurture us and support us when things are uncertain. So we touch on everything that you can imagine in this episode. And I know you're going to love it, especially if you either are a mom or you work with other moms or kids in their spaces. All of you out there that are doing this work personally or for other people I know you will love this episode with Lynne Niehaus.

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Tobi: Hey, Lynne, welcome to the *Design You* podcast. I am just thrilled you're here today.

Lynne: I'm so excited, Tobi, thank you for having me.

Tobi: So much fun. So what everybody may not know is we get the pleasure of working together all the time because you're in my *Design You* membership and we've been – I mean I would definitely call you a friend. But we've also been working together for quite some time now. We both also especially love reading so we connect over books a lot and in the *Design You* book club. But today we're going to talk about you and the work you do and people will learn all the other things you and I have in common, which is basically our entire brain almost.

So to set the scene for that, tell everybody about you, who you are, what you do and even dig into your story a little bit. And kind of give them some background to set the scene for this fun conversation we're going to have today.

Lynne: Okay. Well, I grew up in the south. I don't live in the south now. But I grew up surrounded by just absolutely beautiful things. My father was a – he owned an antique store but he specialized in doing reproductions, reproduction antiques. So we always had beautiful furniture. But we had no money. We had no money at all. And that's the story that I heard growing up, everything, every day no money.

So that was how I came into the world and basically my house was the go to house to play Barbie's because we couldn't afford Barbie furniture, so I went to the scrap pile. And I pulled things out and I had beautiful custom couches. I learned to sew when I was four. I was taking apart hand-me-downs and re-sewing them. So I was like the kid with the couture clothes that came from somebody else.

And around third or fourth grade I started drawing. And I picked up a pencil and I could just draw anything. And I got so much positive feedback from

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just this being able to create anything, being able to draw anything that I got gold stars. And whenever I wanted approval I just went out and made something, drew something, did something, birthday cards. And then I started to hear – once I got into school I was really good at science and math. And I needed to understand how everything worked. If something broke I took it apart, I figured out why it didn't work.

And so my parents started telling me, "You're too smart to be an artist. You need to be a doctor. You need to be – you need to, you know, be something that makes money because you can't do what we do because we don't make money." And so I got a full scholarship to the University of North Carolina. I started to study molecular biology. I'm an observer. So observing was – I could figure out why things were doing what they were doing even when other people couldn't, people with much more advanced degrees than me.

So I got put on these incredible projects. And I was doing some groundbreaking research. I was published by the time I was 20. And I was burned out by the time I was 25 because I was working 16 hour days. I was working seven days a week. I was carrying an 18 hour course load in college. I was paying for everything. So I had to take a break. And that break meant getting married, having a baby, I moved to Texas which was 2,000 miles away from friends and family and everybody and no way to use my degree.

So suddenly I was a stay at home mom and that was never the vision that I had for myself. So being over achiever Lynne, I threw everything I knew into building my family.

Tobi: Yeah, that's so good. So I just, I think it's so important to think about this one statement. Wow. And we do this all the time as parents, don't we? Your parents had your absolute best interest at heart because they were afraid. They were so fearful that you would have struggles that they had so they said to you, "You're too smart to be an artist." Wow. Let's just sit with

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that a minute, too smart to be an artist. And how many people really believe that? There's so many people.

It's the whole reason I have an accounting degree and an MBA and then got a design degree because my parents weren't trying to do that either. But I mean they were saying, "Go get a job that's going to help you your whole life make money and really fulfill your potential." And accidentally we're constantly; those of us who are creatives are hearing this story that art is not a real job.

Kind of like people I think of that become actors or actresses, the chances of you really making money with that are so slim, it's not responsible, it doesn't make any sense. And we start to believe that too, which I mean you and I have talked about so many times. And I've talked about, even on Forbes of this starving artist mentality. It's no accident that those of us who are artists accidentally don't make enough money or as much as we could be making for years, and years, and years, because we also believe that artists don't make that much money, right?

Lynne: Right, right. And then as, you know, then stepping into the design world you have this beautiful vision. And if anything goes wrong you're going to do anything to make that vision come true.

Tobi: Yeah, at your own expense, yeah.

Lynne: At your own expense, exactly, exactly.

Tobi: Paying out of your own pocket, passing things along at cost. We're more committed to the vision than the profit because we haven't married the business mind and the creative mind so often. And we believe that too. We all believe that even of ourselves a lot of times of I'm an artist. I'm terrible with numbers. I'm terrible with business, which is clearly not true especially for somebody like you or me. You were studying molecular biology, I think you said.

And I'm studying – at one point I even started in biology before I got to an accounting degree. I started there too because we went to school and

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we're like be a doctor, or a lawyer, an accountant or something that – I mean accountants doesn't make as much money. But my dad was like an entrepreneur and you'll always fall back on a finance or an accounting degree or whatever. But yeah, and then real life sets and we're like, but what do I really want to be? And where do I get connected with what really fills me up?

And not that we can't get burned out in a creative industry, we can, especially when we're giving everything away for free and it's not sustainable. But I think it's so easy to see why you were feeling burned out before, because you were out of alignment with what was really filling your cup, really connecting with who you are, right?

Lynne: And I'm deeply intuitive by nature. And I made that association. I think I made it very, very early on with I could use my creativity to make other people happy. And I knew exactly how to make them happy. And no matter what field I was in, whether I was making birthday cards, whether I was making people Christmas presents, or whether I was unearthing a scientific discovery, I knew what to do. And so I think I had to almost just spend that time retreating from that aspect of my creativity as a burden and my intuition as a burden.

And it really took having my children and watching them start to move through those preteen years and those teenage years as they were starting to uncover what they were looking for in life as a whole, who they were in the world, who they showed up as. To really start to question am I showing up as who I'm supposed to be? And that's when I started looking at it is I realized I was in an emotionally abusive relationship. And I was doing everything I could to walk on eggshells and make things perfect.

But one day, and actually it took going back to work full-time that I woke up and I thought oh my gosh, what if what I'm doing right now makes either of my daughters spend one minute in a relationship where they feel like this?

Tobi: Yeah. And I think what you're talking about on kind of a bigger level, which I'm doing some deep personal work about this right now is I think – I

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mean and part of it's just human nature, part of it is culture, a lot of it's fear. A lot of it's good intention but we know as humans and especially as women from a very early age, even as young as a lot of us can remember, and especially in the south, we start being told to show up differently than who we are.

And essentially whatever the real version of us is not quite good enough or you're a little too loud, or you're a little too bossy, or you're a little too rambunctious, or you're a little too outspoken, or you're a little too quiet, or you're a little too – don't make anybody feel uncomfortable. And that goes right along with what you're saying. Deny the thing you really love, because you can't make money at that, and go be something you're not. I think it's just ingrained in us.

Thankfully I think is changing in some ways, or at least we have a little opening in this thinking, from those of us like you and like me who did become mothers. And we knew what it felt like for someone to tell us we weren't supposed to be quite how we were, not that we didn't feel loved. You and I both had some really loving relationships. But we also got the message pretty loud and clear from a lot of different places that we weren't quite enough the way we were.

And I think then we have that realization, same as you with my 15 year old where I'm like, I truly want her to pick what's right for her. I don't try to change her. I try to change me if I notice that I'm having an opinion of she should do something different, or she should like something different, or she should show up differently, physically, emotionally, mentally with her choices. I immediately go, "That's funny. Why is that bringing up fear for you, Tobi? And how do you need to change because she should get to be exactly who she is?"

And that's such a shift. And that's kind of what you're talking about, that you started coming to with your daughters, right?

Lynne: Right, absolutely. And I mean I have literally – I think one of the reasons that I love what I'm doing now is because I started it through

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approaching my interaction with my daughters, the way that I was working with clients. How was I honoring their wishes? How was I being the visionary for their project but still knowing that I was doing it for them and in their best interest.

Tobi: Yeah. So let's start to talk about that a little bit, because a lot of the work we've done together, which has been so fun, and I remember when you very first were thinking about joining *Design You* and you contacted me and we had some conversations. And you were working for somebody else at the time. Weren't you working for another company? But you were getting ready to go out on your own.

You'd done some jobs on your own and you were telling me this vision you had which so many people that I work with, they have no idea, they're like, "I know, I really need to niche down or really pick a group of people." And you knew because of this work you're talking about, you were so clear. You're like, "I want to work with girls and their moms and create spaces for them and bedrooms for them." So tell us about that, because I loved that about like you knew.

And we'll talk about some of the cool things you've built since then and as you've worked and developed this business. And that wasn't that long ago. Well, it was a year and a half or go or something, two years ago?

Lynne: It really was, it really was.

Tobi: Yeah. And you were like, "I know. I know exactly who I want to help." So talk about that, yeah.

Lynne: Well, what I kept seeing and what I kept doing is I'd go in and where I was before is I was running a design center in a paint store.

Tobi: I remember that, yes.

Lynne: And so color's my thing, color just, I love color, I'm an artist. It's always been so easy for me. So I'd be working with clients and we'd be doing projects. And their daughters would come in and even if I was doing

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something as simple as a color consultation, they wouldn't have me. Because people are paying you by the hour and people are paying for overall results. So many times, they steered me away from their daughter, their daughter's room because she had her own ideas, and that's where [crosstalk].

Tobi: Blasphemy. Why would we let a human, another human have their own ideas about their own space, how dare you? Yeah, and so many mothers were like, "No, I will not have that in my house, it's ugly and I don't like it."

Lynne: Right. And it was twofold. It was on both sides of the spectrum. It was either, "Her ideas are ridiculous. We could never afford to do what she wants to do. She's going to grow out of it, we'll just let her, you know, we'll just let time past." Or they thought because she had a vision she knew how to do it, she knew how to do it. And so they were just being completely left out.

Tobi: And probably some of them were like, "And I hate her vision, and that color's ghastly. And she wants to hang these like whatever's on her wall." I remember back when I was young and you're like you want to put a poster up or whatever back in the day. And your parents were like, "I'm embarrassed about that room," or whatever. So I'm sure there's a million.

Lynne: Yeah, I was only allowed to have posters in my closet. And the worse thing is my children were only allowed to have posters behind their doors. But they built their room. Their room was a complete reflection of, so it was completely okay and usually they were mood boards. They weren't actually posters because that's like if you're doing, you know, posters have to mean something. They have to have a purpose.

Tobi: So, okay, so these girls would come in and their moms like, "No, that's ridiculous, we can't afford it, or it's too bitter," it's whatever. And they're literally paying you with their kid in tow or telling you that they want to do a space for their child, yet they're like, "But I don't want any of her opinions and any of her ideas." And she gets no say in her room, yeah.

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Lynne: Well, they weren't letting me do anything for them. I was doing their house but I wasn't doing their daughter's room.

Tobi: They were like, "We're skipping the daughter's room. You can do the living room but no, we're not doing the kids' room."

Lynne: Right, right. And it was always, you know, it always came back to that very same thing, she has her own ideas or she's going to change her mind. And then the other thing that I was seeing that was really disturbing and hard to just get around was this breaking out of this paradigm that decorating a girl's room was going to Pottery Barn or Target or Marshall's and picking out a comforter. And then bringing it into the paint store and picking a color out of the comforter and painting the walls that.

Tobi: The end.

Lynne: The end. And it's nowhere else in the whole design world would you ever do anything that dumb. And everybody did it and everybody does it. And it's so frustrating, it's like we could just tweak the paint color. We could make the comforter jump out.

Tobi: There's so much more, yeah, there's so much more.

Lynne: Yeah, and so much fun. And that was the other recognition, that the people that had had the most success in their kids' room as a whole. And usually their son's rooms were the Pottery Barn catalog because it listed the paint colors. And never was that paint color some ridiculous color that's in the bedding. It's a carefully curated neutral wall color that looks beautiful. And so that's when I realized.

Tobi: Right. Yeah, right, it's not like the neon purple that's in this one tiny flower, that they're like, "That looks good." Yeah, "Let's pick that one." And you're like, "No, let's not."

Lynne: Yeah. And so I started to explain to them, I was like, "You realize that's like urban camouflage. If you paint the walls the color that's in the comforter then you can't see the comforter." Or the contrasting colors which

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you see and that jumps out. “Do you want a bright orange room or do you want your room to feel purple?” And so when I started explaining and people started listening they started having success and unexpected success. They were seeing their daughters confidently make choices that their daughters were proud of and they were proud of.

And so then it sort of went into, well, they thought their daughters could decorate their whole house and that didn't go so well.

Tobi: Which is probably saying like, “We can save so much money if our daughter's this creative. Let's just let her do the living room also.” It's so funny how our brains work. So I mean what was the motivation behind this? Because what we haven't talked about yet is that you really have such a love of personal development and a lot of deep personal and mental work and self-help. And you and I connect on some of our favorite gurus. We're both huge fans of Wayne Dyer. And we really like to look inward and be contemplative about why we're making decisions.

And everything you're talking about is so surface level. Let's just get the Pottery Barn, that looks fine, it doesn't have to be personalized. Who cares if our kids feel at home in there, it'll look good. I'll know it's a safe choice, I won't waste my money. We'll just replicate that. And you and I both immediately go to a much deeper level than that when we're designing a space or even just designing how we show up in our day. We're asking a lot more questions, right?

Lynne: Right. And I think as a designer, I found that my strength was just that empathy, that ability to connect really almost instantly with what my client wanted to feel in their space. And so I started translating it into the way that I was talking to my clients. And girls have so many emotions. We know that, that's why it makes raising teenage daughters so hard.

And we think of it as a bad thing but we don't recognize that their space is that one place in the world where they can walk in and they can feel all those emotions, those emotions that they've been taught that they shouldn't feel, and tap into them. And my goal, you know, I tell them when

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I'm either working on a project with their mom one-on-one with them. Or if we're in a group setting where we're doing it in the camp, is you want to wake-up in the morning and the first thing you want to know when you open your eyes is I'm awesome.

I am different from everybody else in the world. I've got this day, it's here. And when you get to school and your best friend is sitting with somebody else at lunch table, you need a place to go that says I've got this. I might have just been abandoned but I have a safe place to go where people love me. And there's so many ways to bring that in. And we do that on a larger scale for our clients when we're doing a whole house because we're always working with how they feel and how they want to interact with their friends, with their family.

But then they do tend to think that this cosmetic place that people just are is okay. And there's so much more we can do with that.

Tobi: Yeah. What's coming to my mind, and this is not at all to get political. I think you and I may align a little somewhat on our politics.

Lynne: We do.

Tobi: And I really mean this is not political. But what's coming to my mind is the conversation that's happening right now in the world about Covid and the toll that not being in schools and things is taking on young people and how the suicide rates are going up really, really high. And I was watching a certain influencer kind of person I know, was kind of in the Christian realm talk about it very strongly today. And her opinion's different than mine. And again this is not to get into the opinion of what you believe about schools, or mask or anything else.

But what I was thinking this morning when I was reading her post and then was just thinking again when you were talking about this is why are we just talking about if we just send kids back to school the suicide rate will go back down? Because why are we not talking about the bigger issue of mental health of teenagers, Covid or not Covid? And even as you're saying

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that, thinking about things like our environment and how they feel and how safe they do feel or unsafe they feel.

I mean it makes me almost laugh that we're having a conversation that we want to send kids back to the place where they feel the least themselves, especially in middle school. And we suddenly think that's the better option. And again I'm not being judgmental on either side. We just don't know what to do, because we're scared and we're seeing all of this stuff happening and all the uncertainty. And all we know is the evidence is that the suicides are going up for young people, which is already way too high, higher than they should be.

And my thought was we're looking at the wrong things. We're looking at the wrong problem. Like I said about how for businesspeople, Covid didn't break your business, not going to school did not break our children's mental health, it just shows us what is already broken. And I'm sitting here thinking as you're talking about this, the impact that spaces can have. And also even the impact of the conversations between mothers and children and letting them be creative, and letting them create spaces that support them. And letting them show up and be seen as they really are.

There's so much embedded in this, I didn't even know we were going here when we started this conversation. But it's just like, it just occurred to me and I'm like this is that conversation about mental health and wellbeing of young people. And your environment plays such a huge role.

Lynne: And I run free mini camps for the girls.

Tobi: Yes, which we're going to get into in a minute when we talk about business, yes.

Lynne: But then my master camp where it's, you know, it's the girls and I working one-on-one several days in a row in a group setting. The reason that I built that was because creative girls like us, I mean our energy, our fuel are the gold stars and the pats on the back and the wows that you get when you step into yourself. And you do something that people (a) didn't

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think you're capable of and (b) can't do themselves. And when they weren't going to school they lost that.

They lost the chance to raise their hand and answer the question or turn in their project that their teacher looks up and then they're like, "Oh my gosh." Those are life changing moments. And so that's why I wanted to give these girls a place where they could shine.

Tobi: I love it. Yeah, I love it. And the other thing that's coming to mind too is you're absolutely right. When we can be our truest self as a creative, that's where we do get all of our confidence. But then we also on the flipside a lot of times in school, or in community, or with other people, we don't feel like we fit in. And we don't feel like we're seen a lot of times. And we don't feel like we're understood because we are different. And we do express ourselves differently. And I mean some of us like you and I maybe excel in some of the traditional education, and studies, and categories.

But a lot of creatives don't, a lot of creatives are struggling in math, or other things and told they're not good enough. So it's a strange dichotomy because yeah, in one way, school can give us an outlet to be creative and be seen. And in other ways it kind can make us feel completely unseen and misunderstood. And so that's why I'm saying this is a deeper conversation and I love where you're going with this.

And for all the parents who right now are feeling so frustrated on either side, they're either having to send their kids to school and they're afraid of it and afraid of Covid and people aren't wearing mask. Or they're not getting to send their kids to school and they're furious because they think that kids don't get sick with Covid and they shouldn't have to wear a mask, whatever, whatever side.

What I want to say is you can do all kinds of other things right now, including in a minute we're going to get into the things that you do for your kids to have the outlets, and the connection, and the things that are missing. And I think it's on us more than ever. To me this is a beautiful opportunity where maybe we've been delegating to the schools or other

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places to try to have them be responsible for our kids' health and wellbeing, and mental wellness.

This is just a reminder to say, "No, we're in charge of that. And we don't have to tell ourselves a story that the only way they can be well is if they're at school." Because there's a million other options, my gosh, the internet is right at our fingertips and there's so many things that we could do to fill this hole right now, right?

Lynne: Right. And then the other part of that, that surprised me because it's always been one of my soapboxes which was technology and keeping electronics out of the bedroom. And so then all of a sudden now they have their desk in their room, they're having to study in their room. And it's really funny because that's one of the topics that's come up because I think parents are also struggling. Parents that felt like me that computers shouldn't be in the bedroom, they're struggling with having their child in not in a place where they go normally.

And then also just because the kids are constantly, you know, I mean technology is a place where they're trying to measure up and figure out if what they're doing is...

Tobi: Right, 100%. 100%. And yeah, and creating that safe space for kids in their room. That's one place where we are different. I'm far relaxed about technology and gadgets and stuff, and always have been. I mean I think we have 12 or 13 TVs in this 4,000 square foot house. We all have our gadgets all the time, everybody gets to have them in their rooms or by our bed. Not that it's all healthy but it's just how we roll.

But you're right, there's so many things that have been a detriment or that have been issues for my daughter with measuring up on technology. But at the same time we've also had an equal amount of growth out – it's been as positive as negative, because she's also learned to grow so many ways because of the challenges of that. And we were able to work through that together. So I mean there's two sides to every coin. But I hear what you're

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saying. It still makes us have to make a conscious decision about what do we believe? What do we believe about this happening?

And then a lot of people feel like this is kind of being forced on them, which of course thinking that doesn't help us. We're just going to get angry. So that's what I'm saying, no matter if it's a circumstance you choose or not for your children's sake. If we can kind of suspend some of those judgments and say, "Okay, this is where we are and this is what we have to do." How can we use the environment to help them excel, right?

Lynne: Right. And I'm a big proponent of just that opening up the doors of communication, that breaking that sort of biological – because it's there. I mean once girls reach a certain age they are preprogrammed to kind of figure out how they're different from their mothers. That's how they start to define themselves. And it makes it harder if we're not being conscious, to have those hard conversations because both sides want to win.

Tobi: Yeah. And we take it personally, we as the mothers take it personally. And I think that what I keep learning is if I get offended by something she's doing, my job is not to change her. My job is to look deeper at me. Why is this offending me? And literally even doing something like designing a bedroom together for a child can open up so many areas for personal growth for you and for them, and personal connection for you two to come together on a whole other level, right?

Lynne: Right, exactly.

Tobi: Yeah, so good. Okay, so let's talk about what you do specifically. Because this is so fun, this has been something that I've gotten to be a part of as I've been your coach, as you've developed this in *Design You*. And so you knew you wanted this as your niche. You knew these were the people you were passionate about helping the mothers and the daughters. And we may get into some more of that in a minute. There's a few other things if we have time we want to talk about. But I think first, everybody's like, "Tell me. Tell me the things."

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So when you decided, you're like, okay, this is what I want to do but I don't just want to do this one-on-one for a number of reasons (a) for my business model I want to create something that's scalable which makes me more money. But (b) and more importantly I can help so many more people than just one of me and one girl and her mom at a time. If I create something that I can do one to many, that I can really make a difference and impact a lot more people, which is so inspiring.

So tell them what you've created as the answer to that which allows you to show up as your interior designer, artist and amazing mom self and really be an influence and a peace - a guide for these girls and their moms as they do this kind of not only personal work, but interior design work. It's like interior themselves and interior design, it's all an...

Lynne: Interior interior, yes.

Tobi: Yeah, it's all an inside job, okay, so tell us about what you created.

Lynne: So the first thing that I did is I wanted to make it easy for everybody to start to tap into what would serve them best in their space, how to up-level their space, how to empower their own space. So I created seven different archetypes that they, good girls, typically fall into in terms of how they want to feel in their room. How – their study habits, how they interact with their friends, just how they feel emotionally, how they respond to different things.

So I have a quiz on my website that determines which archetype they are. And once they take the quiz they get their archetype score. And then they start to get little things that you guys can do together to start to empower their space, to bring it up to a level where they feel that level of confidence that they want to do. And then because I loved working with the girls so much, I created a free interior design mini camp. And I run it two or three times a month. It's probably going to go down to two times a month now that school's started. Back during the summer I was running it a little bit more.

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But I teach them the basic concepts of design and how to use those things to change how they feel in their space, because that's the most important thing to do. I don't care what your room looks like as long as you feel the way that you want to feel and you can function the way that you want to function. I'm all about productivity. I hate looking for things. I hate waiting for somebody else to look for something [inaudible] away. That's my biggest pet peeve in the world.

And so I teach them how to just take these concepts and use all of their creativity to dial into them and just start to create a place that they love. And the results are beautiful, because they want their space to be beautiful because, you know, and I think we all feel that way. Once we start to dig in and feel that beauty that we have inside, it's easier to let it come out into everything we see. And then I have girls that wanted to go deeper, that just love this process of creating, and really want to fine-tune.

So that's when I created my master camp, and so it's part camp, part mastermind. They work together but they're each working on their own space together. So they're bringing all their own personalities into it and we go through a very specific process. And it's really fun because I actually teach – one of my favorite things that I learned from you, Tobi, is because I'm the visionary I always see the big picture. But breaking it down was really hard for me.

So the escape and arrival method has just been an unbelievable game changer for me. So that's what we actually do on the last day of master camp is we go through the escape and arrival method. And we create their action plan for how they're going to create their room. And we talk about how it plays into every single part of their life, their school recital, their science project. All of that is so applicable.

Tobi: I love this. And the master camp is a paid camp, right?

Lynne: The master camp is a paid camp, yes, it's through the summer. And next summer I'll definitely go back to the same format because it works so well. It's a five day camp, a week long camp where...

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Tobi: So cool, yeah.

Lynne: They show up for an hour, an hour and a half or sometimes a little bit longer if they're getting carried away. And then after that hour and a half of learning and working on one particular topic, then they have a mission. So they have a particular part of the design project that they have to go and take care of and then they bring it back the next day and [crosstalk].

Tobi: So cool, so cool. I love that so much. And just real quick I want to address a couple of things, just so everybody knows. Escape and arrival is a framework that I teach you guys that I learned from another coach that I worked with. And it's this concept of saying I want to escape from, like I want to escape from a room that doesn't inspire me. And arrive at a room that makes me feel like a queen or whatever. And so they're like – what are all the little steps between where I currently am and where I want to go? And that's how we break it into a step-by-step piece.

And then the other thing I wanted to point out that I think is so beautiful, a couple of things, because we talked about what the camps do. But I think people need to really understand the bigger and deeper meaning of this because you're giving these people, not only permission to be themselves, to trust their instincts. But you're also, I think an even bigger thing is you're giving these girls permission to feel the actual feelings that they feel.

And just like you and I talked about, we're kind of conditioned as girls forever of you're not supposed to feel that way. We should be happy all the time. We shouldn't feel sad. We shouldn't feel depressed. And we're like, "No, we should." There's a lot of stuff in life that's hard, high school and middle school are for sure hard. And growing up is hard and deciding who we want to be and who we really are, is hard.

And I love that you're doing those two things, you're giving them permission that whatever their vision is, is valid. And that they can trust it and also whatever their feelings are, are valid and they can trust it. And wow, I mean before we even go any farther, just thank you for doing this for young girls because it is so huge. It is so huge.

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Lynne: Thank you. I love doing it. And then I also do – I have a program, if you're ready to just – you know that your daughter is itching for a new room or she's just, you know, you're itching for her to get everything together, I do have – it's my Power Me Up program. Basically it is a one-on-one consultation but you get to do a lot of the good deep work before we ever meet. So it's a four part program, three modules that you and your daughter go through together.

Tobi: So cool, yeah.

Lynne: Yeah, to that place and start that conversation for coming from the two different sides of what you both want as an end result, bringing it together. So I do offer that as a consultation and a program.

Tobi: That's so cool. Okay, so just so everybody knows, yes, you can buy the Power Me Up program, which is awesome, and work with your daughter. Yes, you can send your daughter to a five day camp, both of which are paid. But before you even have to pay a dime, Lynne has these amazing freebies, the quiz that you can take and get all of the emails that come from that, and then the free mini camps.

So even for people who are like, "Right now I don't really have the money yet but I'd love my daughter to get to start to experience this and start to let her creativity come through." They have those too and we're going to tell everybody. In fact right don't you tell them now what your website is and we'll tell them again at the end and we'll put in the show notes. But if they're itching to get, they're like, "Give me the – where? Where do I find this?" Tell them how to find you.

Lynne: So, on my website it's just lynneniehaus.com which is l.y.n.n.e.n.i.e.h.a.u.s.com. They can go there, they can take the quiz, they can get on the list for the next camp. Two of the last three camps did close out several days beforehand because I don't run more than 30 girls in at a time. And then they can get started with everything right there.

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Tobi: Awesome, so good. Okay, this is beautiful. And then for those of you who are like, “How do I create a business like that,” like you, it’s so inspiring. Lynne has done this work. We’ve done this work together for her to – well, she’s done all the work. I’ve just been the guide. I’ve just been helping her see her thoughts or when she gets stuck, or help her monetize things or whatever.

But it’s so cool, this is the same work of empowering yourself as a woman, as a grownup girl to lean into what you’re really passionate about and be willing to believe that you can also create and make money. You’re not too smart to be an artist. It doesn’t not always make money, and I think that just speaks to that, that you were just willing to lean in and believe. Now for the first time after your story in all those years that I’m not willing to show up and not work in this way, the people that inspire me in my creativity, right?

Lynne: Right. And I mean there are definitely things that *Design You* has brought me through that I think because I went out one other time in business on my own and I failed. I didn’t charge nearly enough for what I was doing. And I convinced myself that people just couldn’t pay what I needed to do to be able to do what I was trying to do. Because I was painting, I was doing murals. And what *Design You* taught me was you don’t quit until you’ve gotten there, you just keep going.

And failing is – it goes from something that you’re terrified. And it’s so funny because I come from science, I come from basic research where you get up and you fail every single day.

Tobi: Right. For data’s sake, you’ve failed so you can see the data so you can know where to go next, right?

Lynne: Exactly, but then when I stepped into the creative world it was like, you can’t fail, you can’t do, you know, you can’t launch a Facebook ad that doesn’t get the result you want, you can’t do, like then you’ve done it wrong. And it was just all of that great shift that happened to make me see that, you know, and we actually started at dinnertime, because my stepdaughter, she’s with us three or four days a week. We used to do what

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we were grateful for at night when we sat down to dinner. And instead we say what we failed at today.

Tobi: So good. And in a good way, we're like I've failed today and then this is what I learned from it, right? Yeah.

Lynne: Or even if we haven't learned anything yet, just saying it out loud, yeah.

Tobi: Yeah, I was willing to fail and I survived, I'm still here. I did not die. I failed, I can get up tomorrow and I can fail again. Yeah, failing our way to success, yeah, that's definitely something we work on in *Design You*. And I love it and it's been so fun to watch you because for everybody listening, you don't just decide you're going to have mini design camps for girls and open, if you build it they will come. It's not like you open it the first day and anybody shows up.

There were many conversations and coaching calls where you were like, "Nobody's joining, nobody's signing up. This feels scary. I don't know. I think it's wrong." Because that's what we all go through. And then here you are on a podcast saying, "You better hurry and sign up because I only take 30 girls and the last several camps filled up." And I mean that is what failing your way to success looks like, right?

Lynne: Right. Right. And I love when even the best ones are when the mothers are listening in on the other side and before we wrap up they come in with their questions.

Tobi: You're like not only have I now built this following of young women. The moms are like, "Hey, can I get on this action? Can I get in on this camp action?" That's so good. Okay, well, real quickly – well, who knows if it'll be quickly, but I think maybe quickly before we go, which is all part of the same conversation that you were just having, the being willing to fail.

I teach something called Project Fail, a project I did on myself. And it really is the difference in coming from a place of abundance and being open to

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what you're going to learn if things don't go exactly the way you thought, versus scarcity. And scarcity thinking stops us from everything.

But you were telling me before we started that one of the things you do want to talk about that shows up time and time again is when you start this project with these moms and daughters. Is either the daughter or the mom a lot of times have this scarcity mindset about the project or the process. And one or the other a lot of times has either an emotional attachment or a physical attachment to stuff, to things.

And you're really enjoying how your own kind of journey through personal and self-development and all the mindset work we do in *Design You* as well is showing you how to work with these moms and daughters to dig into why this is, why they feel this way and what to do about it. So can you talk about that a little bit?

Because I know there's a lot of moms who are sitting there going, "I'd love to do this with my daughter but this would never work. Because either she'd want to keep every stuffed animal she ever had or I would not want her to get rid of her grandmother's antique bed that she's sleeping on that she thinks is so boring and dated. But one or the other of us would be attached to things." And that's really what you're talking about, right? Talk to us about that a little bit.

Lynne: Yeah. Well, one of the things that I – when I started, you know, again, looking back at the way my daughters, you know, they've gone through this transition from they have finished college and now they're starting to set up their own apartments. And they're both very intentional about everything that they're doing. And when I started asking, you know, bringing that back up of, you know, one of them was just – kept everything. So I open the door with the girls and with the moms on would you take a look at what's in your physical space.

I actually have them do a quantitative analysis of their storage space. And I want 80% of all the storage space in their room to be active storage space.

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And so anything that hasn't moved, hasn't moved in the last six months then it's passive storage space.

Tobi: So good.

Lynne: And these too can go somewhere else because what I always would hear is, "Well, she never puts her stuff away, she never does this." And let's face it; kids' furniture isn't built for a 12 year old girl's jeans. She physically can't fit them in there. And so why do you have her baby clothes or her 10 year old clothes in her room? And then we started looking at all those other things that we're hanging onto.

And books, how do, you know, we're holding on to those picture books from when we're a kid. And instead let's get them up on the wall, let's make a ledge, let's use them as a pedestal for something. Anything that you want to keep in your room, it has to be intentional because it can tell your story and it can remind you of things in the past. And then we also talk about the stuffed animals, the toys, the things that you're just not ready to let go of. And I talk to them about how they felt when they first got it, and giving that same feeling to somebody else.

Tobi: So good.

Lynne: And as soon as I say that they're like, "Gone, done."

Tobi: Love it. Love it.

Lynne: "Packing it up," because girls do, we love to give, we love to make other people happy. And there is nothing to say you can't take a picture of something and put it on a shelf, it takes up so much less room and it still tells your story. And that's what the whole process is. And then I give the girls words to talk to their moms when they feel like they're hanging onto something that it might hurt her feelings for going away.

Tobi: It's so good.

Lynne: Because I tell them the tens of thousands of dollars worth of self-help books that's had to get me to the other side now. And they do. And

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just giving them more, I mean it's the same with any kind of coaching, just giving them the words to say to the people that they love to say, "I love this. I know you spent a lot of money on this and at the time it was my whole world. But I'm ready to move on." And just being able to say that to them, just again, it's all about empowering them.

Tobi: I love it so much. And I was – a couple of things, first of all the taking a picture of things cracked me up because I get rid of stuff all the time. I love to be tidy. I love – we need a whole other sweep. I do at least twice a year and it feels like with coronavirus, it feels like everything is closing in on us again. I don't know where all this stuff came from again. But it's time to do it again.

But a few years ago I had all these boxes of my husband's trophies, because he played college soccer. So then he played high school and Olympic development all the years. And some of them are probably baseball or tennis. He had all these trophies and they were in boxes and they were just stored somewhere. And I'm like, "We didn't even remember those were here." And so I just made him take pictures of all the trophies. Of course he hadn't looked at a single one of the pictures that he took for like five years.

But it's just like just in theory, he went, "We couldn't get rid of those, maybe our kids want to see them." I'm like, "I assure you our kids don't want to see them. They don't even want to hear the story." We had our epic game, but really just working through that. And then the other thing I love, love, love about what you said of active. I've never really heard it said this way, active versus passive storage. I do think about this a lot.

When I teach people about clutter, and we talk about everybody got into the Marie Condoing, which was so funny for a little while, I mean it's helpful and funny. But what I noticed about that trend was a lot of people didn't even get to the Marie Condoing of folding their clothes a certain way because they don't even use their cupboards, and their chests, and their dressers and other things as active storage space.

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In fact the reason they feel so cluttered is everything they own is on top of a table, or on top of a counter, or on top of the bedside, or the kitchen counter. Because what's in all the drawers, things that you haven't used in six months or six years. And there is no reason for that stuff to be there. And what you're saying is if the things we're not using is either sent onto another home, or at the very least, stored somewhere, in an attic. I think it blows my mind that we pay so much money as humans to store things we're never going to touch again.

So I for sure want people to get rid. But even if you're just weaning yourself, getting it out of the spaces, especially your kids' spaces, that's the one room that they have to be them and you're going to make them store everything they've ever owned, that they can't even remember why they had it. And then not having the active space to put their actual clothes, or shoes, or books, or belongings in a drawer, in a cupboard, in a cabinet, in the closet, yeah.

Lynne: And then we [crosstalk] them for being [crosstalk].

Tobi: Yeah, why is your room such a disaster?

Lynne: "Why don't you put your stuff away?" Yeah, exactly.

Tobi: Yeah, and they're like, "Where exactly would you like me to put this stuff?" Yeah, it's exactly. So, so good, thank you for sharing that because I think there's a lot of people right now who are probably going, "Oh." They're having the light bulb moment of going, "I so do this." This is happening right now in my kids' space. And yet we're yelling at them or we're mad at them and we haven't even set them up for being able. And we're attached to their stuff that they don't care anything about.

That's when we turn back to ourself like I was saying earlier and saying, this isn't their problem, they're not doing anything to us. This is our problem. Why am I so attached? And if I am, fine, let me put it in my bedroom, in my drawers.

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But why do they have to have their infant clothes, like you said, stored in their room or something, stuffed animal, that I'm giving all of this emotional big story to, dramatic story. When they're like, "Mom, it's literally a teddy bear that was from the state fair, it cost like, you know, who knows, \$3 worth of popping balloons. And I really want that thing out of my house or out of my space."

Lynne: Right. And I think it also does go to that money aspect, I know that was what we experienced. And I've heard it again with other clients is when you make a sacrifice to give your child something, they – if you remind them that you're making a sacrifice for them to get it. Because you're doing it altruistically, you want them to have it and you love them more than anything in the world. But once they're done, you know, once they've passed that stage they aren't comfortable coming to you and saying, "Your sacrifice is no good now."

Tobi: Yeah. Well, and it goes to show, I think the unconditional love aspect between us and our kids, because if we're going to get mad at them or judge them for how they feel about it now, we're not being unconditional. We're making it mean something about us. We're not saying – I mean if it's truly just a gift, we give things to people just for the sake of giving. And what they do with it beyond that is really not about us. And so if we're thinking, am I being conditional? Am I getting my feelings hurt? Am I making this mean something about me?

Or did I truly give it to them and that they're free to do whatever they want with it. And so in interior design work in general, but especially with kids spaces there is so much personal development work. There is so much deep looking at yourself to be like what is this bringing up for me? What kind of story am I weaving around this? And is that the truth or is that just something that I've created with my thinking? And is it serving us? Is it serving me? Is it serving my child? So good.

Okay, so anything else that you want people to know? They know where to find you. They know about this amazing work you do. What would you

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maybe even leave these moms or these daughters with right now, especially the ones that are struggling with our current situation and their spaces? Maybe they don't have the money right now because of coronavirus or other things, the economy. How do they start to – do they just go download your freebie stuff and get started? How do they start to move in a new direction? Yeah.

Lynne: Taking the quiz, taking the quiz is really good because the very first thing you get in the first email is seven easy steps that you can take and just pick one, and start there. Because they're personalized to their, you know, your daughter's individual personality. One of my favorite activities to do is actually I usually have people do it before the beginning of the school year. So we're right on target there.

If you go to my website there is a blog post on that walks them through the exact exercise to go through to have that conversation about their stuff. And start addressing that 80, 20 and identifying how much of it is there. And it gives moms the words to start to question their daughter to say, "Hey." And that's the other thing that I want to say to the moms is it's hard for the daughter to initiate that conversation if she thinks that she's going to be doing something that's going to hurt her mother.

So moms need to step up and they need to go in there and say, "Is there anything that's in your room that you just don't want anymore and you're afraid to tell me?" And I'm sure you'll be surprised because when we said that with my stepdaughter...

Tobi: They're going to be like, "How much time do you have? Take a seat lady. This is going to take a little while."

Lynne: Yeah, her eyes got this big and she's like, "Well, yeah."

Tobi: [Crosstalk].

Lynne: Yeah. And so start there. And I think any way that you could start that conversation is the very place that you start.

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Tobi: Yeah. And don't pooh pooh and diminishing and just dismiss what they're saying. A conversation my daughter and I are having right now and I'm not quite ready to it, just because I've got to gather the money to do it. But we did her room when we moved in the house about four years ago. But she's now in the tenth grade. And so that's a big difference to be in the – what was that, sixth grade versus the tenth grade. And we don't have a playroom. We don't have a teen den. We have several living spaces downstairs.

But she's like, "I want some hangout space." And so she does have a built in like a daggy bed with a mattress, a twin mattress and it has a trundle. And she started asking me, she's like, "Could we get rid of my other main bed in my room and have like a sofa and have some chairs and make it like a den or a lounge?" And of course I was like, "We can definitely talk about that and we can put a sleeper sofa in that sofa if you ever need it to pull out for friends again. And yeah, are you sure you're willing to sleep on the twin bed?"

Or, gosh, we rarely have guests and we have another guestroom upstairs. And I'm willing, instead of being like, "Well, no, you can't sleep in the guestroom, that's ridiculous," or whatever. To just be open to saying, she's telling me, she needs some hangout space. She needs a space for her girl friends to come over and start to have some privacy from us. She's like, "I know I'm not technically allowed to have a guy in my room, but if I had a group of kids over." And I'm like, "We could start to talk about that." She's like, "Thank God, I'm not eight anymore."

But she's like, "We need a space where we don't feel like you and daddy are literally staring at us while we're there. It's just not normal." And so instead of freaking out, which you instantly do, and thinking oh my God, all the worst case scenario things, and boys and all this stuff, I just was like, "I hear you. I hear you and that's valid. And yeah, we can absolutely talk about this. We can lay the pros and cons. We can see what that would look like." And it's pretty cool. And it got her really excited.

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And she's brainstormed, and she's sketched, and she's done things. And we haven't even talked about it together yet. She was like, "Thank you. Thank you for hearing me." We haven't even done anything yet and she's so – it's like I gave her a gift, yeah.

Lynne: Yeah, yeah. And hearing is the most important gift that you can give your child. Because how much of your life do you struggle feeling like you're not being heard?

Tobi: Right. Yeah, so just be open moms and dads, and don't immediately go to dollar signs or your worst fears or that they're going to outgrow it. Just be open, alright, and listen, that's step number one. And that goes a long way for mental health as well, just that being heard.

Well, thank you so much. I loved this. It's a unique topic. It's a unique business, which is so exciting. But one as we know, now that we've really talked about this mental health issue that is so, so important, it's so important for teens in general. And this could work for boys too. I mean there's very specific things about girls that you work with. But even a mom of boys that's listening, they can take a lot away from what we're talking about of creating spaces that nurture their kids too.

Lynne: Yeah.

Tobi: Yeah. Thank you so much. It was really, really fun.

Lynne: Thank you, Tobi.

Okay, so really, really amazing and the power of this work. I've loved every moment of working with Lynne in our program. And I just, I love the work she's doing in the world, it matters so, so much. So if you want to build a business like Lynne has, if you want to know Lynne personally, hop into *Design You* and start building a business there. You will have a whole support group of people including Lynne and just like Lynne and like me

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that help you really build this type of business of your dreams, where you can make such a difference in the world.

So I'll see you hopefully inside *Design You*, and I'll for sure see you back here next week with our third part of this three part series of interviews with our *Design You* members. I can't wait for you to hear that one, also crazy, amazing niche that is so, so cool. I know you're going to love it. So I'll see you here next week. Bye for now.

Thank you so much for listening to the *Design You* podcast, and if you are ready to dig deep and do the important work we talk about here on the podcast of transforming your mindset and creating a scalable online business model, there has never been a more important time than right now. So join me and the incredible creative entrepreneurs in my *Design You* coaching program today. You can get all the details at TobiFairley.com.