

Making New Friends



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With Your Host

Natalie Bacon

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Welcome to the *Design Your Dream Life Podcast* where it's all about designing your life on your terms and now your host, Natalie Bacon.

Welcome to the podcast. I hope your November is starting off beautifully. I said yes to the dress last month. My mom, aunt, and cousin came in town into Chicago and we went wedding dress shopping and so many of you gave me such good advice over on Instagram, dos and don'ts. I really took them to heart and used them, so thank you for that.

It was such a fun and just generally speaking all four of us were on such the same page and we are so different personality-wise. My mom, my aunt, and my cousin we're just different, but we all had such a good time and we all got along. We generally always get along, but we really enjoyed the day even though we're kind of different.

I think that we were able to do that because of the common goal and agenda for the day. We had fun and we went out to eat to brunch to dinner to the different shops and we were really just all all-in on the task and I did not put pressure on the day to find the dress even though it did happen and I'm reflecting on that weekend as I sit down and record this for you, so it has me thinking about friends and different types of relationships and who you surround yourself with and your inner circle and family, especially as we're all kind of entering into new and different seasons of life.

I know so many Grow You members are recently married or new moms and a lot of that comes with wanting to make new friends in different areas of your life, right? So, if you recently moved after getting married you probably have a desire to make new friends. The same is true when you have little ones at home you all of a sudden want friends who are mom friends.

I think about my new friends who I made at the dog park with Steve. There are two other couples and they have little dogs just like Penny, they're both doodles, and the three of us, the three sets of couples, we're all engaged and we're kind of in the same season of life and we all have these little dogs. There's just something to be said about making new friends in every

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season that you're in so that you have that connection that you desire and so that you're not putting so much pressure on your husband or your partner to fulfill every single desire that you have.

Typically, what happens is that I coach a lot of you in Grow You about making new friends and there's so much thought drama around it and I want to really explore some of the things that come up so much and give you some guidance on how to make new friends, how to think about it, how to think about people who trigger you, and what types of relationships you might want to even avoid.

So, last night Steve and I watched *Dead Poets Society* with my favorite, Robin Williams. Robin Williams plays Mr. Keating and he says to the students, his students he's a teacher, he says, "How difficult it is to maintain your beliefs in the face of conformity." To demonstrate this, he has three of the students start walking and they all start walking at their own pace. Eventually, they end up walking at the same pace and the other students are clapping and they start clapping kind of sporadically and end up all clapping together.

His point is that even if you are starting to kind of beat to your drum and have your own unique beliefs and thoughts and ideas, if you are surrounded by people who don't believe what you believe it's very hard to maintain your beliefs. We just naturally tend to change our beliefs based on what other people are believing and sometimes this can serve you.

If you're hanging out with people who believe in possibility and abundance and wealth and health then that can really serve you. If you're hanging out with people who are often complaining, not growing, have sort of victim mentality all of the time then that is not going to serve you. So, how this usually comes up is someone will find this podcast and then join Grow You and then really get into it and start to love and start to notice, "Okay, well, the circle that I have right now, the five people who I'm spending the most time with, they're not interested in this stuff at all."

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So, they immediately want to try to convince their circle to listen to the podcast and join Grow You and be as interested as they are in this work and I always say, “That’s probably not the best idea to try to convince people to be interested in what you’re interested” and instead what I recommend is just saying, “Hey, I’m really enjoying this podcast. You might want to check it out. I love it. I joined the program.” You can talk about your own experience.

Beyond that I also say I don’t want you to just quit all of your current friendships and start fresh thinking that all of your current relationships are bad, but what I do want you to do is increase your awareness around the circles that you have. So, notice what people trigger you and why.

When certain people trigger you there’s always an opportunity for you to coach yourself. Oftentimes, the people who trigger you most will be your family or really close family friends, people who you’ve known for a really long time who aren’t necessarily really people who you want to end that relationship with.

I think those types of relationships are the best opportunity for you to grow. So, it might be that you’re just very different than your sister-in-law, so you want to convince her to be interested in the things you’re interested in so that you guys can have this close relationship and you just notice that she’s always triggering.

Well, with that relationship I suggest that you lean in and allow for the differences and to coach yourself, but for the other relationships where people are triggering you who don’t fall into the category of sister-in-law or close family friend or some sort of relationship that you really just want to maintain I suggest that you end those relationships.

A lot of times people think that just because you’re learning this work it means that you need to keep your relationships or you’re not strong enough, right? If you can’t find it easy to love someone then you have more work to do. I’ll let you in on a little secret. If you spend all of your time with people who are so different from you and who trigger you and who are just

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living lives that you don't want to be living, they're not a match for you and you don't have to coach yourself and you don't have to feel bad about it. You can just say, "I don't want to be friends with you." You don't even have to say that, right? It's more of a decision for yourself.

So, you spend less time with them and you decide to kind of grow and expand your circle in different ways and you get new friends. I think that there's this idea that you have to coach yourself and be able to be friends with everyone. That's so not the case. You don't have to be angry with them, you don't have to be mean to them or say, "Hey, we're no longer a match, so we're not going to be friends."

But if you find that you have some friends who you've just grown apart from or if they're different than you it doesn't make you stronger to stay in the relationship just so you can see if you can coach yourself through it.

I recently coaching someone in Grow You who wasn't getting along with one of her really close friend's husbands and she was coaching herself around it and all of this. Kind of accepting it and then her friend told her that she was getting a divorce and the client, the member of Grow You said, "I felt so guilty that I was happy and that I won't have to coach myself around being in his company anymore."

I said, "You don't have to feel guilty about that. He's not a match for you." It takes so much energy to coach yourself around people you don't like and I think it's energy well spent for the sister-in-law who you struggle with, right? There are so many lessons to be learned there, but if you are in an environment where you're only spending time with people who trigger you, it is exhausting.

So, what you want to do is you just want to be honest with yourself. Is this a one-off where this person is triggering you and you just don't want to put the energy into it or are you finding that you're triggered by everyone in your life and all of your friends? If that's the case then you want to get to a really clean place before you end the relationships.

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It's kind of seeing what you're thinking about them that's triggering you and if you like those thoughts. But I just want you to know that you do not have to coach yourself in order to feel like you're a better person simply for being friends with someone who you don't even want to be friends with. So, give yourself permission to end friendships, to not like people who you don't want to like. You can still respect them and say, "You know what, you're just not my cup of tea."

I love to give the analogy of eating food. Certain types of food we just don't care for and how we don't have any drama about it. We just think, "Yes, I love black coffee. I love black coffee and no, alcohol isn't for me." I don't have all this drama about it. It might be even simpler if you do have drama about alcohol. It might be that you love vegetables, but you don't like certain types of fruit. You don't have drama about it. You're like, "Yeah."

Those types of melons, I was just thinking Steve doesn't like melon and he kind of gets an itch in his throat for it, maybe a mild reaction. He's just not a melon guy. He's not going to have cantaloupe and there's no drama about it. He doesn't need to coach himself to try to get himself to like cantaloupe. You can think of it in that way with friends. There's so many people in the world just keep in mind that everyone is 50/50.

So, I find that the people who trigger us the most we've known the longest because our brains have so much more evidence of their negative 50. Have you ever met someone who you just adore immediately and you're kind of thinking all of these amazing, wonderful thoughts and it can be a friend or this could be romantically and eventually it kind of calms down, right? You see the other 50.

Just keep that in mind that everyone has that 50% good and 50% bad in them, so you don't want to leave friendships because there are things that you perceive as negative in other people, but you might just say there are so many things that are different about how this person lives that I don't really want to be around them.

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It's like if I think of someone who is spending a lot of time doing drugs. Let me give you an extreme example here, so let's say they party a lot and they do a lot of drugs. I can still love them as a human and say, "I don't want to spend a lot of time with you. Drugs just aren't my thing." I don't need to feel bad about that.

Or maybe it's something more realistic or milder like someone who just swears all the time and that might just not be your cup of tea. Some people love that and other people have opinions totally the opposite and they don't love it. There's no right or wrong. You just get to decide what kind of people you want to be around.

But I do want to point out to you that like attracts like. So, if you are someone who is focusing on your own growth, you will attract others who are doing the same. I always say, "You attract who you are, not who you want to attract." So, if you want better friends then you need to be a better friend first and this means that you embody the emotions of being a better friend. That sounds a little bit like, "What are you talking about?"

What I mean is that you give yourself attention. You are the fun. You bring the fun. Basically, you start with being your own friend and then you are having so much fun in your own life then you want to give to other people. You want to give in those relationships in a way where you're not expecting things from other people, you just want to give like you want to give your time, you want to give your attention. You just are as good of a friend to them as you are to yourself and then that's what you'll attract.

So, if you're enjoying yourself in your life then that's what you're going to attract more of. But you have to really believe that there are relationships out there that you can create. So, take a look at your thoughts. Do you think that friends are hard to find? Do you think that people are too busy for friendships right now?

I know a lot of you, my main women who I help are typically in their 30s, not all of them, but maybe you're in your career or you just started to be a stay-at-home mom, it can feel like people are just too busy in this phase of life,

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but whenever you say I feel like, you're really just saying what you believe. So, if you believe that people are too busy then you yourself will be too busy and you will create that reality in your life where you think and believe everyone is too busy. That's then your reality.

But really it just stems from the thought, "I think people are too busy," and it's just an optional thought that you can throw away if you want. I don't really see an upside to thinking, "People are too busy for new friendships in this season of life."

What do you think about friends who are out there who are a match for you? So, I've talked a lot about designing your future with maybe romantic relationships and I've definitely talked about it with career and money, but what about friendships? Imagine, and really visualize, what you want your future friendships to be like. Do you travel with your friends? Do you cook together? Do you just hang out on Friday nights and talk? Do you go to shows? What do you want to do with your friends and what kind of friends do you want?

Start to visualize that in detail and create your future with friends from your future instead of your past. Think about what thoughts you would need to be thinking in order to create those relationship. Some really useful thoughts that come to mind are, "Friends are easy to find. Friends have time to spend together. There's plenty of time for new friendships. I can make friends at any age. I'm an amazing friend. I know that my friends are out there waiting for me."

These are just some thoughts that I want to offer to you. Come up with your own. What do you need to be thinking to create that? Note that creating friendships from a place of really feeling good about your own life is going to attract high-quality people. So, remember like attracts like. If you are in a stage of life where you are really beating yourself up and you're feeling negative 80 or 90% of the time and you think the world is going downhill and you feel like you're a victim of your own life then that is likely what you will attract. Then, you'll get together with these new friends and you'll both be kind of ruminating in the negativity and sometimes it can actually feel

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good, right? That's where the saying misery loves company comes from. But you're listening to this podcast, so you have some awareness of this. So, just be on to yourself.

Really take care of yourself and focus on being your own friend first and then making friends from that place of having in common. Like, being emotionally responsible, having a growth mindset, and I don't like to think that every friend has to have all the things, or your partner has to have all the things meanings I have those new friends who are engaged just like Steve and I are and who have puppies just like Steve and I do, but they aren't the friends who I talk about personal development with.

So, having lots of friends who fill different connection desires that I have is so important. I have my friends that I've known for over 20 years from high school who are growing and live very different lives, but who I still love so much and still have some things in common with but in a different way. I never put pressure on those relationships to fulfill my other desires like personal development.

This is something that also comes up a lot in Grow You is, "Okay, well, I love all this personal development work and my current circle doesn't." What you can do is you can make new friends that have that same desire. You don't have to have all of your wants met in your current relationships. You can go out there and make new relationships.

I love having lots of different types of friends. When my gym was open I would go to hip-hop class and I had my dance friends. I know some of you will have church friends and some of you will have mom friends and others of you will have business friends. I have business friends and coach friends.

Typically, there's not a lot of overlap. So, my business friends aren't my high school friends. Now, is it possible that there could be overlap? Yes. But I point this out because I want you to know that if you're feeling a void in your life for a certain type of friendship, instead of putting pressure on your husband or one of your current relationships to fulfill that you totally

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have the power within you to create new friendships with people who have that same want who you don't yet know. Just think about what you would be thinking to attract that person.

So, I narrowed down three steps to create a better inner circle and really to make new, high-quality friends who you love and cherish and who you want to grow with. Step number one is that you have to be the person you are seeking. So, if you want to make new business friends then you yourself have to be serious about business because then you will attract other like-minded individuals.

If you want to attract friends who are new moms then you also should be a new mom. So, basically, whatever values you're seeking in friendships, whatever desires, you need to first have those. So, I didn't come up with the idea that I wanted engaged friends with puppies, but I was someone – am someone who is engaged and have a puppy and so I was that person first. Remember, you attract who you are, not what you want. So, the first step is to really make sure that your mind is right and that you are embodying the values that you're seeking.

Step number two is that you put yourself in the environment that you're drawn to because other similar people will be drawn there, too. So, thinking about the other couples who are engaged with puppies, where did we meet? We met at the dog park. So, we put ourselves in environments where we were drawn to each other.

I didn't put up a sign that said, "Seeking other engaged friends with puppies." I first was someone who had that in my life and then I went into environments that were natural given what I wanted and who I was.

The third step is you have to put yourself out there. If you want to build a community for yourself, for your business, it could just be a group of moms who you want to spend more time with, it could be on Zoom that you're going to do this, it doesn't even have to be in person, you have to be willing to feel a little rejection. Because sometimes people have other things going

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on in their lives and they will say no. I just like to think that that's a bummer for them.

If you are confident in yourself and you believe that you're amazing, if someone says no that's a bummer for them, but you have to clean up your own mind first to know that so you don't come off as needy and graspy and weird. So, those are the three steps.

The first step, again, is to be the person who you're seeking, to embody those values. The second step is to put yourself in that environment. Even during COVID this is possible I promise you. It might be online groups at first before you go in person, but like I said, we go to the dog park and met friends there. The third step is you have to put yourself out there, invite people, be the fun, be willing to hear nos, and not let that mean anything about you or your ability to create amazing relationships.

I think that something to consider is what you want from your friends and what you want to give to your friends and what you consider good friends. So, do you consider yourself a good friend? What does that mean? When I think of good friends I think of friends who give you attention and time and who you give attention to and your time to and who you can talk with and they love you and they hold space for you.

There might be commonalities where it's circumstantial. So, it might be your dance friends or your dog park friends or your business friends and those are great circumstances to build friendships around. So, if you're a new mom it's very likely that you want new mom friends. We connect with people over our problems and over our desires, so where you're at in life is what you're going to attract.

I just want to make sure that you see the value of new friends. Sometimes I think, especially if you're at the season of life that I'm in that there's just not a lot of time for that and this comes from having a little bit of time scarcity and thinking that, "Oh, when life slows down," or, "After having kids," or, "When the kids are a little older," or, "When I'm not working so much," but you end up procrastinating your relationships. If you can integrate even a

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few new relationships now your life will end up being so much sweeter and more fulfilling because you'll be more connected and as humans we just desire connection so much and you end up finding joy so much more easily because you have an abundance of relationships.

So, I don't want you to deny yourself the desire for new friends because of a thought that you have that's optional such as, "It's impossible to make friends during COVID." So, write down what your thoughts are about friends, write down and visualize what friendships you want to create in the future and what you want your future to be like with friends and have the courage to go out there and start creating those friendships now.

That's what I have for you this week. I will talk with you next week.

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