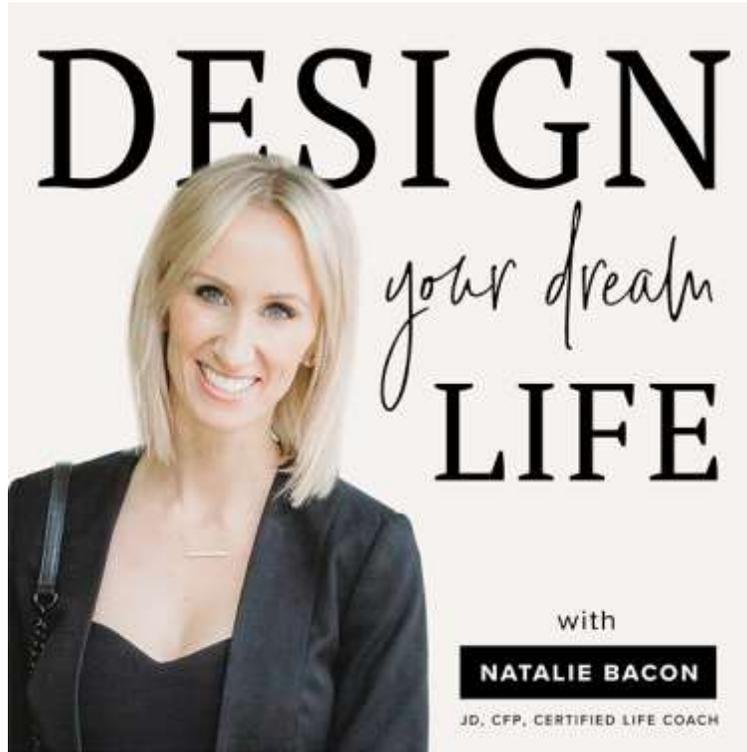


Planning Your Year On Purpose



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Natalie Bacon

[Design Your Dream Life](#) with 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.

Hey friend, how you doing? Welcome to the podcast and Happy New Year. It's 2021. We made it and I have to say I am really energized for this year and I want to help you feel the same way.

I was going through some older episodes and I am having a moment over here. You guys who have been with me since the beginning have seen such a transformation and you probably can tell based on the content and based on the tone and all of it, right?

It's just such proof that these tools work and it really is why I'm so passionate about it. And so passionate about life coaching, and this podcast, and I just want to give a shout out to the OG listeners. If you've been around since the beginning you can say hi to me. Go on over to iTunes and just give me a little shout out in a review and I'll know that it'll come from this episode and we'll just have a little, a little moment there.

I love connecting with you guys so much and have a special place in my heart for those of you who have listened since the beginning. Especially because I know it's just so different, the content is so different. I love it, love the growth. I love using these tools in my own life, and I love helping you use them.

So, I was listening back to so many of the episodes that I've already done for you on planning, on goal setting, on future focus, all those things. And I was looking for how I could really add value here in a new and different way.

And what I came up with was this five-step method that I'm going to share with you. That's a little bit of a different spin on it, on planning. And it really combines the tactical, kind of day-to-day planning that I've taught you how to do with the future focus, visioning, being, right? That Being List episode, writing the Future Self Letters, all of that.

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Because you need both, right? We can't just sit in our rooms and think all day, we actually have to take action. And in particular, I wanted to do an episode on planning your year. Not only because at the time this is coming out it's the new year and it's on all of our minds. But also, because after going through something like 2020 and having a really different experience of the world than we anticipated, than we wanted, right?

We kind of tend to second-guess what we thought before. So, all that is to say I want you to have something fresh and new. That considers 2020, and resiliency, and overcoming, and moving forward from a place of intentionality. While also incorporating, you know, everything we've been through, right? I was there too. It's a lot.

So, let's get started. Okay, so I want you to think about this as a five-step method to planning your year on purpose. Step number one is, I want you to use courage, okay? Step number one is about having the courage to plan, knowing that we don't really know what's going to happen, right? We don't know what the world will be like a year from now. We certainly didn't know a year ago that 2020 would be what it was.

But plans are not wasted, they're not a waste of time, even if they turn out differently. Because most of the time they do turn out how we plan for. And when they don't, we can still kind of change course and feel so much more certainty within us. Even if it's a little bit of a false sense of certainty, it's real in the sense that it's an emotion. So, here's what I'm getting at.

For those of you who are thinking “Well, I don't really want to spend time planning 2021 after 2020. It was such a challenge and it went a complete 180 than I originally thought, and I'm just trying to get by,” and whatever else your brain is trying to tell you to try to keep you in your comfort zone. I want you to do this. I want you to have courage. And courage is sort of uncomfortable. It's sort of like going outside your comfort zone where it doesn't always feel good.

Your brain is like, “I don't know about that, right?” For Steve's birthday we went skiing, I'm going to take up skiing. And it's been at least 10 years

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since I've skied and my brain was really like, "Do we really need to do this?" I personally love ice skating. I took lessons when I was younger. I just thrive on the rink. So, that's where I prefer to be, but I just didn't listen to my brain.

I said, "Brain we're doing it." And I'm going to take more lessons, and I'm going to get better, and it's kind of uncomfortable. So, planning. Planning for a year ahead right after we had this global pandemic, can be something that feels a little bit uncomfortable. And what I want you to do is practice the emotion of courage to do it anyway.

It's like Brené Brown calling it "daring greatly," right? It's like having the courage to be bold and go for it. Even though it might not work out, right? It's so worth it you guys, I'm telling you. And most of the time it does work out, but even if it doesn't, that's not a good reason to not plan. Because you could just change your plan, right? And having these tools and knowing how to plan is really going to help you.

Because let me just tell you, when things shut down, when the pandemic hit. If you have practiced emotions like courage, and being resilient, and planning, you're going to be able to apply that whenever something unexpected in your circumstances changes, right? So, you're so much better equipped.

So, it's not about guaranteeing that 2021 is going to go a certain way. It's about saying, "You know what? I can control my thoughts, my feelings, and my emotions. And I am going to direct all of that energy and all of the agency I have into living deliberately and intentionally."

And if something happens in the world, that means it's not going to go the way I had planned, then so be it. That's okay. I'm here for that too. Right? It's such a more empowering place to be in, than kind of the self-loathing of feeling like you're at the whim of whatever is happening in the world. Okay, so that's step one.

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Step number two is to get to know yourself. This is something that I did work on in the last year, and I'm still doing work on, and it's kind of like having a romance with yourself, as Oscar Wilde would say. It's paying attention to you. It's the little things and the big things. How do you like your eggs? Right? I love that, I got that from a movie. I don't remember which one. It was like she was saying, "I don't know how I like my eggs," right?

Depending on the guy she was dating at the time, she liked her eggs whatever way he did. So, it's how do you like your eggs? The florist for our wedding asked, "What kind of flowers do you like?" Right? It's knowing the types of flowers you like. Or you know, if you know for sure that you don't have a preference, it's knowing that. It's knowing little things about yourself that might not be a big deal, but that you pay attention to. Like the types of eggs that you like and the types of flowers you like.

But it's also knowing your values. It's knowing how you prefer to have fun. It's knowing your deepest desires. And this is work that kind of seems nice, but that I think most of us don't take the time to do. Because we're busy, we're rushing, we're kind of doing the day-to-day to-do list, right?

So, part of this is not just knowing what you like, but it's knowing what you don't like. And it's knowing your preferences and it's knowing, kind of your self-identity in the good way and in the bad way. Because this will help you for the next step, right? Where we're going to get to actually thinking about where we want to go in the future.

So, if I know that I am someone who works at my own expense, right? If that used to be my own self-identity, then I want to change that to someone who doesn't work at my own expense. But it takes that awareness because if I don't know that and I just go straight into goal setting, I'm going to try to take more action to feel differently.

And I haven't taught you this that much on the podcast, but I teach it in Grow You. You really want to be careful not to try too hard to change your feelings by taking more action or by changing your circumstances. So for example, if you have a to-do list that feels like it's a mile long and you feel

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overwhelmed by looking at it. You could try to take more action to feel better to reduce the overwhelm.

And that never works, because feelings do not change by taking more action. The way your feelings change is by changing your thinking. So step two, when you're kind of getting to know yourself, it's getting to know the things you like to do. It's getting to know the emotions that you like to feel and that you don't like to feel. It's getting to know that self-identity in each area of your life and knowing which identities you want to keep, right?

I love my identity for creating money, and wealth, and helping my clients. I love my identity of having more work-life balance. I did not like the identity of over working. Right? So, it's getting to know yourself on such a deeper level. Because once you get to know yourself and your values, and who you are, it makes planning so much easier, because you have a vision of where you want to go.

And that is step number three. Step number three is, I want you to think about where you want to go in the next three years. I like to start off with a further out vision like three or five years. I decided three here, but you could do five. So that you work backwards from there, right?

Anytime you want to live intentionally it's only going to happen if you decide where you want to go. And it doesn't even necessarily have to be a goal. It can be that you want to be someone who flosses every day, that goes to the gym every day, you know. So, what I mean by that is, you have certain habits that you want to be in. It could be a goal, a lot of times you can make habits into a goal, but sometimes it's I want to cook more, right? How do you make that quantifiable?

So, think about who you want to be in the next three to five years. Think about what you want to do in the next three to five years. Think about your life in the next three to five years. And do this from a place of being really future-focused. So, when I do this exercise, I don't really look back at my past. I'm not really looking back about being a lawyer or having a blog, I'm

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looking at my future. And when you first do this, if you are new to this, you will find it's actually very challenging. Your brain, just, is out of practice.

In *Grow You*, sometimes I describe it as giving, you know, three-year-old crayons and an advanced coloring book. Okay, they're going to color all outside the lines, but the more they practice coloring, the better that they get. So, the same is true here. At first when you're thinking about three to five years out, you may struggle to have a really clear picture because it's your first time doing it. It's your first time drawing that future. So, it's kind of bare bones. You're like, I'm going to be married, I'm going to have kids.

It feels a little clunky, that is so normal. The more you do this, just like the more you color, the better you get. And I want you to practice this so that you get really, really good at creating that vision of your future. So, it's so clear and really, you can do this for anything.

Let's say you're giving a speech coming up you can imagine that. So much so, that by the time you get to that day of speaking, you know exactly what energy you want to have. I'm doing this for my wedding. I think it's such a brilliant way to apply life coaching to my life, right? So, I think about how do I want to feel on my wedding day?

Did you know you can just think about that ahead of time because things happen, right? Who knows what's going to happen, but I can get out ahead of it and decide on purpose, "This is how I'm going to show up. This is what I'm going to be thinking. This is how I'm going to be feeling," right? And I get giddy thinking about it. It's kind of like thinking about an upcoming vacation. You can sort of delight in the excitement of it ahead of time.

So, for you, you'll create more certainty about where you want to go and who you want to be in the next three years the more that you practice this. And when you do it for, you know, a three to five-year sort of plan, you actually won't get so hung up if you have a year like 2020, right?

It might change a little bit. It might go from a three-year plan to a five-year plan. Or maybe you changed the plan altogether, but you have so much

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more space to dream really big. In a way that's not you know, 20-30 years out. In a way that's relatively soon, but far enough out that you have that kind of, that freedom to imagine really big without feeling a sense of, "Oh my gosh, that's 12 months from now."

So, get really clear on your deepest desires for who you want to be, what you want to do in the next three to five years, and the more specific the better. So, when I do it, I think about our house we're going to live in, I think about having babies, I think about, you know, our dogs. And I think about how I'm going to work three days a week, and how I'll hire, you know, the next few people on the team and what that's going to look like for the business, and for the family, and how we're going to do all of that. And I'm thinking about this ahead of time.

Now, I'm not getting lost in the how, right? I always think, well someone else has figured it out, so I'll figure it out too. That's really the truth, right? It's going to look a lot different than, whatever, how I come up with now. So, I don't need to get lost in the details of the how.

I can give myself permission to think intentionally about that 3 to 5 years from now. One thing that I deeply believe that I learned from Abraham Hicks, is that nothing takes time it just takes alignment. So, it doesn't take 10 years to build a business, it doesn't take five years to, you know, meet someone and get married, right? It doesn't take a certain amount of time. It just takes alignment.

And that means, you aligning with being that person, because once you are that person, that's the result that you create. But I will say that alignment takes time, right? So, it's often easier and quicker for me to align with business and money goals, than it is for some other people, right? I've been practicing it for so long.

It took me a long time to align with getting married and now the feeling is so different than how it was when I was single. And practicing that ahead of time and being in that energy of being a wife and then what's upcoming for

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being a mom, that energy I can feel and I can step into ahead of having the results. And of course, that's how I will create it.

And this is true for anything that you want to create. So, it will take time, but how much time depends on where you're coming from. This is why some people, you know, will achieve one goal, maybe a health goal really easily. And someone else won't, it depends on where you're coming from. So, if in three to five years you've lost 75 pounds and you're just not someone who struggles with weight, you want to get really clear on the identity that you have.

What are you thinking about? What are you feeling? What's your life like? Where do you live? What kind of foods do you eat? What kind of hobbies do you do? It doesn't just have to be food-related, but imagine yourself 75 pounds lighter. Like, what's your life like, right? Some things will be the same. Maybe you're married and you have kids, that will be the same, so you include that. But maybe family dinners will be different, how will they be different? And you get this picture of it and you get attached to that and you become that ahead of time. So that's all step 3.

This is, I think some of the most fun, planning. Because you stop attaching to your current circumstances and what's happened in the past and you really start believing deeply that you can create the exact life that you want.

And I'm just telling you there's nothing more fulfilling than that. I just read Victor Frankel's, *Man's Search for Meaning*, I'm really late to the game, right? And it's really about that. If you haven't read it, read it.

One of the, kind of best, top all-time personal development books, but it's really about giving your future meaning, deliberately. And its meaning that you get to decide on and I just personally love that future focus, that vision planning.

Okay, so step number four is from there, then you create a plan for the next year. So, most people want to just start off on step 4. It's like, okay, it's January. Let's set a goal for the next 12 months. And they haven't

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addressed the fact that their brain is saying, “Well, look what 2020 was like and we shouldn't do this. It's too risky.” So, they haven't decided on purpose they're going to use courage to overcome that. They haven't really spent time getting to know themselves.

They don't even know what their deepest desires are. They certainly haven't thought about the next three to five years. So, they just start with number 4, and this is why I think New Year's resolutions are kind of like a trend and it lasts maybe from January to March. It's not a lifestyle. You haven't done the foundational work. You're just trying to decorate a house that doesn't have that foundation at all, yet.

So, steps one through three are about building that solid foundation. You have the land, you have the framework. You have it on really solid ground, and then step four is the decorating. It's okay, knowing what I know and what I desire for the next three to five years, what do I think I can accomplish in the next year? What do I want to be thinking and feeling and doing a year from now?

So, this is where I like to write a future self letter from myself. So, it's January 2021 at the time this is out. So, I would write it from myself in January 2022. There's a whole episode on that, you can go back and listen. But basically, you'll start from January 2022 or at whatever time you're listening to this and you will work backward.

And you will thank yourself and you'll tell yourself what you've accomplished in the last year and how your life is different. Doesn't have to be more money, or losing weight, or a new job, or a relationship.

I talk a lot about those because those are often the goals so many Grow You members are setting and I've set myself. But it can be that, you know, you're working three days a week instead of five. It can be that you're actually creating more fun and more joy.

Now, we're going to do this work this month in Grow You for setting extraordinary goals, where I think you want to make it measurable in some

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way. So, if you want more joy and more calm and less overwhelm, how are we going to measure that, right? I think those are such worthwhile transformations, but we need to know how you're going to be able to identify, "Yes, I'm different. Yes, I have less overwhelm. Yes, I have more joy."

Okay, so that's kind of more the work we will do in Grow You. But you want to be thinking here, "Okay in the next 12 months, what kind of transformation do I want to see?" List a goal but more than that, just think about what you want your life to be like one year from now.

I'm a big proponent of just setting one goal. But I think a lot of that can be really in the details of the making it time bound and all of that, and setting it specifically. But here for this kind of planning tool, I want you to just think about what you did for step 3 with thinking about all of the areas of your life for the next three to five years. I want you to do that for the next year.

So, a year from now, where do you want to be in your life? Who do you want to be? Do you want to change any of your values? Do you want to accomplish a goal? Do you want to live somewhere differently? Like I think about it. I think about us living in a house, and being married, and maybe having a second dog, maybe being pregnant, and I let myself go there.

Now, I really like talking about the having kids one, because it kind of aligns with all relationship objections I get from people who will say, "Well, how can you plan that? Like, you don't know." And I say, "If you don't think that you have control over the results, you will always kind of hope for it." And that hope and energy makes it sound like it's out there and somehow, it's going to happen without your involvement, it's like abdicating responsibility.

Now, certainly things can happen in the world and we saw that in 2020, but that's not a good reason for me not to think deliberately that I can create this. And I don't hang my worth up on whether I achieve my goal. So, if it doesn't happen, it doesn't happen. I'll figure it out then, right?

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But I want to not decide ahead of time that it's not going to happen. Like, that's just failing ahead of time. Why would I do that. I'm totally down for the failures for failing forward for the growth and the journey, just as I have been in years past. And I'm down for it in 2021. Let's do it.

Okay. Fifth step is to get into the energy of the person who has that result, that's it. This is your being list that I've taught you how to create. This is practicing believing so hard that you have that result and then taking action from there.

You'll feel it in your stomach. I like to think about being a seven-figure CEO. Like, that to me just sounds so much more natural now and it's not as exciting, which means I'm really getting so aligned with it. Like, it'll be here before I know it. Whereas before even if you've listened for a long time, it was much more exciting to me because it was further away. Okay, so the closer you get to alignment, the less exciting it is.

You can totally indulge in the excitement for those new visions and write for whatever is five years out for me. It's much more exciting, but for that one-year goal, it's transformational but I'm already stepping into it. And I want to step into that energy of having completed it before I take action. And then you take action from there.

This is the biggest step I think most people miss and do wrong. Is they take action from not knowing how and it creates more not knowing how and it leads to hope and kind of avoidable failure, I would say, compared to, stepping into the energy of having achieved the goal, knowing that you're going to fail forward, and being okay with that, and expecting the result. And so, you keep going. I just love this. I just think it's such a beautiful way to live a purposeful life.

So, little bit of a recap. Let's go through it. Step number one is to use courage to kind of overcome that uncertainty. So, decide you know what 2020 was what it was and I'm still going to plan 2021 anyway. And this is true, even if you're listening to this five years from now. You may have had

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a year, you know, last year where the circumstances were not what you wanted or you didn't hit the goal or whatever the case may be.

It's deciding, "You know what, I'm going to leave the past in the past. I'm going to have courage to be bold and dare greatly and move forward." That's step one.

Step two is to get to know yourself. What do you like? What do you dislike? What are your values? What are your identities? What identities do you want to keep? What do you want to change? This is just a fun romantic journey of self-love. I love step two.

Step number three is to come up with your three-to-five-year vision. And really get clear on where you want to be in the next three to five years and who you want to be, right? And getting so detailed in that, in your daily life. Like, what does that look like?

Step 4 is to come up with a 12-month plan based on that three-to-five-year vision. Okay, so you're looking at what is possible for me in the next one year, based on where I want to go in the next three years? And your brain is going to come up with so many answers to that question if you ask it in that way, right?

Remember, that brain is like a computer; it'll filter those results for you if you ask that. So, write this down. It will really, really help you get to work brainstorming and starting to create from your future instead of your past. And then step number five. Once you kind of have that vision, is to decide what the energy is that you need to be in, assuming you've created that result a year from now.

So, one year from now you have that result. So, I think about one year from now and I think about being married, and we have the dogs, and we're in a house. And my business is making millions of dollars, and I think about working three days a week, and I think about my team. And I think of the three-to-five-year plan, and then I think of the 12 months out.

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And then I think, “Okay, what will my energy be like as someone who has created that and as someone who has that?” And I step into that energy now. I become that person now and I take action from there. And the more I can practice being the person who has the result that I want a year from now, the more I will align with it. And I'll actually create it faster than if I was in the, “I don't know how,” energy.

Okay, that is what I have for you today, planning your year on purpose. Come join us for extraordinary goals in Grow You, as we do this work for January and into the entire rest of 2021. I will see you there.

Thank you for listening to the *Design Your Dream Life* podcast. Subscribe to the podcast to get the latest episode sent directly to you.

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