

## Cleaning Out Your Brain



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With Your Host

**Natalie Bacon**

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# Cleaning Out Your Brain

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. We are going to jump right into today's episode which is about cleaning out your brain. So I've been doing a lot of work in my own growth about time, time scarcity, time abundance, creating more time, having more space in my life. And part of that is very action oriented, like scaling my business and growing my team so that I can work fewer days. But most of it is in my mind. Just like I did this work five years ago with money I've more recently done it with time.

And it's so fascinating because when the problem presents, when we think there's not enough money, or when we think there's not enough time, or not enough fill in the blank, it always presents as if it's a problem in our circumstances. But what I love about thought work and what I'm going to teach you today is how it's always starting in your brain. And the same is true always. So you might think that this is not new information, but I'm telling you as you grow your brain will go back to that old way of thinking if something new presents and that thought pattern's still there.

So for example I'm so clean and abundant with my money. I feel like I have such an amazing relationship with it. You've heard me talk about that before. And the same was not true with time. And so I wanted to change that but it didn't mean that I needed to rearrange my calendar or take a bunch of different action from a place of only focusing on the result. The truth is I actually needed to step back and clean out my brain with respect to my relationship with time because all of those actions are being driven by my relationship with time, how I think about time.

So for example if I think that I am someone who always is busy then that's what I'm going to create regardless of how much maneuvering I do, regardless of the new planners that I get. I always like to say, "You don't need another planner, you need a plan." So often looking to change the action and the result without changing our mindset and it never works. And I think knowing this just helps you focus on the right work which is your thought work, versus trying to hustle and change your circumstances or

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your actions and expecting something to work long term when it really doesn't.

So all of this starts with cleaning out your brain and what I mean by that is getting onto paper what is in there, what neural pathways you've created so that you can increase your awareness. Now, we throw around the term 'awareness' a lot but I got a lot of questions about the Mental Chatter episode. So I want to just clarify it really simply here for you. You are not your thoughts and you are not your feelings.

You yourself are the consciousness or the soul watching them. So if you think of a subject and object relationship there is the object and then there is the subject. So the subject is watching the object so you your soul are the subject and you are watching the object which is your thoughts and your feelings.

I love the example of watching a movie. Have you ever watched a movie that was just so good that your mind and your body felt like it was a part of the movie? Whether it was in a movie theater, even in your own home you got so intertwined with this movie that you just felt like you were a part of it. That's kind of what happens with our souls and with our consciousness when we get so attached to our thoughts and our feelings.

The more awareness that you have from the position of watching your thoughts and watching your feelings the more you see that you are not your thoughts and you are not your feelings. And that's when you get the power to change it. So here's why this even matters in the first place. If you don't see that you are not your thoughts and you are not your feelings you're going to go around trying to change your actions and circumstances to change your life and to feel better. You'll think that it's the world outside of you that has the problem.

So if you are having a rough time at work you are going to think that it's your job and so you will change your job. And you might do this indefinitely without realizing that it's your thoughts that are creating the experience that you're having at your job. Now, this doesn't mean that you don't want to

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quit your job or get a new job, it just means that you want to do it from that place of having the awareness that you're the creator of that experience because you can't outrun the world. And what I mean by that is you'll go from job to job and you will carry with you your thoughts and your feelings.

So if you think of all those neural pathways that you have in your mind you're carrying those with you everywhere. And the emotions, the emotional patterns that you've memorized, you're carrying those with you everywhere. And the only way that you can really change them is to first bring awareness to them.

So what I'm teaching you here in this episode is how to increase that awareness of your own mind so that yes, you can change but also so you create less suffering and resistance to anything that you experience as negative. So how to do this is to get everything that is inside your brain out onto paper. And you want to write about what you're thinking, what you're feeling and what you're doing. So your thoughts, your feelings and your actions, so write it down.

Now, I get a lot of questions about what to write about. People will say, "I'm not sure what to write about." So if you're not sure what to write about, do this for any problem you're experiencing, any feeling that you've been feeling a lot lately or a goal. So I have three examples of each for you.

So let's say that a problem that you have in your life right now is your sister-in-law is pressuring your mom to host and your mom doesn't want to but she tends to do so reluctantly and then complain about it. So you have this problem going around in your head and you think that your sister-in-law pressuring your mom is the problem. What I want you to do is I want you to write down everything that you think about the problem. Write down how you feel about the problem.

Write down what you're doing about the problem. And what you're doing might just be gossiping about it, or it might be that you're talking to mom about it or sister-in-law about it. It might be that you're coming up with a solution. It can also be inaction like you're thinking about it a lot. But what

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you want to do is you want to write down everything you're thinking, everything you're feeling and everything you're doing.

An example of a feeling might be let's say you feel really stressed when you think about everything that you have to do for work and also balance that with your home life. And any time you think about it the emotion of stress just pops up. You want to write down everything that you're thinking. You want to write down your emotion of stress and how that feels in your body. You want to write down everything you're doing or not doing about it.

So your thoughts, your feelings and your actions with respect to any problems, any specific emotion that keeps coming up for you, or with your goals. So let's say you set an extraordinary goal for this year to lose 30 pounds. And so far the only action you've taken to do that is going through a course. Let's say you went through How to Change your Eating Habits Forever in Grow You. That's a course we have in the bonus vault. And you haven't done anything other than that but you have taken this passive action which is the consuming of the content.

So you want to write down what your thoughts are about this goal. You want to write down how you're feeling about it. And you want to write down the action which I kind of just gave you. And once you do this for a specific example I want you to create some space around it. So you're going to write for let's say 10 to 20 minutes without stopping, without judging, just write, write, write. And then reread what you wrote. And slow down because remember what I started with here is you are not your thoughts and you are not your feelings.

You are the consciousness or soul, can call it whatever you want, behind your thoughts and your feelings. So just like if you were watching that movie, if you are so wrapped up in your thoughts and your feelings you don't even realize that you're the watcher of the movie. And so with this exercise what I'm trying to help you do is get to the place of being the watcher. So you want to reread what you wrote down. You want to slow down and just get some space around it.

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Then be really curious about why your brain is thinking these thoughts and why your body is feeling these feelings. So about this time if you actually do this exercise it's like cleaning out the messiest or biggest room in your house and you move everything from that room into another room before you put everything back. But you see the big mess, the big pile in another room and you just want to get rid of all of it, you just don't even want to look at it. And what I find is the same with thought work.

So most people as soon as they increase their awareness and they see what their brain is thinking and feeling the next step is that they immediately want to get rid of all of it. So using the examples above you don't like that your brain is all up in your sister-in-law's and your mom's business and you see how judgmental you're being and you don't like that. So what happens is you start to judge your judging.

Or you discover that you're the creator of the stress you're experiencing and so you start to beat yourself up about feeling stress. And so you try to change your thoughts right away so that you no longer have to feel stress anymore. But it's from a place of blaming yourself for creating the problem in the first place.

And in the last example you actually decide to think that you're not cut out for losing the weight anymore and think that you won't be able to achieve it because you're not someone who takes massive action, you're stuck in passive action. Ultimately what's happening here is that you're ending up using your own awareness against yourself. So before you discovered thought work you didn't have awareness that you are not your thoughts and you are not your feelings. You didn't have the awareness that you were your consciousness watching.

But once you discover that you are your consciousness and you are in the position of the watcher what our brains do is we have a tendency to judge and to beat ourselves up for having a brain that thinks in that way. So instead of judging and instead of trying to throw away everything and start over and avoid it what I want you to do is I want you to go into acceptance.

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And it's not just my preference for you to do this. It's actually the only way that you'll make lasting change.

So think of a time where you discovered that you were being really negative and you just didn't like that you were being negative so you tried to think positively instead. But over time what you realized was those negative thoughts kept popping back up. This is exactly what happens when you don't first allow and accept that your brain has the negative thoughts. You were judging yourself for being judgmental.

And when you want to change from a place of lack, from a place of not accepting yourself you will create more lack. You will avoid the negative emotion. You will avoid the thoughts and you never create the actual change that you want. So it's kind of counterintuitive but instead of starting to think positive when you have negative thoughts, what you want to do is you want to accept that your brain is thinking negative thoughts. And you want to be really curious and discover why your brain is thinking those thoughts and feeling those feelings.

Usually your brain has a really good reason for doing what it's doing. And it means so well, usually your brain on default is coming from a place of trying to ensure your survival. So if you can shift from judgment to curiosity you can have so much more compassion for your brain. You don't have to keep the default thoughts and feelings but you also don't have to judge and be mean.

I always like to give the example of a toddler versus the adult. So think of your brain on default as a toddler and it means really well. So just like a toddler who is unsupervised with a marker is going to draw all over the walls and cause a lot of harm, your brain unsupervised is going to cause a lot of problems in your mind if you do not clean it out.

We saw this so much with Covid, even if people didn't get the actual virus what they were getting was Covid brain, they weren't managing their mind and cleaning it out. And so they created so much more internal suffering that didn't actually serve them or serve the world at all.

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So on default your brain is going to create a story about your sister-in-law. It's going to create a story about how you're not good enough to lose the weight. It's going to create a story about how you need to feel stress in all of your jobs. But we don't have to be mean, and judge, and punish yourself and beat yourself up for this just like we don't be mean and punish the toddler. We might just pull the toddler aside and say, "Hey, what's going on? Let me just grab that sharpie from you and let's talk about this. Let's see how you're thinking and how you're feeling?"

And from that place of compassion and acceptance that's when you can change your thoughts deliberately, that's when you can direct your brain to a piece of paper instead of the wall.

But I really think that most people don't even need to get to the step of me teaching how to choose your thoughts deliberately because what they really need is how to get to the place of awareness and then acceptance. Because once you really accept your thoughts and your feelings and you do it without judgment it's actually more natural and easier to choose thoughts and feelings deliberately because you're not in a rush.

So if you realize that you are spending a lot of mental time and energy in your sister-in-law's and your mother's business, you're all wrapped up in their drama and what's going on. And you realize you're being pretty judgmental about it, instead of shaming yourself and beating yourself up about that if you can go to the place of this is my brain judging, trying to protect me, I can allow all of it. I can accept that this is my brain on default. I don't have to think that I'm a bad sister-in-law or that I'm a bad daughter. I can just notice it and I can love myself and allow it.

And then I can say, "How do I want to show up differently in the future?" This is very different than trying to run from who we once were as being judgmental, which is what I see most often. And you cannot outrun yourself. You can't outrun the world. You can't outrun your feelings. So again, the best thing that you can do is get everything that's in your brain out onto paper, focus on your thoughts, your feelings and your actions and slow it down. There's no rush.

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You're not getting 'better' as a person if you naturally think positive thoughts about sister-in-law versus if you naturally think negative thoughts. It's just your brain, we all have human brains and some of us naturally think positive thoughts about sister-in-law. Some of us naturally think negative thoughts about sister-in-law. Some of us naturally think positive thoughts about money. Some of us naturally think negative thoughts about money.

There is no inherently good or bad in your thoughts and feelings. And I think that's why we beat ourselves up, because we think that by having thoughts that we don't really like, or feelings that we don't really like, that somehow that makes us, meaning our consciousness or our soul, bad. And if you think you're bad you're going to want to run away. And what I mean by run away is you're going to want to avoid looking at those thoughts. You're going to hurry to the positive thoughts. You're going to hurry to the positive feelings. And what happens is you haven't yet accepted all of it.

And all of this really hinges on what I started with which is you are not your thoughts and you are not your feelings. You are the consciousness watching them.

Eckhart Tolle talks about becoming the watcher. And Michael Singer in his book gives the example of the movie, of you watching the movie and getting so wrapped up in the movie that you think you are in the movie. Just like your consciousness gets so wrapped up in your thoughts and feelings that you think you are them when really you are the watcher. That example is from The Untethered soul. I talked a lot about that in the Mental Chatter episode as well.

So my hope for you in this episode is for you to increase your awareness and also have some compassion for yourself, to go on this personal growth journey from a place of loving yourself, not from a place of thinking that something is wrong with you or that you're doing it wrong. I know when I do this work with time I think about my consciousness or my soul watching my brain and watching my body, my thoughts and my feelings with respect to time. On default sometimes my brain goes to there's a rush and I can watch my brain and I can notice my brain.

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Sometimes my body goes to I can hurry and get this done. And so I can watch my body do that without judgment. And I can say, “Yeah, it makes sense that my mind and my body, my thoughts and my feelings go to this place of let’s hurry, let’s get more done.” And sometimes that’s even rewarded, but I’m at a place now in my life where I don’t want that anymore. I want to really slow it down.

And I love that I’m at that place in my life. And so what I can do is I can decide to accept all of it and love how I’ve been in the past and love how I’m being in the future. And choose to change it from this place of acceptance, and love, and self-care. But that only works if I’m willing to clean out my brain first and see what I’m thinking and what I’m feeling which is causing me to take action in the way that I’m taking action.

And to do that from that place of openness, and love, and curiosity, that my friends is powerful work that will help you transform your life in whatever area you are working on this year and beyond.

That’s what I have for you today. I will talk with you next week.

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