

Body Neglect



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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.

Hey there. Welcome to the podcast. I have to say, it has been an amazing week so far. I picked up my wedding dress. I cannot wait to show you. It will be over on Instagram @natalierbacon, after the wedding of course. I can't give any sneak peaks to Steve. I love it. I just love it. I tried on about, I don't know, close to ten dresses. At this particular boutique, I tried on only two and I loved both of them. The one I went with I think is stunning and it fits my body beautifully. It's just been a really amazing season of being engaged.

Steve and I got engaged during COVID, and we will be having a COVID micro wedding that they call it where it's really small, just friends and family. But we're still doing all of the elements of a traditional wedding. So I am wearing this beautiful white wedding dress. I'm just really excited about it. It's a fun season.

I was also thinking about this season in particular with COVID, and as it sort of ends hopefully here soon, what skills and hobbies and activities I've enjoyed and have been doing that I want to keep doing. So I'm just kind of mentioning this as the start here so maybe you want to think about this. Now, I know for a lot of you you might have little ones at home. So it's really just getting through it the best you know how. That's great too. There is no shame in that. There is no reason that you need to think you should be doing more.

For those of you who are thinking intentionally about it and have some time that you want to use deliberately, I thought I'd share the few things that I'm finding I just love. I love redecorating. I am redecorating. We finally have all of our furniture in. We'll buy a house in the next year after the wedding. I'm kind of letting that go until after the wedding. It's been so fun to redecorate our home and just really get it to this place where it's elevated and reflects who Steve and I are and Penny.

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I've been skiing. You've probably seen as well on Instagram that took up skiing. I hadn't been skiing in years. Like 15 to 20 years. I've gone skiing a couple times. I'm going to go again this year. In the future, I can't wait to have this be my wintertime hobby. I've learned so much from really starting as a beginner and how sometimes it's not the most fun because you're so bad. I felt that way and really leaned into it knowing that that's what it takes to get better.

The same is true for the other hobby that I've taken on, which is playing chess. This one has been harder for me to do really slowly. I kind of want to skip to the part where I'm really good. So on the weekend, Steve and I will play anywhere from one to two games of chess. Typically we do it on Fridays, pizza Fridays sometimes. I've found that it's so hard for me to be so bad. Steve is really good at chess. Sometimes the games are really fast.

I am finally past the point of knowing what all the pieces do but thinking ahead so many steps hasn't come naturally to me. Steve's been playing chess for years. He used to play with his brother. I find myself really wanting to rush to the place where I'm just so good at chess. But I'm doing it anyways. I'm coaching myself and thinking about okay. How do I want to show up as a new beginner chess player? Because I really believe that how you do anything is how you do everything.

So it's not about chess in so much as it's about me doing and starting something new. I want to be a good team player and be able to be a beginner and kind of notice my thoughts and feelings and the rushing and all of that. So I know I talk a lot on the podcast and in Grow You about coaching yourself and how it's never done, but it also doesn't have to be about really big serious things or really big goals. It can be how you show up playing chess or skiing or whatever else. Cooking.

So that's what I've been doing, and a lot more personal development time, which I've loved. I've also given myself permission to work on the weekends when I want to. So there was a season where I was working and kind of hustling nights and weekends. I really began to balance that out and

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really go to the other extreme and not work any nights and weekends and not really work Fridays. Only reserve Fridays for appointments.

I still kind of have that as the framework, but I noticed that I want to give myself permission to do work that I enjoy on the weekends if it's still quarantine. You know I'm in Chicago. So everything's been really strict with being closed down. This past weekend it's been really, really cold. So if it's freezing and it's quarantine, it's okay that I want to work on the weekend. I really had to do some mind management about that and plan it ahead of time, so I know that I'm not spending too much time working. But that I'm also honoring what I want to do with the time that I have knowing that it's always my decision.

Okay. That's my little intro catch up with you all. I hope you are enjoying this season and making the most of it. Today what we are going to talk about is a concept I'm calling Body Neglect. So if you haven't listened to *Body Love* or *Getting Ready Every Day*, after you listen to this episode go back and listen to those two episodes. They're all related to the relationship that you have with your body.

So as most of you know, if you've been listening to the podcast I have been going to a physical therapist, and I've also hired a personal trainer. So I'm physically active at least three days a week just with those activities. Sometimes more if I do these other activities on my own. What I've noticed is not just the change in my physical body, but I've noticed the change in my relationship with my body. What I mean by that is the relationship that exists in my head. The way that I talk to my body.

What I've found is that I'm so much more deliberate and intentional with how I talk about my body and to myself about my body and to others about my body. What I've noticed is that I'm so much more intentional with how I talk to myself and to others about my body. It's shed light on the fact that I used to go into what I'm calling Body Neglect. I see this a lot as well with my clients. So I'm going to give you seven examples of how this happens, and then I'm going to give you two tools at the end for how to think about and change your relationship with your body so that you're not neglecting it.

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So what I mean by Body Neglect is you neglecting your body. When I look up neglect in the dictionary, it means the state or fact of being uncared for. If you use it as a verb, it's to fail to care for properly. So if you think about your body and how to treat it, if you're in Body Neglect, you're not caring properly for your body. I'm not talking about really harsh and extreme ways that would be really obvious. I'm talking about really subtle ways that you might not even be realizing.

So the first example I have, and I want to talk about is when you're working. So if you work whether you work inside the home, outside the home, whatever you consider your daily work in the world. Do you neglect your body or are you caring for your body? So I'll just talk about my own experience. My body used to be so stiff and ache from sitting and working all day. I didn't have the awareness that my body was talking to me. My body was telling me to get up and move, right? I would sort of use will power to just work through it.

So when you're working, what is your body telling you? Is it telling you that you need more water? Is it telling you to get up and move? Do you have the awareness around how you're treating your body when you're working? I find that most of us don't. We sort of stay in our heads all day and we sort of ignore our bodies.

The second example I have for you is one that you will most likely relate to. If you're like, you try to drink a lot of water throughout the day. It's something that I always recommend. I like to say that we are like plants. We need to drink a lot of water. So with that means you need to go to the bathroom more. What I find with myself and with the clients I'm coaching is that we will sit and neglect our body's need to go to the bathroom. So it's sitting down and working and noticing that you need to go to the bathroom and not getting up and going when you notice that.

So your body's saying, "Hey there. I need to go to the restroom." And you're telling your body, "Okay, well we're going to wait. You need to wait until I'm finished." This might go on for 30 minutes or an hour before you finally decide to honor your body's request. Isn't that fascinating? That we

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don't prioritize the care for our bodies that our bodies are telling us they need. I just think this is so fascinating.

So just start to pay attention to what your body is telling you. When you need to go to the restroom, do you get up and go to the restroom or do you tell your body, "No body, we're not going right now." Now there might be times when you want to tell your body to wait, right? Like maybe you're in the waiting room at the dentist and it's COVID. So you're going to wait to go to the restroom until you leave and get home.

What I find with myself too. I mean not really anymore, but how I used to do it was I would be working totally in the comfort in my own home. I would need to go to the restroom after drinking so much water, and I put it off. I just tell my body, "No, body. We're not going to the restroom now. I'm going to keep working. I'm in the middle of something." It's kind of like your toddler knocks on the door and says, "Hey can you help me with something?" You're like, "No, no. Not right now. I'm busy." That's just over and over and over. So you want to notice if you are doing this. I find this is such a common one that we can really relate to is going to the restroom.

The third example of Body Neglect is how you treat your body when you're sick. Really, I could tie in when you're tired as well. When you are sick or when you are tired when your body's physically exhausted. Or let's say you have a cold, or you have the flu. Do you beat yourself up about it? Do you stay in your head and kind of worry about what you can't do because you're sick? I can imagine having the flu in the past and thinking oh my gosh. Now I have to cancel all these things. I can't go here or do this. Kind of staying in my head about it.

That's a little bit of Body Neglect because what the conversation could look like is, "I hear you body. I know you're working hard to get better. Thank you so much body." Right? I love to think that my body is always trying to heal, and that the best thing I can do for it when I'm sick or when I'm tired is to rest. I hear you body. I hear that you need some rest. I'm going to rest.

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What about when you get on the scale? This is a big one for my weight loss clients or if you have a big weight loss goal. What are your thoughts about your body when you get on the scale? Do you think thoughts like, “I’m overweight? I shouldn’t weigh this much. My body’s so heavy. I wish my body were different. I don’t like the number on the scale. I don’t like my body.” Just start to bring awareness to the way you’re treating your body when you get on the scale. Right.

Because this goes a little bit into what I teach for wanting to achieve anything. You want to do it from a place of abundance. So you can actually set a goal to lose weight and love the body that you have right now. You can say, “I see you body. Thank you for taking care of me. I’m going to do a better job of taking care of you now. It’s okay that we weigh this number. It’s okay. We’re going to start from here. I’m going to love you. I’m going to take care of you. We are going to lose weight from this place of self-care and love.”

When you do it from having this amazing relationship with your body, you don’t beat yourself up. You don’t neglect your body. You actually care for your body. You lose weight from a place of caring for your body instead of losing weight from a place of neglecting your body.

What about when you eat? So most of the time we eat food, and we are not connected to the food that we’re eating. This is particularly true if you are eating really fast or you are eating food that you think isn’t really good for you. So if you’re eating sugar, if you’re drinking alcohol, if you’re eating a lot of processed foods and you’re doing it quickly. Just notice that you’re not connecting with your body and the fuel that your body actually needs. So you’re disconnecting, and you’re probably staying in your head. So you’re not caring for your body.

It’s just good to pay attention to and start to notice. Like, “Oh, whenever I eat dinner, I really enjoy the food and I feel like it’s fuel for my body. But right after dinner, I go into this sugar mode and I’m immediately looking for something sweet so I can get this dopamine hit. I am disconnecting from my body and what my body really needs in that moment.” It doesn’t make

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you bad, and there's no reason to beat yourself up over it. But it's really good to pay attention to.

The sixth example I have for you is when you're laying out in the sun. Now I am so guilty of this one. I'm getting so much better now that I'm in my mid-30s, but for a long time I neglected my body in order to get a tan, right. The sun feels good. I like being tan. I didn't pay attention to what my body needed. A little bit of vitamin D is a good thing, particularly in Chicago in the winter. It's just the beginning of March right now. My body needs some vitamin D.

What I'm talking about is overexposure and kind of doing it at your body's expense. So when you think of laying out in the sun and getting a tan, why are you doing that? Are you just doing it for an hour to get a little bit of vitamin D, or are you doing it for a different reason? Are you really caring for your body when you do this? Are you giving your body exactly what it needs like wearing the really strong SPF? Or are you not? What's your reason? So, of course, that's not to say that laying out in the sun is bad. You just want to notice why you're doing what you're doing and increase your connection with your body.

The last example is when you see other people's bodies, what do you make that mean about your body? Do you neglect your body? Do you stop caring for your body? Do you compare your body to other people's bodies? Do you say, "Oh, I wish I had her body?" Or do you compare your current body to the body that you had when you were 18 and say, "Oh, I wish my body could look like that again."

When you do this, notice that your brain is going to either the past or someone else's body. Either way you're comparing your current body and basically saying, "Body you are not enough, and you should be better."

What I want you to do as you kind of think about Body Neglect and your relationship with your body is to use the tool of personifying your body. You've probably heard me teach this a lot with respect to your selflove and

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the way that you treat money and really anything you can do this with. I find it so helpful.

So the way that you personify your body is you separate yourself from your body and you give your body human qualities. So you basically pretend that your body is a person outside of you that you're in charge of protecting. Like a best friend who needs your help or a small child.

So if your body was your best friend or a small child or someone outside of you and you saw someone else's body, would you say really mean things about your best friend or a small child? Right, definitely not. You would not say, "Oh see that body over there? I wish you were more like that." You would not say that to someone that you love. So if you personify your body and you think of your body as someone outside of you, it just really magnifies the relationship you have with your body. I.e. the conversation that you have in your mind, the sentences in your head about your body.

Tool number two is to become BFFs with your body. Become besties. I like to think of my body as my best friend. I'm going to protect you body. I'm going to love you. I'm going to be gentle with you. I'm going to take care of you the best way that I can.

I once heard someone talking about how she went into the doctor. The doctor had said that she needed to get some sort of scan to find out what was wrong. The doctor told her that it could be some sort of tumor. She said, "I told the doctor, 'You do not have the authority to create that sort of guess until we have the results.'" She said, "My body is my best friend, and we're going to figure out what's going on. I'm not going to accept what might be. I know my body is trying to heal. I know I am best friends with my body. I know we can get through this."

Now, of course, she went through and got the scan and all of that. It wasn't a tumor, right.

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It's just noticing that you can protect and guard and love and cherish your body just like you would your own baby. Just like you would your best friend. So for me, I like to think I'm BFFs with my body.

So as you're doing this work, I want you to think of a GPS. There is the starting point and then there is the destination point. So if you're travelling somewhere, you need both. You need to enter in the starting point, and you need to enter in the destination point. I think that if you want to have an extraordinary relationship with your body, you need both. You need to notice where you are now. So find out where you are neglecting your body.

Right, I gave you seven examples on this episode that I think are pretty common. So you can start increasing your awareness of where are you not caring for your body? What are you thinking and saying to yourself about your body? That's your starting point in the GPS. Then I want you to think about where you want to do. What relationship do you want to have with your body?

For me, I like to think that I'm besties with my body. That's where I want to go. Now I'm going to travel on this journey from where I am now to where I want to go. So there's no rush. I don't need to beat myself up if I am in a little bit of Body Neglect. Instead I can just notice it. I can increase my awareness of it. Then I can decide deliberately if this story is a story that's really serving me or if I want to change it.

I have to tell you that as a woman and just as someone who has cared a lot about looks in the past, this work just brings me so much peace in a way that I didn't even know was available to me. So I want to encourage you to do this work. Join me and the other amazing women in Grow You as we deep dive into studying our minds and doing thought work all month in the month of March. I will see you in Grow You.

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