

Living In The AND



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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 friend. Welcome to the podcast. I'm so happy to be here with you today, and I'm so glad that you are here with me. Today's topic is called 'living in the and' and I am so excited to bring it to you because I've been using it in my own life and in my client's lives. It's had a really profound impact. Before I get into it, I have a few housekeeping items that I want to let you know about.

First up, if you want to learn business from me, be on the lookout for an offer coming next month. So that would be October of 2021. This is something I've never done before. I'm going to have two offers. One that's going to be lower priced, very affordable. I assume there are going to be hundreds, maybe thousands of you who will opt into this offer. Then there is going to be a much smaller mastermind group with a dozen of you or so that I will work with at a much higher price point for the next year.

So if you want to learn online business from me, a brand new creator program offer coming next month. Just really be on the lookout for that. I'll talk about it on the podcast. Also if you're on the email list, you'll get an email about it as well.

Next housekeeping file is that I have a new download for you. I created a podcast directory with the most popular episodes on a variety of topics including mindset, confidence, relationships, time management, health, challenges, and even my favorite episodes. So if you head on over to nataliebacon.com/directory you can download that.

This is especially good for anyone who is new. I know we have new listeners, particularly as I sort of grow my family and have a lot more mom topics that kind of are present now for my life and for my clients. I want to make sure that you don't feel overwhelmed by the hundreds of episodes. So really this is just a directory for you to be able to focus on the episodes that you were truly meant to hear and are most interested in.

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Last item. On September 22nd, it's a Wednesday, I am hosting a free workshop. It is called Self-Care for the Soul. I'm going to have a bonus for you on that workshop. So if you are interested in taking this work a little bit deeper, it's just going to be a one hour workshop. Totally free. Head on over to nataliebacon.com/selfcare. It's all just one word. You can register there and join all of the amazing women who will be live with me as we sort of do this inner work on a deeper level than what you get just on the podcast.

All right. Now let's dive into today's topic which is living in the and. This is a tool that I created based on some of the teachings and trainings that I've had, particularly as I went through my deep dive coach training certification this past summer. It's something that I've noticed is really, really helpful for my clients. So I wanted to bring it to you here. Truly it's one of my favorite tools.

So instead of seeing things as black and white or always/never, it's both. So I call this it's living in the and where there's truth in both of what you're saying, and it's not so black and white. There's truth in what the other person is saying. So you're going to want to use this when your brain goes to extremes. This is pretty much when you're in this all or nothing thinking. Sometimes people call it that. When you feel like someone is giving you feedback that's extreme. You would want to use it then and question that. When you think it's all going to be one way and your brain goes to scarcity. You would want to use living in the and.

So I want to give you some examples because I think this sounds really easy conceptually, and it is. When you apply it to day to day life, you'll see how often we don't live in the and. So the shorthand examples are thinking of productivity and rest. Good and bad. Right and wrong. Big and small. Easy and hard. Success and failure. So what this means is nothing is ever all the way one way. It's usually both. Can you find that gray area in a way that helps you through whatever challenge you're facing?

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So the first example that I have for you is my dad. So for those of you who are new, my dad passed away about two years ago from cirrhosis of the liver. He was an alcoholic. So I could tell the story of my dad being a really horrible dad in some ways. He missed graduations. He went to jail. Was in and out of jail for DUIs. He lost his dental license. There were a lot of times in my household growing up where it was extremely volatile. He put a car in my name. The list goes on and on. I have so much evidence to support that story.

Then there's the story of how amazing my dad was. He believed in me from such a young age. He told me I could do and be anything and anyone I wanted. He always listened to my ramblings and never judged me. He was playful and fun and laughed and was so present when he was sober. We were so connected. I truly consider him a best friend that I had when he was sober. It's so much easier for me to be extreme in my thinking about him. Either he's good or he's bad. What's true for me is that it's both. He was both good and bad. He was both a really amazing dad and a really lousy dad.

Your brain on default does not want to go to living in the and. Here's why. Your brain has sort of been wired for survival. Part of survival means being a part of groups. So when you choose to think a certain way, you become a part of a group. Your brain really likes that because it feels certain and secure and stable.

So think of politics. If you are very conservative or very liberal, it's very clear for your brain to make decisions and to know who your people are. It's much harder for your brain to make sense of where you fit in if you believe a little bit of both on both sides. So I think living in the and is actually much more challenging, but it brings you so much more internal peace.

I was coaching this woman, and her daughter has a diagnosis where the doctors say that it's important for her to not be overweight. Most recently the doctors had been saying to my client, the mom, "Watch her weight. We

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want to make sure she doesn't gain weight. It's not good for her diagnosis." My client was going into this all or nothing thinking about who she was showing up as and who she was being as a mom. Either the doctors were totally wrong, or the doctors were 100% right. Either she was a really good mom, or she was a really bad mom. Either she was succeeding as a mom, or she was failing as a mom.

What I coached her on was seeing that there's room for both. That she's an amazing mom half the time and half the time she gets it wrong. That's not a problem. That that's a good thing. That's how all of us are. We're half amazing and half mess.

I bought this shirt recently. I got mine off Etsy. I first heard about them from Jody Moore. She was wearing this shirt that said "World's Most Okayest Mom". I love it because really what it's getting at is living in the and. When you go to the place of, "I have to be amazing, and I have to be this amazing wife and this amazing mom. We have to have the most amazing family. It sounds like you are wanting to do something so good, but the reality is that half the time you're going to get it wrong. Life is going to be messy. You're going to make mistakes.

If you're holding yourself to this impossible standard that you can't meet, it's going to feel really bad. So yes, we're going to try. What we're not going to do is beat ourselves up when we get it wrong. It's like what are the doctors saying that that is true, and what are they saying that may be a little bit rooted in fear? Can it be both?

I love this with politics, and particularly what we've gone through with COVID. I think that this is one of the hardest things for us to do in society because we really like to identify in groups. So wherever you sort of stake your claim, if you're a conservative or liberal, you feel very committed and unwilling to look at the other side. This is actually just a protective mechanism. So your brain feels so much safer and certain of the world if you see it through one lens. It's easier.

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What's much harder is to watch both CNN and Fox. What's harder is to say yes on this side, this is right. On the other side, this is right. On the other side, this is wrong. On the other side, this is wrong. There's both right and wrong on both sides. That there's both right and wrong on both sides.

We can also apply living in the and to our experiences that got cancelled during COVID. Things got cancelled. You missed out. What else is true? You spent more time with your family inside. You got stronger. You built up your resilience.

For me personally one of the most transformational ways that I've applied this to my life, this living in the and, has been through working and playing. So I used to work so much. In some ways, it was easier to work all the time. I think that we fall into this trap of we either want to focus on working and producing and goal setting and being really heavily into that masculine energy of focusing on results. Or we go the opposite way, and we're really into our feminine energy and experiences and flow and play and self-care. It's all the way to the other extreme. I think it's easier to do one or the other.

For me, I know that it was easier for me to work and sometimes overwork and focus solely on that productivity and be in that results oriented organizational time management focused energy. Over the last couple of years, I'm sure many of you can tell just in the tone of the podcast and how much it's changed that I have really incorporated so much more space for myself. So much more rest and self-care and play and fun and time off. So in that way, I'm doing both. I'm living in the and. I think that it is harder. It would be easier for me to go all one way or the other way. You may experience this for yourself too.

I think that this is true because of what I've heard Abraham Hicks say, "The path of least resistance is the path you're already on." Meaning if you are working and producing and hustling and on that path, it's easier to stay on that path because of the momentum that you have.

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So the path of least resistance is that path of overworking. So your brain actually would rather stay on that hamster wheel and keep going, going, going even though intellectually you say you want rest. Your brain doesn't know how to take that rest. So living in the and means noticing that, having the self-awareness of it, and getting back into that internal balance where you add the other part of it.

For me, there was a time where I was terrified to work less. I truly thought that my money was tied to how much time I put in, how much I worked. It's just simply not true. My business produces more money than it ever has, and I work less than I ever have.

So getting off that hamster wheel of overworking and producing and being in that energy all the time and adding in the other side of the coin required me to take a path that had more resistance. Because it meant that I had to stop, slow down, and do something that was so different than what I was used to. Then not go all the way to the other extreme where I'm just resting and not producing, and I'm playing all of the time. It's both. Can I produce? Can I work? And can I rest? Can I play?

Another way that this comes up a lot in my coaching is through disagreements with family members. Whether it's your spouse, your mother in law, sister in law, neighbor, friend. Anytime we have a disagreement, our brain really wants to be right. What I want you to notice is that there is space for you to be right and for her to be right. For you to be wrong, and for him to be wrong. There's space for all of it, and it will require more thinking and more groundedness from you. But it is 100% worth it. It's like living in that gray space.

I see this come up as well when I coach women about being married and being a mom and how much they love it, and how much they miss their days of being that single woman in college or living with their girlfriends and having that experience. Instead of feeling guilty, I just want you to notice that there's an opportunity for you to have both. For you to live in the and.

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Yes, you love being married and you love being a mom, and you miss the days when you were a single woman in the city.

A part of that too is noticing that there is the good and the bad in every season. So you had problems back then when you were single, and you have problems now. They're just different flavors of problems. Knowing that in the next 10 years, in the next 20 years you're going to have different problems again. You're going to look back on this time with the same sort of fondness that you do about being single because we always sort of look back and filter out what we want.

So in this case if you're looking back fondly about your single days, you're filtering out the problems. That's okay. Just notice that and notice that there's space for you to have both. For you to love where you're at right now, love being married, love being a mom, and miss your days as that single woman.

Whenever I notice my brain going into scarcity or catastrophizing, I really use this concept. So maybe I'll have a few things go wrong or unexpectedly, and my brain wants to go to this place of nothing's working. This is horrible. My business is failing. What I can do is I can remind myself of the truth. What's really true? Maybe I didn't hit the specific goal. That's true. So I had that fail there. I still have a very successful business.

So what it does is it moves you out of catastrophizing. It's both amazing and it's a mess. Life is both easy and hard. When you think of your life through the lens of living in the and, you will create more space to be compassionate and understanding of other people, of people who have different views than you do, and of yourself as well. Because when we are in judgement of other people, we often are in judgment of ourselves.

I also love this tool because it requires your willingness to be wrong and to be open to all sides. I think that's something that's so important if you care about growing and evolving and living from your highest self. I love the example of the health choices that I make. So right now and for the last few

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years, I haven't drank alcohol. I don't think that I'm right in terms of what the rules should be for everyone. I just choose not to drink. I'm open to drinking again in the future if I decide. So there's this lightness to it. I'm open to hearing what other people say about it.

Same is true for meat. So I don't eat land meat. I haven't in a while. I do eat seafood. I'm totally open to being wrong about all of it. Maybe there's one day where I'll eat meat again. When you are so convicted in your thinking and you're unwilling to hear the other side, you close yourself down to growth. You make being right more important than connection, than truth, than anything else.

As a former lawyer, I think we are particularly good and skilled at this, knowing how to argue anything. The more that I've settled into being a life coach and not practicing those attorney skills, I think the better I am at just being totally open to being wrong about all of it. I'm like yep, maybe I'm wrong. Notice how that drops the defenses so quickly.

Can you imagine how much better the world would be if we all did this? It all starts with us practicing it in our own minds where we are curious and where we say, "Yeah, tell me about your side. Tell me what I'm missing. I'm probably a little bit right, and you're probably a little bit right. And I'm probably a little bit wrong, and you're probably a little bit wrong."

When we approach our own challenges, when we approach our circumstances, when we approach feedback, when we approach other people from this space of grayness and living in the and, we open ourselves up to become truth seekers. And become more connected to other people as well as allowing ourselves to grow, evolve, and adapt as we and the world changes.

So start practicing living in the and. It might be challenging at first, but it is so worth it. It's something that I've been doing for the last year and with my clients in Grow You, and we absolutely love it. That's what I have for you today. Take care.

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If you loved this podcast, you're going to love Grow You. Grow You is my virtual life coaching program where I take everything on the podcast to the next level. I invite you to join our amazing community of women and moms and deepen your own personal development. Head on over to nataliebacon.com/coaching to learn more.