

How To Feel Better



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Natalie Bacon

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How To Feel Better

Hi there. Welcome to the *Design Your Dream Life* podcast. My name is Natalie Bacon, and I'm an advanced certified mindfulness life coach as well as a wife and mom. If you're here to do the inner work and grow, I can help. Let's get started.

Hey friend, welcome to the podcast. I have to say I am so tired as I am recording this. RJ was up, I think, five times last night. I am doing so much thought work around it reminding myself that it's totally okay to be tired. It's not that big of a deal to be tired. That thought really helps me otherwise I sort of go into a little bit of self-pity. Like poor me. I should be able to sleep longer. This is so hard.

So instead, I tried to shift to it's okay to be tired. It's not that big of a deal to be tired. I can be tired and still do what I set out to do for my day. While it doesn't take away the part of being tired, it decreases the resistance to it, and it's not so bad. So that's what's going on. Life with a baby, as you know, if you have or have had babies in the household.

What are we talking about today? We are talking about how to feel better. So it's right on topic. How to feel better is the topic of the month inside Grow You for April. So when you join Grow You today, you get all of the curriculum from March, which was how to become more mindful. You also get all of the content that comes out on April 1st for how to feel better.

So if you are struggling with anxiety, feeling overwhelmed, kind of having that mom guilt and really wanting to enjoy your life a little bit more and stop feeling spread so thin, this would be the perfect time for you to join Grow You. You can join for one month, give it a try. If it's not for you, no big deal. You can cancel with a click of the button on the cancellation page. It's so, so, so easy. So if you're not in there yet, head on over to nataliebacon.com/coaching, and you will get all of the curriculum starting April 1st for how to feel better.

Today, I want to talk with you about three steps that you can get started with for how to feel better. These steps are new. I haven't taught them before. I think because of the way that I'm starting to think about this topic a little bit differently than I've taught before, these are going to be really

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simple yet really, really powerful. I'm always trying to simplify my teachings for you to make it clearer and easier and hopefully just more helpful for you.

Before I share the three steps with you, I want to go over some background on how feelings are created. So your thoughts always create your feelings. If you've been a follower or listener or you're a Grow You member, this is not new information for you, but it's still so powerful to hear again. I know it is not lost on me every time I hear it. Your thoughts create your feelings. Your brain directs your body with what to feel based on what you think.

But most of us, myself still included, we attribute our feelings to our circumstances. The practice of doing the inner work and becoming more conscious of what's going on internally for you is how you start to step into emotional adulthood where you take full responsibility for the creation of your feelings. So your thoughts create your feelings.

What it sounds like when you don't do this is saying things like, "I'm irritated because my sister didn't call me back." When you say it like that, that is attributing your feelings to what's happening outside of you when the truth is, you're irritated because of what you're thinking. Another example, he makes me so mad. That's attributing you feeling mad to what this person outside of you did, instead of what's true, which is you are mad because of what you are thinking about what he did.

This doesn't mean that you don't want to think those thoughts and feel mad, but oftentimes, we get ourselves into so much more resistance and negative emotion over things that we actually don't want to feel bad about. So what we can do is take a look at what we're thinking and change our thoughts so that we can feel better.

A big one that I coach on, and I just did a podcast on the hard seasons of motherhood, is when we say things like this season of life is stressful. That is attributing the stress that you're feeling to the season that you're in, which is outside of you. The stress is always created from what you're thinking. When you phrase your feelings like this, that they're coming from outside of you, it implies that you lack agency to control how you feel, which just simply is not true.

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So when you feel irritated, when you feel mad, when you feel resentment, or any other negative emotion, it's coming from your thoughts, which means that it's a choice. It's a decision. So every single feeling that you feel is a choice. It might be a choice that you're making unconsciously. Most of the time it is. That's why we want to do this work.

And myself included here. I'm still a human being. So I still have to catch myself. That's really how I came up with this process that I'm teaching in Grow You as well as the three steps here because I wanted a really simple, but practical and useful way of doing this that was really effective.

So coming from those assumptions, I want to go into the three steps that you can get started with to feel better. Step number one is to change how you talk. So the first thing you're going to do is change the words that you use to talk about your feelings. So instead of I'm irritated because my sister didn't call me back, start saying I'm irritated because I'm thinking my sister should have called me back.

Whenever I do this, and I do it every day, I imagine these sentences and the word thinking is always in caps to emphasize it. So that might be helpful for you as well. What I did here was I attributed feeling irritated to my thoughts. That's it. It's fascinating and amazing how helpful this is. So in the next example, it would be a mad because I'm thinking he should be different than he is. The third example, I'm stressed because I'm thinking this season of life is hard, and it shouldn't be.

When you attribute your feelings to what you're thinking, you will get in the habit of starting to think in the way that really is how the world works. So we are taught growing up, particularly in Western culture, that things outside of us cause our feelings. Which creates this dependency because we have to control the world. We have to control other people to feel better if they're in control of our feelings.

When we say, did little Jessica hurt your feelings? That is teaching our children that their feelings are created from outside of us. So instead, we can say what are you thinking that's causing you to feel so sad? That shift,

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just saying what are you thinking, it shifts everything. It teaches our kids that their thoughts create their feelings.

This is actually the best news because, of course, then you have control over what you think. It doesn't mean that you're never going to feel mad or stressed or irritated, but it means that you're going to have the power to change it at the root cause. Okay, so that's step number one is to change how you talk. Add to that thinking verbiage when you describe how you're feeling.

Step number two is to place your hand on your heart whenever you're feeling negative emotion. For example, let's say that you are helping your kids get out the door in the morning, and this is a challenging part of your day. Whenever you feel negative emotion in your body, place your hand on your heart, then pause and breathe. That's it. This is a moment to practice self-compassion with yourself. It's saying to yourself, "I see you mama. You're doing a good job. This is hard, and also you were made for this." It's saying all that simply by checking in with physical touch for yourself.

This can often be really helpful when you feel some strong emotions. Instead of going straight to doing thought work, simply placing your hand on your heart when you're feeling a strong negative emotion can help you release that emotion. It's a way for you to check in with yourself and give yourself self-compassion without even using words to do it. It's really, really powerful. I've been doing this. It works beautifully.

Step number three is to choose what you want to feel instead. So often we live on default, which means that we are carrying around the feelings that we've habituated. What I want you to do is choose what you want to feel purpose.

So for example, let's say you want to feel content more often. Start practicing what that feels like. Imagine yourself in your same circumstances feeling content. What would you be thinking? What would you be saying? How would you relate to people in the world? How would you interact with your family? What else would you be doing?

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This is work that I've done. I have to say, it's been so powerful. I've really gone from feeling emotions on default like anxiety or worry or even excitement, which isn't a bad feeling at all, but one that I felt so often. All three of those, I would say, I replaced with other feelings. One being contentment.

I like to use the analogy of changing your style, and how uncomfortable it is when you first do this. So if you're used to wearing yoga pants and athleisure every day, and you decide that you're going to show up for yourself and start dressing up every day, it's going to feel a little bit weird at first. This is because of momentum. You have momentum to wear the athleisure. You're familiar with it. Your body is very comfortable in those clothes. You know what size, what style, what colors. You're a pro at wearing athleisure.

When you start dressing up, you're not as familiar with it. Your brain doesn't have all of that data yet. So it feels a little bit strange and even uncomfortable. However, the more that you practice dressing up, the better you get at it, and you build momentum. Eventually it will be your new normal.

This is the same for feelings. So you have to get comfortable feeling good, even if it feels weird at first. If you're used to feeling overwhelmed or anxious or mom guilt or resentment or any of those negative emotions, and those are your default primary emotions that you feel most often, I promise you that it will feel a little bit strange when you give yourself permission to feel really good. If this is normal, and I want you to do it anyway. I want you to embrace the discomfort of shifting to a higher vibration state, meaning a better feeling.

It almost feels like irresponsible to be unsatisfied with how my life's going. Like I need to feel unsatisfied in order to make progress or in order to fix things. The truth is the opposite. You 100% can feel good and change your life. Really, that's the way to do it. Otherwise, you're always waiting till you get over there to feel better.

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So in my experience as a woman and mom and in my experience as a coach, I find that most of the time we spend our days making sure that everyone else is cared for. Whether it's our kids, at home, our spouse, our household, our co-workers, our friends, our partners, significant others, acquaintances, people we don't even know. We are givers, and we want to help everyone. But we do so at the expense of ourselves.

So it sounds like the to do list that you have is never ending. When I say at the expense of yourself, I mean at the expense of feeling good. We want to take care of others and help others so much that we do so at the expense of feeling good. This doesn't help anyone. Because how we show up is on default with our default feelings, whether that's apathetic or irritated or overwhelmed or whatever it is. We carry that with us. It becomes part of our personality because we practice it so much.

The idea to take time for ourselves, to prioritize feeling good, it feels a little bit selfish and maybe even impossible. Like how would I do that? I want to encourage you to think about it differently, and to see that the way of prioritizing other people's needs at the expense of yourself isn't worth it. That how you feel every day matters. That feeling good matters. That this isn't a small thing. It's the most important thing because this is your life and it is passing by.

If you feel negative emotions, consistently, regardless of what's happening in your circumstances, regardless of what's going on in your life, your main emotions that you experience are always negative. This takes a toll on your health, and it really leads to having a miserable life. So wake up every day, and make it a priority to feel good. This doesn't mean that you need everything in your life to go right so that you give yourself permission to feel good.

It's the opposite. It's everything in my life can be half mess and half amazing, and I'm going to make it a priority today to feel good. Or more specifically, the kids can have a hard time getting out the door in the morning, and I can still feel good. I can still make it a good day. It means that you decide to feel good for no reason at all. You feel good about

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yourself. You feel good about your life. You feel feelings that feel good to you for no reason at all.

I know firsthand that this takes practice, but I also know that you can do it. It sounds like waking up in the morning and saying, “Today, my top priority is to feel good. Today, I'm going to find moments to laugh more. Today, I'm going to coach myself and listen to coaching because that helps me feel better. Today, I'm appreciating my life and all that is good. Today, I'm looking for what is right, and I'm going to indulge in it. Today, I'm making space for joy.”

When you prioritize feeling good, the rest of your life falls into place in a way that is so unpredictable. It's like little miracles happen. It doesn't mean that there aren't still challenges, but it means that you show up in a way where you are your best self and able to handle and work through those challenges in a way that you're really proud of.

So I want to just review with you the three steps again real quickly so you can hear them all together. I want you to start practicing these. Then come into Grow You and I will coach you on them and take it to the next level for you.

So step number one is to change how you talk. Instead of attributing your feelings to what's happening outside of you, you attribute them to what you're thinking. So, for example, instead of saying I'm so disappointed because they're not listening to me it sounds like I'm so disappointed because I'm thinking they should be listening to me, and they're not.

Step number two, whenever you're feeling strong negative emotion, whether that's frustration, irritation, resentment, disappointment, anxiety, worry, overwhelm, any of those emotions. In the moment, particularly when you have a lot going on and you can't sit down and do any thought work, place your hand on your heart, pause and take a deep breath. That's it.

It's a way for you to use physical touch on yourself, and the heart is a really good place to do it. So you can connect with yourself and feel better about

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whatever negative emotion that you're experiencing, which releases the resistance to that negative emotion.

Step number three is to choose what you want to feel instead. Choose a better feeling on purpose. So if you want to feel more joy, practice feeling joyful. Ask yourself what would you be thinking saying and doing if you experienced more joy. These three steps will truly change your life if you start practicing them. I find them to be really practical and simple, and yet very, very effective. Give them a try. Let me know if they're working for you.

You can even pop into my DM on Instagram @natalierbacon. I would so love to hear from you. That's what I have for you this week my friend. I will talk with you next week. Take care.

If you loved this podcast, I invite you to check out Grow You, my mindfulness community for moms where we do the inner work together. Head on over to nataliebacon.com/coaching to learn more.