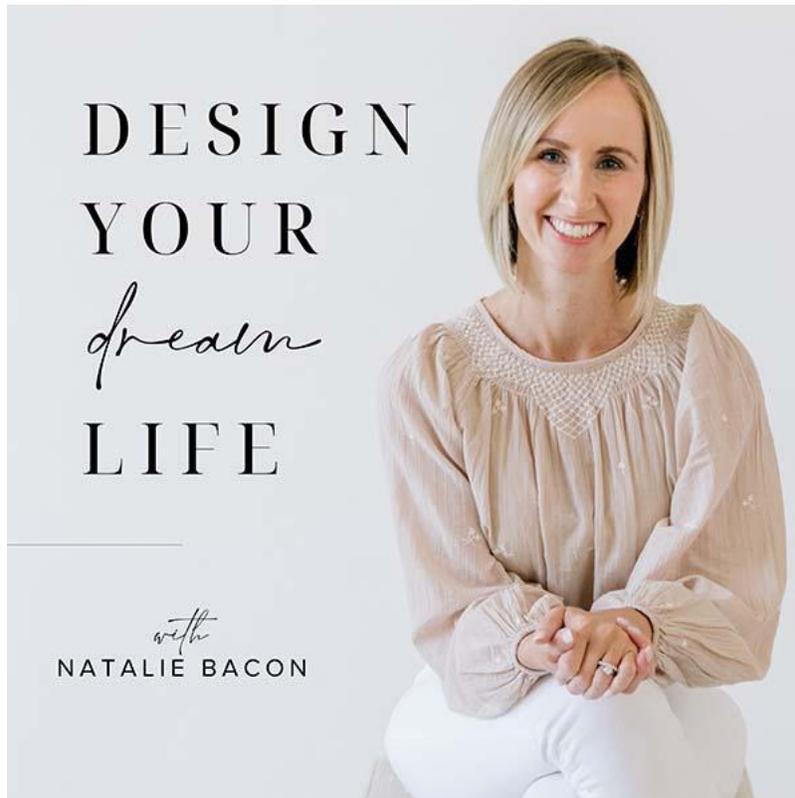


# Everyday Overwhelm And Day-To-Day Struggles



## Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

**Natalie Bacon**

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## Everyday Overwhelm And Day-To-Day Struggles

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 gang. Welcome to the podcast. I'm so happy to be here with you today. I think I say that every week. It's true. I love recording these episodes for you. I love creating content for you. I love coaching you. I just love this work, not only because of how much it has changed your lives, which thank you for all of the feedback and everything that you share with me about it. But also because I am consistently coaching myself and applying these tools to my life.

I seriously don't know how anyone navigates life without these tools. I know that when I am around people who don't manage their mind, I just witness so much unnecessary suffering. I just want to tell them hey, come listen to my podcast. Come join Grow You. It doesn't have to be so hard.

Of course, we still have our challenges, and there will be problems. I like to say that problems are forever. But when you have these tools, you at least can work your way through the challenges in a much more empowering way. At least that has been my experience, and that is why I am so passionate about bringing you this work.

If you have not downloaded the podcast directory, highly recommend that. Head on over to [nataliebacon.com/directory](http://nataliebacon.com/directory). There's also a free class, you can take [nataliebacon.com/mindfulmom](http://nataliebacon.com/mindfulmom). Both of those resources will help you kind of get that positive input in your ear, especially if you're a new podcast listener. Welcome, and you're not really sure where to get started. That is a guide with the best episodes. and I break them down by category as well.

Then the Mindful Mom class, I think 22 minutes. It helps you coach yourself and work through anything in your life where you want to become more mindful and coach yourself. So hopefully those will be helpful for you. If you signed up for either of them in the past, go and sign up for them again

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because they are new and updated. I just recorded the new Mindful Mom free training not that long ago as an updated version, and it's amazing. I want you to have it.

If you're already Grow You, you can head on over to the bonus vault. The replay is inside there. You get all of my free trainings in your portal so you don't need to opt into it. But if you're not in Grow You yet, head on over to [nataliebacon.com/mindfulmom](http://nataliebacon.com/mindfulmom), and you'll get a 22 minute class that's completely free. Hopefully, it will help you become a little bit more mindful.

That leads us perfectly into what I want to talk with you about today, which is every day overwhelm and day to day struggles. This has been coming up so much in my coaching on Instagram, on stories @nataliebaconcoaching as well as inside Grow You. I've done podcasts before on overwhelm. I re-listened to them, and then I decided let's do another one with a little bit of a different spin on it. I took examples from you all. Thank you for all of your submissions that I'm going to walk through and hopefully help you get a little bit more traction with navigating overwhelm.

So what I concluded after doing all of this extra research and sort of revisiting overwhelm with fresh eyes. I like to say that I have a beginner's mind with respect to anything I'm revisiting again for a second or third or fourth or 20th time. I always like to have that beginner's mind so I can learn regardless of how much work I've done on something in the past.

So I approached this topic with a beginner's mind. I did all this research. I talked to you all. I coached on it. I've come to the conclusion that this entire podcast can be summed up in one sentence. Overwhelm is a feeling that's created by the thought I can't handle this. That's really it.

Now, of course, I'm going to go deeper into it with you, and we're going to go through examples but have this in the back of your mind. When you're feeling overwhelmed, are you thinking a thought like I can't handle this? Or this is too much. Or given the resources that I have, the amount of something is too much for me to handle. Some version of that typically is what creates overwhelm.

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Our brains work so fast, thankfully, and we are always scanning our environments for circumstances, for facts, for what people are doing and saying and how they're behaving and what's happening in the world. We interpret the things outside of us, those facts, as overwhelming or not. The key distinction, though, is to see that it's the interpretation that creates the overwhelm, not the actual facts.

So, for example, I was coaching someone, and she said, "My kids are just so whiny. It's overwhelming for me and for everyone." This seems so legitimate, right? It seems like the truth because what happens is your kids say what they say. They do what they do. They're whining. Very quickly your body goes into overwhelm. So we think that okay, if I can get the kids to stop whining, I won't feel overwhelmed. Even if this is true, it's true not because the kid stopped whining. It's true because of the story you're telling in your mind.

This is why I think mindset work is so important. Because even if you get the kids to stop whining, which good luck, right? Of course, kids whine. What is optional is the overwhelm. But let's just say for purposes of this illustration that the kids never whine again, and you never feel overwhelmed with respect to the kids.

Unless you do the mindset work, you're overwhelm just changes outfits. So you keep trying to change your circumstances, but you take your mindset with you. Because it's always your mindset that creates your feelings. It's always your thoughts that create overwhelm. So if you change your circumstances, if your kids stop whining, and you have thoughts like oh, thankfully, they stopped whining. This is so much better, and you feel better, you still have the mindset that certain things outside of you create overwhelm.

So then maybe your husband says to you we need to talk. I'm not happy, okay? Now your overwhelm isn't directed towards your kids whining. It's directed towards what your husband said. You're thinking that you feel that overwhelm because he said that. That was another client example. Husband says, "We need to talk, I'm not happy." You feel overwhelm.

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So I'm all for you setting up your life and your circumstances in a way that serves you. The problem though is that if you only focus on having optimal circumstances, you miss the part where your mindset is actually the cause of the overwhelm. This wouldn't be a big deal if you could always control your circumstances, but we can't, right. Sometimes husbands say things like we need to talk. I'm not happy.

Or another example was we're moving across the country with a two year old. Okay, that's a circumstance, what are you making it mean? The thoughts that you have, what story you're telling, your mindset is what's creating the feeling of overwhelm.

The reason that I want you to really slow down and pay attention to this is because negative emotion isn't bad. So overwhelm isn't bad. But what we want to look at is are the thoughts that I'm thinking and is the way that I'm feeling helpful in this situation? Overwhelm just typically isn't helpful. So I think coaching yourself to get to a place where you rarely feel overwhelm is a worthy goal.

This is what we do in the Mindful Journaling course. If you're inside Grow You, you could absolutely use that course to help you become the next version of yourself who just rarely feels overwhelm. So notice are you feeling overwhelmed a lot? Is it one of your top emotions? Or do you just randomly sometimes once in a while feel it? You can become someone who rarely feels overwhelmed? The way that you do that is not by controlling all of your circumstances because we can't always control all of our circumstances. Sometimes we can control them, but oftentimes we can't.

When schools get shut down, when someone gets a diagnosis, when you realize you made a mistake, whatever the case may be. There are circumstances that will happen that you would not choose, and you can't control. Overwhelm isn't going to help you move through that challenge. When the husband says we need to talk, I'm not happy, feeling overwhelmed just isn't very helpful. It's not going to help you show up in the way that you want to show up as a wife. When you know that you're

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moving across the country with a two year old, overwhelm isn't going to help you.

Another example that was submitted was the kid's activity schedule. So that's the circumstance. The feeling is overwhelm. What are you thinking about their activity schedule? Now, this is one that I want to mention, you can decide from your prefrontal cortex okay we have control over the activity schedule. Are we participating in so many activities as a family and individually that it makes it so hard to manage our minds? If that's the case, then let's change our circumstances so that it's easier to manage our minds around it.

One of my coaches says, every single person in her family gets one activity. Otherwise, it's too hard for her to stay out of overwhelm. So that's what I call putting a constraint in your life. Like, it's like a rule that you have where you reduce the amount of things that you need to do. You can do this with decision making as well. You can make decisions ahead of time so that it's easier for your brain to have an empowered mindset.

Whenever your brain has a lot of options, it's harder to stay out of overwhelm. So, for example, I do this with my clothes. I decided a few years ago that I was only going to wear neutrals. I redecide this often. Sometimes I think maybe it will just one day go to the opposite and only wear bright colors. The point is not that neutrals are better or bright colors are better. It's that I'm creating a rule to make it easier for my brain to make decisions.

Because I've decided that I do like clothes. I like to dress nicely. I have better thoughts about myself when I show up put together. The way that I've decided I can marry that mindset with also knowing that to me fashion and style and clothing, I don't want to take up a ton of space in my mind is for me to put constraints around clothing and the decisions I make with respect to clothes. The way that I do this is through neutrals, and also choosing a few words that I like to use as filters for the clothes that I buy.

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So for me right now, the words that I use are feminine and simple and neutral. So when I'm at Target, or Nordstrom, or I'm shopping at little boutiques online, I only purchase clothes that fit through those filters of feminine, neutral, and simple. As I evolve and grow, I can switch out those words. But I do that from my prefrontal cortex deciding ahead of time.

How this ties back to overwhelm is if you don't have a filter to make decisions through for something like clothes or food or drinks or social media, and you just allow all of the input in, it's so hard for your brain to stay out of overwhelm. Your brain has evolved to survive. It wants to be really efficient. It has not evolved to make all the decisions that are inside a target, right.

So if you can set yourself up for success through having these constraints, and for you, clothes might not take up a lot of mental space. But let's say that food does, or what you drink does, or preparing meals. So in our house, we typically do a very light version of meal planning where we have a certain style of food every single night. We sort of review it on the weekend for the upcoming week.

For example, maybe we'll have Italian one night, Greek another night. We typically have pizza on Fridays. I like to do Mexican on another night. That is a filter through which I can make decisions about the food that we're going to eat for dinner. This reduces the number of decisions so my brain doesn't go into information overload. It keeps me out of overwhelm.

So creating decisions ahead of time, creating constraints, and having filters around areas that typically are harder for you to manage your mind around can be a great way for you to solve for overwhelm. That combined with changing your mindset I think is the secret sauce.

I also want to mention the difference between managing overwhelm in the moment versus out of the moment. So, if you notice yourself getting overwhelm in the moment. The dog just had an accident in the house, the baby's crying, your five year old's having a tantrum, the pasta is boiling over on the stove. It's almost like you're overstimulated.

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Your brain just immediately goes to the thought I can't handle this. This is too much, and you feel overwhelmed. That is not the time to try to coach yourself and change who you are. That is the time for you to go inward and feel your feelings. So there's this distinction between in the moment and out of the moment.

So here's what I like to recommend for in the moment. You place your hand on your heart, you take a deep breath because this starts to regulate your nervous system. It starts to decrease that stress response so you get out of that fight, flight, or freeze. Then tell yourself something that helps you take responsibility for your feelings. So it might sound like I'm feeling overwhelmed. It's created by my thinking. This is a thought error. It's okay that I feel this way.

When you say something like this in the moment, you have your hand on your heart, you took a deep breath, then you say something that acknowledges that the feeling you're experiencing is coming from your brain. You validate your experience, but you also take responsibility for your feelings. Okay.

This is really important because if blaming your circumstances on your feelings helped you, I would say do that. So I never want you to think that you're doing it wrong. I want to give you tools that empower you to actually overcome these challenges.

So in the moment when you've already gotten to the place of overwhelm, your job is to validate your feelings and attribute them to your thinking. So you place your hand on your heart, you take a deep breath, and you say I'm feeling overwhelmed. This feeling is caused by my thinking, and that's okay. Then I like to add on a little mantra that's a little bit empowering. Like, I can handle this, or I can cope with this. That is what you want to do in the moment.

Now, this is going to be helpful just for you to feel regulated and a little bit more calm and be able to process that feeling. This is very different than

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what you're going to do out of the moment. Out of the moment is where you want to work on your mindset.

So you imagine a circumstance happening that is like what I just described, or any of the examples that I've given so far or anything in your life that typically leads your mind to feeling overwhelm. So this is what you do out of the moment is you imagine that happening. Okay.

Someone said everything to do with time. That's what she submitted. I feel very overwhelmed by time, time loss, not enough time, time moving too fast. Everything from minutes to years. So if time overwhelms you, get a specific example from your circumstances. Then ask yourself what am I thinking about that circumstance? What am I thinking about today? Am I thinking I didn't get enough done? I didn't do a good job. There wasn't enough time today. Then notice that those thoughts are what create your overwhelm. Okay.

Your brain doesn't want to see this, but it's so important for you to do this out of the moment so that you start thinking this way. The more that you do this out of the moment, the more it will carry over into the moment.

So if you are Grow You and you do this in the mindful journaling course, or there's also a self-coaching course. You can do models on this as well. If you do this daily or every other day, what's going to happen is that in the moment when something comes up that you didn't expect, you have flexed this muscle of taking responsibility for your feelings and having a more empowered mindset that it will come up in the moment. So you go to overwhelm less and less.

I make big decisions in my life and grow consistently. I experience a lot of challenges and pain, and I'm a human being right. Just like everyone else. But I don't experience a lot of overwhelm. It's not because I'm a unicorn. It's not because my life is easy, and I don't have things happening that could lead me to thinking overwhelming thoughts. I have that happen all the time. I just never think the thought I can't handle this. I never think thoughts like this is too much, or there's not enough time. Or I have to do it all. The

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reason I don't think those thoughts is because I have trained my brain to go to a mindset that serves me better in those challenges.

So there was another example submitted, and this is what the client said. She said, "How can I manage everyday life that feels overwhelming with kids and a baby and everyday struggles? I feel like there's not enough time. That I have to do it all. I'm having trouble managing housework, the kids, appointments, shopping, anything else that comes up. It just feels like a lot."

Okay, so this is the difference between coaching and practicing mindfulness and calling a girlfriend. If my girlfriend calls me and tells me all of this, I am right there with her. I am validating her experience. I am listening. I'm supporting her. I'm sharing my experience as well. Mindfulness tools will help you move through it in a way that is very different.

So I like to use the analogy of having an interior decorator come over versus having your best friend come over. When your best friend comes over, you want her to tell you your house looks perfect the way it is. You don't need to change anything.

Now, when an interior decorator comes over, you want her to actually tell you, "Hey, you should move this here. If you had some symmetry here or painted the walls, it would actually look better, and your house would be more open." Or whatever the case may be. You want that feedback. That's what coaching and mindfulness and what I do inside Grow You is like.

So going back to this example. If you feel overwhelmed, that is the feeling that you're feeling. It's because of the thought you're thinking. So all of the facts that you have. So you have kids, you have a spouse, you have a job, you have shopping to do, groceries to buy, appointments to make. Those are all the facts of your life. What are you thinking about them?

When you think this is too much, I can't handle this, it's very disempowering. It's like your life is happening to you. Your brain will want to

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hide. It wants to go to overwhelm and conserve energy. That's just what brains do. When you see that it's your mindset creating the overwhelm, you can change your mindset. You can think thoughts like I can handle this. I was made for this. If we need to make decisions and reduce the number of activities or outsource or delegate, I can come up with solutions. I got this.

When you think thoughts that create competence and empowerment and capability, you will come up with actions that are solution focused. When you go to overwhelm and you're thinking I can't handle this, that's all your brain is scanning for. That's why the difference between doing the work in the moment versus out of the moment is so important. In the moment, validate your feelings. Attribute it to your thinking, but validate how you're feeling. Out of the moment, practice thinking thoughts that are helpful and solution focused.

Here's another example. My client said, "I'm integrating returning to work and my son starting kindergarten as well as childcare for my infant. I'm trying to do it all, but I'm exhausted and overwhelmed by the end of the day. This leads to resentment towards my husband."

So when you are feeling overwhelmed, it's because of your thinking. It's not because of what you're doing or not doing. Now, I'm not saying you need to do everything and never asked for help. I'm saying change your mindset to be more empowering and then ask for help. Look for solutions. All of those actions that you will take from an empowered place will be so much better and helpful for your life because it puts you into problem solving mode.

You won't go into resentment because you won't have the thought this isn't fair that I have to do at all. You just have to remind yourself brain, it's not true that I have to do it all. I'm choosing to do it all right now. If I want to make a different choice, I can. I know that it's hard sometimes, and I can do hard. I was made for this. I can handle this. Whatever it is, right. You want to come up with thoughts that feel true and good for you. That's why having a daily practice can be so powerful.

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So circling back to the very beginning of this episode where I said that the thought I can't handle this is what I have found to be the cause of so much of the overwhelm that I see most of my clients experiencing. When you tell yourself the truth, which is that's a lie. Of course, I can handle this. How do I know? Because I am. I am handling it. I'm handling it, and it's hard, and I can do hard. I can cope with this.

You see that subtle shift between I can't handle this versus this is hard, and I can handle this? The feeling that it will create in your body is so much different. It will get you out of overwhelm. So that overwhelm is definitely not one of your top emotions, and it's something that you feel so infrequently. That is what I want you to sort of have as a goal if you are someone who really feels overwhelm.

The last thing that I want to mention here is having compassion for yourself. So you're not wrong for feeling overwhelmed. You're not a bad person. You're not a bad mom. You're not doing anything bad. This is just your default brain interpreting the world.

So please don't interpret anything that I've said today against yourself. This is when we use the coaching and the tools that I offer and make it mean that we're not good enough or we're doing it wrong. Every single person, including me, is going through challenges. The challenges are an opportunity for us to go inward and solve the challenges from the inside out.

So I like to think of it like this. Overwhelm is my assignment right now. It keeps showing up. It's like I enrolled in the Harvard class overwhelm, and it's okay. I'm not bad. I'm not wrong. It's not a problem. This is just my homework assignment. This is my next growth journey. It's going to be messy. I'm going to make mistakes. I'm not going to get it perfect. But I'm going to keep trying. Why? Because I want to be someone who shows up for myself on purpose, who navigates these challenges.

Come join me inside Grow You. I would love to coach you on overwhelm. We have a 24/7 written coaching forum where I can coach you on this

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today. Join me at [nataliebacon.com/coaching](https://nataliebacon.com/coaching). I will see you next week my friend take care.

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