

Ep #35: The Later Habit



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With Your Host

Desi Creswell

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Hey designer, you are listening to episode 35. This is the one where I'm talking all about that sneaky little phrase, I'll do it later.

Welcome to *The Interior Design Business CEO*, the only show for designers who are ready to confidently run and grow their businesses without the stress and anxiety. If you're ready to develop a bigger vision for your interior design business, free up your time, and streamline your days for productivity and profit, you're in the right place. I'm Desi Creswell, an award-winning interior designer and certified life and business coach. I help interior designers just like you stop feeling overwhelmed so they can build profitable businesses they love to run. Are you ready to confidently lead your business, clients, and projects? Let's go.

Hello designer. Welcome back to the podcast, so glad to have you here as always. Summer is in full swing here in Minnesota. And school is out and it's been such an adjustment. I'm sure all of you with kids are relating to that as well. But we have found some fun things to do so far.

One of those things that I just wanted to tell you about in case you have one of these in your area is the Museum of Illusions. It's one of those things that I saw an Instagram ad for and caught my eye. But essentially it's optical illusions that you can interact with.

So being able to walk into a space and have the mirror duplicate you. Or walking into a space where you're part of the kaleidoscope. It was so cool. It was at the Mall of America, which is like this giant mall that we have here in Minnesota. And I tend to not go there at all because it's just huge. But that happened to be where the Museum of Illusions is located, so we went and we had such a fun time.

I even convinced my husband to come with us. Sometimes he's like, "I don't know about those types of things." But we had such a great time. So if you have one of those in your area, go look it up.

Today's episode is really inspired by the conversations that I've been having with a lot of you around joining Out Of Overwhelm. Remember that the next cohort is starting July 18th and there are still spots available. Plus you're going to receive three one-on-one coaching sessions with me to use during the program.

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But what I wanted to share is that a lot of you have been saying I'm busy, I'm planning to join in 2024, which is really a version of what we're going to talk about today, which is the later habit. It's really saying I'll solve these challenges and get the support that I need later. And I'm not saying that every person who has a plan to join Out Of Overwhelm later doesn't have a great reason for that.

But what I also observe is that if you're thinking I'll join Out Of Overwhelm later, I can almost guarantee that you're latering in other parts of your business. And that's because "doing it later" is a habit. And in this episode, I'm going to tell you why later is a habit, how to recognize it for yourself, and then what to do about it so that later no longer holds you up.

Before we dive into the topic, I have a quick request for you all listening to leave me a podcast rating and review. This really helps the podcast get in front of more designers, which means I'm able to help more designers just like you and make the impact on the industry that I have set out to make. It truly only takes a few minutes and it helps so much with the algorithm. And let's face it, we all need more help influencing that.

So take a second, open up the show in your podcast app, scroll to the bottom, tap to rate it five stars and then select write a review. And then be sure to tell me what you loved most about this episode or about the show in general, or something you'd love to see on a future episode.

I want to start talking about this topic in terms of how it might be showing up for you so you can first have awareness if this is one of your patterns. And I think we all know that little, or sometimes really loud, voice that presents itself when we're about to do something, right? When we're planning to do something and we don't really feel like it. Or you're planning to do something and something else seems more urgent. Or there's a difficult conversation with a client you need to have and all of a sudden next week seems a lot more appealing than getting that done today.

That's more day-to-day, but later also appears when you're thinking about your bigger goals or initiatives you want to implement in your business. It might sound like I'll get those systems in place when, fill in the blank. Things slow down, I

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have more help, I watch this training, right? It's some type of when this thing happens, then I'll do that. Or I'll raise my fees when I feel more confident. There's always the when attached.

And later might sound like next year. Or years from now when the kids are older. Or when it's not summer or when it is summer. I've heard people say all the seasons as a reason for later. So as you can see, the later habit shows up in the day-to-day execution of your business tasks, whether that is on your back end or serving clients, and really in the long-term planning of your business as well.

And there's a reason why the later habit shows up and exists the way that it does. And that is because of the way that our brains work. Our brains are so powerful, they're so helpful to us and they can really hold us back and prevent us from pursuing our goals if we let them go unmanaged. Your brain will often offer up what will seem like a very reasonable reason to do it later.

Except if you're in the pattern of doing it later, your brain just gets better and better at coming up with reasons to do it later. It essentially strengthens its argument and becomes more persuasive. And what ends up happening then is you lose trust with yourself.

When you tell yourself you'll do it later, you start to actually not count on doing it later. I want you to think about this as if it were a friend or even an employee that you have. The friend or employee who says they're going to do something and continually flakes out. It's really frustrating. You start to not count on them. And it's the same thing when you later yourself. I invite you to consider what that version of later sounds like and when it's most likely to show up for you so that you can have that awareness and be onto yourself.

When I work with clients, a lot of them will come to me and they'll want coaching on this later habit. And they're wondering, I want to do this objectively. I just can't get myself to do it, I keep putting it off. So I think it's important we talk about why we say we'll do it later. And that is because there is a payoff in one way or another for us when we put it off to later.

With any habit that we have, even if it's one we don't like and objectively could say it's not serving us, there is always a payoff. Otherwise, we wouldn't keep

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doing it. With the later habit, the payoff is often a sense of relief or a dopamine hit. Let's talk about the relief first.

When you say you'll do it later and make the decision to do it later, sometimes consciously and sometimes unconsciously, you escape not only from doing the task in the moment but also all of the emotion you have created thinking about the task.

And this is really why I always end coaching on mindset with a strategy. Because you can have all of the how-tos of how to get that thing done. But if you're thinking about the task or project in a way that creates dread or resistance or confusion or any other negative emotion in relation to doing the task, you're going to want to kick the can down the road and get that relief.

You have to develop the skill of noticing when you're creating that negative emotion for yourself and use your brain for you to generate the positive emotions that are going to get you into action. Positive emotion doesn't even have to be joy or excitement about doing something, but learning how to create motivation, commitment, determination on demand is critical. It is why the mindset tools I teach in *Out Of Overwhelm* are so important and vital to you creating success in the day-to-day of your business and in the long run.

You can have attended all of the webinars, bought all of the planners, but if you don't know how to create awareness of your thought patterns, and in this case meaning the later habit, and actively shift your perspective, you will continue to put off what you say you want to do.

Or you're going to have to grit and grind through willpower and force yourself to follow through. This is an incredibly exhausting way to work and I want to offer you relief from that type of exhaustion. Not this faux relief that you get from latering in your business and saying "I'll get to it later."

Now I want to talk about the dopamine hit you get from latering. This is that other payoff that I'm talking about of the later habit. Dopamine is a chemical released in the brain and it makes you feel good. It's something us humans spend a lot of time and money on trying to get more of.

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One of the interesting ways that you get a dopamine hit is through planning. When you're in the habit of later, you often are creating a lot of plans, either on paper or just in your head, and then don't follow through. And then you go back and you create more plans.

And that planning gives you the dopamine hit. And this costs us so much time without an end result. It feels really good to write down what you're thinking you're going to do and then imagine those grand plans playing out. It's why there's such a huge market for all of the pretty planners and project management software. And these are amazing tools when we use them in tandem with proactive planning and follow through that really is a combination of the mindset and strategy of time management.

The downfall is that you're repeatedly creating plans and hopping from one system to the next. You're giving your brain a reward with that planning, without creating the real reward of a finished project or goal. I know that is not ultimately what you want for yourself.

It's really about that quick, in the moment pleasure rather than the long-term satisfaction of seeing your plans come to fruition. When we step back, we know exactly what we want. We don't want that short-term hit. We really want that long-term pride and satisfaction that comes from following through and making progress on goals.

So why this is so fascinating is that you might not feel great about yourself when you later yourself, because you probably judge yourself for that pattern. But you do get a type of that replanning fresh start excitement when you later yourself. And that can be really addicting. So I just want to make sure that you understand that that is part of this habit. And not as a way to further judge yourself, but just to understand what's really going on.

The other way that you create dopamine through the later habit is by thinking idealistically about yourself and your future. And let me explain how this plays out. The later habit in your brain tells you that there is going to be a better time to do something when the conditions or circumstances or people are ideal or perfect. I'll do this when, fill in the blank.

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And tell me, what is it for you? What have you been telling yourself are those idealized conditions or circumstances that you need to have in place before you can take action? You don't need them to be perfect, but our brains love to tell them that they do in order for us to get started.

The later habit mindset also really likes to imagine not just an ideal set of circumstances, but an idealized version of you. Thinking that there is going to be a better version of you who in the future will magically feel more motivated or confident or will be able to do it perfectly. And that's simply not the case.

In the clients that I work with I often see a really big link between perfectionism or this idealistic thinking and procrastination. And that's why there's an entire module on it in Out Of Overwhelm. Because we're waiting for this perfect time or this perfect version of us to exist and it doesn't exist. So we just end up waiting till later and later and later because it never arrives, until we decide now is the time. We're going to take the imperfect and make it the perfect time for us.

Imagining these ideals in the future triggers that reward center in the brain. So again, here's where the later habit has this payoff and you have all these good feelings while you're in the fantasy of later, even though there will never be a time when you always feel like doing something or where you're fully prepared and can ensure that it won't be a flop. It just doesn't exist.

Now, when I tell clients this, sometimes they're a little bit disappointed at first, right? Because that fantasy is going poof. But also I really hope that this can ground you in knowing that you can drop that pressure around perfection.

Now I want to talk about what you do with this later habit if you're recognizing yourself in what I've shared. As with any habit that you want to change, the very first step is to have awareness and notice what's happening without judgment, which was what I was hoping would happen with what I've been sharing in the first part of this episode.

So once you see that you have the later habit, it's time to have an honest conversation with yourself. One of the reasons the later habit is tricky is that it's ambiguous. Once you've identified what the later habit sounds like for you,

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whether it's that little voice or you notice actions that you take or don't take, get honest with yourself on why you're telling yourself you'll do it later.

Are you putting everyone else's desires before your needs and people-pleasing? Are you worried you're going to get it wrong? Or are you feeling confused about where to start? Are you stuck in overthinking or thinking about what other people will think? Sometimes having this radical honesty with ourselves is all we need to do to shift out of later and back into now.

You can also ask yourself this powerful question, why do I want to do it now? Your brain is going to have all sorts of reasons you should put it off. It's your job as the CEO of your business to remind yourself of the benefits of taking action now, whether it's the more immediate future like you'll be able to finish your day on time, or the bigger picture of your business and how doing this one thing now contributes to your bigger picture business goals.

And if you're still thinking about doing it later I want you to ask yourself, If not now, then when? And this clues you into a few things. First this calls into question if this is actually something you plan to do at some point. A lot of times you're telling yourself you should do something you have no desire to do or you know you have no bandwidth to do, or it's something that you really don't need to do right now.

If you're not actually going to do the thing, just drop it and move on and stop telling yourself you're going to do it later. If it is something you really do plan to get to, then make a doable plan. And that starts with how you're going to do it and when you're going to do it.

And this is something that clients learn to do in-depth in *Out Of Overwhelm*, both from the mindset perspective and the strategies to break projects down into really manageable chunks that don't require you to go hide from your clients or employees for a week to actually get something done in your business.

When you kick this later habit, you will save yourself so much time and energy from that planning and replanning like I already talked about, from all those mental negotiations of should I do this or shouldn't I do this, from the avoidance behaviors you're using to put things off until later, from all the negative self-talk

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that you have around putting things off repeatedly. I want you to just think about the impact just removing the later habit from your business could have on the time, energy and space you have in your day.

You are going to get so much more done and be more effective when you're working so that you can actually take time away from your business and enjoy it. When you get rid of the later habit, you also get so clear on your goals. And that's because of the self-trust piece.

When you trust yourself to not put things off until later, you take an honest look at your original planning and at what you're committing to because you know that if you decide to make that commitment, you're going to follow through. You're so much less likely to be putting random things on your to-do list or on your plan for the quarter when you've taken the time to consider if it's something you really want to commit to.

This builds a strong relationship with yourself where you know you can count on you, which is going to make a huge impact in your business and as a person, right? When you know you can count on you, that is a gift you give to yourself and to everyone else you interact with in your life.

I want to recap because I know I shared a lot today. Here's the main points. Putting things off until later is a habit and it's a habit that you can break. And if you want support with this, Out Of Overwhelm is the place to do it. Join now and get started on July 18th, the link is going to be in the show notes. And again, that is when you're going to get the three private coaching sessions and we can dive deep on any issue that you want.

Hopefully, after listening to this podcast you have that awareness now of what latering looks like and sounds like for you. And once you see it, get honest with yourself about if you're actually intending to do the thing or if it's something you're telling yourself you should do and maybe could release. And if you're going to do the thing, decide when and how.

You can also look at why you're wanting to later and why you actually do want to do the thing to create internal motivation. If you want to learn more about creating internal motivation check out episode 16. These emotional and tactical

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tools that are going to help you move past the later habit so that later is no longer an issue really can change everything, both personally and professionally. And I know it's so much easier to do this when you have consistent support and I'd love to be the one to do that for you in Out Of Overwhelm.

There will never be a better time. There will never be an easier time. There will never be a more convenient time. There will only be more time that has passed without solving the problems that you're currently facing in your business. And you can get support this summer. Remember, when you join for the July through December round you're getting the three private sessions and you'll also have developed the skills you need to set your 2024 goals and make them as good as done.

Simply go to the show notes, click the link for Out Of Overwhelm and submit your form so that you can join us this July.

In the next episode, I'm going to be sharing how I reclaimed an additional five hours of time per week using the tools that I share with clients in Out Of Overwhelm. Now, I didn't think that this was possible, but I challenged myself to do it and proved myself wrong. You're going to be so surprised how I did this. I can't wait to share that with you.

If you haven't already subscribed to the podcast, be sure to hit that follow button now, so that you don't miss the episode when it airs. And until then, I'm wishing you a beautiful week. I'll talk to you in the next episode.

Thanks for joining me for this week's episode of *The Interior Design Business CEO*. If you want more tips, tools and strategies visit www.desicreswell.com. And if you're ready to take what you've learned on the podcast to the next level, I would love for you to check out my signature group coaching program, Out of Overwhelm.