

Ep #61: Write Your Own Permission Slip



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With Your Host

Desi Creswell

[The Interior Design Business CEO](#) with Desi Creswell

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Hey designer, you're listening to episode 61. This is the one where I'm talking about writing yourself your very own permission slip. Permission to take time off, permission to break some rules, whatever you've been wanting to do but haven't done, this episode is for you.

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. Happy Wednesday. Welcome back to the podcast, so glad to have you here. Now, if you've been listening in order, today was supposed to be an interview with Caleb Anderson and DeAndre DeVane of Well-Designed. And unfortunately, life happened, as I say. So we won't be having that interview today, but I promise to bring that to you in the new year. It'll be a good one and I promise it'll be worth the wait.

So today, we're going to take it in a different direction because we can. This episode is actually inspired by and sort of an elaboration on the concept of permission I shared in my Monday Mindset newsletter. And that is an email that my subscribers get from me every Monday morning without fail. And if you're not on Monday Mindset, I have to ask you why not? This is how you stay up-to-date on the latest trainings, offers, ways to work with me, workshops I might be offering, either in my own business or through one of my partners.

And it's also something that I have had countless designers tell me that they look forward to every Monday morning and that they actually watch for this email to arrive in their inbox. And I would love to extend that invitation to you to receive that. So the link will be in the show notes for you to subscribe to Monday Mindset, and then we can start our conversations every Monday morning in addition to these Wednesday episodes.

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Now, this particular Monday Mindset was about giving yourself permission to take time off during the holidays. I want to talk about that today, but I also want to talk about permission in general. Permission in all areas of your business. But let's start with time off, whether that's time off now during the holidays, time off this winter when you want to get away. I know I certainly love to get out of the snowy Minnesota weather.

Time off is probably on your mind right now, so let's talk about that. And really, it's the perfect time to talk about this, for me, because as you're listening to this, our family just started a two week adventure in Costa Rica. This is the third winter we'll be back. We're actually staying on the same beach that we stayed on last year because we loved it so much. The house we rented wasn't available, but we did get the one next door.

And the beach is just incredible. So amazing for the kids to play, both on the sand and in the water. There is a walkable yoga studio, which I mean walkable and yoga. And it's right next door to a smoothie shop. So it's like you're hitting all of my favorite things. And we love it there. The kids just delight in the water and I really love that we've created a life where it's possible for me to take this time off.

And I'll just say that this area, increasingly giving myself permission, has been something that I've had to work on. Permission to take time off, permission to do things differently and I've gotten more and more comfortable with the permission giving it to myself as I've practiced it. I used to kind of give myself this faux permission to take time off, where I'd still be somewhere but taking calls or answering emails or even having actual work planned to complete during the "vacation."

And I want to be clear, there's nothing wrong with any of this. Absolutely take some calls if you want, answer some emails, do a project. I know I've talked to some clients who are going to use a little bit of the vacation season to get a few things done in their business. Totally fine. But what I do want you to do is be clear on your intention for the time off and what you want to give yourself permission to do.

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For me, I actually enjoy working when we're on the airplane headed somewhere and usually decide to have some level of checking in while I'm away. But this has a very different energy now to how I do that and my approach to it and the lightness that I feel around it, versus previously when I was talking about that faux permission where it felt like I was just still constantly on.

So what I want is just for you to be intentional and give yourself permission to take time off in the way that you want to take time off. If your first response is, "Oh, but I love working when I'm on vacation," great. That might be absolutely true, but I also do want you to just pause for a minute and see is it that you actually love working while you're on vacation?

Or is there an underlying should of I should be doing this, or discomfort with actually taking time off? So your brain is actually being a little bit tricky and having you do something that you ultimately don't really want to do. And there's a layer of permission that you need to give yourself.

If you want more of the logistics of taking time off for your interior design business, definitely check out episode 20 where I share how to prepare for time away in your interior design business and also plan for your re-entry into the working world. But for now, let's talk about permission. And that is really around the mindset of taking time off or doing things the way you want to do them in your business.

Often I see business owners forgetting that they have permission to take a break. This is really the mindset of taking time off, and it could be time off during the holidays, a winter vacation, or even one of my clients in the past wanted to structure her business so that she could take full summers off to be with their kids.

And what I often see is that business owners, despite the fact that we got into entrepreneurship so that we could call the shots and have that flexible schedule, forget that we actually have permission to take a break and give ourselves permission to do so. What tends to happen is this default pattern of continually pushing ahead or using quieter weeks or slower times to "catch up." And again,

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like I said, none of this is wrong. But we want to have an idea of why we're doing it and if we actually want to do it that way.

I even notice this for myself at times. Last week I had an appointment with my son where I was going to be in a waiting area. My first instinct was to just grab my laptop for the appointment so that I could keep working. And then I thought, "No, I'm starting this new book. I want to read the book." And yes, of course, with running your own business there is always more you could be doing. And it's up to us to decide what is enough.

And let me tell you, it felt so luxurious to sit there with a book, not a screen, and just give myself permission to do what I felt like doing at that moment, trusting myself that I would get the work done that I need to get done and that I had a plan to do so. So I just want you to consider, what if you gave yourself permission to be truly off when you took time off? And, of course, that starts with the initial permission giving of allowing yourself to take time off in any capacity.

It could be even just 15 minutes of off time, or a few hours, or a few days, maybe even longer. It might be to celebrate the holidays or go wandering in a store. Sometimes that just feels so luxurious for me if I can find a little pocket of time where I don't have my kids with and I can just browse, right? Or maybe it's having lunch with a friend, just doing something simply for the sake of having fun. Or you don't even have to do something that's fun, you could just aim for just not doing, giving yourself that little bit of a break.

This idea of giving yourself permission to step away has come up a lot with clients lately. One of the clients I was coaching in Out Of Overwhelm recently really wanted to take time off around the holidays this year because, historically, it's been a crazy time of year and it's kind of like there's more work than holiday celebration. And she's put everything in place to make this happen this year, which is amazing.

There is the exception of one install that wasn't able to be moved. And she really didn't want to be hopping in there, especially because she felt like if she showed up for that, that was going to then trickle into lots of other questions and requests from the client. And we started poking around in there in the coaching

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session and I asked her some questions. And what we found was that she really didn't need to be there for that day. She could get everything lined up, she had most of it lined up, and it would all run seamlessly.

The only reason she was feeling like she had to be there was because she hadn't really given herself permission to do so, given herself permission to step away. Her brain was telling her that she should be there, that it was irresponsible if she wasn't there and so on. But really, none of this was necessary or true. Permission was what was necessary.

If you want to take some time off in the next few weeks, go ahead and practice giving yourself permission, even when your brain says, "But you could be doing more." Plan when you're taking time off, and this is really important, put it on the calendar so you see it and can start to plan around it. And then you're going to need to honor that plan, even when it feels uncomfortable.

Let me tell you, learning to relax and take time off and actually enjoy it when you're used to going a million miles an hour is actually an acquired skill, but it's so worth it. You're going to need to remind yourself that you are the one who needs to write the permission slip. You don't have a boss that you must go to and ask for some PTO, so you need to be in charge of scheduling yourself out of the office because you're the boss.

And this is where I want to talk about giving yourself permission really in all areas of your business. I'm going to give you some ideas of what this might look like. You could give yourself permission to let your personality come through in your marketing and branding. Let me tell you, that is what attracts ideal clients to you. They want to see you.

You could give yourself permission to be seen and be visible, whether that's in your community where you're out developing relationships, or on Instagram where you want to start showing more of you as the person behind the business and more of your work. You could give yourself permission to be bold enough to pitch your project to a magazine, or give yourself permission to take on the types of clients and projects you want in your business.

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You have permission to say yes or no to whatever you want. You could give yourself permission to take a midday walk or a yoga class. You're in charge of setting office hours. You can give yourself permission to charge fees that reflect the true value of your services. There are so many ways in which I see interior designers withholding permission from themselves. And I think this is often coming from a mindset of if I do what I actually want, it's going to be to the detriment of my business, that I'm not going to reach my goals, that I'm going to be doing something wrong.

And I want you to consider that giving yourself permission to do things the way you want will actually benefit your business. And it's going to be way more fun. A great example of this was another Out Of Overwhelm client I was recently coaching. It had been on her priority list to reach out to a few builders to expand her referral network and really start building those relationships. But she hadn't been doing it. She'd been putting it off and procrastinating and kind of avoiding it.

And then once we started coaching on it, we found that the reason she'd been procrastinating was because she had this preconceived idea about how she should do this task, how she needed to reach out to those builders. And the way that her brain was presenting that to her was in a very boring, stale and contrived way. And that is not at all who she is. So of course she wasn't doing it. There was resistance to doing it the way she thought she should do it and she hadn't given herself permission to do it her way.

So we started brainstorming what it would look like to develop these relationships in a way that felt fun for her, like it was something she actually wanted to do. And we wrapped up the coaching call with her excited to take action on her plan because she gave herself permission to do it her way. And I guarantee that her being herself and showing up with her personality the way that she likes to interact with people is going to draw in the types of people she wants to partner with.

I want to give you an idea of a really fun take on this idea that another Out Of Overwhelm client came up with. And what she did was she actually wrote herself a set of permission slips to keep at her desk. And then as things came

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up, she would just fill them out for herself. So you could do the same thing. And keep top of mind like, hey, what do I really want to do here?

So the question I want to leave you with today is what do you need to give yourself permission for? If that feels really edgy, you don't even have to take action on it. But, like I always say, give yourself the gift of the truth. Just start to see what it is that you would give yourself permission for, even if you're not ready to act on it.

If you want to learn to give yourself permission to create a thriving business that fulfills you and allows for time off and a lifestyle you want outside of work, I want you to know that there are just a few remaining spots left for the January 2024 cohort of Out Of Overwhelm and I would love to have you join us. There is an incredible group of designers in this very intimate group and you could be one of them.

All you have to do is click the link in the show notes where you can submit your application, and that's just so we ensure it's the best fit for you. And then you'll also have the option to schedule a one on one call with me if you have questions or want to talk through your decision.

That's what I have for you today. In the next episode, I'm going to be sharing a few important questions you need to be asking yourself as we wind down the year. You're definitely going to want to tune in for that episode, so if you aren't already subscribed, do that now. Hit that little plus sign or follow at the top right and make sure it pops into your podcast feed next week. I can't wait to share those questions with you, they're so powerful. And until then, I'm wishing you a beautiful week. I'll talk to you in the next episode.

Have you ever wished I could be your coach? If so, keep listening. For a limited time when you leave a rating and review for the podcast you'll be entered to win a one on one coaching session with me. I can answer your questions and coach you on your unique challenges.

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won't take long, and as a thank you for leaving a rating and review you'll have the opportunity to win a private coaching session with me.

Just click the link in the show notes to submit your review so I know how to get in touch. I can't wait to select a winner and it might be you. I'll talk to you next week.

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.