

Ep #76: Best Case Scenarios



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With Your Host

Desi Creswell

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Hey designer, you're listening to episode 76. Today we're going to be talking about best case scenarios. My guess is you spend a lot of time thinking about worst case scenarios, and I want to make the case for picturing possible positive outcomes and how it can support you in your interior design business, not just because it'll feel better, but because it is actually proven to give you better results.

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. As always, delighted to be here with you. It has been a really, really busy season of life around here. Feels like the months are just zooming past. We're just coming off our third swim meet weekend in a row. It was the state swim meet this last weekend and both kids participated, which was really exciting. That was a first.

And we had my son's relay team and their parents over for a pancake breakfast before we went off to the meet, which was really fun. And it's so fun to see your kids' friends grow with them. Of course, it's amazing to see your own kids grow. And it's really cool to see all of, in this case, these boys who are maturing, they're getting stronger, they're getting into competition. Really, really cool.

And then it was the first state meet that my daughter had participated in and she has come so far in swimming and not really even swimming, but just in her ability to encounter new situations and navigate those with more confidence and more ease. And so it's just been really special to see that.

Today what I want to talk to you about is best case scenarios, what they are, why you should imagine them and how staying stuck in thought loops about

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worst case scenarios is, first of all, miserable. And two, actually hindering your business results and growth.

Before we dive into the topic, I want to give a quick shout out to a listener who left a rating and review. Nonni1021 shared, "Great podcast. Desi equips me to shift my perspective and focus on so many aspects of my business." I so appreciate this listener noting the multifaceted approach to building a business that I share here on the podcast. So thank you for acknowledging that. And I'm so glad that it has been useful.

As a reminder, I am still giving away private coaching sessions with me when you leave a rating and review for the podcast. So all you have to do is tap those five stars, leave a quick review, it literally could take you a minute, and submit the form that's in the show notes so that I know that you submitted the review and I know how to get in contact with you when I do the next drawing. And you could win a private coaching session where we can dive deep into whatever topic or problem that is presenting itself for you in your interior design business. And I'd love to support you. So be sure to enter that giveaway and the winner could be you.

As I mentioned, today what we're going to talk about is this concept of best case scenarios. And honestly, it's been coming up a lot for me lately and I thought it would be a good time for me to talk about best and worst case scenarios on the podcast and share that with you.

I know I've mentioned a few times now that I'm going to be launching a brand-new coaching experience for designers who are in more of that advanced stage of business. They're not in an overwhelmed state. They have a solid foundation and they're ready to evolve and grow, both as business owners and the actual business itself, which in my opinion are tightly linked and both the designer who runs the business and the business will grow together.

And this particular designer wants to grow and evolve with sustainability in mind. So that growth could be an up-leveled client, greater visibility, building and leading teams, really settling into how their life fits with their business and more. It's called The Designer CEO. It's going to be a hybrid of one-on-one coaching

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and group coaching. And it's super intimate, I'm thinking about eight designers for the start of this. The link is going to be in the show notes if that piques your interest so that you can get all the details and also schedule a conversation.

I'm going to be having consultations with designers this month who are interested in the program and wanting to make a decision if it's the right fit for them. When I think about this program, who it's for, who I'm going to be able to serve and what they're going to create, I am so, so excited. It's something my clients have asked for in the past. I know it's the next step in my business.

And, here's the big and, and my brain is still constantly wanting to tell me that no one will want to work with me in this way. That I've put all of this energy and effort into building out the components of the program and it's probably going to be a waste of time. And then it usually throws in and no one will probably want to work with you ever again. A little dramatic, right? I'm guessing though, you can relate. It's possible that these things could happen. The worst case could happen.

It's possible that not a single designer will decide to join me. It's possible, but it's not probable. And even if that is the case, I trust myself to navigate that. And so the worst case really right now is me. My guess is you're probably nodding along here and going, uh-huh, uh-huh. Maybe you've experienced it where you're really excited about the project you just landed. And then your brain wants to tell you that the client probably won't like what you do or live up to their expectations.

Or maybe you're really excited about some magazine press that just came out. And then your brain offers up that everyone's going to probably think you're too boastful and write negative comments on the post when you share it on Instagram. Or even worse, silently judge you.

Or maybe you're on track to meet your financial goals. And that's really exciting. And you see the work you've been putting into your business paying off and compounding. And then at the same time, your brain offers up the next project probably is not going to come. I'm not going to be able to repeat this. I can't sustain this.

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I want you to know your brain going to the worst case scenario is normal. You are not alone in this. It happens to me. And I know that there are other designers listening to this episode right now and nodding their heads along. So I first want to normalize the tendency to go to the worst case scenario.

And as a side note, this really is one of the amazing things about being in a group coaching experience, and it's that you realize the stuff that swirls around in your head, the challenges you go through also come up for others. You start to realize you are not alone in this challenge and you are not wrong. And that you have tools to do something about it. And that there's other people going through the same process.

I really do want you to know that most people have the default to go to the negative. So it's not that there's anything wrong with you, it's just how you're wired as a human. Your brain wants to keep you safe. If it's presenting all sorts of worst case examples and possibilities and brings up all the things that could go wrong, know that it's trying to protect you. Your brain actually thinks it's being useful.

I want to be clear that when I say that we don't want to focus on worst case scenarios, it's not the same thing as blindly assuming everything's going to work out or pretending challenges might not exist. There's absolutely a place for anticipating obstacles and being strategically pessimistic.

And if you want to hear more on that topic, check out episode 65, which is titled Why You Should Plan to Fail. I'm going to give you a quick example here, just in case you need a recap or you haven't listened to that yet, but it might be something like this. Let's say you're planning a major kitchen remodel for a client. And you notice this persistent worry coming up, going to the worst case scenario.

Yes, this is your brain's natural tendency. And it might be an opportunity to pause and say, hmm, I wonder why this worry is here. Maybe something is very particular about this site, or you haven't worked with a particular cabinetry company that the builder is bringing on. And so maybe there are a few things that you want to work through or get some more information on.

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Or maybe you realize, Oh, it's been a while since I've talked to my insurance provider. I should make sure I really still have the proper coverage for where my business is at.

There might be useful information in the worry, but once you get curious and see if there's useful insight or actions you could take to prevent something that's being presented as the worst case, or just possibly even a bad or undesirable outcome, worst case scenarios really no longer serve a purpose once you've done that initial legwork. Worst case scenarios are really like letting a toddler run around with a pair of scissors, nothing good is going to come of it.

In various episodes in the past, I've talked about one of the coaching tools that I teach my clients, which really is a great way to illustrate how your thoughts create your feelings, your feelings are going to fuel your actions. And then your actions produce results. I want you to think about if you're allowing your brain to run wild with thoughts like, this isn't going to work. I'm going to mess up something bad's going to happen. You're going to generate emotions like fear and anxiety.

And when you're feeling fearful or when you're feeling anxious, you're likely to go into a freeze or flight state where instead of doing something useful or doing that due diligence, you start to engage in avoidance and procrastination behaviors. And then what ends up happening is with those feelings fueling your action or inaction, it actually can end up leading you to being in a situation where you're more likely to create the outcome you don't want.

That's what I mean by worst case scenario thinking isn't useful after you extract the lessons. This also doesn't mean that you have to eradicate that type of thinking. It's still probably going to pop up, just like I was sharing about my own example in launching The Interior Design CEO Mastermind. Even though I've gone through the process of kind of like what could go wrong, what's my contingency plan, all of that, it still pops up.

So that's not the problem that it's going to pop up. What it means though, is that you have a choice of what you do and how you respond to your thinking when it's presented. Do you allow yourself to spiral into a negative thought loop,

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projecting into the future where you have no evidence that this thing's going to happen? Or do you notice the thought pattern with compassion and kindness and say, thank you brain for trying to protect me, but I'm not going down that path right now.

You've done the whole worst case thinking. Now it's time to give the best case scenario, the one that you really want to occur, at least the same amount of airtime as the worst case or whatever that outcome is that you'd really rather not encounter.

Shifting your thinking from worst case to best case is really a practice. And to redirect yourself, you can ask yourself powerful questions like what if I'm wrong about that? Or how is it that the best case scenario could be equally, if not more possible? Get your brain to work on a positively framed question instead of a negatively framed question and you're going to see and notice a shift in your experience.

And I'm going to talk more about how it's going to actually impact your results. Like if we think about that thought model that I shared, thoughts create feelings, feelings drive actions, actions produce results. If you have a positive input into your thoughts, if you're thinking in a way that's going to serve you, you're more likely to not just feel better, but take more effective action and produce better results.

Those two questions that I just shared with you to ask yourself, what if I'm wrong about that and how is it that the best case scenario could be equally possible? Those questions are going to help you come up with positively framed thoughts that are going to shift the following feelings, actions, and results.

There's also two things I like to remind myself when worst case scenario thought loops are presenting themselves. First is the phrase, this or better. Sometimes when we're really stuck on worst case scenarios or outcomes we don't want, it can be really helpful to take the time to actually follow that thread of a thought to what is the worst case scenario that I'm imagining? And get clear on what's looping in the background of our imagination instead of letting it sort of just fester there.

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What I find consistently for myself and when I work with clients and we do this is that usually the worst case scenario is not as bad as we originally thought. Often the worst case scenario is just being about where you are today, which is probably not that bad or it's something that you could easily solve for. Might it be inconvenient or undesirable? Maybe, but you can take care of it. So that phrase, this or better, meaning where I'm at now or better for the outcome, can be really powerful.

The other phrase I like to use and remind myself of is I'm going to assume the best outcome until I'm proven otherwise or have new information. I'll use this reminder for myself after I've done what I could and now whatever is going to unfold will unfold. I need to get the results of my action to evaluate them, get new information, and then make new decisions.

And so this is me trusting that I'm going to take whatever information presents itself or whatever results occur as they arrive and adapt my plans accordingly. But until I have new information or new data, I'm going to assume the best outcome because really, I don't have any more evidence that it's going to go wrong. It's just another thought thread that's taking me down a path that's not useful.

One last strategy I want to share with you about best case and worst case scenarios is to spend time actively visualizing the outcome you want to create or achieve. When we're going to worst case scenarios, we're actually playing this really kind of scary movie for ourselves that our imagination is creating. Maybe scary is too dramatic of a word, but it could be something that's producing a lot of dread for you, resistance, anxiety, sadness even.

But what if you created a new movie for yourself? The wild thing is your brain can't differentiate between real and imagined. It's why you can watch a scary movie and you feel fear. You're not in real danger, but your body is responding to that story that's projected on a screen. Your body has that physiological response to what's on the movie screen.

We know that happens with something scary, and we can also see it when we're watching something that feels good. When you're watching those animal videos

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or something like that, where it's like, oh, they're so cuddly and cute and feeling better. You're not actually cuddling the animal. You didn't get to pet it or anything like that, and you experience an elevated sense of well-being in the body.

And I'm not even talking about sitting around on a meditation cushion, trying to visualize yourself for 30 minutes or even five minutes. Of course you can absolutely do that. And I know that I don't have time is one of the biggest thoughts that create resistance for us trying something new. Visualization does not have to take long. I mean, you could even do it while you're driving to an appointment or waiting in line at a store.

When I mentioned that your brain can't differentiate between real and imagined, I want you to consider how this is a mental rehearsal of what you want to create or the outcome you want to have. This is not just a woo manifestation. There are several scientific studies showing that visualizing the outcome or experience you want to achieve will support you in creating that result. It is a way to practice showing up feeling confident, connected, whatever those emotions are, and having a dress rehearsal for the result or experience that you are hoping will happen.

I'll give you one example. There was a study with piano players and they divided the piano players up into two groups and then gave them music for them to practice with. One of the groups actually practiced with a piano, so pressing down the keys, et cetera. The other group, their practice was actually to visualize playing the piano, playing the song and pressing down the keys, but never actually pressing down real keys.

And at the end of the study, they took the two groups and had them play the piano, what they'd been practicing, whether that was on the actual piano or practicing the music and the finger positioning in their imagination. And both groups improved. There was some greater improvement with those who actually pressed down the keys. And I also want you to see that that mental rehearsal was nearly as effective. Athletes do this too. I mean, it works.

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So I want you to think about if you're driving to an appointment for a big presentation, if you're spending a little time thinking about how you are sharing what you've selected, how you're presenting the selections.

Or maybe it's something with your staff in the office and you need to have a difficult conversation with this person who's maybe not performing at the level that you need them to. And then you, in advance, visualize how you are going to show up leading that conversation, being kind and also firm. How you want the other person to receive you. How you want to respond to whatever they might say. It's so powerful in not just even shifting your experience, but also outcomes.

This simple swap from worst to best case scenario can really change your life and your business. The way you experience the day, how you pursue your goals, your effectiveness when you take action, the strength of your relationships, whether that's with clients, team members, other industry professionals, even just how you show up in person with your family and friends.

I had one client a while ago who we worked on this and the impact of how she was able to be just even present on a Friday night with her husband and her kids was huge. And it's not to say that everything always went perfectly with their projects. It was that they were assuming the best for themselves until proven otherwise.

And this cut through so much anxiety and then also allowed them to more effectively problem solve if and when something came up. And of course, overall, this is just going to make your mind such a nicer place to hang out. I really encourage you to focus this week on noticing when your brain presents the worst case scenario and really feels attached to living there.

You could even do this now, as you're listening to me, if there's a circumstance that's coming to mind that you've been feeling anxious or worried about, what is the best possible outcome? How could that be equally as possible for you as that worst case doom and gloom scenario that your brain is offering up?

I'd love to hear what you think of this idea and what happens when you test it out for yourself. As always, feel free to just hit reply to one of my emails. If you're not on Monday Mindset and you love this podcast, Monday Mindset is the

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

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Monday email I send out without fail every Monday morning. And if you love this podcast, you are going to love Monday Mindset. So I'll also include the link for that so that you can sign up. And of course, you can always reply to that or any other email that you get from me and let me know how this goes.

In the next episode, I have a very special guest, Molly Schoneveld. Molly's a friend, colleague, and PR expert specifically for interior designers and lifestyle brands. We've actually already recorded the interview, I'm airing these a little bit out of order, and let me just tell you, it is so packed with wisdom and actionable strategies as we discuss all things PR for your interior design business.

If you aren't already subscribed to the podcast, take a second and do that now so you do not miss this episode. Just trust me, you do not want to miss it. And you don't want to miss any of the other ones going forward either.

And if you're interested in joining me in The Designer CEO Mastermind to really take your business to the next level and also really grow as the leader yourself, as the person behind the business, you can get all the details at desiid.com/designerceo and also schedule a consultation where we can have a quick chat and I can answer any questions and you can decide what is your next best step.

Until that next episode drops, I'm wishing you a beautiful week. I will talk to you very soon.

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.

All you have to do is scroll down to the bottom of your podcast app, tap the five stars and leave a review. Tell me your favorite episode, why you look forward to listening every week, or why another designer needs to check out the show. It 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.

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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.