

Ep #78: Competing Desires



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With Your Host

Desi Creswell

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Hey designer, you're listening to episode 78. This is one where I'm going to talk about a concept called competing desires. This is all about looking at what you really want to create in your interior design business and where you're believing those goals are in conflict, and actually then creating space for the desires to coexist, where there's room for both. This is going to change the way you think about your goals in your business.

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. I'm sitting down here to record for the first time in what feels like a very long time. I batched a bunch before we headed out on spring break and we are back now. We took an amazing trip to Spain. My husband did an incredible job planning it for our family, and our kids did so well. We went to all sorts of different places and had lots of different types of lodging. And, of course, we're totally out of routine with the time change and it was so, so worth it.

I have to tell you about this, like, oh my gosh, small world moment that happened to me on the trip. We were on the Southern coast of Spain, that's where we were traveling along. And that's actually very close to Africa, which I just think is wild. But we ended up doing a day trip to Morocco.

Now, the day trip was incredible. We had an amazing tour guide. We ate some delicious food. I purchased some beautiful things for our house that I was able to bring back in our suitcase. And I got to meet somebody that I had never met before in real life, and it was a total accident and I'm going to tell you. We were going through kind of like the downtown area and we'd been doing some shopping and we were really kind of on our way back to ending the tour that we had.

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We were going to get back on the ferry to head back over to Spain. And we went by this little store and they had some tiles, some hand-painted tiles sitting out in front of the storefront. They really caught my eye and I had to stop and look at them. And so I started going through, they were like single tiles, so I think probably from a building or something that had been replaced and they were just selling them as individuals. And I thought, oh, this would look really cool if I found a cool stand for it and put it up in the house.

And anyways, I'm standing there kind of combing through these tiles and I start to look up because I want to show my husband and be like, what do you think? And I look up, I notice someone who has these beautiful little blue and white bowls, which I love blue and white. And we look at each other and this woman and I, we recognize each other.

And it is a designer who lives in Morocco, not far from that shop that I was at, who participated in a couple of my workshops last year. And she was pretty active in the group and I had an opportunity to coach her a couple of times. And I mean, it just blew my mind. I mean, what are the chances that I'm out on a tour on spring break with my family in Africa, totally far from home, and I happen to be looking at some tiles and I get to see one of the designers I have coached.

It was just so cool, so I had to share that with you all. I love things like that, where it was just like those tiles caught my eye for a reason. It was so that I could meet her in person. And it was a really special moment on top of a really special day.

Today, what I want to talk to you about is a concept that comes up a lot in the coaching I do with my designer clients around goals and pursuing growth in their interior design business.

Before we do our deep dive into this topic of competing desires, I want to let you know that The Designer CEO is officially open for enrollment. The Designer CEO is a brand new way to work with me in a really high-touch way. And this is actually going to be a mastermind that's a hybrid approach, meaning you're going to get the depth of one-on-one coaching and that intimacy with you and me meeting on a regular basis to really dig in. And it's paired with the power and

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collective knowledge of being in a community and a group of like-minded peers who are experiencing the same challenges and having similar goals.

The Designer CEO is going to be for designers who want to grow sustainably with their values and life priorities in balance with their business goals. This is really a holistic approach to growing your interior design business and we're going to be covering topics like marketing, press, goal-setting, finances, managing team members, and so much more.

And we're going to be doing the internal work, meaning leveling up your identity and self-concept as the leader of the business and claiming what you really want for your life alongside your business goals. And we're going to be doing that alongside the external, more strategic work that's necessary to grow your business.

If you've been listening to the show for a while, I think you've probably gathered that I believe that you have to have the mindset and the strategy. You have to have both. And the growth of your interior design business, that foundation is really rooted in your growth as the owner, as the leader of the company. And we're going to be exploring all of that and putting plans into action.

The Designer CEO is going to be much less of a course where you're just going to sit down and consume a bunch of information. You're of course going to get some incredible resources from me because that's just what I do, but also this is going to be where you make plans and implement decisions and get support along the way.

And if this is sounding like the type of support your business needs, and you as the owner wants, head over to desiid.com/designerceo And that's where you can get all of the details and you can also schedule a time for us to meet. This is an incredibly intimate group. It's going to be limited to eight designers, and I'm going to be speaking to everyone who joins individually to ensure it's the best fit for them and for the others in the community.

Like I said, you can schedule that time for us to talk live or if you want to get started conversing about this opportunity, you can always send me an email

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desi@desiid.com, send me a message on Instagram, @DesiCreswell, and we can take it from there.

What we're going to talk about today, this concept of competing desires is so important, no matter what stage of business you're at. It's going to be applicable whether you're newer to your interior design business, or you are very seasoned and have been in the business for decades. And that is because as your business evolves, the goals and the desires that you have for yourself and what the business produces and creates out in the world are going to continue to evolve.

And each year and each season of life that you're in is going to look different. But this idea of competing desires and taking a look at what I mean by this, which I'm going to go into, is going to be very important.

Let's just start off by laying the groundwork here. And let's say, what do I mean by competing desires? What I mean is that there are two things, this could be results or outcomes, circumstances that you want to coexist, but are being perceived as in conflict. I'm going to say that again. So competing desires are two desires, two things present that you want to achieve, results or an outcome. And you're perceiving those two desires as being in conflict.

There's actually two main ways that I see competing desires show up for my design clients, and I'm going to give you an overview of each and then also share some specific examples so that you have a better understanding of how you can apply this concept and the awareness to your own business to help you achieve what you want, both personally and professionally.

And with these two ways, I will say sometimes this perception of two desires being in conflict is not true at all, but we haven't questioned our own beliefs. And sometimes the things are in conflict and we need to reckon that for ourselves, or it's going to keep us stuck.

Let's talk about this first way, and that is when there are two things you want, but you believe you can't have both. You believe that if you have the one thing you desire, that means the attainment of that particular desire will then come at the expense of the other thing you desire. A lot of times for the clients I work with,

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this will present in the terms of what they want professionally to achieve is going to be competing with what they want personally in their lives.

An example of this might be a designer that wants to be able to continue to grow their clientele, taking on more and bigger projects and having flexibility for their kids. Maybe that's being home when the kids get off the bus or taking Fridays off. There's a competition that the designer believes is present and it becomes a this or that.

They are telling themselves that they have to choose because if you think about competition, what is present in competition is that there is a winner and a loser. One desire wins, another desire loses.

Another example of this might be that you have a desire to make more money without increasing your hours. And you believe that that's not an available possibility for you. You have a desire for money, for profit in your business, which of course is a great desire to have. And you have a desire for time, but you believe that time and money are in conflict and that one is going to win, one is going to lose.

With this type of competing desire, the goals are seen as an either or versus a both and. Instead of asking how both could exist, looking for that and there's a shutdown of one desire. Essentially you take it off the table for yourself. And as I've said in other podcasts, never be the one to say no to yourself.

If there's two things that you really want, let's take a look at how could it be possible that both desires or both goals could be supportive of one another or exist in harmony with an ebb and a flow of what you have and what you can accomplish versus a rigidity of one is in and one is out.

And initially you might look at those two desires and believe it's not possible for you, whether that's because of societal norms, narratives you've heard in the industry, whatever it is, the family of origin you grew up in and their belief systems. And so then it becomes your responsibility as the CEO of your life and business to look for examples and evidence of how you could make it work.

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And if it feels really out of reach that it could be for you, you could even look for how others have done it. This is really where you want to consider that you might be wrong that your desires have to compete. Are you willing to be wrong in order to challenge those beliefs and get what you really want? You have to be willing to start looking for the both and, and allowing yourself to see that as a possibility. Otherwise, those desires are going to remain in conflict.

So that's the first way I see competing desires show up with my interior design clients. The second way I want to talk about is when two desires really are in conflict and you're resisting this truth. The resistance of the inherent conflict leads to procrastination, avoidance, and disappointment, wishing for something other than reality.

An example of this could be that you have a desire to be published or grow your audience on Instagram. And you also have a desire to be liked by everyone and accepted and praised by everyone. You don't want to risk rejection or someone leaving a comment, or sometimes it's even just you don't want to risk not having someone give you a little heart tap on an Instagram post. So those desires are in conflict.

If you submit a project to a magazine, there is a chance that the publisher is going to say this isn't right for us. This isn't a big enough project. We have too many of those types of projects. Or with the Instagram example, you can have a desire for this beautiful feed that everyone is just raving over and it's helping you get all of these ideal clients into your business, but the truth is you're also signing up for someone to completely ignore your account or have an unfavorable opinion about something you did in the design.

Waiting until you think those two things won't be in conflict at some point, wishing that they weren't, or hoping that somehow you just get a pass on that experience, you're going to be waiting for a long time. And it's definitely going to hold you back in terms of creating what you ultimately want in your business.

And of course, we can coach on confidence and putting yourself out there, building resilience to be seen and take up space and care less what others think. And there's no escaping that if you're out there marketing your business in

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some way, you aren't going to be for everyone. And you get to decide what you think about that.

If you notice you're dragging your feet or there's a lot of resistance at doing something new or something that feels hard, just pause. Pausing is always a good idea. What I want you to consider is are you asking something of those desires that is just not possible? Are you wishing that two things that are inherently at odds, not be at odds? And if that's the case, it's okay, but acknowledge it. You can acknowledge it and say, yes, this feels hard and that's okay. Or yeah, I wish it wasn't that way, and I can still pursue what I want.

Another example was something I was coaching a client on recently about her real desire for certainty in the business and knowing exactly how her actions would play out. And she also has a desire for novelty and challenges she can dig into and solve in the business. These two things, certainty and novelty are at odds. They are competing. If you have certainty, you do not have novelty. If you have full-on novelty, you do not have full certainty.

And I mean, of course there's no such thing as true certainty, to be clear. But even if there was, if you knew exactly how things were going to go, it would probably end up being boring. When this designer I was coaching acknowledged the resistance to the competition of desires, her shoulders just dropped and she kind of laughed and she released the resistance. She could use that energy in a different way. And it felt really different to be thinking about her future goals.

If you're resonating with this idea of two things being at odds and wanting them to not be at odds, what I want you to do is experiment with creating what I call a dual desire. And this is where you are taking two things that are going to be in conflict or in competition and actively nurture a level of wanting or at least accepting of the fact that it's a package deal.

In the example of pitching to the press, let's say you want to get published. You can remind yourself that if I want to be nationally or locally recognized, I'm also signing up for some no's. I am actively choosing that desire or possibility to be present with the other possibility or desire of being published.

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Or with the Instagram example, if you want to grow your following and really establish yourself as a brand on the platform and have that visibility, you have to want that outcome, and you also have to want to learn the skills required to create that type of account. And you have to be willing or accepting of the fact that there's going to be some flops as you figure out what works for you.

If you want to move forward with your goals and let those desires you have in your interior design business lead you, there has to be some acceptance of all that is involved. And this is so true in life, in business, in all the things.

I mean, I was kind of laughing just the other morning. We brought my mother-in-law along on the spring break trip, and she was staying in the guest room that we have downstairs. And it was pretty early in the morning. My kids were just really picking at each other, there was so much noise and screaming. It was just like one of those things. And it was only 6:30 in the morning.

And she comes up looking very tired. And I said to her, you know, I'm really sorry about all of the yelling and that that woke you up. And we both had a good laugh, and it's a package deal. She loves to, you know, both of my in-laws and my mother too, love to be with our kids. And we love to have that time together. And there's some stuff that's really kind of annoying or we'd rather not have. It's the same thing with your desires in your interior design business, you have to choose both.

Let's recap this idea of competing desires so you can really play around with this concept in your week and in your own business or in your personal life. If you remember, the first type of competing desire is when you're believing two desires cannot coexist. You're believing that two goals are in conflict when they don't need to be. And now I want you to challenge that assumption. So a question you could ask yourself is how could I have both?

The second way you could use this concept of competing desires is to be looking for when you're wanting two desires or goals to not be in conflict. You're maybe delaying action or wishing that conflict will go away, when there is just a level of push and pull present in those desires and that's just part of the process.

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And if that's the case, I want you to consider how you could move toward a dual desire, meaning creating desire for both, the thing you ultimately want and the thing you're going to have to want in order to get that thing that you ultimately want. And if it's not a desire for that thing that's maybe a little less desirable, at least working towards an acceptance of what is.

That is what I have for you today. As a reminder, The Designer CEO Mastermind is open for enrollment and you can get all of the details at desiid.com/designerceo, and also schedule your consultation to talk to me about joining us. Until the next episode is out next Wednesday, I'm wishing you a beautiful week and I'll talk to you soon.

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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.

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