

# Thoughts Vs. Facts



## Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

**Natalie Bacon**

[Design Your Dream Life](#) with Natalie Bacon

# Thoughts Vs. Facts

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 there. Welcome to the podcast. I want to give a shout out to all of the Grow You members. Particularly if you have been in there for a long time and you are a VIP or a platinum member, and for those of you who are brand new. We are doing so much good hard fun transformational work in there. It's been so rewarding for me as your coach. I know that it has been so rewarding for you. It's such an honor for me to be your coach. I really just want to say thank you. We're just getting started.

For those of you who aren't in Grow You, thank you for listening to the podcast. Thank you for being here. Thank you for giving me your time for 20 to 30 minutes every single week. I know that there are hundreds maybe thousands of podcast options for you to listen to. It's really a privilege for me to be included in your list of podcasts. So thank you so much.

Today I want to talk with you about facts and thoughts and the difference between thought two. I cannot believe I haven't done an episode about the difference between thoughts versus facts. I teach this so much inside Grow You. I practice it daily in my life. It's a huge part of how I coach. So I was trained at The Life Coach School using a particular self-coaching model, and this is how I coach my clients. I just can't believe I haven't talked about the difference between thoughts and facts on the podcast before. So I want to bring it to you so that you get it here.

Let's start with talking about what thoughts are. Thoughts are sentences in your mind. Thoughts are entirely optional. You can think anything you want at any time. Okay this is incredibly empowering and life changing. I remember when I first learned it, and I immediately switched some of my thoughts. It was what really got me hooked on doing this inner work. So I know how powerful it can be just to know that you don't have to think what

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you've always thought. You don't have to think what other people have taught you or told you to think. You can truly decide to think anything.

Most of us think the thoughts that we've always thought based on a lot of different factors. Social norms, our upbringing, our peer group, the things that we're reading and listening to and learning, our careers. We're offered thoughts all of the time. We typically just adopt them without questioning them. The work that we do here is looking at our thoughts and deciding on purpose do we want these thoughts to stay or do we want them to go.

Contrast that with facts. Facts are the circumstances of your life. They are concrete. If you think of admitting evidence in court, they're that provable. Facts are boring. They don't have feeling behind them. So when I tell you that it's 85 degrees out, that is a fact. If you live near the equator, you might think that that is a mild day. Depending on where you live in the world, you will have different thoughts about 85 degrees.

Another example would be weight. If you weigh 135 pounds, that is a fact. It's provable. You can get on the scale. There's a number. The thought that you have, such as I'm about average weight, is the thought that is optional and up for debate.

When it comes to what people say or what they do, what they specifically say, the exact words that they say, that is the fact. What they specifically do or don't do, that is the fact. Then your thought about it is the thought. So if your husband gets home from work and he says, "What did you do all day?" That's the fact. Husband said what did you all day. I call it the math of it. Your thought he doesn't think I do enough is the optional part. That's the story. Unless he explicitly says I don't think you do enough, we can't call that a fact.

The same is true for what someone does. Let's say that a bunch of your girlfriends went out to lunch together, and you were not invited. The fact is that you did not get an invitation to that particular lunch. Your thought is

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we're just not that close. That's your interpretation of not being invited to lunch.

So in all of these examples, I think it's pretty clear how you can see where the fact is and where the thought is. A little shortcut here is to say what is the math. What exactly happened? What did they say specifically? What's the math of it? The temperature? The weight when you get on the scale? The numbers. When there is a number, I think it's pretty clear how to separate out thoughts from facts.

Now I want to talk to you about some harder examples. This is where I do all of my coaching, and this is where we do so much of that inner work because it's so much harder to see but it's the most important. So let's start with talking about labels you give yourself.

So think about how you describe yourself. A couple examples, I'm type A. I'm not a morning person. I'm a procrastinator. I'm in over my head. All of those thoughts. So there's no test to get tested if you're type A or type B. The more that you tell this story, the more that you reinforce it.

I used to do this with being like an alpha female. I used to describe myself that way as if it was a fact. It's so amazing to me to see now that I would not describe myself that way at all. I'm me, and I'm still the same person. So what changed was how I thought about myself.

So let's say that you think that you are just not a morning person. As soon as you say that about yourself, your brain looks for evidence. So your brain will look for evidence to prove the thought true. I like to think of it like Google. You type in this idea and Google presents lots of results for you.

The same is true in your mind. When you think a thought, your brain will go to work searching for evidence. So if you think I'm just not a morning person, your brain is doing to look for evidence that that's true. Your brain will say I struggle to get up in the morning. When my alarm goes off, I hit snooze. I haven't got up with my alarm on time since I can remember.

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So you'll have all of this evidence. That is simply because your brain is trying to prove true the thought that you're thinking, "I'm not a morning person." You'll think that that thought is a fact. What I want you to see is that anytime you give yourself a label, it's a thought.

Now thinking thoughts about yourself isn't bad. We all do it. We think thoughts and tell stories to make sense of ourselves in the world. What we want to do is bring awareness to the stories that we're telling, the thoughts that we're thinking so that we can think the most supportive, empowering, loving thoughts and stories about ourselves and about other people and about the world in a way that serve us. So if you want to be a morning person, then thinking thought the thought I'm not a morning person isn't serving you.

I was in a Facebook group not too long ago, and I was hiring a nanny. Someone had replied to my post, and then a different person sent me a private message and said, "Hey, don't hire the person who replied to your post. One of the people who applied, don't hire this particular person. She's a liar." I found it so interesting because that's her thought about this other person. She's a liar. Now she said it as if it was a fact, but she didn't give me the facts.

The facts would be something like she said she took my kids to the part, but really she didn't. So she was she was going to pick up my daughter from school, but she didn't. She was supposed to come over at 3:00 p.m. Instead she told me that her car broke down, but I saw her later that day at an intersection and she was driving her car.

Whatever the facts are created this story that this person messaged me about to come to the conclusion that she's a liar. There's no blood test for being a liar. There's no way to prove this. Now we can prove that in this situation, she said this and something else happened, right. She said A, B, C and X, Y, Z happened. That's how you prove it. To say she's a liar is a label that is her opinion.

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The same is true when we say someone's really negative or she's just so rude. These are all thoughts. We say them typically thinking that they are the fact. I think we do this the most with people who are closest to us. So I coach a lot on the marriage relationship and also with kids. So how this comes up in marriage is typically I'll be coaching the wife, and she will come to me and say, "My husband struggles to connect with me. He's just not very thoughtful. He doesn't help with the invisible load of parenting. He doesn't understand me." All of these are thoughts. None of them are facts.

As your coach, my job is simply to show you your mind. It's to show you the story that you've created that's causing you so much pain. Because husband gets to do whatever husband wants. He has agency. Now of course there are consequences. You get to do whatever you want. I just want you to stop telling a story that's hurting you. It's the best news ever to learn that it's your thoughts that are creating the emotional distress for you and that it's not the other person. I like to say they're not that powerful. Husband can't cause you that type of emotional pain. Only you can do that.

So if you're thinking the thought husband doesn't understand me, how does that feel? How do you show up in your marriage when you think that? Typically if you think a thought like he doesn't understand me, you'll feel disconnected and you will either avoid or find other ways to disconnect from your husband. So you actually create that result. So whatever you are thinking shows up as a result in your life for you.

One thing I want to point out, because this is where some of my work gets a little bit confused, is that what you think about someone else shows up for you not the other person. So if you're thinking my daughter is really struggling right now, thinking that thought doesn't make her struggle more. Your thoughts don't create someone else's result. Thinking that thought creates your result.

So if you're thinking that she's struggling right now, you will create more struggle because you'll be focused on the struggle. Your brain will look for

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evidence that there needs to be a struggle. Somehow struggle with end up in your result line, we call it in the coaching model.

So notice that you can choose to think a story that's more supportive but that also feels true for you. So if you think that your daughter is struggling, what's the subtext there? Is it my daughter is struggling and she shouldn't be, and this is a huge problem? So you feel worried and you create more struggle for you in the household.

Alternatively what if you thought daughter is going through some challenges right now, and I know she's capable of working through it. I'm going to show up and support her in the best way that I know how. That probably feels connected and loving and empowering, and you'll have a totally different outcome when you think that. So notice you don't have to go to the thought my daughter's having an amazing time right now.

So sometimes when I suggest that you look at your thoughts and you see that it's the cause of your pain, clients will say, "Okay so you just want me to think happy thoughts or positive thoughts when my daughter's struggling." I say no. I want you to just see that what you are doing is thinking an optional story, and that there are hundreds of other ways that you can think about it that feel true for you. I never want you to think a story that doesn't feel true for you, but I want you to be aware that it is just a story.

Another area that this comes up a lot aside from family relationships is resources, specifically time and money. So thoughts like money doesn't go on trees. We're living paycheck to paycheck. This is a really hard season financially. I'm just so busy right now. I'm running out of time. There's not enough time.

All of these are thoughts. We can't prove them. We can't test them. We can't submit them in a court of law. Even if everyone would agree with you, it still doesn't make them a fact. That's a good thing because it means that

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you can change your story if you want to. Really at first all I want you to do is see that it is a story.

So instead of money's really tight right now, what about the thought we always have enough money to pay our bills. Always. I've always paid my bills on time. The difference is important because how you think creates how you feel.

If you are feeling abundant with money because you're thinking, "I'm someone who always pays my bills on time. I always have enough money to support my family." You will take action from a really abundant place. Then you will get more creative with creating more money if that's something that you desire. Or you will have a better relationship with your family and your money as it relates to both. You will open up to possibilities.

Contrast that with if you're thinking money's just really tight, you're going to feel constricted, restricted, and like there aren't options for you. There are always options, but they start from how you think about it. The same is true for time. This one, I think, we just have this culture of busy. A lot of these stem from thoughts that we think culturally as a group. There's a lot of group think here.

What you can do is you can decide on purpose as I'm not someone who's going to identify as someone who's really busy. I'm going to decide to identify as someone who has a full life and can say yes or no to as many or as little things as I want to. I want to feel good about what I do commit to. I don't want to say that I'm so busy because it doesn't feel good when I think that thought.

The last category that I want you to think about in terms of the difference between facts and thoughts is the world. So what are your opinions about the world? Notice that they are opinions and that they're thoughts. The world is a scary place. You just can't trust people. Those are thoughts. Or when people talk about politics and how the world is more polarized than



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ever before. Can you find a thought that's the opposite that's also true? The world is also more connected than ever before.

So notice what your brain is focused on because on default it will focus on what you've always thought, a lot of which might be negative and might not be serving you. Doing the inner work and taking a look at your thoughts starts by separating out your thoughts from the facts. This requires that you slow it down and you see what the story is that you're telling that you have that awareness of it.

This is the work that we do inside Grow You. If you're in there, go through the foundational inner work course and the how to coach yourself course and do the worksheets as well. These tools will help you kind of sharpen this skill. I'm telling you, the more that I do this work, the more that I come back to separating out the facts from my thoughts. It's like what they say about mastery isn't learning about new skills and tools. It's about sharpening the foundational skills. That what this episode is about.

So if you love personal development and you have been a listener for a while or you even practice your own thought work, don't see this as something that is too beginner for you. If anything, I think that the more you do this work the more you come back to this difference between thoughts versus facts.

So even if you're very advanced and you've been doing this for a long time, start to pay even more attention to the difference between your thoughts and the facts. When you're doing it, be sure not to judge yourself.

So I know a lot of times when I'm coaching inside Grow You, a client will say, "I know this is just a thought but." What's happening there is that intellectually from your prefrontal cortex you know it's a thought, but in your body you don't yet know it's a thought. That's just the human part of you. You're always going to have a part of you that is attached to your story. You're always going to be creating new stories.

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That's why this work is never done. It's like showering every day. There's no point where you don't need to shower anymore. Of course you have to still clean out your brain because you're still living in this world and having things thrown at you and new circumstances. You're changing your life intentionally, and your brain is interpreting all of it.

So you always, always, always will come back to the stories that your brain is telling you. It doesn't mean that you're doing this wrong or that you should be further along or that you shouldn't be having the interpretation or reaction that you're having. It's simply an invitation for you to take a look. Take a closer look at the story that you're telling, slow it down, and decide on purpose if you want that to be the story.

There are always more ways to interpret the facts. So you don't have to go from one extreme to the other, but you can interpret the facts in a way that serves you that feels just a little bit better than what your brain is doing on default.

I coach a lot on the in-law relationship, and this always comes up. It's always the in-laws are causing so much distress, and they're hard to manage your mind around. It's just a common topic inside Grow You. What you can do is you can look at the facts, make it really math. What did sister-in-law say? What did she do? What did mother-in-law say? What is your interpretation of it? What are your thoughts about it?

The story that you're telling is what makes the relationship so challenging. You don't have to think they're your favorite people and they're just like you and you're gonna be best friends. There's so much space for you to love them and allow them to be them without trying to control them or without trying to get away from them. It takes doing this work intentionally.

So it's March when this episode is coming out. If you're in Grow You, make sure you do the workbook this month. This episode goes along really well with this monthly content. I want to make sure that you are separating out those thoughts from the facts so that you can decide on purpose what story

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you want to tell. Because that will give you the most leverage, the most power over your life in a way that serves you the best. That's what I have for you today my friend. Take care.

If you loved this podcast, I invite you to check out Grow You, my mindfulness community for moms where we do the inner work together. Head on over to [nataliebacon.com/coaching](https://nataliebacon.com/coaching) to learn more.