

Ep #10: Default Thinking Patterns: What You NEED to Know



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Hosts

Kelle Cobble & Nina Lynch

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Kelle: Feeling overworked, overwhelmed and frazzled and you don't know where to start to feel better and you're sick and tired of kicking ass for everyone around you, but not for you? The idea of putting yourself first is almost laughable.

Nina: What if we told you, you can create the calm, flow, energy and connection you desire in your life without scheduling anything on your calendar or rearranging anything in your world? What if we told you it was about checking in on your tapes, the old cassette tapes in your mind circa 1985 that create your default programming?

Kelle: These tapes become our default after years of use and become our go to place for problem solving and action. Like a soundtrack in our heads, these tapes inform how we feel and what we do.

Nina: Yeah. Join us today as we talk about default thinking and how managing your mind and overriding that old software is the key to feeling better and creating different results in your life.

Nina: Alright, let's get going. This is *Ambitious-Ish*.

Burnout? Check. Daily overwhelm? Check. Resentment rash, stress, and a complete lack of well-being? Check, check, check! You're not alone. We're your hosts, Kelle & Nina, and we are here to help you feel calm, balanced, and empowered so you can redefine success, make choices that feel authentic, and ACTUALLY enjoy the life you work so hard to create. You ready? Let's go.

Kelle: Hey, I'm Kelle.

Nina: And I'm Nina. Hey, we wanted to kick off this episode with a huge thank you to all who have reviewed the show. It means so much to us to hear from you. What you're liking and what you want to hear more of. And it really helps stroke the old algorithm and bring the show to more people.

Kelle: Yeah. And if you haven't reviewed, please give us a review, we would so appreciate it. We love what we do and why we do it. We're looking to help all the smart driven strivers out there, feel better in their amazing lives. We want to be

Ep #10: Default Thinking Patterns: What You NEED to Know

there for them and you as you start to question it all when it feels hard, before you decide to just burn it all down.

Nina: Yeah, let's check-in on some alternatives before burning it all down, okay, please. Quitting the job, throwing in the towel, moving to Tibet and sitting on a meditation cushion for a few weeks or a chaise in Cabo. It's a lovely respite, but it doesn't change the underlying mindset and reason why you hustle all the time.

Kelle: That's where we're going today, why you do what you do on repeat sort of automatically.

Nina: Yeah, it's because of a little thing we call default thinking. We've mentioned this in past episodes. And it's just about time we spread out the concept a bit with you and take a closer look.

Kelle: Why does it even matter that your brain works in a certain way automatically? Because your mindset dictates how you show up in the world and the results you create in your life.

Nina: It's hard to see your own brain and optimize your mindset to create the life you want and feel better living it. That's why you need a coach.

Kelle: Yes, this is what coaches do. We show you how your thoughts create your feelings and your thoughts and feelings together create who you're being. The actions you take and the results you create all come from your thoughts and your feelings.

Nina: So for our clients and the women we work with, they like to achieve, they like to strive, they get things done. They're ambitious. That is because of how they are thinking and how they are feeling. They have very unique thought patterns and feeling patterns.

Kelle: Yeah. Our clients have very specific thoughts and feelings that we're very familiar with and can help clients identify quickly. This is our specialty.

Nina: Yeah, for a while there, I wasn't showing up in a way that made me proud at the end of the day. With my kids, I was a ticking time bomb. In my work I was

Ep #10: Default Thinking Patterns: What You NEED to Know

burning out and in my relationships, I just felt demanding. And the results I was creating were completely isolating. I was creating so much division and so much stress, everything just felt hard. And then I started noticing my default thinking, the tapes playing in my head and I realized I could change the tape. So today, let's talk about changing the tape.

Kelle: Yeah. Are you one of those people who worries about work and has a lot of guilt when you're not working? That's all because of how you're thinking and feeling. So if you tend to people please, it's because of how you're thinking and feeling. If you're a procrastinator and tend to start and stop projects and can't follow through and finish anything. That's because of how you're thinking and how you're feeling, who you're being.

Nina: Yeah. And there are of course circumstances that happen that are out of your control, like a snowstorm, a pandemic, a diagnosis. There are things that happen outside of you, but we always have control over how we think and feel about those things.

Kelle: Because your feelings are created by your thinking, so your thoughts create your feelings. You don't just have default thinking. You have default feelings too, so feelings you feel on repeat that come from your repeat thoughts. But today we're just going to focus on understanding your default thinking patterns, your tapes as Nina likes to call them. So if we understand this, take care of our default thinking, we start to understand and can manage those default feelings too.

Nina: As regular humans out living our lives in the world, we tend to notice our actions first, then our feelings and then we notice how we're thinking.

Kelle: Yeah, how it actually works is we think thoughts that create feelings that drive our actions.

Nina: So here is an example. I wanted to refresh my bedroom recently. And I thought about how I wanted things to feel in there, colors and fabric and vibes, how I move through that room. What kind of furniture did I really need in there. We have tons of closets, so I could get rid of dressers and drawers. We have a

Ep #10: Default Thinking Patterns: What You NEED to Know

killer view out the master of the Olympic Park and the Park City resorts. So I wanted to honor that with some seating where I meditate and start my morning.

I hate curtains, but I need them right now to block out summer heat and afternoon sun. So I thought that through and researched some alternatives. All of these thoughts were buzzing in my head, creating a picture and a story in my mind. And I created this newish bedroom that I sleep in now in my mind before I created it in real life.

Kelle: So everything that exists in the world starts as an idea in someone's mind before it came to be. I think of small, super useful things when we teach this to clients, like this is going to sound ridiculous, but my chucker. I think it's actually called a Chuckit, the ball thrower for my dog, the chucker is so clutch in my life. This started with an idea in someone's head before it was created and resulted in this huge business now. I wish I had thought of this idea.

Nina: Yeah, it's the same with my Nespresso machine. I love my Nespresso. This amazing invention started as an idea in someone's head before it came to be. And thank goodness it was.

Kelle: So it's really important to pay attention and clean up your thoughts and thinking and from there you'll feel better. Your thoughts and feelings will create who you're being in the world, how you're relating to other people in the world and making decisions.

Nina: All of the things we think are problems in and of themselves are almost always problems stemming from our thoughts and our feelings. So taking a look at how we're thinking and feeling is so important.

Kelle: Coming back to default thinking, this is what your brain chooses to think about without any effort. So one of our colleagues explains this like you're buying a new computer, a new MacBook Pro, and it comes with the original software, the initial programs that are already installed in the computer and they're part of the operating system that came with the computer. So you don't have to even think about it. You just turn it on and it comes with FaceTime and Pages and Safari and iCal, which I don't even think I've ever used, and Notes.

Ep #10: Default Thinking Patterns: What You NEED to Know

Nina: The same is true with your brain. It comes with default programming. It comes with automatic thinking, thoughts that it thinks on default that you haven't consciously chosen to install, they're just there. So you think about the computer, you think about software upgrades you can make to your MacBook Pro like Zoom and Chrome and Slack to help you perform at a higher level.

Kelle: Yeah, all of those are installed. So instead of just accepting that default software, you upgrade your operating system to up-level your experience instead of living with default programming. I mean, what would we even do if we didn't have Zoom?

Nina: Oh, my God. And so for humans, our default thinking, that automatic thinking we don't really even notice is 95% of our thoughts.

Kelle: Right, okay, science nerds, we have over 60,000 thoughts a day, many of them are subconscious. By age seven we form the strongest neural pathways in our brains, which, just is really frightening to me since I have a nine and 12 year old. These old tapes are running in the background on repeat like an old operating system. They include everything you've been conditioned to think, old beliefs, patterns, habits, emotions, cognitive biases from your parents and your teachers and experiences you've had your whole life.

Nina: Yeah, our default thinking comes from a mix of three sources, it's sort of a cocktail of sorts. The first source is human evolution. So our brains are always scanning for danger, looking for threats to keep us safe. This is called a negativity bias. And our brains operated in this way for survival to keep us safe when we hunted and gathered and lived in tribes. And while the world around us has evolved, our brains haven't exactly kept up.

So while you're perfectly safe living in your suburban home under a roof with food and water, running water, by the way, your brain is still scanning for threats and maintaining your survival. It is still very much focused on three main things, comfort, safety and pleasure. Comfort, safety, pleasure, that's all it thinks all day long. That's why anything new or different or labor intensive is coded as a threat to your safety. It feels hard because our brains want everything to feel easy, to save energy for survival. Again, comfort, safety, pleasure.

Ep #10: Default Thinking Patterns: What You NEED to Know

Kelle: I mean, what's wrong with that?

Nina: Sounds luxurious.

Kelle: Netflix, wine, the sofa. The second source is our social conditioning. We live in a white male colonial society known as patriarchy in which we've been socialized. So societies rewarded us for showing up in a certain way. We're taught to focus on everyone else but ourselves. And it teaches us to people please, to put ourselves last, to doubt our own capacity to live big. And that women should be nice and polite and small and cute and not rock the boat and just be quiet and small.

Nina: But this is why it's completely normal as a woman socialized in this sort of sexist society to doubt ourselves, to doubt yourself, to fear conflict and confrontation. And to maybe even be afraid to put yourself forward for attention and critique, it makes complete sense. This resonates for you.

The third source of your default thinking is your family of origin. So this has to do with a handful of things including your birth order, for example, being the oldest child, the youngest, the middle, a twin, parenting styles of your parents, and your sibling relationships. You learn to operate a certain way in your family of origin to keep yourself safe. You also develop stories from your family of origin on money, work, what to do with your emotions, how to communicate, what your values are and so much more.

Kelle: Understanding these things about our brain is really helpful. Through a lifetime of wiring your brain through neuroplasticity, it creates lines of code and then it just runs that code. This is autopilot. This is your default operating system, your default thinking. Our brains just repeat what they have been told, what they have heard and what they have learned.

Nina: Yeah, default thinking can be sneaky though. We don't have obvious abrasive or loud self-talk all the time. It's the subtle low grade self-talk that over time really hurts us.

Kelle: It's a lot harder than it sounds to notice your default thinking unless you have a coach or a solid mindfulness practice.

Ep #10: Default Thinking Patterns: What You NEED to Know

Nina: Yeah. I had a sneaky thought come up for me not long ago and I'll share it as an example. I use it often with clients. I was doing a thought release in a moment of total overwhelm. I was about to shut down. So this is when I use a tool we call a thought release to see what exactly is going on in my brain, to understand why I was feeling so overwhelmed.

I made a list of all the thoughts in my head, the to-do's I was looping on. And I calmed down a bit, self-regulated, if you will. That's what we talked about last week in episode nine. And I went to prioritize my day based on the thought release. And that's when I noticed the sneaky thought, they won't miss me. You see, I was going to have to say no to a few commitments and that's what my brain on default served me. It kind of stopped me and gave me pause and I was like, "Oh, that's not a very nice thing to say to myself."

Kelle: Oh, come on, that's an example of that subtle, low grade mean girl talk our brains serve up that over time can just be really damaging, it's like putting really shitty fuel into your car.

Nina: Here are a few more. I wish the lines on my face were gone. I am such an idiot sometimes. I'm a bad mom. I can't do anything right.

Kelle: I have one too. I'm such a mess.

Nina: Totally.

Kelle: They seem subtle and little, but they are super low vibe. Your thoughts create your feelings and your feelings are a vibration in your body. These thoughts have super low energy to them.

Nina: And these thoughts make you feel bad about yourself. We do this so fast in the mirror, but we start to live from this lower feeling state as we keep thinking quiet thoughts like this chronically. And it makes your day-to-day living really low and your experience of your day chronically low. A lot of the time we think our default thoughts are actually facts, the lines on your face are factual. This is key, though, right, Kel?

Ep #10: Default Thinking Patterns: What You NEED to Know

Kelle: Yeah, this is a concept we love to point out to clients when we start doing this work with them. And it takes some time to understand and practice the difference between thoughts and facts. For example, if you think, I just want this to be right or I just want to do the best job.

Nina: Check in on how those thoughts feel. We're guessing they create a feeling of pressure or stress, even though they seem supportive. But they don't actually feel good because they leave no room for mistakes. I'm sort of sweating right now thinking about them.

Kelle: What we're actually saying here is we have to be perfect, anything short of that is bad. We need to do everything right. Now I'm just frazzled and sweaty thinking about that. This is why I have deodorant sitting right here on my desk.

Nina: These impossible standards, these impossible and damaging expectations we have of ourselves are subtle and kind of quiet, but they do a lot of harm.

Kelle: Alright, we're talking to you. Shout out to all of the perfectionists out there.

Nina: Yeah, you see, perfectionism is the belief that you should be perfect. In the context of a job, it might mean you feel like you have to be perfect and deliver perfect work to feel like you've done a good job, even though in most circumstances there is no such thing as perfect.

Kelle: Yeah, I'm just going to say that again. There is no such thing as perfect, people. This is definitely a topic for another episode because there's a lot to look at here, but back to default thinking and facts versus thoughts.

Nina: Yeah, this tendency to think perfectionist thoughts can be really damaging and it's a big part of the work we do with clients. To poke holes in the story, you tell yourself that they have to be perfect. That the stories they're telling themselves are actually part of default thinking they acquired over years from social conditioning.

Kelle: Our white male colonial society or patriarchy has taught women they need to look a certain way and be a certain way to be successful, which typically meant to look perfectly pretty and be perfectly quiet and perfectly small.

Ep #10: Default Thinking Patterns: What You NEED to Know

Nina: It's all impossible.

Kelle: Perfectionist tendencies just make us feel bad.

Nina: So listen, slow it down this week and start to pay attention to the default thoughts you think, the thoughts you're thinking without really even paying attention, pay attention to them this week. After you talk, just check-in on what you said and see if it's really true.

Kelle: When you start to check-in this way, you start to realize and open up to so much untapped potential. Most people go through life on default automatically. They don't realize their thoughts create their feelings, and that they're creating their results in the world with every thought. They blame and complain about things outside of themselves for their habits, their feelings and their results for years and years and years.

Nina: Yeah, it's a disempowering way to live your life. But you care, you care about this work if you're listening to this podcast and we want you to use this to feel better in your life.

Kelle: Totally. What got us here, those default thoughts won't get us to where we want to go and this is where we begin, more fulfillment, more fun, more acceptance and more love.

Nina: Yeah, as long as you're a human being your brain will get messy. Our brains think automatic thoughts on default and when we start to notice them and change our perspective, we think cleaner thoughts that change our lives.

Kelle: Sort of like working out, we don't work out once to get strong.

Nina: These default thoughts aren't helpful or supportive. They're not going to take us to the next version of ourselves. So we have to like ourselves more and that starts with our thoughts, to feel better and create the life we want to live.

Kelle: Yes, this all requires mindfulness, which is holding space for yourself and paying attention to yourself differently, like that compassionate watcher from episode five so you can live life more intentionally, not automatically on autopilot.

Ep #10: Default Thinking Patterns: What You NEED to Know

Nina: So take this work and run with it this week. Let us know what you notice about your default thinking, what the tone sounds like, what patterns you notice.

Kelle: Yeah, check-in on those tapes. Okay, that's all, thanks.

Nina: Talk soon. Thanks all.

Kelle: Alright, talk soon.

Nina: If you enjoyed today's show and don't want to worry about missing an episode, you can follow the show wherever you listen to your podcasts. And if you haven't already, we would really appreciate it if you share the podcast with others who you think would benefit from it, and leave a rating and review to let us know what you think.

Kelle: It doesn't have to be a 5-star rating, although we sure hope you love the show. We want your honest feedback so we can create an awesome podcast that provides tons of value. Visit [ambitious-ish.com/podcastlaunch](https://www.ambitious-ish.com/podcastlaunch) for step-by-step instructions on how to follow, rate, and review.

Thank you so much for listening to today's episode of *Ambitious-Ish*.

Nina: If you're ready to align your ambitions with your heart and feel more calm, balanced, and connected, visit <https://www.kelleandnina.com/> for more information about how to work with us and make sure you get on our list.

Kelle: See you in the next episode!