

Ep #401: Your Self Image and Money with Tonya Leigh



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Brooke Castillo

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You are listening to *The Life Coach School Podcast* with Brooke Castillo episode number 401.

Welcome to *The Life Coach School Podcast*, where it's all about real clients, real problems, and real coaching. And now, your host, Master Coach instructor Brooke Castillo.

Brooke: 401, Tonya Leigh...

Tonya: That's crazy. I remember when you first started this podcast.

Brooke: Oh my gosh, you guys are so lucky. Tonya Leigh is here today. You've never been on the podcast.

Tonya: No, never.

Brooke: She's my best friend, so I spend so much time with her all the time and I'm like...

Tonya: You get sick of me.

Brooke: "Can't have you on the podcast..." But the truth about it is – if you don't know Tonya Leigh, you don't know who she is, you've heard me talk about her on the podcast before – before she was my best friend, she was, like, the biggest influence that I've ever had in terms of my self image. And she really changed the way I saw myself and showed up in the world.

And so, I'm so excited that she's here to talk about this with us today and to share her work with you. If you're not exposed to it yet, you need to be because, I think a lot of times that people think self image is something that's shallow and superficial. But we're going to talk today about how to affects your money. And I think it affects your money in a really big way. So, welcome to the podcast, Tonya Leigh.

Tonya: Thank you. I'm so happy to be here, finally.

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Brooke: So, let's start with what you do in general a little bit so they have a sense of your work.

Tonya: So, I am the founder of the School of Self-Image and we focus on three different pillars that really, when you elevate all three, it transforms how you see yourself. And that is mindset, style, and surroundings. And for me – and I know you can relate to this, Brooke, and probably everybody else listening to this – I realized that my self image was creating my entire life.

And for so many years, I had spent my energy and my time trying to fix myself, fix my weight, fix my relationships, fix my bank account. And all that did was perpetuate the story that I was broken. And I'll never forget, I went to Paris for the very first time. You know how much I love Paris. And it was there that I got a glimpse of the woman I wanted to be; everything from how I dressed, to my mindset, to just how I carried myself.

And so, I came back home really with this idea that we, as women, get to create ourselves. You're not broken, but your self image might be. And so, all of my work is around that transformation. Because you can only create to the edge of your self image. Which is why, when we're talking about money and self image, like how do you see yourself in relationship to money? And so, I'm super excited to talk with you and your audience about this.

Brooke: Yeah, so this idea that – I think a lot of times, when we say the word self image, people misinterpret that to mean just how you look compared to other people. And I think it's important to see that your self image is really how you see yourself.

And so, before this podcast, I was sitting there thinking about how you see yourself is really about more than just how you think about yourself. So, how you think about yourself is definitely part of it. But it's also how you literally see yourself in the mirror and how you show up for other people.

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So, when I was thinking about my own self image, I think a lot of times, the way that I thought about myself was unconscious. I wasn't even aware of the thoughts I was having about who I was, what I looked like.

And I think some people dismiss this idea of what you look like and how you think about the way you look as shallow and superficial and not important. Like, what matters is what's on the inside and your content, not really the cover of the book. And so, I think a lot of people dismiss this work for more, quote unquote, important word. So, what are your thoughts about that?

Tonya: I think it all matters. I feel like how you present yourself to yourself and to the world is just a reflection of your internal story. And so, you can see there are certain women that love to show up in yoga pants and sweats. And I am all for that, if it's intentional, if that is the style that you're wanting to project into the world.

But for me, it's about intentionality. It's are you making these choices on purpose? Are you sending the message to the world, and more importantly to yourself, of how you want to be seen? And that's what all of this work comes down to.

Brooke: Yeah, so a lot of times, when I talk to people about this, they'll say, "Well I just don't care. That doesn't matter to me." And when I hear people say that – people say that about money too, which I think is so interesting. They'll say, "I don't care about it. It doesn't matter to me. I don't care about my clothes or how I show up. That doesn't matter to me. I care about more substantive things and things like my values and what I give to the world," and that sort of thing.

And what you said, if your intention, the reason you look the way you look is because you don't care, I think that is a problem. I think not caring about yourself and how you show up and the way you present yourself to yourself in the mirror, if your answer to that is, "I don't care," then I think we have a problem.

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I think what you're saying is it doesn't mean that you have to dress in a ballgown every day. It doesn't mean you have to look like other people. It just means that you've made choices about what you're wearing, how you're showing up, how you're doing your hair, your clothes, your environment in a way that is conscious, "I'm doing this because..." And if your reason is, "I don't care," I don't think that's a great reason.

Tonya: Yeah, I've been thinking about this question a lot, because we've talked about this a lot. And, you know, I feel like there's three groups of people. There's the group of people who are dressing to impress others. And that's off-putting to a lot of people.

These are the people that go out and spend a lot of money buying designer clothes even though they are trying to fill a hole in the soul that clothes can never fill. That's something we have to do for ourselves. Then there's another group of people who are rebelling against that system.

They're all reacting to the system. One is saying, "I don't care. The system's told me I should look like this for years. I'm done with all of it." And then the other group of people is enslaved to the system as well.

I want to talk about the third group of people. And that's the people who tune all of that out and just say to themselves, "Who do I want to be as a human? What do I want to express?" And I know we can talk about style as being very frugal and frivolous – frivolous, not frugal...

Brooke: I mean, you can be frugal...

Tonya: You can be frugal. But they can see it as very frivolous. But I find – and I'm curious to hear what your thoughts are about this – that getting to know your style is the most amazing form of personal discovery. It's a chance for you to get to know yourself, who you are, and what you want to express to the world on purpose.

And so, I find that when I have conversations like that with women, they're way more open to discovering what that is. And they might find that their

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style doesn't change that much. But what does change is that they're doing it on purpose.

Brooke: Yeah, so I'll give you some examples of this for me. And I think this will help differentiate. When I was trying to figure out what my personal style is and what I want it to be, I started thinking about words that I thought depicted who I am, how I wanted to see myself, and how I wanted other people to see me.

And what I realized when I went shopping with that in mind, with that conscious intention in mind, what I realized is that sometimes I would see clothes that were beautiful or really stylish or like an outfit that's put together that was super fun.

And a lot of times, I would see something like that and I'd be like, "Oh, I want that. That looks good on that mannequin, I want that," without even considering, is that my style? And so, I would put on these clothes that looked good on other people or looked good in magazines or looked good on mannequins and I just didn't feel right in them. I didn't understand that just because something's beautiful or attractive or lots of people like it, doesn't mean that it's my style.

And then, when I went out shopping with more of an intention behind – I wanted to be sophisticated but I also wanted to be a little bit edgy. I didn't want to be too buttoned up. And so, when I started looking at my style in terms of a choice, a conscious choice I had made, it made all the difference in the world.

I was able to find clothes and put them on and be like, "Yes, this is me. This is how I want to see myself." And it wasn't even just like, "Is this a beautiful outfit or does it look good on me?" It was more like, "Is this me? Truly who I want to be?" And that's a huge difference.

And there's no pretense about it. It's not, "I'm going to put on these clothes and hopefully no one will see me. They'll just see the clothes." I see people do that a lot too.

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Tonya: Yeah, and I think we've all been in that situation where we go to an event and we're wearing something that doesn't quite fit us, like our soul. And we feel awkward. And it's energy that is spent in an unuseful way, versus when you have clothes that feel amazing on you and they feel like the truest expression of you, then you don't have to think about it. You can just go out in the world and enjoy social gatherings. You can enjoy meeting people, not being so self-conscious because you didn't really choose an outfit that reflects the truest version of you. So, I think it just frees up your energy in so many beautiful ways.

Brooke: Yes, and when you start, I think, creating your self image and understanding it from the inside out instead of the outside in, make decisions – it's funny because Tonya is always telling me... she has a much better sense of style and she knows how to say all the designer words, like really fancy, and I always say them wrong.

But there are certain things that I like to buy – for example, I love a Kate Spade bag. I think they're cute. I love them. That's not her taste. That's my taste. But when you find something that you like, that you think represents you and you enjoy, it doesn't matter what anyone else thinks.

And there are certain shoes that I love to wear. And some of them are really inexpensive. But I love the way they look. I love the way they make me feel. They represent me. So, all of a sudden, you have so much confidence, regardless of whether people are noticing what you're wearing or whether they like it or not. It's not about them.

And I think that is how we can use self image in terms of how we see ourselves and how we show up and our clothes and in our environments in a way that really demonstrates who we are. And that's how we can be an example of what is possible. Not by following some external trend that feels awkward and not really us.

Tonya: Yeah, and one of the things that I've heard, and I know you've heard as well, is women will say, as you were sort of talking about earlier, "I

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just want to be authentic.” And their version of authentic is no makeup, not doing their hair, just showing up in whatever.

As you were just talking, to me, that is authenticity. It’s how you preset yourself, the things you do, your behaviors. And one of the things that you do every day is dressing. It’s waking up and getting dressed. It’s when it’s lined up with your values and your purposeful intent of who you want to be. To me, that’s being authentic.

So, for me, if I showed up and didn’t do my hair, didn’t wear makeup, which I don’t wear a lot of makeup these days. Very intentional. But if I was wearing sweatpants, that wouldn’t be authentic for me because that’s not who I am.

And so, for anyone listening, if your argument is that you are not dressing up because you’re being authentic, I just want you to think about it. If you were to express yourself in the best version of you, what would she look like? Or he? And that, to me, is being authentic in your thoughts, your style, all of it.

Brooke: Yeah, so there’s the way that you think about how you want to look. There’s the way you actually look when you look into the mirror. And for me, that’s really important. One of the things I always ask myself is, “Do I look like me?” And for me, one of the best ways to use self image is to help aligning with your dreams and your future.

So, I’m always thinking about my \$100 million self now and I want to dress as my \$100 million a year self. And how is that different from the way I’m dressing now? And it’s not much different now. But I’ll tell you, back when I first started doing this work and I was dreaming of my \$5 million self, it was a huge difference.

Like, would I be dressing – I spent a lot of time in a ballcap and sweatpants and yoga pants and it’s because I wasn’t intentional. It’s because I didn’t care. It’s because I was literally not putting any effort into myself, how I

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looked to myself – I rarely looked in the mirror – and how I was showing up in the world.

And when I started – I've said this so many times, but when I would hang out with Tonya, I'd be like, "Girl, you're always dressed up." And she said to me, "It's just as easy to put on a dress as it is to put on a pair of sweats." And when she said that, I was like, "It's probably even easier to put on a dress."

And we were just hanging around masterminding. We were just seeing each other. And it was such a profound moment for me. And I started really asking myself, at the best version of myself, at the version of myself that's producing at the highest level and helping the most people and showing up in the biggest way, what am I wearing on a Tuesday? What am I wearing on a Sunday afternoon? Is it this?

And maybe the answer for many of you is yes. And that's probably because you've been intentional about it. But for many of you, it's no and then the next thing is, "This is so overwhelming. I don't know how to shop. I'm not good at this. I don't know how to do makeup. I don't know how to do my hair. This is so hard. I barely have time to do the things I'm doing. Now you're telling me that I should be thinking about the way I dress and show up?"

And it's not even the clothes. It's your environment. It's your health. It's how you show up on time. You know, do you show up full of anxiety and stress or negativity? How are you presenting yourself? So, what would you say to someone that says, "I just don't have time for all that?"

Tonya: Well, I want to share a story. Because I think a lot of people can relate to this because many of us work from home. And so, when I first started my business, I had two email subscribers; my mom and my dad. And I started to think about the version of me who had 1000 email subscribers, and what we she doing?

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And I immediately went into action mode. She's consistent. She sends out a newsletter every week. She's putting her work out in the world. But one of the things that I wasn't paying a lot of attention to was my style. My style story is still evolving.

And I grew up in a trailer in the deep south. I didn't know how to be stylish. But at this point, I was really good at taking the action. And like so many people, I just didn't think style mattered. Especially because we didn't have Zoom back then. We were doing – what were they – teleconference calls?

Brooke: Yeah, we were just on the phone. No one saw us.

Tonya: And so, I was working with one of my very first clients and she was talking to me about how she felt so frumpy at work and how she wasn't really showing up in the best way for her. And it was about 12 o'clock in the afternoon and, I swear to God, I look down and I am in my old nasty PJs. They weren't even cute PJs.

And there was this moment of incongruence. There was this moment of, like, I felt shame about how I was showing up for myself while also trying to hold space for her shame of how she was showing up. And so, there was that day. I call it my chic awakening, where I was like, "Never again."

When I show up for my clients, when I show up for my friends, and more importantly, when I show up for myself, I am going to do my darndest to make sure that I am being the best version of myself. And I cannot tell you the energetic expansion that happened from that.

Because there's a study by psychological sciences that says people judge you – it's just what we do – within milliseconds of meeting you. So, someone sees you on the street, your clothes speak before you do. And that's why it's so important to make sure that we are sending the message that we want to send. And it doesn't take that much time.

Once you start on your style journey – and I've been through it, I've watched you go through it, you start to see what works for you and what

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doesn't and you can curate a closet where it becomes so easy to put an outfit together that really expresses who you are. But you have to be willing to go on that journey and to experiment and to make mistakes and to buy the wrong thing. Because inevitably, it's going to happen. But all along the way, you're learning the lessons and it's like you're getting to your style North Star.

Brooke: Absolutely. And so, I think I touched a little bit on this. I do think you can see how, when you start aligning with new money goals, it may or may not change the way you're showing up in terms of your clothes. Maybe it will change the way you show up – for me, I always like being on time. I always like being impeccable in my work. I like having my environment be very organized and very clean and very minimalist. That's very intentional for me. You open my cupboards, they're clean inside. They're organized inside.

Tonya: And she's not kidding, you all. Everything she's saying, it's like times 10. Her house is impeccable.

Brooke: Yeah, and that's very intentional. And I remember, somebody came up here and was looking in the penthouse and they're like, "Oh, I didn't know you could be rich and a minimalist." But you can. You can decide, "This is the environment that I want to keep and this is why I want it to be this way."

And so, I think it's like, if you could be any way, if you could be effortlessly stylish, would you want to be? And maybe for some of you, you like the idea of being down to earth. Like I want people to look at me and think, "Oh, she's so down to earth." What does that mean?

I like being a little bit fancy. Some people don't want to be a little bit fancy. They want to be intentionally plain, intentionally minimalist, intentionally wear a uniform every day, same clothes every day. There's no right or wrong way of doing it. It's just a conscious choice, "This is who I want to be."

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And I'll tell you, when I first started, I was so overwhelmed with all of this style stuff that I decided to just limit myself to one store because the idea of going shopping in all these stores and trying to find my style, it was too much. But I wanted to look nice and I wanted to dress in a professional, sophisticated outfit every day.

And so, I would only shop at this one store all the time and it simplified it for me until I got used to it. And now, I shop everywhere and I have lost of different styles of clothes. But I feel more confident and comfortable in it.

So, it doesn't mean you have to jump to this, "Now I'm my \$5 million self," all the time. It's like, for me, it was about taking baby steps and thinking about, like, is this really how I want to look at myself in the mirror? I was literally avoiding myself in the mirror. And I know that there's people listening that do that.

Tonya: Yeah, you have to be willing to look at yourself and just take an honest assessment with so much love and so much grace towards yourself of what's working and what's not. And to realize you can create yourself and change from a place of love and wanting the best for yourself.

I'm not an advocate of beating yourself up when you look in the mirror. Find what you do love about yourself. How can you accentuate the positives? And so, I do think having an honest look at yourself in the mirror, like what do you love? What's not working? And begin to build upon that, I think, is the best way to start.

Brooke: Yeah, so do you think being conscious about your clothes, your environment, your hair, your body, your health, even your purse and your wallet, do you think that affects your ability to make money? Why or why not?

Tonya: 100%. I'll tell you a really fun story. I think investing in your style is a great business investment. Not to mention, for me, dressing is a form of self-care. And so, I love what Joe Polish says. He's like, "You are a million-dollar racehorse. You have to treat yourself as such; best grooming, best

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food, best care, get the braids done on the horse,” or whatever your version of that is.

And so, I remember reading this story about Barbara Corcoran. Everybody knows her from Shark Tank. And when she made her first \$1000 real estate transaction – someone rented an apartment – she immediately was like, “I could have taken that money and put it in ads and tried to get business.” But she was like, “What I did is I marched right down to Bergdorf Goodman and bought a \$360 coat. Back in the day, that was a lot of money.” But she said, “I put on that coat and I literally felt like the queen of New York real estate. I felt powerful. I felt very different,” because of how she saw herself in that coat.

Now, you go on to look at what she’s been able to create from those feelings of powerful confidence, and she probably felt wealthy in the coat. And so, those types of energy just keep attracting more of the same into your life. Which is why I think investing in your wardrobe is an amazing business investment for yourself, because of how it’s going to help you see yourself as a businesswoman or man and what you’ll be able to go on and then create from that.

Brooke: Yeah, and choosing that consciously, what do you want your business image to be to your clients? How do you want them to perceive you? Is it professional? Is it laid back? Is it casual? And that comes down to imagining someone walking into your house right now. Is that how you want to think about yourself?

I remember when I was really struggling with my weight, I always just wanted to cover my body up. So, I’d buy jeans that were a little bit too big and I’d buy a sweatshirt that would cover up my body. And I didn’t want to see myself that way. I didn’t want to look, literally didn’t want to look in the mirror.

I was hiding from myself. And so, I kept telling myself, “When I lose weight, when I’m more acceptable, when I have this figured out, that’s when I’m

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going to buy the coat. That's when I'm going to put a belt on. That's when I'll put on a t-shirt."

And what I learned is that you can't wait until you feel worthy enough to start working on being worthy. And so, if you love your body now, if you're 100% in with yourself now, then how can you start being that version of yourself that shows up in the way that you most genuinely want to be in the world?

And when you – it's so funny. Whenever I'm in a department store, everyone always thinks I work there. They're always like, "Mam, mam, mam..." and it's because I look put-together. I look like I showed up on purpose to this place.

And Tonya and I are always together and people are always saying, like, "Why are you so dressed up?" How do you address that? Because I think that's an issue for people too, like, they feel like, "Who do you think you are dressing up like this?" And especially if you do it all of a sudden, if you've been walking around in caps and sweats and then, all of a sudden, you start wearing dresses during the day...

It was even funny, this guy I was dating started doing that because he was like, "You're always so dressed up." And his kids were like, "What's going on, dad? Are you going to work today?" So, you start making this shift, how do you deal with people thinking that maybe you are trying to impress them or that it's about them somehow?

Tonya: Yeah, and I've definitely dealt with all of that. When I started my journey, I got a lot of the, "Who do you think you are?" And when you know why you're doing it and you like your reason for why you're doing it, you have to also, at the same time, be okay with everyone having an opinion about how you should look.

And if we tried to listen to what everybody thought we should look like, God knows, we'd have to have five closets because everybody has an idea of how you should dress and how you should show up in the world.

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So, when people say that to me, I usually answer them with some snarky comment of, “I’m celebrating.” And then of course they’ll be like, “What are you celebrating?” And I will be like, “My life. Here it is. I’m here for the party.” And just being okay with people being uncomfortable with how you decide to show up.

Brooke: Yeah, I showed up to this mastermind – I was invited to this mastermind. It was all men. It was like 10 men and me. And it was at this lake house. And there was time where we were going to be on the lake and playing – and even that, I have nice clothes that are appropriate for that. But then, when we were going to mastermind, I went and put on my business clothes.

I put on slacks and heels and a couple of the guys were like, “Oh, you don’t have to do that for us.” I was laughing hysterically. I was like, “Yo, bro, I am definitely not doing this for you. Let’s just be clear about that.”

Because for me, when I’m talking business and talking about growth and talking about millions of dollars, I want to dress up for that conversation. It’s kind of like when you go out to lunch with someone, I like to dress up for the person that I want to be when I’m with that person. And also, hey, this is a special occasion. I want to celebrate you. I want to bring my best version of myself to this meal with you.

Not because I’m like, “Hey, look at me, how great I look, I want to impress you.” It’s more just like, “No, I wanted to show up as the best version of myself for you.”

And when you go to someone’s house and it’s a disaster and they knew you were coming over and then they’re like apologizing for not being able to show up, I think that it’s just something to think about in your own life if that’s something you want to do or not.

Tonya: Yeah, I think that’s a good question. What do you keep apologizing for in your life? Because there’s something within you that thinks it

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deserves an apology. So, that's actually a really good question to think about. Because there was a time where...

Brooke: "Sorry I'm late," is a big one, "I'm sorry I'm such a mess..."

Tonya: Yes, I've been there. I've had those.

Brooke: "I'm sorry my house is such a mess. I'm sorry I didn't have time to prepare." Those are the kinds of things that I think are all involved with our self image and how we think about and see ourselves and how we want to show up.

So, I think there's a really interesting thing. You might have even told me about this. We might have just talked about it. It's like, wherever you are right now, look at your environment, if it's yours, and look at yourself. And what do you think it says about you to you? Not even to anyone else. What is it saying to you about you and is that what you want it to be saying?

Tonya: That's so good. That's one of the pillars of the School of Self-Image is surroundings. Because your surroundings are always confirming a story that you have about yourself. Which is why, when you put yourself in new surroundings, you can begin to see yourself very differently. It's what happened when I was in the mastermind with you five, six years ago.

All of a sudden it was like, my goals aren't crazy. They're actually achievable. I just started by simply putting myself in new environments, started to see myself at a very different level. And the same goes for your desk.

I mean, my desk right now is pretty pristine. I've got a few cords here, trying to get the mic figured out earlier. But I was thinking about this earlier. Because you know I moved into my place a couple of months ago and there's a box in the closet full of stuff that I've not unpacked yet. And I'm like, "What is that saying about me?" Like, unfinished business. It can confirm a lot of stories.

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And I was like, “What is this saying about me in terms of my business?” because this is my office, right? I was like, “Wow, there’s something I’m sticking in the closet that I’m not taking care of.” And whenever I started to think about it, I knew exactly the business issue that I’ve sort of stuck in the closet and I’m not addressing.

And so, by going in the closet and unpacking the bag, which I’ve already put on my calendar to do, I’m going to be creating a new story of, “I don’t just stick things in the closet and just pretend they’re not there. I take care of business.”

So, when we start to clean up our environment, it’s going to start reflecting back a different story about ourselves. We’re going to start to have a new image of who we are. And I think this is applicable in all areas of your life, and especially in business and when it comes to money, 100%.

Brooke: Yeah, and I think how we think about ourselves and talk to ourselves is so important. And if we’re not putting any effort into looking good for ourselves – and only you know what looks good to you, what you would like to see when you look in the mirror.

Maybe it is makeup. Maybe it’s an outfit dressed up or whatever. Like, one of the things that I talk about all the time is it’s just me here. There are a lot of times when I’m just working and I don’t even see anybody else. I’m not even on Zoom. Nobody’s coming here and I’m still dressed. I’m still dressed up. I still am showing up for myself. The most important person that’s going to see me and have an opinion about me is me.

And one of the things that I do is I make sure my opinion of myself is good, that I’m dressing in a way and that it’s intentional so, when I go out in the world and maybe someone doesn’t have a high opinion of me or somebody says something to me or looks at me in a certain way, it’s like, I have my own back in there.

And if I don’t, I think about when I used to dress up before, I would wear jeans and a sweatshirt to try and cover myself up and then someone else

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would say something to me or look at me in a certain way, it would just compound that negative self image because I was thinking that way and showing up that way myself.

The other piece of this that I want to talk about is, I think the way we show up, the way we envision ourselves, the way we align with our money goals and how we want to represent and show up in the world, especially if we are showing up professionally in business, the other piece of that is, what if you're not there yet and what if you don't have a lot of money yet?

And so, a lot of people will say, "Well I can't go out and buy a \$300 coat yet and I can't go out and buy all this fancy stuff. I'm not able to do this work yet until I'm able to spend more money and I don't know how to pick out clothes and it's all just too much." And one of the things that I want to pass on is this does not have to cost a lot of money. So, can you talk a little bit about that?

Tonya: Yeah, and I think we have to see, on a deeper level, that kind of language with yourself is just perpetuating an image that you have of yourself of, "I'm not ready. I'm not ready. I'm going to have to wait until one day." And that's what we do in the School of Self-Image. It's like, those little subtle thoughts that seem so true, it's just perpetuating this image that keeps you delaying your life day after day.

Brooke: But you know what's so interesting – and when you just said that is when you say you're not ready, to me, hearing you say that means you're not ready yet, like you're still getting ready to go out. Like, if we're going out to dinner, "I'm not ready. I'm not prepared yet to go out into the world. I'm not prepared yet to do this thing." And so, we're not getting ready for ourselves.

Brooke: Yeah, we're not getting ready for our lives. And if you were ready, if you had everything you need in this moment, how would you show up? And it will cause you to go into your closet and look at what you have differently. Like, what can I choose from what I already have?

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It might be a statement necklace that you've been saving until one day when you're ready. It might be a great pair of shoes that you've been self-conscious about wearing because you think people are going to have something to say about it.

But we all have what we have right now. And I'm all about maximizing what we already have. And when I started this journey, you all, I was working as a critical care nurse. I was 70 pounds overweight. But I remember, I had one black dress that looked decent on me and I kept putting that dress off. Like, "I need to lose the weight first. I'm not ready."

And there was a day where I just put it on and I went to take Sarah, my daughter, to the park in it, and the way I felt, that little shift in how I was feeling was the start of a tsunami for myself.

Brooke: Yeah, that's so interesting because, like, think about this. You walk in your closet, you have your going out clothes, then you have your staying in clothes. And what I did after I met Tonya and talked to her about all of this is I just got rid of all staying in clothes. Because staying in clothes were, "I don't care," clothes. I don't care what I look like. I just care about being comfortable.

But I will tell you this – and this is one of my style rules – I do not buy anything that isn't comfortable. So, even though it may be stylish, even though it may be Chanel, it doesn't matter, Louboutin shoes are so hot and so sexy and so amazing and so uncomfortable that I just cannot buy them. It doesn't matter.

And so, for me, the rule is it has to be comfortable. I have to feel like it fits my style and I have to be able to look in the mirror and say, "There she is. That's me..."

Tonya: "Hi..."

Brooke: "Hi girl, that's me." Because even Tonya and I will go shopping together and I'll be like, "That's totally you," or, "That's totally me." And we

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have some crossover, but not much. We have very distinct styles. And that's when you know you've done this work on yourself. You know what is you, and the best you. Not like, "Oh, that's not me because I never dress up.

But what I was going to say is, what if you went in your closet – maybe like right now, you go in your closet and you put on your fanciest thing. It's like, Tuesday afternoon, and you just put it on and see if you feel different. See if you show up different. See how you speak differently on the phone. Go to the grocery store in that fancy outfit, or whatever, and notice, is it you/ Does it feel like you? Does this feel like who you want to be? The way people respond to you, is that representative of you?

Tonya: I hope the day after this airs I go into Whole Foods and I see all your listeners in ballgowns. I will recognize you. I'm like, "They did it." But it's so true though because I see, you know, they call it retail therapy, but I think it's more dress therapy. We can dress in a way to enhance our mood. Or we can dress in a way to match our mood. And moods love to be fed.

Brooke: That's good, actually,

Tonya: Have you ever noticed, when you're in a bad mood, what do you want to reach for in the closet?

Brooke: I don't have those to reach for anymore because I got rid of them all.

Tonya: She reaches for Chanel. But the rest of the world, we're reaching for maybe our cashmere PJs. I don't know, but it's like moods love to be fed. And when you can catch yourself in a low vibrational mood and you can reach for something that makes you feel better and you put it on, it can really begin to elevate your mood and therefore how you show up and, as you know through the Model, the results that you get.

And that's why I think we don't give style and dressing enough credit for what it can do in your life. Because let's face it, it's hard to lay down and

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eat Cheetos on the couch when you're in a Chanel suit and heels, right? You're not compelled to do that. But when you're in distress – I've been there, I used to love my Cheetos. Like, sweats, Cheetos, and George Clooney on ER was my jam.

And I just kept feeding this bad mood and this story about myself. And it kept perpetuating this self image of I'm not good enough, I'm never going to get there, I'm not worthy. But when I started dressing up, I started to tell myself a new story.

Tonya: Yeah, I love that. And just being really conscious about that decision every single day, like I chose this outfit, I chose to put this on today in a way to take care of myself, in a way to show up for myself.

And it's the same, like Tonya in her school, she talks so much about all the different ways. One of the things that just recently happened with me and one of my girlfriends is – and you guys know this from the podcast, like how I feel about how your wallet should be and how your purse should be.

And she just had this really old wallet. It was like, I'm going to guess at least five years old because the sides of it were just worn down from going in and out of her purse.

And I looked at, like, that's where you keep your money. That's where you keep your cash. And I'm not saying – like, I don't have a very fancy wallet, but it's very organized and it's very clean and it's very clear and it's newish.

And I pointed it out to her and I said, "You're trying to make all this money right now, but look at how you're treating it. You're putting it in an old rickety wallet. And it was something she wasn't even aware of. She was like, "Oh my gosh."

So, she went on Amazon. She didn't spend a lot of money, but just bought a new pristine wallet to house her money. And it's the same with your purse and how organized it is. All of that stuff really matters.

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Tonya: It all matters. Your home matters. Your car matters. Your clothes matter. Your makeup cosmetic case, it all matters. It's all about being intentional. And I know the feeling of feeling like you're so far behind. You have this fantasy ideal world that you want to be in, and you look around at what is right now and it's just overwhelming.

And you're like, "I don't even know where to start. I don't even know where to start with my style. I don't know where to start with my thoughts. I don't know where to start with my environment."

And what I can say is it doesn't matter. Just start. Start with one drawer. Start with one outfit. As you talk about, Brooke, start with one thought. And I mean, my journey has been over 10 years. It's taken me this long to get to who I am today. And I'm not in a hurry.

I've still got growth to do. I still have so much evolving to do. And I think the more important thing is just to enjoy the process. Clean out that one drawer, which will tell you a new story about yourself, playing around with different outfits, finding that one limiting belief and start finding evidence for something new.

Just start with something, refuse to be overwhelmed with this process. That's part of the old self image, "I am overwhelmed. I don't know where to start." As long as you live in that, you're just going to keep perpetuating it. Just start. Trust in yourself that you know one place to start, and that's the start of the journey.

Brooke: I love that. That's so good. I think for me, it was like, it's just as easy to put on a dress as it is sweats. So, I just got rid of sweats. I just don't have ugly, oversized sweats anymore, which is so insane. That was like my uniform for so long. And I just would put on a dress instead.

And it made such a profound impact on how I saw myself that all these other things started to change. That's why I only started with one store, because I was so overwhelmed with all of this.

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I would look at Tonya and she's got all these crazy outfits that she knows how to put together in amazing ways and I was like, that will never be me. That's too challenging. It's too difficult. And that's okay. I just needed one store to be intentional about dressing up and showing up in a way that I wanted to that started to really change everything for me.

And I don't think we can emphasize enough that it's just what you want, and like your reason, "I don't care. It doesn't matter to me. I don't matter to me," not a good reason.

Tonya: Right, and I was thinking about – because I've been alongside you. We've both been on journeys. Mine's been more around my business. I've watched you with your style. And now, to see who you are, it's like you've always been this way. But people don't see the journey.

I hope you don't mind me sharing this, but we were in [crosstalk] not too long ago in Colorado and you were like, "This is like the old me." She was just like, "That's what I want women to know..." and men too. I know you have male listeners.

It's a journey and it never ends. You're going to walk into your closet one day and you're going to realize, this isn't me anymore, and that's a beautiful thing. Get rid of it and then put things in there that are.

But there is no there. I think that's what I'm trying to say here. I think women want to get there, not realizing this is just an ongoing journey with your style, with yourself, with your life. There is no there, so just relax. One of my favorite mantras is, "There is no hurry."

Brooke: There's definitely no hurry. And you don't need to be in a hurry for this because this is an amazingly fun process. So, I just want to shift a little bit because I know this work that you're doing right now in your business is to really help entrepreneurs, to help women who are in the position like we are, where we're showing up as teachers and leaders and coaches.

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And it's visible. Being in business, especially online right now, there are going to be pictures of you on Instagram. You're going to be showing up on Zoom calls. You're probably going to be doing videos. There's so much pressure in terms of how you look on camera, how you look in pictures, how you look on your website, all of those things.

And I know that you're working with women to be able to do that in a very conscious way for their businesses. So, can you talk a little bit about that work and how you're going to teach and go through this process with them?

Tonya: Yeah, I would love to. Thank you. So, one of the realizations that I had was all the work that I do within the School of Self-Image is so applicable to what I'm calling your business image; how you want to see yourself within your business, how you want your customers to see you. What do you want people to say about you and your business?

And so, I'm in the process of creating – it's unique. I don't know of anything else out there like it called Your Business Image Makeover. And we're going to be talking about your self image as a CEO. We're going to be talking about your style, how you show up, the surroundings that you place yourself in, everything from your office to your network of people and how important that is to your growth as a businessperson.

And so, I'm really excited about it. It's going to be coming out next year and we are already starting a waitlist. So, people can go to businessimagemakeover.com and get on the waitlist. I can't wait.

Brooke: Nice, yeah. And I think when people say, for example, when you come to work at The Life Coach School, we have – in our manual – we're a little bit fancy. Like, you have to dress up for work. You have to show up on time. Our expectations as a business are very professional and you should have your hair brushed. You should have clothes on. Nobody's running into a meeting in the middle. Nobody hasn't taken time to get ready in the morning.

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And I do think it creates a sense of calm for everyone. And I was talking to another friend about a coach that she was working with and she's like, "She's always late. She always has to leave early. She's always a little bit of a mess."

And I think that if that's an intentional thing, I just really want to know your reason. What's the reason why you want to be a mess?

Tonya: And you need to market it as such. People need to know, when you work with me, this is what you can expect. When it's unconscious and unintentional, your clients can feel it. There's that incongruence, 100%.

Brooke: And I want to offer that I think some of this work that Tonya is going to be doing and the importance of it is, you create a sense of – and I've gotten a lot of feedback from my students specifically – consistency and trust when you show up on purpose in the same way, when you show up consistently and they know that you're going to be on time.

Like, I'm not late to calls. They know I'm going to be on time. They know I'm going to be prepared. They know I'm going to be presentable. They know my environment's going to be presentable. There is a calm that happens within your students, within your clients and a level of trust where you're able to establish authority.

And what's so important about that, especially if you're a coach, is you want to be able to have enough authority and enough trust with your clients that when you tell them they're amazing, they believe you. When you tell them that they can achieve their dreams, they believe you. And if you're inconsistent and incongruent and creating a lot of havoc as you're trying to coach, you may not be creating that sense of certainty in your clients.

And I think that is one of the easiest ways to do it, is by being aware and being consistent and having rules for yourself on how you want to see yourself and how you want your clients to perceive you and make sure that they are congruent.

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So, I highly recommend anyone who – I mean, we've had a couple people we've introduced this idea to and they're like, "Well, I don't have a self image and I don't need a self image. My business is doing just great."

I want to challenge you, if you're one of those people that have said that to us, let us prove you wrong. I think it's made such a difference in my business, how I feel about myself, how I show up, and in the experience of my clients as well. And I know you probably have many examples of...

Tonya: Yeah, so many. We have women every week submitting their before and after stories and they always include photos. And I just received one last week. She sent it to me on Instagram, and literally, I get chills just thinking about it because it was three months and it was with her family.

And she looked amazing in both, but it was crazy to watch the transformation, not just with her, but her husband looks completely different. Her children, they look completely different. But that is just a reflection of what happened inside.

She was telling me just how much more confident she is and they own a business and how she's showing up differently in her business, and just the ripple effect of that. And so, I'm all about style from the inside out. I want you to figure out who you are, who you want to be, and express that.

And if you want to work on your business, working on your business image is some of the best work you will ever do because, just like your self image, you can only create to the edge of it. You can only create to the edge of your business image, how you see yourself as a businesswoman. And so, I'm really excited about this program.

Brooke: Yeah, I love that, how you see yourself as a businesswoman, how you see yourself as someone who can produce at the highest level of their game. Like, if you want to be the best life coach in the world, if you want to be the best writer in the world, how do you see yourself visually in the mirror in that role? And then living into that place.

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I know it's like this old cliché thing, like dress for the job you want. It's not even just dressing. It's thinking, showing up, being that person you most want to be, and then your life will catch up with you. So, I love you, Tonya.

Tonya: I love you.

Brooke: Thank you so much for coming and sharing all of this. We gave you guys a lot of great stuff. Make sure you check out Tonya's work. She has a membership too that's just amazing that I highly recommend. Her work has completely changed my life. I'm so excited you came here on the podcast. And let us know. Tonya has an Instagram. Go check it out. What's your Instagram?

Tonya: @tonyaleigh.

Brooke: Yeah, go to Tonya Leigh's Instagram, follow her. It's so beautiful. Make all the comments. Do all the things. Like, say hello, do those things y'all do on Instagram. Alright, everybody. Have an amazing week. Thank you, Tonya.

Tonya: I love you.

Brooke: I love you too.

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