



PODCAST TRANSCRIPT

EPISODE N° 132

Say “Yes” to Life

FRENCH KISS LIFE

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Say “Yes” to Life

Richard Branson said, “I’ve enjoyed life a lot more by saying yes than by saying no.” The word yes is so powerful because it creates movement. It gets the momentum going in your life. It opens you up to a whole other world of possibility. And in this episode, we’re talking about how you can start saying yes to your life.

Bonjour and welcome to The French Kiss Life Podcast, where personal development meets style. I’m Tonya Leigh, certified master life coach and the hostess of this party, where we explore how to live artfully and well. Each week, I’ll be sharing inspiring stories, practical tips, and timeless wisdom on how to elevate the quality of your everyday and celebrate along the way. Let’s dive into today’s episode.

Hello, my friends, welcome back to another episode. I’m going to start this one out with a disclaimer because I am recording this from a chateau in the French Alps and I have been searching for the last hour for a quiet space and it does not exist here. Even though the surroundings here are so peaceful, we have so many kids here and they are running around being kids. It’s so glorious to watch. And then I went outside because there’s this beautiful little pond and I thought, “This would be a great place to record.” And then the train came by.

So I’m like, you know what? I’m just going to bring you all along on this crazy journey. So if there’s any loud noise behind me, we’re just going to keep on rocking. So, let’s start this episode out with a Community Spotlight. This is the part of the show where I feature someone in the community who has benefitted from the *French Kiss Lifestyle*. And today’s spotlight is on Paula Kennedy. She is one of my Slim, Chic, and Savvy members. And here’s what Paula wrote.

She said, “Tonya, I, like you, was born in the tiniest town in North Carolina. I was born and raised 30 minutes from Wilmington in a rule and religious home. I had spent most of my life trying to please everyone I know except me. I was the first person in my family to go to college and finish with three degrees and I constantly pushed myself for the grades, the job, and for everyone around me to be proud. I found myself completely burnt out, struggling daily, getting divorced and telling myself that it was all my fault.

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I joined one of your programs after a health scare that left me in the cardiac ICU. Your story changed my life immediately. I had been through a series of losses, including the passing of my mother, finishing a PhD, and pushing my body to complete exhaustion and abuse. After I joined Slim, Chic, and Savvy, and the outstanding Slim, Chic, and Savvy community, I began to leading so many negative and poor-quality choices from my life.

The results have been dramatic in under a year. I have effortlessly lost 17 pounds. I started a business. I am traveling to Europe for the entire summer and training with a trainer two times per week. I have organized, cleaned, and updated my wardrobe, and my lingerie, and I’ve made so many choices that have changed me forever. My friends say that I look like I have discovered the key to life. I am fearless. I light a candle and send blessings to you every single day for making me see that I am worth it. Thank you for what you do and for changing my life.”

Paula, I just want to say, thank you. When I read your email, I was just overjoyed because I’ve been following you over the last year and I’ve seen the commitment that you’ve made. I’ve seen you follow through and I’ve seen you be the one that has changed your life. So, I am raising my virtual flute to you, my friend, and celebrating you today.

Now, if *French Kiss Life* has impacted your life, I would love to hear about it, I love hearing stories like Paula’s. So, make sure you take a screenshot of this episode and tag me on Instagram. You can email us at support@frenchkisslife.com or find me over on Facebook and let me know how you have benefitted from the *French Kiss Lifestyle*.

About four months ago, my best friend called me up and she said, “Hey, we’re thinking about renting this chateau in the French Alps, do you want to come?” And immediately, my brain wanted to say no. I was thinking things like, it’s too expensive, I’m going to Europe in the fall, I don’t need to go right now, I don’t need to take time off from work, just all of the reasons to stay right where I was.

But I know my brain’s tricky ways. No is one of those words that, when used appropriately, it is very useful in your life. You know, if you’re saying no to obligations that don’t light you up or you’re saying no to the people that are

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draining your energy, then it’s a very useful word. But I have found, in my experience and in working with clients, that we’re often saying no to the very opportunities that would open up our world in amazing ways.

It’s really important that you understand that your brain loves the familiar. The brain literally wants to keep you exactly where you are even though you may be miserable where you are because it’s familiar. The brain knows how to be in that place. The body is conditioned for that state of being. So when opportunities come around that may seem amazing, you can always expect that no is going to be your first instinct. But that doesn’t mean you have to listen to it.

I think about one of my dear friends, she got into a really depressed state for a long time after her divorce and I would call her up and say things like, “Hey, let’s go to lunch,” and she would always tell me no. It’s as if she was so familiar with this state that she kept recreating it over and over again by using the word no, “No, I don’t want to go out to lunch. No, I don’t want to go have dinner. No, I don’t want to go out for a walk. I’m going to stay right where I am.”

And that is when the word no is one of the most damaging words you will ever use in your vocabulary. And I was thinking, when I was preparing for this podcast, like, where does this come from? Because as I was saying, I’m staying in this chateau with these amazing kids, they’re running around, and they’re just a big old yes to life. Do you want to go for a walk? They’re like, yes. Do you want to go play with the chickens? Yes. Do you want to go jump on the trampoline? Yes. They’re so open.

But I also think that it’s when we are children that we start disconnecting from our yes to life. I was doing a little bit of research and I found that, on average, a kid hears the word no 400 times a day. Really think about that. 400 times a day, they’re asking their parents or the school teachers, like, can I go outside or can I eat this or can I do that? And they’re hearing no, no, no. They’re being shut down from their curiosity, from adventure, and oftentimes, from their own joy.

Now, this is not to bash my parents, because I have the most amazing parents in the world and I always think, as parents, we’re doing the best that we know how.

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But I grew up in a home where no was a very common word. And a lot of it was based on religion.

So I remember, as a kid, I couldn't go to the movies. And I couldn't understand it. Like, why can't I go to the movies? All of the other kids were going. And so I would ask my parents, can I go to the movies with my friends? And it was always a no, no, no. And my soul started to just feel so contracted.

I started to feel trapped by life. But the crazy thing is, as an adult, when I had the freedom to say yes to whatever I wanted, I still had that tendency to say no, no to the things that I was craving, no to the things that I desired. And looking back now, I have an understanding of why that is, because it was so ingrained in me to just say no to the things that lit me up, to the things that I desired, and I just kept perpetuating that cycle because I didn't have an awareness of what I was really doing. I just knew I felt really trapped in life.

Now, I realize it was simply because I kept repeating the word no. Do you want to take a cooking class? No, it's too expensive. Do you want to travel more? No, I can't, it's not possible, right? No is a word that creates inertia. It's motionless. It's a very fixed word.

However, yes started to set me free. When I started to say yes to crazy stuff that made no sense, that's when life became ridiculously fun. Like, crazy fun. I remember wanting to be a part of this group. And number one, I had no understanding that it was invite-only, I just called them up and told them they should invite me. And then they told me how much it would cost and I was like, oh wow. It was a crazy amount of money. It was way more money than I'd paid for my first car. But for some reason, I just felt so drawn to be there, and I said yes to it, even though it made no sense in my brain.

My brain tried to convince me it was way too expensive; I was going to become homeless because I was spending this money. Like, it was crazy all the things that my brain was trying to tell me to stop me from saying yes to this. But I knew, if I wanted things to change, I had to start saying yes to something other than what was familiar. And so I joined and through being a part of that organization, I met

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my best friend who now I’m sitting in a chateau in the French Alps with; like crazy how that worked.

And we’ve had so many adventures together and I cannot imagine my life without her, but that’s because I said yes to something that was crazy and, again, made no sense. But something within me was just so drawn to it and I knew I would figure it out. And so that’s just one example.

Another example is when I first started my business, I had this crazy idea that I wanted to combine my love of travel with personal development. And at the time, I didn’t know of anyone in that space leading retreats out of the country, but I wanted to do it, and so I said yes to it. And it was scary. My brain fought me the whole time, like, “Who are you to lead retreats in France? You don’t even speak French. Who are you? You don’t even have an event planner.”

But I did it. I said yes to it. And that reminds me of another quote by Richard Branson. He says, “Say yes to opportunities and then figure it out afterwards.” And that’s what I did. But imagine if I’d said no to that. We would not be even talking right now because one of the things that I’m known for now is leading retreats in Paris. And that’s only because I had the courage to say yes to something that lit me up, even though it was so, so scary.

You know, we often say no to opportunities that are out of our comfort zone due to, often, our thoughts of being unworthy or not enough or not prepared. And in all of that saying no, you’re missing out on the best parts of life. Take it from someone who knows, your brain’s always going to try to convince you that you’re not ready.

You can take all the classes and get all the degrees and have all of your ducks lined up in a row and your brain will still tell you you’re not ready. But the moment you say yes and you commit to it, which by the way, if you did not listen to my last episode, episode 131, the power of commitment, go back and listen to that. But once you say yes and you commit to your yes, literally, mountains will move in your favor to support your dreams and desires.

I have so many examples of the power of yes. I think to some of my clients who come with me to Paris, and they’ll tell me, you know, the whole time, their brain

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was saying no, no, nope, and they pressed the button, they submitted their payment, and then after the experience is over, they're like, “That's the best thing I ever did. I'm so glad I said yes to it, even though I was afraid and my brain tried to convince me that it was a crazy idea.”

The same goes for my Slim, Chic, and Savvy program. Time after time, women will say, “My brain kept saying no but something within me was a huge yes to it.” And those women that follow their yeses, they are the ones that are living extraordinary lives. And right now, I know there is something that you're wanting to say yes to that you have been afraid to say yes to. What is that thing? And what's the worst thing that could happen if you say yes?

What I know is the worst thing that can ever, ever happen is a feeling; truly. Really think about that. I know we think the worst thing that can happen is that we fail or we disappoint other people, but the worst thing that will ever happen is a feeling, which is why one of the main things that I teach women is how to deal with their emotional life, because when you master that, you can master anything.

But the worst thing that can happen is that you experience a really uncomfortable feeling. The best thing that can happen is you've experienced grand feelings; joy, bliss, courage. That's the thing with saying yes, is that when you commit to new opportunities and you start saying yes to things, what's going to end up happening is that it's going to require that you tap into your courage and that you overcome all of the insecurities and the doubts in your own mind.

And the more you can do that, the better you get at it. I tell clients all the time, whatever you practice the most is what you're getting the best at. I want you to stop practicing saying no to the very things that would change your life and practice having the courage to say yes to them.

I don't know if you're a Seinfeld fan, but if you are, you may remember this episode. But there was one where George Constanza – did I say his name right? We'll just call him George, how is that? But he starts revealing to Jerry Seinfeld, he was like, “I feel like my whole life, I've been making the wrong decisions.” And

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Seinfeld tells him, “If every instinct you have is wrong then the opposite would have to be right.”

And there’s so much truth to that. And one of the things that I realized was that I needed to reverse my yes and no. I needed to start saying no to many of the things that I was saying yes to. And I needed to start saying yes to many of the things that I had been saying no to. Really think about that. It’s pretty powerful and I don’t think it’s an all or nothing, but I do think, if you want your life to start changing or you want to improve your life even more, take an inventory of what you’ve been saying yes to and some of those things probably need to be a no.

Do you really want to be on the PTO? Now, for some of you it’s a strong yes and you like your reason. But some of you, you may be on the PTO because you think people will think poorly of you if you’re not doing it or you think you’re a bad mom if you’re not in the PTO, which by the way, is not true. But really, think about all of the things that you’ve obligated yourself to that, deep down, you don’t like your reason for obligating yourself to these things and you would love for it to be a no in your life.

Equally, there are probably ideas that you have, things that you’ve been wanting to do but you keep putting them on the back burner, you keep saying no, year after year after year. How is your life going to change if you keep saying no to the very things that would completely change your life, open you up to a whole new world?

And again, the worst thing that can happen is a feeling. The second worst thing that might happen is that things don’t go the way you had anticipated. That’s happened to me so many times, and you know what? I’m grateful for all of it because every time I said yes to something, even though the result wasn’t what I had anticipated, I learned. I grew stronger. I grew more determined.

Life became like this playground where I wanted to figure things out. And the beauty of saying yes was that it takes us back to our childlike state, where we follow our curiosity, where we follow our joy, where we follow our bliss. We don’t shut our souls down day after day saying no to ourselves. As adults, we get to change that. Even if you were told no as a kid, as an adult woman, or man if you’re

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listening to this and you're a gentleman, welcome, but no matter, man or woman, now you get to change the trajectory of your life.

You get to change the script. And here's the thing. I've noticed, the bigger the yes, the greater the reward. I think about what I was sharing earlier, joining this group, it was a huge investment, but I think about the huge reward that I've gotten from that and I can't imagine now what my life would look like if I had not said yes to that because, again, I met my best friend, I met so many other friends. It's opened up so many business opportunities for me.

It's mind-blowing what that big yes has done for my life. And again, it was scary. But now, on the other side of it, what's even scarier is the thought of not having said yes to that. So you may be wondering, Tonya, where do you start with knowing what to say yes to? Well, think about what you're curious about.

And one of the things that I'll often clients, because they'll say, “How do I know if it's the right decision or wrong decision?” You know what, here's the thing; I want you to take the judgment out of your decisions and just get good at practicing decisions because when you think your joy and your happiness is in the decision, you'll never want to make one, because you'll think, “Oh, if I make the wrong one, I won't be happy.”

When you know you create your own happiness, you're not as afraid of decisions because you know, no matter what, I'm going to be happy. I can create my own joy, no matter what happens with this decision. So take the pressure off of yourself to choose the right thing. Just choose something. Say yes to something that is outside of your comfort zone.

The other thing I want you to think about is imagine whatever that thing is that you're thinking about saying yes to. I want you to imagine that if money or time or energy or other people's opinions were not a factor, would you still want to say yes to it?

Also think, if the best-case scenario happened, which is what I always like to think about – I'm a best-case scenario kind of girl. I sometimes visit, like, what's the worst thing that could happen, but again, I know it's just a feeling. But I also

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like to ask myself, if the best-case scenario happened, would I want to do it? And if my answer is yes, I go and do it.

So, my challenge for you this week is to say yes to at least one new opportunity. If a friend calls you up and asks you to dinner and your brain is like, nope, I've got to do the laundry, you need to turn that no into a yes. If you've been wanting to publish a blog post but your brain's been telling you you're not ready, turn that no into a yes. If you have been thinking about that pair of shoes for longer than six months, you need to turn your no into a yes. If you've been thinking about taking that vacation for five years now and it's still not on your calendar, you need to book the vacation.

If you have been saying no to sex because you don't feel good in your body, you need to start saying yes. If you've been dying to take a dance class and yet you're afraid of what other people will think that are there because you haven't danced in years and you're not feeling great in your body, guess what, you need to turn that no into a yes.

Think about Seinfeld's advice. Do the opposite of what you've been doing. Start saying yes to those things that you've kept putting on the back burner because I promise you, I promise you this, when you start saying yes to the things that take you out of where you are right now, it is going to blow your mind. You're going to open up your world with so much more opportunity, possible new friendships, new adventures, new experiences, new stories to tell your grandkids.

I will tell you, a yes life is the best life. That reminds me of the movie Yes Man. I don't know if you've seen it. It's really, really good. It's about this guy who gets out of the habit of saying no and he says yes to everything. And from that movie, there's a great quote that says, “Probably some of the best things that ever happen to you in life happen because you said yes to something, otherwise things just sort of stay the same.”

So what are you ready to say yes to? That is your challenge for this week. I want you to say yes to something; something unfamiliar, something out of your comfort zone. And I would love it if you would share it with me. You can take a

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screenshot of this episode and tag me on Instagram with what you are saying yes to.

Now, it is time for a J’adore. This is the part of the show where I share something that I love with you. And today’s J’adore is an unusual one, but it’s one of my personal favorite things because I created it. It is my Slim, Chic, and Savvy program.

It is for women who are ready to let go of whatever is weighing them down, to live their life in their unique and creative style, and to have the knowhow to create a life they love. And it just so happens that we are shutting down the doors to enrolment in the next few days.

And so, since we’re all about saying yes, I wanted to just check in with you and see if you’re ready to say yes to this amazing, amazing program. It’s one of my favorite things that I’ve ever, ever created, other than my daughter. She’s my favorite creation. But the stories that come out of this program and what women are able to create are just mind-blowing; new businesses started, more money, better health, better relationships.

What I teach within Slim, Chic, and Savvy makes you a better woman. You will learn how to manage yourself emotionally. You will naturally start to want to make better choices for yourself. You will create daily habits and routines that support your dreams and your desires. And the best part is the community in which you’ll be a part of.

Time after time, women tell me that this community is by far the best one they’ve ever encountered on the interwebs. Within our private group, we have so much support and celebration of each other and we get to witness each other’s journeys, which is great.

I mean, these women, some of them, because I’ve been running this program forever, they’ve been with me for a long time. And I was meeting with a group of them in London a few weeks ago. Actually, not a few, it was like last week. I’m sorry, time has become irrelevant in my world.

But they were saying, like, it’s so cool to even see me evolve in front of them. And why I’m so excited about Slim, Chic, and Savvy right now is because we

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completely redid the whole program. I have added in new tools that I’ve been using over the last few years that have completely taken my life to the next level. I have created videos for every lesson. There are fun challenges every week that I give you where you actually go out and you implement and practice what it is that you’re learning.

There are beautiful worksheets that accompany every lesson. What else? Oh, I also created a brand-new journal that I will mail to you when you join because we start our days out with intention. We are women that aren’t letting life happen to us. We are happening to our life on purpose. And I get to coach you, which is one of my favorite things in the world. It’s my jam.

I’m a good coach and I know that because I coach myself every single day. And plus, I have women tell me that I am a great coach. So I take in that compliment, I appreciate it, but it’s only because, as I tell my clients, I am doing this work right alongside you every single day. And I think that’s what makes me a good coach, is because I just don’t make this stuff up and put it out there. It’s the stuff that I’ve personally used to completely change my life.

And so that is my J’adore of the week. If you want to be a part of this incredible program and community, go to slimchicandsavvy.com and you will find all of the information there.

Now, one thing I do want to point out, because women will say, “Well, is this a weight loss program?” because it has the word slim in it. And some women even get upset with me. They’re like, “Whoa, what are you telling me? That I have to be slim to be chic and savvy?”

I want to be very clear on the context that I use the word slim. Many women that come into the program want to lose weight, but the program is applicable to live because what I’m talking about is ridding your life or slimming your life of whatever is weighing you down. But I have also added in a bonus for the Slim, Chic, and Savvy program and it’s called the Slim Masterclass.

I am going to be walking you through step by step what I did, combined with the science of change, on how to lose weight with ease, with pleasure so that it’s sustainable for life. Because I could tell you a diet that could potentially work, but

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as someone who dieted for years and years and my weight yoyoed up and down, I know that that’s not sustainable.

I want you to be slim from the inside out so that it becomes a lifestyle for you. It’s not a one-shot wonder but it’s something that you implement into who you are so that you naturally want to make better choices, so that you naturally want to take care of your body.

So that’s like a whole separate program that I’m including in the Slim, Chic, and Savvy program. Also, there’s a library that I’m creating of TL talks, where they’re little pep-talks that I have created because I’m very aware of where women are most challenged, what some of the obstacles are, because again, I’ve been running this program for years.

So imagine if you are feeling really frustrated with your husband. I will have a TL talk for that at some point. And that whole library will be yours. Or lets’ say that you just overate and you’re feeling really guilty and you’re beating yourself up. I will have a talk for that to really help you keep the momentum going in your life, to not get stuck, to keep saying yes to your dreams and your desires.

And then also, as soon as you sign up, you’re going to get access to my Art of Discipline workshop. And this workshop is not the kind of discipline that you use to punish yourself. It’s the kind of discipline that you use to free yourself. I had one woman who signed up and she watched it, like, within the first hour of signing up and she emailed us and she was like, “This workshop alone was worth my investment,” because discipline was something that she knew she needed, but because of how she’d been thinking about it, it wasn’t something that she could fully embrace.

And so, you get all those bonuses plus an incredible brand-new program that I went to New York City to film about four months ago. And we have a whole new brand-new membership site. It’s beautiful, it’s fun, and it creates amazing changes in women’s lives.

So, that is my J’adore for this week. If you want to learn more, again, go to slimchicandsavvy.com and I look forward to potentially supporting you inside

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the program. Thank you for tuning into his week’s episode. I will see you in the next one, cheers.

If you enjoyed this episode and you want to dive even deeper into the French Kiss lifestyle, let’s start with a makeover; a mindset makeover. You can download my free training, The 3 Mindset Makeovers Every Woman Needs by visiting FrenchKissLife.com/mindset – because after all, mindset is the new black.