



PODCAST TRANSCRIPT

EPISODE N° 184

The Willingness to Get it Wrong

FRENCH KISS LIFE

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The Willingness to Get it Wrong

“The secret to being wrong isn’t to avoid being wrong. The secret is to be willing to be wrong. The secret is realizing that wrong isn’t fatal,” By Seth Godin

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.

What is happening, my friends? I missed you last week. But I felt so strongly and deeply that I wanted to just pause last week because it didn’t feel like the right time to post the podcast that I had recorded and I just wanted to take a step back and to really listen and to look within my own brain and to just be in all of it.

And as I’m recording this, just so you know, I am coming off of about five days of really intense emotions. Because remember, French Kissing Life is about feeling all of life. And my old tendency used to be to run from these feelings. I didn’t think I could handle it. I thought it was too hard. I thought I could just pretend that it’s not there and put on a happy face.

But I know that that doesn’t work. From years of trying that approach, it doesn’t work, my friends, it turns out. The only way out is through. It’s so true. And so, I have literally been crying a lot and being with myself in this intense emotion. And I know I’m not alone.

I know so many of us are going through it right now. I mean, think about it, we just went through a pandemic. And I think we’re still in it. I’m not sure. Can someone help me? Because I haven’t been hearing as much about it because then we moved into the murder of George Floyd, which when I saw on my computer screen, I was horrified. I could not believe what my eyes were seeing.

And so, we had that. And then we have, what, I think the latest stat is 40 million Americans unemployed. And I know that this isn’t just an American issue. I know that there are many countries that are facing high unemployment rates.

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What else? Like, me personally, I have been going through some personal stuff. And so, all of it, it's so heightened. And the tendency is to want to run from it. But what if we didn't? And that's what I'm playing around with right now.

What if we just opened to all of it? I talked about this in one of my podcasts called A Bring It Attitude. And what if we just said to life, "Bring it, I was made for this?" I'm thinking about what that means in this time and I feel like, if we can approach what is going on in the world right now with that bring it attitude, instead of being defensive and being afraid and running and putting our head in the sand and trying to pretend none of this is happening, which is the safe thing to do, but is it the right thing to do? Does it serve you as a human being to do that? Does any growth come from that?

And the answer is no. And I feel like allowing ourselves to be open and having that bring it attitude, the ultimate goal of that is to let all that doesn't serve us burn. Anything that doesn't feel like love, let it go. Any limitation of how you're holding yourself back, maybe this is the year to let it burn.

I came across this beautiful passage by a lady named Leslie Dwight that someone shared on Instagram and I reshared it. But here's what it said, "What if 2020 isn't cancelled? What if 2020 is the year we've been waiting for? A year so uncomfortable, so painful, so scary, so raw that it finally forces us to grow? A year that screams so loud, finally awakening us from our ignorant slumber? A year that we finally accept the need for change, declare change, work for change, become the change? A year we finally band together instead of pushing each other further apart? 2020 isn't cancelled, but rather, the most important year of them all."

It is time for a Community Spotlight. This is the part of the show where I get to highlight one of you who has benefitted from the French Kiss Lifestyle. And today's spotlight is on Jennie. She wrote a review on iTunes titled A Lifechanging Kiss.

Here's what she said, "I just started listening to podcasts after my surgery in March, thanks to my daughter. I stumbled across Tonya Leigh in a happy accident. Her podcasts have gotten me through the toughest time in my life. She resonated with me as I too am a former critical care nurse. I've desperately tried to change

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my life, but I honestly didn't have the tools to be successful. For the past three months, I've devoured the podcast and even joined the masterclass. SCS is next on my agenda. My outlook on life is already changing. I didn't ever think of dreams before listening to Tonya. She doesn't know it yet, but Tonya Leigh has become my BFF. I listen to her every day, sometimes all day long. I now dare to have dreams. And now, I'm developing the skills to realize goals. Already I walk differently and I see differently too. Tonya, thank you. This is just the beginning of a lifelong beautiful relationship. See you soon in SCS."

Jennie, thank you so much for this review. And I love my nurses. Us nurses are a special bunch, just so you know. I love all of you, but a big shoutout to my nurses today. And I love knowing that I'm your BFF and I especially love knowing that I've really encouraged you to dream.

Your dreams are your guide to your most incredible life. And what we often do – and I've done this too, you all – we'll have a big dream we don't believe it's possible for us, so what we want to do is just to deny our dreams and to pretend that we don't have enough time or that it's too big or that it's impossible, and then we just turn our back on our dreams.

But what I want to encourage us all to do is to get honest with what we want and then have the courage to face it, and then decide, who do we need to become to create that for ourselves? So, Jennie, that is your work, my friend. And that is all of our work, to decide what we want and then ask the question, who do we need to become to create that?

In this episode, I want to talk about the willingness to be wrong, which is so hard for so many of us, including myself. I get it. It doesn't feel good to be wrong because, at our core, we want to be right. We want to feel like we are doing the right thing. We want to feel like we are making the right decisions. We want to feel like we are heading in the right direction.

But here's the problem with the unwillingness to be wrong; that most often, what that causes is us to be stagnant. We are afraid to speak our truth. We're afraid to try new things. We're afraid to take bold risk because we don't want to offend people. We don't want to make a mistake. We don't want to be misunderstood.

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And so, because we have a lot of fear around getting it wrong, we never give ourselves the opportunity to get it right. And the other problem around this is that unless we're willing to be wrong in those moments where we are and someone calls us out, what we do is we get defensive. We contract. We go into fight or flight. We are closed off. And there is no growth in that.

But when you're willing to get it wrong, you stay open. You're like, "Bring it. Tell me where I'm wrong. Tell me how I can do better. Tell me what I don't yet know." Because here is the thing. We are all human beings.

Now, are there going to be people that come at you with a lot of anger and a lot of hatred? Of course. Can you stay open in that? Can you still love them? Can you still love yourself in that? I think that is the work.

You know, recently, when everything happened around the George Floyd murder, I was, again, horrified. And I needed to process it. I needed to look at my own bias. I needed to look at, "Why is this just now truly affecting you?" Even though I grew up in a very racist society. In the Deep South, y'all, it can be very rough down there.

And I aid on my Instagram post, I told how I saw this as a little girl, something I should have never seen as a child because here's the thing; racism is not something that is born within us. It is something that is taught to us. And I have lost friends over standing up for racism. I have really done my work, what I thought I should be doing, to not be a racist person.

But listen, I have blind spots, you all. I want to believe that I am the most loving an inclusive person ever. And I also want to be willing to be wrong about that so I can be even more loving and even more inclusive.

And so, when all of this stuff happened, I had someone in my community send me a private message and said, "Are you going to say anything?" And my first instinct was like, "Oh no, I'm in trouble." Right? Like, "What have I done wrong?"

And I needed to be open to that. I had to be open to, "Maybe you're wrong by not saying anything. Maybe you're wrong by being so afraid of being wrong that you're staying silent," and that is not who I want to be. I want to come at

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everything with so much love. I want to be inclusive. And I also don't want to tolerate racism.

I believe we are all equal. I believe we all have so much potential and I want to be very mindful of my cognitive bias in all of this. Because I know, as a white woman, I have certain privileges that my black sisters do not have. I get it, you all. And I want to use that for the good of all.

And as I'm even saying this, I have that voice in my head saying, "Oh, sister, you're going to get it wrong. You better stop right now. You're going to offend people. People are not going to agree with you." And that is okay. That is what we must be willing to do to live an incredibly beautiful and bold life. And I am all in for it. I am willing to get it wrong.

But I want you to think about how this affects you with your dreams as well. So many of you are afraid to make the wrong decision. You're afraid to try things because you may be wrong, you may fail. But that is how you learn and that is how you grow and that's how you make it right.

I was telling my students in the Dream Atelier, I'm like, "Listen, success is built on a mountain of failures." That is a quote by Geoff Livingston, I believe. But it's so true. And yet, so many of you are, like, paralyzed, afraid of making the mistake, afraid of being wrong.

But I want you to imagine a life where you are willing to be wrong, where you actually walk towards the possibility of being wrong. I want you to think about who you would be and what you would create and who you would become.

I think about all of the typos in my email. I think about how I mispronounce things. I think about all of the mistakes that I've made. I think about even now, in my business, we are gearing to make a big change. I have no guarantee it's going to work. All I know is that it feels like the next step for me and it feels exciting and I'm going to go all in on it with the possibility I may get it wrong. But how else will I know?

And in even speaking my truth, even my truth from my limited brain right now, it may later turn out to be wrong. I may look at it and be like, "Oh, I was a little off

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then. That was my truth then, but I'm willing to expand my truth. I'm willing to even discover that my truth was wrong." To me, that is strength and that is courage.

It reminds me of Lao Tzu where he says – let me see, I wrote it down here – “All things including the grass and trees are soft and pliable in life. Choosing to remain flexible is choosing life. A tree that cannot bend will crack in the wind. The hard and the stiff will be broken while the soft and the supple will prevail.”

And to me, an unwillingness to be wrong is very hard, it's very rigid. And we all know these people. We know these people that are so devout in their beliefs and how they see the world that they are unwilling or it to be seen in a different way. And I am all for us having strong values and strong beliefs. But I want us just to be open to the possibility that we could be wrong and to open into that.

I also want us to be open to making mistakes. I want us to be open to failing because that is the path to getting it right and to making your dreams come true and having an incredible impact on the world. There are going to be people that don't like you. There are going to be people that disagree with you. Open up to it and see if there's any truth in what people are saying to you. It doesn't mean you have to change, but let's not become so rigid that we're not open to it.

My problem is that, my entire life, I wanted to please everyone. I think it's that Southern girl mentality, right, like I wanted everyone around me to be happy. I wanted to please everyone. And I ended up shrinking out of fear because I didn't want to offend people. And then, my perfectionism kicked in and I didn't put myself out there because I didn't want to fail in front of people.

And so, what ended up happening is that I was failing in the privacy of my own life by not going after my dreams. But this willingness to be wrong, the willingness to make mistakes, the willingness to be human, which is what it is, is the path to our most incredible, incredible lives.

Here's what I know to be true about me. I'm going to mess it up y'all. I'm going to make mistakes. I'm going to fail. I'm going to disappoint some of you. I may even offend some of you. But what I know is that my intention is coming from a place of love.

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And sometimes, I have to check myself because sometimes it may be coming from fear. And something from fear never turns out well. But what I know is that, deep down, my intention is love and my intention is to add value to the world and to be an example and to live an amazing life.

But I also know that I'm going to get it wrong, so I might as well be willing to get it wrong and not be afraid of getting it wrong because that's when I shrink. That is when I don't speak my truth. And that's when I don't show up as the fullest version of myself.

And I just want to give a huge shoutout to my community who you all are really good about saying, "Hey, you may want to check yourself right now. You may want to just take a look at this." And I am so grateful for that. I truly, truly am because, at the end of the day, we are all so human.

But I want to believe in the best in us. I want to believe that when we get it wrong, that we will do everything we can to get it right. And without that lesson, we will never learn how to get it right. We will never learn the next steps. We will never grow if we're so afraid of getting it wrong.

And here's the other thing that I want to say around this is that, we have to commit to loving ourselves through it. There is so much shame and guilt out there right now. And I get it. I feel it too. I experience it.

But the problem with that is, when we are so hard on ourselves, when we get it wrong, the chances are we're being just as hard on other people when we get it wrong. And I've just discovered that as I've been more loving and compassionate towards myself when I get it wrong, I am so much more understanding and accepting of other people when they get it wrong.

And I realize, we are just all messy humans down here trying to figure it out. But I do believe in us and I do believe in the power of being willing to get it wrong when our intention is coming from a place of love.

So, here's what I want to challenge us all to do. And I'm in this with you. But I want to challenge us to stay open, to really practice not being defensive. You know

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what that feels like, right? It's like we want to argue and defend our point and defend why we did what we did and defend our decisions.

I do believe we need to own our decisions. I do believe we get to decide how we feel about them. But we don't have to defend them to the world. We can just remain open and willing to be wrong. And then, I want to challenge all of us to make bold moves, to take risk, to speak our truth, to try that new thing, to make that bold decision.

Because a big and bold and audacious life is going to require that you make some big and bold and audacious decisions. And that also means that you may get it wrong. Welcome to life, my friends. Welcome to an extraordinary life. Because, again, when you're willing to get it wrong, every time you do that and every time you do get it wrong, guess what, you're one step closer to getting it right.

I also want us to be willing to be criticized. It's a big one, I know. So many of you aren't saying what you want to say. You are not going after what you want because you're afraid of being criticized. You're afraid of what people will think.

Know this one really well. I am one of those, again people pleasers that I don't want to offend anyone, I want everyone to like me. I want to be inclusive. I want to just create a loving world. But I have to be really careful because if the intention is coming out of fear, then chances are I am not being true to myself. So, you have to be willing to be criticized and you can still love everyone. But you have to love yourself. And if you're not being true to yourself, it's really hard to love yourself.

Also, be willing to listen. This is so hard because we all have our beliefs and we all have this filter in which we take in the world. And what we often do if we're not mindful is that everything goes through that filter. And if it doesn't fit our filter then we don't want to listen. We don't want to have anything to do with it.

But what if everything is there to inform you? And it may be there to inform you to be stronger in your beliefs. But it may be there to actually shift your beliefs. But you have to be willing to listen. And you can't really listen when you're being defensive. You just shut off all possibility of understanding, of taking in a new perspective.

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And so, when I feel very righteous and like I need to be right, I like to stop and take a pause and ask why. Why do I feel so strongly that I need to be right about this? And what if I'm completely wrong? Am I willing to be completely wrong on this?

And that's a really powerful question because then it does open you up to new perspectives and new possibilities. And I've seen this throughout my life. Even with my own limitations around my success, someone will come along and they'll offer me something that really could take me to the next level.

But because I'm so limited in how I see myself and my success, I want to push it away and say things like, "Well yeah, that's good for you, but that won't work for me." But what if I'm completely wrong about that? What if it could absolutely work for me? Are you willing to be wrong about your own self-limitations?

It's a really powerful question. So, you have to be willing to really listen and to be willing to be wrong maybe about most of everything you knew around a certain topic.

You know, I see this with my clients so often. Like, I will offer them a belief. I will offer them a perspective and they want to argue for their own suffering. And I want them just to listen for a moment and ask themselves, "What if I'm totally wrong about what I thought was possible? What if I'm totally wrong around how I see myself? What if allowing myself to be wrong about this is how I'm going to make it right, how I'm going to reach my goals, how I'm going to make a change?"

But you have to be willing to listen. And this one is hard. We have to stay on top of our own brains because our brains will try to convince us that we're so right at our own demise. And then, you have to be willing to repeat this process again and again, to stay open, to make big bold moves, to be willing to be criticized, and then to listen and then repeat over and over and over again.

I want us all to challenge ourselves to be wrong and to be willing to be wrong. Have your ideas be challenged by other people. Have your perspectives challenged by other people. And really live a life where you're seeking that out instead of trying to be right all the time, trying to look perfect, trying to be perfect.

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What if we were all willing to be wrong? I honestly think that is what makes a great leader. You know, I never really thought I was going to end up in a leadership position, like people turning to me to lead them. The way I've always thought about it is, like, I am a leader of myself. But as a result, I find now that I have this community that I am so honored to lead and I want to be willing to be wrong, you all because, again, I think that that's what makes a great leader.

Because leaders sometimes can be a little stubborn. We think we have to know everything in order to lead. And I think that's such a mistake. I think that is what keeps us from leading in such a powerful way. I read in an article where they said, "There may only be a subtle difference between determination and stubbornness. One leads to success while the other one makes you look stupid."

And I have definitely looked stupid, you all, because I'm so stubborn sometimes too. But when you're willing to be wrong, I feel like that's when you are your most powerful. Because here's the thing; being wrong is not a sign of weakness. It's often a sign that you're wise and you're open to growing and becoming more wise.

So, let's all challenge ourselves to be willing to be wrong. Let's challenge ourselves that maybe there's a perspective that we don't see, or being willing to make a mistake or to fail and to be criticized. Because here's the thing again; how are you ever going to get it right unless you are willing to get it wrong?

Have a beautiful week, everyone. I will see you in the next episode.

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 Three Mindset Makeovers Every Woman Needs*, by visiting frenchkisslife.com/mindset. Because, after all, mindset is the new black.