



PODCAST TRANSCRIPT

EPISODE N° 191

Dear Tonya: Boredom, Elegance & Lashes

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Dear Tonya: Boredom, Elegance & Lashes

Do you have questions? Well, guess what. I have answers for you. Welcome to a Dear Tonya episode.

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.

It is time for a Community Spotlight. This is the part of the show where I get to highlight someone in the community who has benefitted from the French Kiss Lifestyle. And I just want to say that I think our community is the best. I know, I'm a little biased, but the amount of support that I see in this community just warms my heart.

I think we believe that women don't support other women. We've had negative situations occur with other women and we can begin to think it's just not possible for us to find women who really and truly love each other, celebrate each other, encourage each other, and want the best for each other. And I feel like we are that community.

And I just want to thank you. What I've created is because of you. It's because of the kind words. It's because of the support. It's because of your energy that *French Kiss Life* is what it is. And so, a shoutout to all of you. I appreciate all of the messages. I appreciate all of the support. I appreciate all of the love. And today, I want to specifically appreciate Fabulously Elegant.

She wrote a five-star review on iTunes and here's what she said, "Fabulous and elegant. Tonya has such a sweet and genuine way of connecting with her listeners. She is humble and compassionate while still able to say what she needs to say straight forward. She has a wonderful way of pushing people to be better. I've been listening to her podcast for about six months. She's made me realize that I am worth more than I give myself credit for, and that I can completely makeover my life, to live the way that gives me joy.

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Over the last three months, I have moved to a new country, accepted a promotion at work, and I am now learning to enjoy the process and live in the moment. I still have more goals that I know I will achieve. Listening to the *French Kiss Life Podcast* has helped me calm my mind and has given me peace. Thank you, Tonya, for giving everyone that listens your fabulous words of wisdom.”

Well, thank you, Fabulously Elegant, which you are, by the way. And isn't it just so much fun to realize that we can makeover our lives? We get to decide who we want to be. We get to decide what kind of life we want to live. And then, when we give ourselves permission to actually go out there and be that and do that and experience that, it's the best thing ever.

Thank you all so much for tuning in to another episode. And I can't wait to see you in the next one. Cheers.

Well hey, beautiful friends. Welcome to another episode. How's your day? How are you doing? My friend Melissa and I, she talked me into getting onto Marco Polo. And every morning, I get to wake up and see her face and she usually says, “Hey, what are you doing? What's your plans for the day?”

That's such a great way to start the day, knowing that there are people that care about you, people that are actually really interested in your day and your life. And I want you to know, I'm really interested in yours. I love it when I get messages on Instagram and Facebook and sometimes via email.

And even though I can't respond to every single one, I try to read as many as I can. And it just delights me to hear about your journeys and to just be a part of your life in some way.

One of the things that I often get are questions. In fact, I get a lot of them. And I wish I could answer each of them individually. But I like to keep a little folder on my phone and I take screenshots of questions that have been sent to me. And then recently, I put a post on Instagram, on IG stories, and said, “Hey, do you have a question for me? Because I'm going to be doing a Dear Tonya episode.”

And we had hundreds of questions come pouring in. So, today's episode is dedicated to your questions. So, let's get started. This is so much fun for me.

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So, this question is from Ibru. She asked on Instagram, “What do you do when someone says something unkind to you? How do you deal with it?” Well, here’s the thing, you guys, I want you to imagine someone that is in love with life, someone that truly loves themselves, someone who has a goal or dreams that they’re working towards, someone that has a full life.

Those kinds of people would never say anything unkind, right? So, when someone says something unkind to me, what I know to be true is that says everything about them and nothing about me. What I think of other people says everything about me and nothing about them.

So, if I think something unkind to someone or I say something unkind to someone, that’s my stuff. So, if I’m thinking unkind thoughts about someone or I say something unkind, it means, for me, that I’m just out of alignment. Because when I’m feeling love, when I am in a space of compassion and understanding and awareness, I don’t think unkind thoughts.

So, when people do that to me, I just know that they’re not in alignment with their truth. I don’t make it mean anything about me. Now, does it sting initially? Yes. But then, I have to remind myself, “Wait, this is their stuff.” I can let them have their stuff and I can work on my stuff. And so, that is how I deal with it.

And this is something that I deal with quite often, just because I’m in the public. And I think especially when you’re in the public and you’re speaking your truth and you’re putting yourself out there, you’re so much more open to having all kinds of things come at you; loving words, hateful words, agreements, disagreements.

But here’s the thing. What I want you all to know is that when you’re willing to feel all of it, you really do become unstoppable. So, again, unkind words, I just – as my dad says, it’s like water off of a duck’s back. I’ve learned to really just let it go, let it how, let it go, and just sed the person that is being unkind so much love. Because I always think about where they must be in their headspace, to say something like that.

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Okay, the next question is from Lindsey and asked, “You talk about how you eat simply. Do you follow a specific eating plan or diet?” So, the answer is no. I am open to eating anything and everything. I’m actually a foodie. I really enjoy food.

But something interesting has happened with me over the last decade because many of you may not know my story, but I used to weigh over 200 pounds. I developed an eating disorder. Food was my obsession.

I would wake up in the morning thinking about what I was going to have for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. And as I was eating breakfast, lunch, dinner, or all the snacks in between, I would be beating myself up for it. And so, it was just a really toxic relationship with food.

So, as I started to do the work that I teach in my programs, one of the things that I realized is that I’ve lost my desire to overindulge. I think about food when I’m hungry. I think about food if I have a special occasion coming up. For example, I’m meeting up with some friends tonight and we’ve been planning the dinner menu because we’re all bringing something.

And to me, that’s fun. But in my day to day life, I don’t want to think about food. I want to use my brain for something so much more productive. And that’s the thing that I’ve realized. Part of my journey is having dreams and goals that I can focus on.

Because, as my grandmother used to say, “An idle mind is the devil’s workshop.” So, when I have specific dreams and goals I’m working towards, I don’t want to spend my energy thinking about food. I don’t want to have to make decisions about what to eat.

Which is why, in my day to day life, I eat very simply. I typically only eat two times a day now because I’m just not that hungry. Now, in the mornings, I usually have, like, a bulletproof coffee. Then maybe around one o’clock, two o’clock, I have things in my fridge that I’ll eat.

Sometimes I make a smoothie, if I’m feeling like something cold and I just want to dump a bunch of nutrients in my body. Sometimes I’ll do a salad. It just varies. But I just have my staple go-tos in my fridge.

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And then, for dinner. I'll do something simple like a meat and a veggie and whatever is in my fridge. I just don't even think about it that much. Which, honestly, you guys, is such a miracle. For those of you that struggle with weight and food, you know what it's like.

I never thought there would be a day where I would be saying the words that I'm speaking right now. I thought I would always have an obsession with food and I would always sabotage myself with food.

So, I hope that I can be an example of what's possible when it comes to food. And it's taken a lot of work. I've had to experience a lot of discomfort of wanting to reach for something and not doing it because I was reaching for it for the wrong reason.

But on the other side of that, you become comfortable with the new you, the new normal. And then, it becomes odd to think about reaching for food when you're bored. It becomes odd to think about overeating. But it's taken me many, many years to get to that place.

And I think a lot of people are wanting a quick fix. They're wanting to lose the weight and be naturally slim overnight. And if you want to do it in a way that's healthy and in a way that really serves you and leads to long-term wellbeing, then take your time. Take your time.

And I know I totally went off on a tangent. I don't even know if that was the flavor of the question that you were asking. But no, I don't diet. I am willing to eat all the things. My body just doesn't crave the things that I used to crave either.

My friend is here with me. And last night, she was like, "Do you have chocolate?" And I was like, "No." And she was so shocked. She was like, "You don't have chocolate?" And I'm like, "No, I don't even crave chocolate anymore."

Now, if I'm somewhere and it's available, I'll have a bite of it or two. But even if I eat a whole bar, I'm not going to beat myself up over it, ever. We need to stop that, ladies. We need to stop beating ourselves up for eating because it just keeps you in the toxic cycle of overeating.

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So, yeah, I do eat simply. I typically eat two meals a day. I just keep my staple things in the fridge. And I do splurge when I go out to dinner or I'm at, you know, someone's house and they're having dinner. That's when I get my variety. But day to day, I like to keep it simple. I do not want to waste my brain energy on figuring out what to eat.

Here's another food-related question. And this is from S.J. She asked, "How do I stop eating when I get very anxious? We are going into lockdown again for six weeks." Okay, so here's the thing, if you want to stop eating when you're anxious, the simple answer is you just stop eating.

But what's going to happen is that you're going to now be met with the anxiety. You're going to have to learn to feel your emotions. And that is uncomfortable. But do you know what's even more uncomfortable? Overeating and gaining weight and then feeling bad about yourself.

I'm just going to give it to you straight up. One of the things that we don't consider when we are on our weight-loss journeys is that it's about so much more than the food. Many people, not all but many people are struggling with their weight because of their emotional life. No one ever taught us how to feel an emotion.

So, when we start to feel worry, anxiety, fear, we think that food is going to solve that. But we know that's not true, right? Because it may be a temporary relief, but once that high, that rush leaves, guess what you're left with? The anxiety is still there the fear is still there. the worry is still there.

So, why don't we work on the deeper issue, which is why are you feeling anxious? Why are you feeling worried? Why are you feeling fear? Because food cannot solve for that problem.

And here's the other thing I just want to throw out there. going into lockdown does not cause anxiety. There are some people that are going into lockdown again and they're super-excited about it. If it really caused anxiety then we would all feel anxious when we hear that we're going back into lockdown. But not everybody feels anxious.

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So, the reason why you're feeling anxious is because of your thoughts. And food cannot change your thinking. So, if you want to not eat when you're feeling anxious, the answer is actually willing to feel anxious, knowing it's just energy moving around in your body.

And listen up, ladies, we have babies. We raise families. We do some hard things. For sure, we can feel some anxiety and not reach for food. And so, the answer is feel the anxiety, and then look into your brain as to why you're feeling the anxiety, and solve for the deeper issue, because food cannot do it for you.

Okay, next question. This is by Rev. Nicole. And she asked, "I'm working on working less but having more impact. What insights do you have?" So, you really need to pay attention to your activities. Because listen, effort does not mean results.

I have so many clients who say to me, "But I'm working so hard. I'm doing so many things. But they're getting very little traction." Why? Because impact is created by focusing on high-impact activities.

So, you can sit around all day and you can piddle on your website and you can do what I call faux-working, which I've done plenty of. It's that work where we're busy and we trick ourselves into thinking we're working really hard. But what we're working on really doesn't move us forward. It doesn't have that big of an impact.

So, the first thing you must do is define, what does it mean for you to have a big impact? So many times, we throw words around and we never stop to define it for ourselves, so we don't even know exactly what we're trying to do and what we're trying to move toward. And then, we don't know if we've actually done it because we haven't stopped to define it.

So, for me, I know that my goal is to reach a million women. That is the impact that I want to have. And so, when you know that, you can look at your activities and you can ask yourself, is this moving me forward? Is this in alignment with the impact that I want to have?

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Because when I think about reaching a million women, first of all, I don't know how I'm going to do it. The how is none of my business. I just have to believe in reaching a million women. And then, I have to be willing to look at the results I'm getting. What are the activities I'm currently engaging in and are they moving me closer towards that? And if they're not, I probably don't need to be doing it.

So, for me, I've discovered that my highest impact activities are, number one, thinking time. And I think we overlook this. We get so into the busywork that we don't stop and just have thinking time; thinking time to critically think about our lives, about our ideas, about what we want to create.

And so, once a week, I have a thinking day where I really just sit around and think. I have my journal. I write down ideas. And that gives me so much clarity so that when I am in my workdays, I'm so much more productive and effective.

The other high-impact activity for me is marketing; figuring how to get my message out to more people. And within that, I will try some things and it will not work, I promise you. But that's good to know. That is probably an activity I don't need to be engaged in or I need to change my strategy.

So, marketing is a big high-impact activity. The other one is content. I have noticed a direct correlation around consistency with content and the amount of impact that I am having.

The other high-impact activity for me, and I think this will be really good for you, is building a team. Because if you want to work less and have a bigger impact, you are going to need support in doing that.

So, on my thinking days, I'm thinking about what kind of support do I need? Where are there holes in the business? What kind of person do I need to fill those holes? And then building and nurturing and growing your team.

And then the other high-impact activity for me is coaching. I love coaching. I'm an amazing coach. And I say that with a lot of confidence because I coach myself all of the time. And I think that's what it takes to be a really great coach is you have to coach yourself.

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But that is one of my biggest high-impact activities because of the breakthroughs that women have when they're working with me. So, you just need to decide, A, what is impact for you? And B, what are the activities that you can focus on that will get you there the quickest?

Next question is from Janet. And she asked, "How long was your transformation journey?" I get asked that question a lot. And here's what I want to say. I'm still on the journey.

And the reason why I'm still on the journey, why I haven't given up, is that there's no time limit on it. I have fallen in love with the practice of evolvment. And so, whenever someone asks me that, I always sense – and Janet, if this isn't the case, I apologize ahead of time – but I always sense that there's some hurry.

Like, "Tonya, tell me how long it took you so I'll know how much time to give myself." And that hurry, that energy is slowing you down. I love to tell my clients, "Hey listen, there is no hurry." And when you really practice believing that, it's incredible how much more quicker you can get to where you want to go because you're taking the pressure off of yourself and you're enjoying your life and you're enjoying the journey.

And if you think about where you want to go and that version of you, that is how she's living her life, so it's about bringing that energy back to today. So, I don't even have an answer to that question because I'm still on the journey of transformation. And I don't ever intend to stop. And I'm not in a hurry to get anywhere. I'm loving where I am. I'm excited about where I'm going. And I just want to enjoy all of it.

The next question is from My Chinese Roots and this is such a good question. I'm so glad you asked this because I've been asked this before. So, I want to clear up the record. She asks, "You always talk about our future selves, but shouldn't we just embrace the present?" The answer is yes and yes.

So, here's the thing, when I think about my future self, guess what she's doing? She is embracing the present. And so, I bring her back to today and I have so much love and so much appreciation and so much gratitude for the life I have right now. And I'm also excited for my future life.

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We live in such a black and white world. It's either all or nothing. We either have to be embracing the right here and now, or we have to be fully in the future and abandoning the here and now. And I come from the school of thought, it's a yes and. You can do both.

Every day, when I'm working and I'm thinking about my goals and I'm thinking about my future, all I'm doing is creating excitement in this moment, the excitement that's actually going to drive the actions to help create the future that I want.

And equally, every day, I'm looking around and I'm just amazed. I'm like, "Oh my goodness, the sun came up this morning and I didn't even have to make it happen. Oh my god, I just breathed and it just happened. My heart's just beating without any effort on my part."

I am doing both at the same time all of the time. Because here's the thing, we only ever have this moment. And so, in this moment, you can be appreciating the present. And the very next second, you can be thinking thoughts about your future that create excitement in this moment.

And so, yes, I will forever be talking about my future self because I'm just so excited to meet her. I'm so excited to become her. And equally, I'm so grateful for the woman I am in this moment. So, it is a yes and. I will always encourage you to be extremely grateful and appreciative of the life you have, and excited about your future.

Okay, next question is from Always Joe Cool. I love your handle, Always Joe Cool. So, she asked, "What is the most helpful question to ask yourself daily to stay centered and motivated?"

Okay, here's my favorite question. And I don't just ask it once a day. I am asking it throughout the day. Because life is constantly handing you situations. And the question that I love to ask myself is, "Who do I want to be in this?" Now what do I want to do, but who do I want to be in this?

So, for example, when COVID came around and everybody was so anxious, myself included, because something new is happening in the world and the brain

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doesn't like new things, right? I finally asked myself, "Okay, Tonya, who do you want to be in this? Who do you want to be on the other side of this?" I think, "Who do I want to be," is the one of the most powerful questions you can ask yourself.

And the answer to that question guided my thinking. It guided my actions. And I will tell you, I have been more creative and I have created more results during this pandemic than I probably did all of last year because I asked myself, "Who do I want to be?"

When I wake up in the morning, I ask myself, "Who do I want to be today?" When I know I'm going to have a tough conversation with someone, I ask myself, "Who do I want to be in this conversation?" When I'm walking into a roomful of strangers, which unfortunately I'm not doing much these days, like most of you. But when I walk into a roomful of strangers, I love to ask myself, "Who do I want to be in this room?"

That question informs everything. It informs how you think. It informs that conversations that you have. It even informs the outfit that you choose for the day. So, that is the daily question that I ask myself on repeat that helps me to live an intentional life, "Who do I want to be?"

The next question is, "How can I be elegant and a plus-size?" Okay, listen up, ladies. Elegance is a state of mind. I feel like we have this idea of elegance, like an Audrey Hepburn, someone that is stick-thin, wears black and pearls, and red lipstick. But elegance is simplicity and effectiveness.

And do you want to know what's not effective? You arguing with your body. You making it mean that because you have a plus-size body that you can't also be elegant. That is so ineffective.

Elegance is an energy, elegance comes from how you think of yourself, how you see yourself, and therefore how you show up in the world. You know, when it comes to dressing, for example, and you're plus-sized, you just simply need to know the styles that accentuate your body, that flatter your body.

You need to know the colors that look best on you. You want to bring out your best features. To me, that's elegance. Elegance is being kind to yourself. Elegance

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is also being kind to other people. Elegance is getting rid of all of the clutter that is just making you feel burdened in your life.

And guess what. None of that has to do with the size of your body. I want you to celebrate your body because you know what, ladies, just the fact that we have bodies that are carrying us throughout this experience is a miracle. Bodies that support us every single day.

I want you to celebrate your body, no matter the shape or the size. To me, that is elegance. And so, if you want to be elegant and have a plus-size body, stop thinking that because you have a plus-size body that you can't be elegant. Because that is a lie.

Okay, that question got me all riled up. Next question is, "How do you deal with boredom and the frustration that comes from it?" It's so funny, I was just having this conversation with my friend who is here and I was telling her, one of the emotions that I never feel is loneliness and boredom, even though I am alone a lot of the time.

Now, I feel all kinds of other emotions that are not comfortable. But loneliness and boredom are not two of them. And why is that? I've been thinking about that question because I do know what it's like to feel bored. There have been times in my life where I was bored out of my mind and I felt super-lonely.

But the reason being is that I have dreams and goals that I'm always working towards. I always have something to entertain my mind. I have things that love, like reading books and listening to music and I'm curious about the world.

So, when you have curiosity, you have questions that you want to learn more about, and you also have dreams and goals that you're working towards, there is always something for your mind to focus on. So, for any of you that are feeling bored, I want you to write down a list of questions that you would love to explore, things that you would love to learn more about, things that you want to know more about. And whenever you're feeling bored, you can go to your list of questions and you can start exploring those topics.

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The other thing is, do you have goals that you're working towards. And the goal could simply be, "I want to clean out my closet." So, when you're feeling bored, guess what you get to do. You get to go in there and work on your goal.

But I have found that when you are curious about yourself and you're curious about the world and you have dreams and goals, boredom is one of those emotions that you'll probably rarely experience. And if you do experience it, guess what. It's just an emotion. It's just a feeling in your body. Be curious as to why you're feeling it. What's your brain telling you that's creating the boredom?

Because let me tell you, life is a playground. There's so much out there to explore and to learn and to experience. And so, boredom is probably telling you that those things aren't available to you. And what I can tell you is that that is a lie.

So, be curious. Figure out what you want to learn more about and then set some goals for yourself. Then there will be no time for boredom.

Next question is from One Girl Travel, which by the way, ladies, you have to go check her out. If you're someone who wants to travel and maybe you don't have someone to travel with or you want to explore traveling alone, Alessia is amazing. But she asked, "How do you know when it's the right time to take the leap from the comfort and security, to the unknown?"

And my answer is actually very simple. You just decide. A lot of us are sitting around waiting for a sign. In fact, the other day, it's funny, I was just joking with myself and I'm like, "God, send me a sign." And literally, in less than five minutes, an airplane with a sign flew by my window.

But listen, you all, you just need to decide. And for me, I am always stepping into the discomfort. Because I'm always wanting to grow. There's always something new that I want to experience or that I want to create. And so, for me, I'm always making a decision to step into the unfamiliar and into the unknown.

It really is a decision. Is there something that you want that you don't yet have? Then there's your answer. It's time to take the step, to take the leap into the beautiful land of mystery. Because remember, everything that you want and don't yet have is hanging out in that place.

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Okay, next question is from Des, and she says, “Help with how I can manage my thoughts around the low-carb to not feel restricted.” So, here’s the thing, “I am restricted,” is a thought. And when you think that, you probably feel very restricted.

In fact, I used to tell myself that and I felt rebellious. Because who wants to be restricted? And so, when I was feeling rebellious, guess what I would do? Yep, I would go and eat all of the things. So, we have to be very mindful with our language. Words are powerful.

So, if you’re walking around and you’re saying things like, “I am restricted. I am deprived. I am having to do this. This isn’t fair.” You’re going to be generating emotions that are going to cause you to do the very thing that you don’t want to do because you did also say that you’re feeling better physically.

You’re not restricted. You’re making a choice. You’re an adult woman choosing to do something that feels good in your body. You are free to eat whatever you want. But you are choosing to make decisions that serve you, that feel good, that give you more life and more vitality and help you to create the results you want.

And if you focus on those kinds of thoughts, guess what you’re going to feel. You’re going to feel empowered. You’re going to feel confident. You’re going to feel excited. You’re going to feel proud of yourself. I promise you, you will not feel restricted.

So, for anyone that is changing up how you eat and you’re walking around telling yourself that you’re restricted, I just want you to know that that is a thought that is not serving you. What would be a better thought that would drive you to feel in such a way that you want to keep doing these things for yourself?

So, Des, I want you to ask yourself, are you restricted, or are you a powerful, confident woman who is choosing to do things that serve you, that feel good, and that lead you towards what you want for yourself? Big difference, right?

Next question is, “How to incorporate ease at work? High-pressure, corporate environment, controlling management.” So, I did a podcast called Ease Vs. Easy.

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There's a big difference. And one of the things that I say in that episode is that ease is a state of mind.

Because if you think the outside world is creating how you feel, what you're going to try to do is control the outside world. And the outside world is uncontrollable. The only person you can ever manage is yourself. And if we think about how hard it is to manage ourselves, why in the world would we ever think that we can manage our boss, the environment, all of the other things outside of us?

Now, can you plant yourself in a different place? Of course. But I have found personally that the best way to get to where I want to go is to practice already being there, which means learning to manage your mind.

I have actually seen women jump from one job to the next, chasing ease. And the saying is true, wherever you go, there you are. And what I've discovered is that they're putting the pressure on themselves. They are controlling of themselves. And so, start with where you are.

Let me give you an example. So, right now, if you were to look at my calendar, you'd be like, "Holy smokes, this girl has got a lot to do." But I'm not feeling pressure. I'm not feeling overwhelm. I'm not feeling all of those emotions that the old me would have felt.

Why? Because of my thinking. I just focus on the next thing that needs to be done. I'm willing to do an imperfect job. If people get upset with me, I know I can't manage that. I can only manage my thoughts around it.

And so, by managing my own mind, I am able to access more ease. If you think ease is in the next job or the ease is in the next relationship or ease is outside of you, what you're saying is, "I'm constantly going to have to control the world to feel better."

And what I'm offering you is that you can start to feel ease in the job you have right now. Because if you look into your brain, you'll discover the thoughts that are creating your dis-ease. So, you change your thinking now to create more ease.

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And then, ironically, what ends up happening is that the world outside of you begins to shift as well because the world is constantly your mirror. It's projecting back to you who you are and what you believe to be true.

So, start from where you are. What are you thinking that's causing the stress? What are you thinking that's causing the dis-ease? And then manage your own mind around it. That's how we create more ease in our lives. Because ease is a mindset.

The next question is from Natalie and she asked, "How do you deal with split energy?" So, for those of you who don't know what split energy is, it's the energy of wanting two things at once. It's the energy of being scattered because your focus is in so many different directions.

So, here's how you deal with split energy. You, number one, decide what you want. That's the first step. What do you want? With decision, you're cutting off other options, which for a lot of you is really scary. But what you're also doing is now you're telling your brain where to focus.

You're telling your brain what you've decided is important. You're telling your brain, "Here's where we're going." And then, when all of the thoughts that come up that try to take your attention off of that or tells you that it's not possible or it's not going to work, your job is to steer those thoughts towards where you want to go.

And by doing that, you're going to get the momentum behind your dreams and goals. Split energy is destroying so many different dreams. On one hand, a woman will say, "I want to make money. I want to make a million dollars." And then, she also has a belief that either it's not possible or it's wrong for me to want that kind of money, or people who want that money are selfish and greedy.

And so, she has conflicting belief systems. So, what I will tell her is, "Keep your desire to make a million dollars. And then your work is to get your beliefs and your thoughts lined up behind it." So, when that thought comes up that says, "It's greedy for me to want money," your job is to look at all of the reasons why it's not greedy.

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Your job is to find a better feeling thought that you can believe that's more aligned with where you want to go and you do that over and over and over again until you have your belief system lined up with what you want. And then, it is like a rocket, my friends. That is how you line up your energy and get the momentum going in your life.

Oh my goodness, I am not even close to being finished with all of these questions, and I'm not going to be able to answer them all today. But I did have some personal questions that came in. Not just some. I had a bunch. So, I'm going to answer some of them.

I was actually surprised with how many of you are curious about my astrological chart. You wanted to know all of my signs, so here you go. I am a Capricorn sun sign. My birthday is in January. My rising sign is Gemini and my moon sign is moon.

So, the way this was explained to me was, because I have a sign in each of the elements – so, Capricorn is earth, Leo is fire, and Gemini is air, I'm very grounded, meaning I got my roots into the ground. I am the mountain goat. I am determined to climb that mountain.

But I'm also a dreamer. My head's in the clouds. I'm always thinking about what's next and my vision and my dreams and my goals. And then, you throw in the fire and I'm passionate.

So, here I am, the mountain goat. I'm sorry, I just don't see myself as a mountain goat. But then, when I really think about how I am in my life, I totally get it. But I'm a mountain goat that's just taking one step at a time. And I'm climbing up the mountain. And I'm excited to get to the top. But I'm also passionate about the journey. So, yeah, that's how I see my three signs and how they work together.

Another question that I had several of you ask me – and it's a question I've been asked a lot – is about my accent. Many of you want to know how I changed it. So, if you're new to me and you're new to the podcast, you may not know that I grew up in the deep south, in the Bible Belt.

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And I always say, there's a difference between a southern accent and a country accent. I had a country accent. I could draw out a one-syllable word into about six or seven syllables.

So, for me, when I started to work as a nurse and I started to work in hospitals outside of the little area that I grew up in, I started to hear different accents. Because here's the thing, when you're in something, you don't even know you're in it. I just thought, really, everyone spoke that way except people on TV, right?

And so, I started to hear different accents. And then, I also started to be made fun of. Which when you're young and you're impressionable, it's really hard. I'll never forget being in Colorado and I was on a shuttle in Keystone Resort and this gentleman overheard me speaking, I think it was with my parents because I was on vacation with my mom and dad and my brother and a bunch of family.

And he looked at me and he was like, "What planet are you from?" Now, looking back, I realized that he was just trying to be funny. But for a young woman, I took that as something is wrong with me. Sometimes people would ask me to repeat myself because they couldn't quite understand what I was saying.

So, I decided that I wanted to change my accent. And as I'm talking, I'm realizing, this could be an entire podcast in and of itself, but I'm just going to keep going. So, once I made that decision, I did a few things.

I never hired a voice coach. But I started to plant myself in new environments because our environment is shaping us. So, if you think about it, as long as I was in the environment of the little town I grew up in, that is all I heard. And we become what we surround ourselves with.

And so, by putting myself in new environments, I started to hear a different dialect. I started to hear different accents. And you have to understand, a new environment can be physically or it can also be in movies. And back then, it was cassette tapes. And even though I had those things, even before, I didn't pay attention. I wasn't listening to them with the intention of changing my accent.

So, I put myself in new environments, and then I started to practice. I would listen to Meryl Streep because I thought she had the perfect English accent. So, I would

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listen to her and I would stop and I would try to repeat it the way Meryl had repeated it. And over time of practicing a new accent, eventually I didn't have to practice anymore. I just woke up one day and I'm like, "Wow, this is just how I speak."

But do you know what's interesting, like when I go back home and I'm there for a few days? It comes out again. Even now, I'll say certain things that people will say to me, "Oh, now I hear the southern accent." Which I actually love. I love a southern accent. But you know what?

We get to decide who we want to be. And I decided that I didn't want a southern accent anymore. And so, I changed it. The hardest part of all of that was the backlash from the people that I grew up with. Because, of course, they were like, "Oh, look at her talking all fancy. She thinks she is the hot tamale."

People were very judgmental when I started to change my accent. Even now when I go back, sometimes people make fun of me. And that's okay. I don't care. You know what matters is that I like me and that I like my accent. That is the only thing that matters.

So, yeah, if you want to change your accent or anything else about your or your life, guess what, you get to do that. The only thing that matters is that you like your reason. That is the only thing that matters. So, yeah, that's how I did it. And it was a process. It's not like I woke up one day and I'm like, "Oh, look at me sounding all like Meryl Streep."

No, it was just practice day in and day out and just paying attention to how I was coming across and the words I was saying and correcting myself with love and gentleness and kindness. And over time, voila, this is the voice of Tonya.

Last question – I have a lot of style questions and I'm realizing that maybe I should just do a separate podcast on that. But a lot of you that follow me on Instagram and you've been watching my stories, you've asked me about my lashes. And I promised you that I would tell you all about them.

So, gosh, was it about three weeks ago? I decided, you know what, I am going to go get lash extensions. I've never had them in my life. In fact, every time people

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would talk about them, I would be like, “Ew.” Only because I didn’t want to go and spend that much time getting my lashes done, because it is a time commitment.

The initial application takes about two, two and a half hours. And then, when you go back for refills, it’s about an hour. But I don’t know what’s been happening with me, you all. It’s almost like I’m in this midlife – I’m not going to call it a crisis. It’s not a crisis. It’s like a midlife awakening, where I’m like, why not?

Why not go get lashes if I’m curious about lashes? Why not just do what I want to do? Because when you’ve raised children and you’ve been running a business and you’ve been taking care of your parents and you’ve been just doing all of the things that we tend to do up until midlife, you get to a point where you’re like, “You know what? It’s my time.” And I’m definitely in that stage.

And so, part of that is I’m going to go get some lashes. And so, my daughter’s friend actually does lashes. And so, I called her up and I’m like, “I want to come in and get lashes.” And I had no clue what kind of lashes. I just went in there and I’m like, “Just make them look amazing.”

And so, she did. In fact, it was sort of shocking when I looked in the mirror after she did them. I’m like, “Whoa.” It was a little bit too much. But she assured me that some were going to fall out and they weren’t going to be as thick. And she was right.

And let me tell you all, I am so in love with lash extensions. Am I going to keep them forever? I don’t know. But right now, I’m a convert. There’s something about just waking up and having lashes that just changes everything. And I also love that I’m not wearing as much makeup. I’m not wearing as much eye makeup. I don’t feel like I need it because I’ve got lashes now.

So, I asked her, I said, “Okay, my ladies are asking me what you’re doing, because I don’t know.” And so, she gave me the lowdown on what my lashes consist of. So, apparently, I have Russian lashes. And the way she explained it to me is that these are ultra-fine synthetic mink lashes that because they’re so much thinner, they’re able to apply more lashes to each natural lash. And because they’re so lightweight, they can last a lot longer than regular faux-lashes.

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And then, I wanted a cat-eye lash, so it means that she used longer lashes on the outside than on the inside. And when we did the cat-eye, at first I was like, “This is way too much.” And so, when I went back for a refill, I’m like, “Let’s go a little bit shorter on the outside of my lash,” or my eye.

And so, we used, like eight – I guess it’s centimeters, millimeters? I don’t know. Anyway, eight on the inner corner, out to like an 11 on the outer corner. And in terms of maintenance, I just find that if you brush them and you don’t pick at them and you don’t play with your lashes, they last quite a while and they don’t damage your lashes, if someone puts them on properly.

So, if you’ve been thinking about getting lash extensions, I’m going to strongly encourage it. It took me a long time to finally try it. Now that I’ve done it, I’m like, this is amazing just waking up with lashes. So fun.

And you know what? We only have one life. Shouldn’t we do those things that we want to do? Shouldn’t we try new things, experience new things, become new things if we choose to? It is your life.

And we sit around judging ourselves, worrying about what other people are going to think, “What will people think if I get lashes?” Who cares? Again, all that matter is that you want them and you like your reason for wanting them. I will always be your biggest supporter and biggest cheerleader in following your heart’s desire, no matter what.

Well, that is a wrap on this episode of Dear Tonya. And hey, listen, if you like this kind of episode, if you like the Q&A format, let me know because I still have a lot of questions that I didn’t get around to answering. And I would love to give you an A to your Q.

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.