



PODCAST TRANSCRIPT

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How to Have a Love Affair with Yourself

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How to Have a Love Affair with Yourself

One of my favorite quotes is by Oscar Wilde, where he said, “To love one’s self is the beginning of a lifelong romance.” In this episode, I’m going to share with you how to have a love affair with yourself.

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.

Well hello, my beautiful friends. A little warning before I start this podcast. I just had the best workout and my endorphins are flowing. So, if I seem overly energetic, it’s because I am right now. But I thought this would be the perfect time to talk about how to have a love affair with yourself. And it’s perfect because I feel like this is what I’m doing in my life right now. I am just so happy and so in love with myself.

Now, some of may hear that and think, “Well, that sounds very arrogant. We don’t usually walk around saying that we’re in love with ourselves.” But it’s a feeling that I have for myself. And let me just assure you, I haven’t always felt like this. I do remember the times in my life where I was my own worst enemy and where I wasn’t in love with myself.

And I’ve done a lot of work to be the kind of woman who loves herself. But I feel like I’ve taken it to a whole different level these days. I did a podcast this year called *How to Enjoy Your Own Company*. I did it when we were in shutdown and I knew that a lot of us were at home and not having a lot of engagement with other people, other than maybe our immediate family. And many of my clients were saying, “This is tough.”

And in uncovering the reasons why, a lot of women aren’t used to spending a lot of alone time with themselves. And then, when they do, they realize they don’t like being with themselves. But listen, we have to be with ourselves for the rest of our lives, which is why it is the number one relationship for you to focus on cultivating.

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And so, I've been paying attention to what's been going on in my life and why I feel like I'm having this crazy romance that's just getting better every single day.

Some of you may not know this, but I was in a long-term relationship that I left in the beginning of the year. And it was hard to leave because he is an amazing man and I love him deeply. It wasn't like we hated each other and just wanted to get away from each other. I just felt my soul calling for me to leave.

And so, after I made that decision, I found myself in a city by myself a lot and I was presented with this new challenge of being alone so much. And it's turned out to be the most amazing experience. And it's also been equally hard because that's life, right?

You're always going to have ups and you're always going to have downs. And that's the way life is designed. Life is about the contrast. If you don't know what sadness is, how can you ever appreciate joy? If you don't know what worry and anxiety is, how can you ever appreciate peace?

And so, I'm talking about the other half right now, the other half of just feeling so in love with myself, and in love with life. And here's what I've discovered. What has been happening is that I have elevated my own practices. I tell my clients all of the time, I'm doing this work right alongside you and I keep evolving.

And this has been a year probably of the most growth that I've ever had. My word of the year in the beginning of 2020 was I wanted to be amazed. I didn't know, when I said that, that I was going to be amazed with myself. But I am. I've made some tough choices this year that haven't been easy.

And I've spent a lot of time with myself, really asking the tough questions of, what do you want? What do you want to create? Who do you want to be? What is the next evolution of you? And all of that inquiry has just made me so alive. And I was already alive before, but I feel like I am just buzzing in my cells.

So, let me tell you what I have discovered in terms of what it takes to have a love affair with yourself. The first thing is you have to listen to your desires. I want you to think about it like this. Imagine being with a partner who did not care what you wanted, who just ignored what you wanted, who just didn't even ask you what you wanted. It wouldn't be a lot of fun.

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And some of you may find yourself in relationships like that. So, you know how painful that is. But what I want you to understand is, are you doing that to yourself? Are you ignoring your desires? Do you never even ask yourself what you want?

If you want to have a love affair with yourself, it's going to require that you listen to your desires of what you want, where you want to go, who you want to be. And when you start listening to those desires, there's this tingle that starts to happen in your body. It's like you start to wake up. I think that's why a lot of women just feel so numb. They've dampened the thing that makes them feel so alive.

And so, for me this year, I've just been asking myself every day, like, what do you want? Where are we going? What does your future look like? Who do you want to be? What do you want to enjoy more of? Who do you want to be with?

And then, I've been taking action towards those desires. And so, I just feel so alive right now because my life is full of desires that are being recognized and I'm acting on them. So, if you want to feel alive again, if you want to have so much love towards yourself, you're going to have to recognize what your true desires are.

You can't just push them down and expect for life to be full. That's not the way it works. You've got to be brave enough to ask yourself the tough questions. One of them being, what do I really want? And to stop lying to yourself. A lot of you are lying to yourselves.

You're saying you don't know what you want. You're telling yourself that what you want is not possible, which is a lie. And so, what you do is you just ignore your desires.

But I want you to understand, love and desire go hand in hand. So, if you want to have a love affair with yourself, get real about what it is that you want and what you desire.

The second thing is, make yourself proud every single day. Can you imagine being with someone who's just constantly disappointing you, doesn't keep his or her word with you? It wouldn't be a fun relationship, would it? And yet, that is what we often do to ourselves day after day. And we wonder why we don't feel good.

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We wonder why we don't think highly of ourselves. Because we are the one neglecting ourselves.

Just in the last few weeks, I have had to come to terms with some things within myself that I didn't realize were such a big deal in holding me back. And I made some big strides in confronting them, recognizing them, and then doing something about them.

And in the moment, it was so hard. I can't tell you how hard it was. I wanted to revert back to my old patterns. I wanted to revert back to what's comfortable. But I stepped into a new level of me. I evolved into the next version of Tonya by doing the hard things. And what I can tell you is the next morning, I woke up and I was so proud of myself.

I was like, that-a-girl. Look at you. Look at what you did. Look at that tough conversation you had. Look at your courage in being willing to look at the parts of yourself that you tried to deny, your dark shadows. You were willing to look at them and then you took action on them. I'm so proud of you.

It just deepened my love for myself. It's that feeling of having your own back. It's not fun to be in a relationship with someone you don't feel like has your back. And yet, I want you to ask yourself, do you have your own back? Do you make yourself proud? Do you keep your word to yourself?

Because it's going to be hard to have a love affair with yourself if you're breaking promises to yourself, if you're disappointing yourself day after day and you're not doing the hard things that, if you were to do, would make you so proud of yourself, would make you have a love for yourself.

The next thing that will help you have a love affair with yourself is to speak lovingly to yourself. Now, this is a big one for many of you. And some of you may not even realize how you speak to yourself because it's so subconscious and it's so familiar. You may have been doing it for years. Maybe even decades.

But imagine being with someone who tells you you're not good enough, that tells you that you don't deserve things, that you're not worthy. And yet, many of you are thinking that about yourself. You're saying that to yourself.

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And the other thing that I've noticed is that women especially tend to focus on what they think is wrong with them versus all that's amazing and beautiful and right about them. And that's one thing that has shifted for me over the years.

I look for what's right about me because I spent most of my adulthood looking for what was wrong with me. And as Rumi says, "Whatever you seek is seeking you." So, if you're seeking for all of the things that are wrong with you, your brain will deliver a host of things to consider. But equally, if you start looking for what's right about you, what's beautiful about you, what's amazing about you, you will find that too.

Now, in the beginning, it's going to take more effort, only because it's a new practice. I'm always amazed when I'm coaching women and I'm like, "Tell me something amazing about you." And this is after they've usually given me a whole list of everything that they think is wrong about them. It catches them off guard and they have to sit there and think, "What is amazing about me?"

But I don't let them off the hook. I'm like, "I'm here. I have all the time in the world. Think it through. What's amazing about you?" And they'll finally find something. And usually, it's something about who they're being for someone else. Like, "Well, I'm a good friend."

Okay, we can start there. But eventually, I want you to get to a place where you're just like, "I'm just amazing. I don't even need to give you reasons. I just am an amazing human being. I'm an amazing woman." So, if you go to do this, I just want you to understand, if you've been in the habit of thinking harshly about yourself, it's going to take some effort and some attention to establish this new practice.

But what I can tell you is that I don't speak mean things towards myself like I used to. Now, every once in a while, I'll have a thought pop up that tells me I'm a loser and I'm not good enough. I just don't entertain it. I'm like, "Look at my silly brain doing what my silly brain does." And then I immediately go to, "What's amazing about me? What's right about me?"

I just don't give it the airtime that I used to give it. And when you begin to speak lovingly towards yourself, you start to feel love towards yourself. That's how it works.

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Every day, if you were in my house with me, you would think I was narcissistic or arrogant. But I promise you, I'm not. But I will just walk around the house and be like, "I love me. I really do. I'm so proud of me. I'm so proud of what I've done. I'm so proud of all the hard days that I put in, the hard nights I put in to get to where I am today."

I'm just in love with me. And I think it's a beautiful thing. Many women are uncomfortable with saying that. They think they're bragging. But I want you to brag away about yourself. Because the more love you have within you towards yourself, guess what happens. The more love you have to give the world, the more love you'll have to give your family and your friends and your community and to your business or your job. But what is the saying? You can't give from an empty well.

You need to fill up your love tank for yourself so that you have more love to give to others. And that's what I've noticed with me. The more I truly love myself, it's made me more loving in the world.

I really do believe that the most amazing gift that I can give the world is to love myself madly. Because when I do, I can love others madly. I have more compassion. I have more empathy. I just have more love to give.

Those years that I wasn't loving myself, guess what I was presenting to the world; not a lot of love, my friends. But now, as the – I it Led Zeppelin song says, Whole Lot of Love. I've got a lot of it because I'm giving it to myself.

The other thing that I've been doing – and I've been doing this for a while, but I feel like I've elevated my practices, as I said earlier. But treating myself well. When you love someone, you want to treat them well.

Imagine being with someone who doesn't treat you well, who ignores you, doesn't give you good food, who doesn't take you on dates, who doesn't buy you flowers, who doesn't do all the loving things for you. That's not a good relationship.

But how are you treating yourself? Are you treating yourself well? Do you eat good quality foods? Do you take yourself on walks? I've been taking myself out on dates, just me. I'll go to a little café and I will sit there and I will journal. And I'll just spend time with me, talking lovingly to myself, exploring my desires, making decisions about how I'm going to make myself proud. Just loving on myself.

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Every week, I have flowers delivered from me to me. I eat delicious foods that feel good in my body. I love to take time out in the evenings for a beautiful bedtime ritual, of taking good care of my skin. Sometimes – not sometimes. Almost all times – taking a nice warm bubble bath. I treat myself well. Because when you love something, you treat it well.

Now, a lot of you think that you don't love yourself and you have a lot of evidence to prove it. And so, you want to love yourself to treat yourself well. But I want you to treat yourself well to prove to yourself that you're a woman who loves herself.

And at the same time, I want you to be speaking lovingly to yourself. I want you to be doing all of these things at one time. Because it all adds up. And one day, you're going to be where I am right now and you're going to be thinking, "Oh my god, I am having a love affair with myself. It's so fun." But it takes work.

If you think about the people you love the most and how much effort you put into those relationships, you're going to see that love requires effort. It requires a display of your love. And I want you to be displaying that love to yourself.

And then, the final thing that I do, and I've been doing this for many, many years, but it's just something that I do for me, is dressing up every single day. And I do it just for me. I don't do it for anyone else. In fact, many days, no one sees me because I'm in my office, I'm working, I'm in my home doing the home things. No one even sees me, but I see me. And I matter. And you matter. I want you to matter to yourself.

But think about this. Imagine being married to someone and all he does is sit around in his boxers all day every day. How would you feel about that? Now, he may enjoy it, I don't know. But you'd be like, "Dude, get up and get dressed. Show some self-respect." And yet, some of you don't do that for yourself.

The number of times I've heard women say to me that they don't want to dress up, they don't want to invest in clothes because of their body, "When I lose weight, then I'll dress up." It makes me want to scream at the because I'm like, the woman you are today in the body you have today is worthy of feeling amazing.

Don't abuse yourself by neglecting yourself. Stop putting your life on hold until one day when you've lost weight or you feel beautiful. You get to start doing that work today. Or the number of times women will say to me, "It just doesn't matter.

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Style doesn't matter." I'm like, really? Do you think your house matters? And they'll say, "Oh yeah, of course that matters."

But what you wear every single day doesn't matter to you? The way you're presenting yourself to the world, and more importantly to yourself doesn't matter? Let me tell you why it matters. Because you matter to yourself.

And so, for me, dressing up is something that I get to do to delight in myself. It's something that I have an opportunity to do so that when I look at my reflection in the mirror, passing by throughout the day, it symbolizes a woman that respects herself, that loves herself, that thinks she matters.

It's so funny because I just saw a friend of mine who is recently in love and I could instantly see it because of the way she was dressed. She had on this cute outfit. She was beaming. She was just radiating. And I thought about it, how love can cause us to do things that we don't normally do. But I think we can do those things to evoke that feeling of love within ourselves.

I want every woman – and even if you're a man listening to this, I want every man to have a love affair with themselves. I just feel like it makes us such better humans. It doesn't take from the world. If anything, it adds so much love and joy to the world.

And here's the other thing that I've noticed. There is this thing called the emotional scale, where anger, terror, resentment, all of these are low-vibe emotions. And then there's joy, peace, love, ecstasy on the upper end. And everything is responding to your energy.

And the thing that I've noticed as I'm feeling this love affair with myself is that I've attracted more things to love. My life is overflowing right now with love. the people that have come into my life, the opportunities that have presented themselves, the amazing loving clients that I have attracted into the School of Self-Image. It's just mind-blowing.

And I tell you, it's because I'm in such a state of love. My love overfloweth. And people can feel it. They can sense it. And if they're vibrating on a different level, then the chances are, they'll leave. And that's okay too. You can let people go with love. There's nothing wrong with that.

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But my work right now in the world is to stay in my own state of love. And when I get thrown out of it, because I probably will, because I'm human, I just want to come right back into it because that is the journey. The journey is to notice when you're out of love with yourself so that you can get back in love with yourself.

And so, that's how to have a love affair with yourself. Have a beautiful week, everyone. And you know what? I love you. Now, decide right now that you are going to have a love affair with yourself. 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 Three Mindset Makeovers Every Woman Needs*, by visiting frenchkisslife.com/mindset. Because, after all, mindset is the new black.