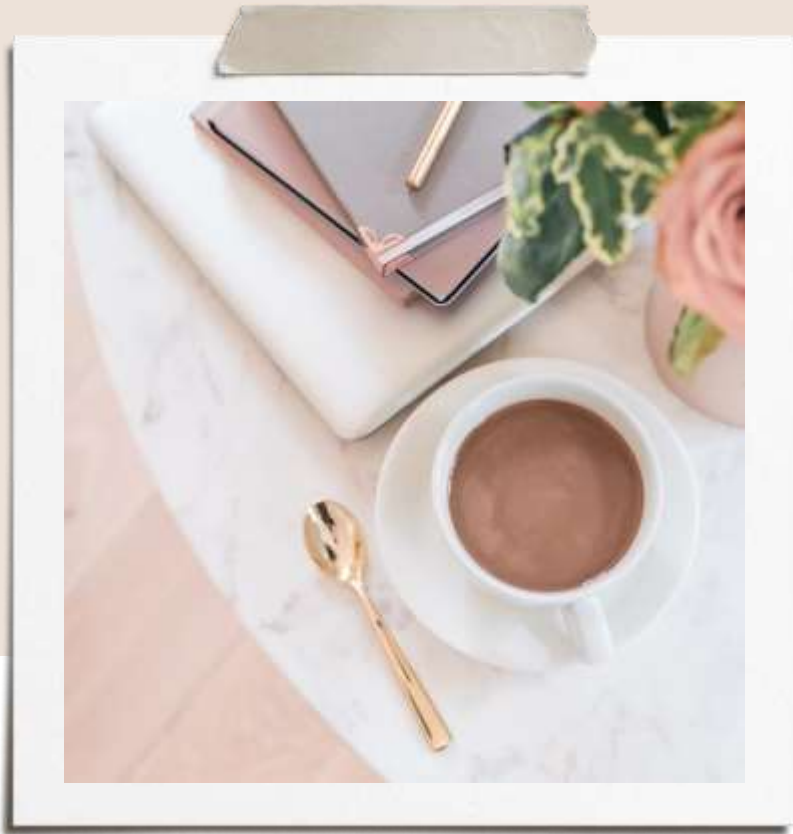


VIDEO TRANSCRIPT



EPISODE 216

Embracing Failure

SCHOOL OF
SELF-IMAGE

SCHOOLOFSELFIMAGE.COM

Embracing Failure

Failure is one of those things that many people try to avoid. But what would your life be like if you embraced it? That's what this episode is all about.

Welcome to the School of Self-Image, where personal development meets style. Here's your hostess, master life coach Tonya Leigh.

Well, hello, my beautiful friends. How is your week going? How is the new year for you? I hope your answer is, "Amazing." But hey, listen, if it's not, I totally get it. And what I can tell you is that if you're having a hard time right now, if you're struggling in any way, if you're being challenged, something beautiful happens when you accept that, when you just understand that maybe life isn't meant to be amazing all of the time.

Life is about the contrast. It's about showing us what we want and what we don't want. And for me personally, when I stopped expecting life to be amazing all of the time, that's when life became truly magical. So, there's a little pep-talk for you.

So, in this episode, I have a really exciting topic for you all. And that topic is how to embrace failure. Yes, I want you to embrace it. So, within the School of Self-Image this month, we are talking about confidence. And one of the challenges that I have given to the women is to take a daily risk. I want them taking a risk every single day, knowing that they may fail, and fail horribly.

But what I've come to understand is that when you are willing to fail, that's when you are most likely to succeed. But we live in this state of being afraid to fail, not realizing that everything we want is going to require that we are willing to fail.

And I was thinking back over my life and all of the failures I've had – and unfortunately, I don't feel like successful people talk enough about the failures that they went through to get to where they are today. But I want to put it all out there on the table for you all, for you to understand what it takes to create what it is that you want to create, to reach your goals.

You're going to have to be willing to embrace failure as a part of the process. And let's think about it, why are we so afraid to fail? I want you to think about that question for yourself. Are you afraid of what you may lose? Are you afraid of what people may think? Are you afraid of disappointing yourself?

It's really important that we understand why we are so afraid to fail. Because if we can make peace with it, then we get the courage to really go after our dreams, to go after the life that we want. So, I want you to spend some time thinking about why am I so afraid to fail? Why am I afraid to publish the book? Why am I afraid to start the business? Why am I afraid to go after the new job? Why am I afraid to date? Why am I afraid to move to a new city?

Embracing Failure

Really examine what your fears are and what specifically your fear of failing is all about. But I was thinking back over all of my failures. And let me tell y'all, I've had a ton. And I was thinking of it in terms of categories.

I first thought about style failures. I now consider myself to be a stylish woman. But when I first started on my style journey, I was not stylish at all. I grew up shopping at Kmart. I wasn't really around stylish women, and so I didn't have examples to look up to, other than women that I saw in magazines. And that felt so unobtainable to me. And yet, there was this deep desire within me to have a wardrobe that really reflected who I wanted to be and to be able to put clothes together in a way that felt good.

And so, in my journey to become a stylish woman, I had so many failures. In fact, I remember putting this outfit together to wear to a Christmas party and I saw a picture at my mom's not too long ago and I looked at it and I was like, "Oh my god, what was I thinking?" It was a style failure.

But it took me being willing to fail and learn and grow and try again and try again until I figured it out. And to me, that's the secret to building confidence, is being willing to fail, to try new things, to be on the playground of life.

In fact, this month within the School of Self-Image, the women have been given a style challenge. And the whole purpose of this challenge is for them to be more creative, to play with their clothing, to be willing to fail at it.

And when it comes to style, I think about what is a style failure, and it's only something that doesn't feel right for you. Who am I to say what is stylish and what isn't for you? But I know for me personally what a style failure looks like. But it's been so much fun to watch these women play with their clothing and to put outfits and ideas together with the wardrobe that they already have knowing that they're going to build confidence from doing that.

And yet, so many of us don't even give ourselves permission to try new things, to put polka dots and florals together. Why? Because we're so afraid of what other people will think. We're so afraid that it won't work. We're so afraid that people may laugh at us. And so, what we do is we rob ourselves of the experiences that will actually help us build our confidence.

Another category I was thinking of is financial failures. And let me assure you, I've had plenty of those, y'all. But you know what? I'm so grateful for them because they taught me how to think about money differently. They taught me how to spend more wisely. I would not have learned those lessons had I not been willing to fail.

For example, when I first learned about investing in stock, I thought I was like a stock analyst. And so, I went in and invested about \$25,000 in this stock that I just thought was going to take off. And it didn't. It tanked. And I lost almost all of my investment. But the lesson I learned

Embracing Failure

from that has now helped me make money within the stock market; money that I wouldn't be making without having learned that lesson.

I even think about investments in my business that, when I made them, I thought they were going to have a big ROI. Turns out they didn't. But it taught me how to hire better. It taught me how to be more savvy. And for that reason, I'm so grateful for it.

Let's talk about weight loss failures. Because that is a failure that I'm very, very familiar with. But what I tell my women who are wanting to lose weight is you have to be willing to fail at it over and over and over again to finally get to the result that you want. But how many of you step on a scale and you see it reads five pounds more than it did two days before and you use that as evidence against yourself? You turn that failure into something to beat yourself up over, versus realizing that is part of the journey.

The number of times I attempted to lose weight, only to fail, I can't even begin to count. But what I didn't do is give up on my goal, on my dream of being just a naturally slim woman that didn't obsess about food. And I knew there was an answer out there. And so, I kept showing up for it. I kept learning about myself. I studied myself, why I ate, why I overate, why I tried to deprive myself.

And in that showing up again and again and again, I finally figured it out. And now, I get to teach it to women in my groups and my programs and nothing delights me more than to share what I've learned about weight loss with women. But the reason why I'm able to share that is because I was willing to fail at it over and over again until I figured it out.

Let's talk about business failures. I've had my share of those too. And for those of you who are entrepreneurs and you're building your business, what I want you to understand is that any big dream is going to require that you're willing to fail. But that's how you learn. That's how you get better. That's how you adjust. That's how you grow. And that's how you build your confidence. Because you realize that even when you fail, you can have your own back and you refuse to give up on yourself and you build that belief in yourself that, no matter what, you're going to do whatever it takes to get the result that you want.

I remember when I first started my business. Back then, we didn't have all of the fancy technology that we have now. And so, I was doing – what are they called – teleseminars, where it was all on the phone. And I remember my first live teleseminar. I think I had like 20 women that showed up. And I – my voice shook the whole time. If I were to go back and listen to that recording, I would probably classify it as a major failure because I was so nervous. I could barely speak. I couldn't even put my thoughts together.

But you know what? I showed up for it. and I showed up for another one, and another one, and another one, until it just became normal. It's just what I did. I finally became successful at talking in front of groups of people about the topics and the tools that I loved so much. But I

Embracing Failure

had to be willing to fail that first time, that second time, that third time in order to get better at it.

Now, let's talk about launches. It seems like every time I launch something, something goes wonky. Usually, it's a tech issue. And I was starting to think, "Something is wrong." Even though we were preparing, we were testing. I was like, "Why do we keep having these failures when we launch?"

And I talked to my mastermind group and they were like, "Girl, that is just part of building a business. Why don't you just accept that it's going to happen and that you are going to deal with it when it happens?" But I have to be willing to accept that and embrace that that is a possibility in order to give me the courage to go out there and do it.

In fact, it's so funny, I was just teaching a class on confidence within the School of Self-Image. And right before I went live, I decided to be super-smart and update my Zoom. And so, I thought I had all the latest software. I go live. And I go to share my slides and Zoom says, "Oh, you have to quit this meeting in order to share your slides." It was some kind of update that they needed to do.

And so, there I was teaching about confidence and being willing to fail and failing publicly in front of my community. Of course, it was a really easy fix. I signed off, came back on. But what I told them, I'm like, this is a part of being successful. You're going to have tech failures. You're going to have people that get upset with you. You're going to put something out there that no one responds to, or very few people respond to. You're going to sit down to write a book and it's not going to feel all unicorns and daisies. You're not going to like it. But you have to keep showing up and being willing to fail in order to get the result that you want.

Let's talk about relationship failures. You could say that I've had quite a few. I've been divorced twice. I just ended a long-term relationship. By most people's standards, those are failures. But you know what? I consider them to be huge successes because of what I learned about myself, what it taught me, who I became in those relationships, the gifts that those people gave me, the gifts that I gave them.

And that leads me to my final point here. The way that I've learned to embrace failure is to think of everything that I show up for as a success. Because you know what? There are people that are just sitting on the sidelines of life afraid to fail. And so, they're not doing anything. They're spinning in indecision. They're not taking any risk. And as a result, their life never changes.

But when you're on the playground of life and you're falling down, you're bruising your knees, you're getting back up, you're playing again, you're getting better, you're getting stronger, to me that is a success. Just because you don't get the outcome you want the first time you try or the

Embracing Failure

second time or the third time, doesn't mean it's a failure. It just means that you're in the process of becoming successful.

When I think about great companies, every single one of them have encountered major failures to get them to that point. The same goes in your life. Every great life has consisted of a lot of failures and a lot of lessons learned in order to help them create that extraordinary life for themselves. And yet, so many of you are trying to bypass the failing part and just skip onto the extraordinary life. It doesn't work that way.

Again, you have to be willing to fail over and over and over again and learn and grow and get stringer, become wiser, become more confident. And as you do, you will eventually get to that result that you're after, but you will never get there unless you're willing to embrace failure.

The other thing that I've noticed in my life is that the bigger the risk, the bigger the potential failure. But also, the bigger the potential reward. For example, in October, I decided to open up the School of Self-Image. There were no guarantees, you all.

No one came from the heavens and told me that it was going to work out. And I've learned a lot in the last three months. I've had some failures in this process. But I'm embracing it. I'm like, "Bring it. I was made for this. And I'm learning. And I'm growing. And I am committed to making this the best school out there when it comes to helping a woman elevate her self-image, how she sees herself. Because that's creating her entire life."

But I could not do that if I was not willing to fail. I took the risk of losing everything. I have been building a brand for, gosh, over eight years, one that was actually going really well. But my gut told me that it was time for a change. I wanted to build something new, something else. And I'm learning so much. And I am grateful for all of it.

And I intend to keep showing up and failing and showing up and failing, showing up and failing again until I have created a school that I have in my vision. And it's coming together and it's so exciting. But I couldn't do it if I wasn't willing to fail and if I wasn't willing to take the risk.

And the reason I'm able to do this is that I know that no matter what happens, I have my own back. I remind myself every single day, I am okay no matter what. I will figure it out. And that kind of mindset, that kind of thinking allows me to take the risk and to potentially fail because I know that the worst thing that can happen is that I have myself to back me up. And I will figure something else out. And that is a mindset. That is something each of you can cultivate within yourself.

I want you to think about what would your life be like, what would you do, create, and experience if you were willing to embrace failure? Really think about that. What are you being called to create that you're so afraid you're going to fail at it that you don't even give yourself the chance?

Embracing Failure

You're failing by default. And as a result, you don't get to experience the rewards that could be on the other side if you had the courage to go out there and try, try something new, take that risk, take that next step to your dream. And if it doesn't work out, just know that that's part of the process. Let it teach you. Let it guide your next steps. But don't give up on yourself. Don't give up on your dreams.

I think a lot of times, when things don't go the way we expect and we don't get the outcomes that we want, we make that mean that it's not for us, that something's wrong with us. And what I'm here to tell you is that's actually the path.

There's a beautiful book out there called *The Obstacle is the Way*. And it talks about this. when you hit an obstacle, it's not there to stop you. It's there to grow you. Embrace the obstacles. Embrace the failures and keep moving forward because here's the thing; you get to define your failures. And I choose to define them as successes. Why? Because they're growing me. I'm learning. I'm getting better. I'm getting stronger. They're guiding my next steps.

So, when I think about failures as successes, it's something that I want to embrace. And so, I'm going to encourage you to double down on your failures. Fail often. Fail quickly. Get back up. Try something new. Keep at it. Don't give up on your dreams. Don't give up on your goals. Go out there and collect some failures.

What if you were willing to fail and you were like, "Okay, this week I'm going to get 10 failures." Imagine who you would become. Imagine what you would earn, how it would grow you. And imagine the success that is awaiting you when you are willing to approach your dreams and goals with the willingness to fail. That's when you become unstoppable. That's when you create results. But until you're willing to fail, you're going to sit there afraid, taking very little action, and playing so small in your life.

I want you to treat life like a playground, knowing that yes, you could fall. You could sprain an ankle. You could bruise your knees. The other kids may laugh at you. But you know what? You're the one playing. And playing is fun. And that's how I like to look at failures. They're fun because of who I'm becoming because of them.

You know what? The woman who isn't afraid to fail is the woman who will eventually rise. So, don't be afraid to fail. Be afraid of sitting on the sidelines of your life. Have a beautiful week, everyone. I love you. I'll see you in the next episode.

Hey, are you ready to transform your self-image but lack direction and support? If so, I'd like to invite you to join the School of Self-Image. This is an exclusive monthly membership where you'll create your own powerful before and after story. Through weekly classes and coaching, you'll learn powerful techniques on how to elevate the quality of your mindset, style, and surroundings to change how you see yourself and create extraordinary results in your life. Head over to schoolofselfimage.com/join to learn more.