

VIDEO TRANSCRIPT



EPISODE 226

The Power of Personal Branding

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The Power of Personal Branding

No matter if you're a stay-at-home mom, or a grandmother, or an executive at a company, or a teacher, or a nurse, you have a personal brand. The question is, are you creating your brand on purpose? And that is 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, friends. Welcome back to another episode. I feel like I'm in a snow globe right now. I'm in my apartment and there's a snowstorm outside my windows. It's so beautiful. But I'm really excited because I just finished creating all of the content for next month within the School of Self-Image. By the way, the doors close today, so if you want to join us, head over to schoolofselfimage.com/join.

But next month is all about creating your personal brand. And I'm going to be leading all of the members through how I've created my own personal brand and how they can create theirs. In fact, I'm going to have them create a brand guide to guide them in their daily life in creating themselves on purpose. It's what self-image is all about; you deciding how you want to see yourself.

Because how you see yourself is creating your entire life, so why not define yourself on purpose. You get to decide who you are and you get to decide what your personal brand is. So, I want to share with you the impact of personal branding on my life and why I believe it's important for every woman to create her own personal brand.

Now, you may be listening to this and thinking, "Tonya, I don't need a brand. I don't have a business." But the truth is, you have a brand. The question is, are you creating it on purpose?

So, what is a brand? Well, a brand is the way an individual is perceived by those who experience her. In business, your brand is your promise to your customer. In personal branding, I believe your brand is the promise to yourself.

With branding, you focus on the set of emotions that you want people to perceive when they are around you. Branding is a very creative process. And when it comes to personal branding, what I've noticed is that it requires that you get to know yourself. You get to know your desires and you begin to build your identity around those things.

So, I want to share with you why I think that personal branding is so important in a woman's life. The first thing that I've noticed is that it brings more ease into your life. And the reason it brings more ease is because when you know who you are and what you value and what you stand for and what you want to express, it makes decision-making so much easier. Everything from the clothes you buy to where you travel.

The Power of Personal Branding

So, for example, when I think about my own personal brand, there are many words that come to mind. And I actually have them all written down, but sophisticated and elegant and feminine are three of my personal branding words. So, when I moved into my apartment last year and I had to decorate it, having those three words to guide my decisions and what I wanted to purchase made it so much easier to just sift through all of the options and really choose items that represent who I am and who I'm choosing to be.

Equally, when I go shopping, I know what I want to express as a woman. So, if the attendant offers me some ripped up blue jeans, I know that's not a part of my brand. That is not what I personally want to express. Not that there's anything wrong with it. It's just not my style.

And so, by knowing my personal brand when I go shopping, I know exactly the feel of what I'm looking for. I know the kinds of items that belong in my wardrobe. Again, it makes decisions so much easier.

Even when it comes down to what kind of music you listen to or how you spend your time. Knowing your personal brand will guide those decisions and the better you know yourself, the easier these decisions become and the more ease you have in your life.

Another reason why I believe personal branding to be so important is that it teaches others how to perceive you, how to think of you. Now, we can't control what people think. But we have more control than we may realize.

For example, if you think of Kim Kardashian, everyone has a certain way of seeing her. And that is very intentional. The same goes for Oprah or Martha Stewart. These are women who have built their brands on purpose. And you can like it, or you can hate it. But what I can tell you is that it's very intentional.

They are teaching people how to see them, how to think about them. And we're no different. Even if you're a stay-at-home mom or you work in the corporate world or you're a schoolteacher or you're a nurse, you have a brand and you can manage your reputation and how people see you when you get clear on the message that you want to convey.

I'll never forget when my daughter was probably around eight or nine, she came home, and she gave me a Mother's Day card that she had made at school. And I realized in that moment how I had branded myself in my daughter's eyes. This card was so cute. It was me sitting at a table with like a long flowy dress on. And beside me was a mound of grapes and cheese and it was me holding a glass of wine.

That was my branding. And it's how my daughter saw me, a woman who enjoys good food and wine, who loves to dress up. And at that moment, I realized that I had been teaching my daughter how to see me without even realizing it. And that's when I realized the power of our personal branding. We even teach our children how to think of us and how to see us.

The Power of Personal Branding

My eight-year-old daughter was proof of that. She literally drew a picture of how she saw her mother. And I happened to like it because that's how I want her to think of me. I want her to think of me as a woman who enjoys life, who celebrates life, who loves to dress up and take care of herself.

And because I have been intentionally building my brand, she continues to see me that way. And I'm sure it's evolved a lot. She just doesn't think of her mom as someone who sits around and drinks wine and eats grapes. I'm sure, if she drew a picture today, it would be different. And hopefully it would represent the woman I've evolved into.

I'll never forget talking to one of my friends about five or six years ago. And she said, "I want to be the Olivia Pope of my industry." And she started to dress like Olivia Pope. Olivia Pope is the character from Scandal, in case any of you haven't watched that. But she started dressing more like Olivia Pope. She started carrying herself more in that confident feminine and sophisticated way.

And over time, fast forward six years later, when I look at her, that's how I perceive her. But what many people don't know, or maybe didn't know that that was her guide, that was her muse, is that her personal brand has been very intentional. She has created that on purpose. And as a result, it did change the way people perceived her.

And so, if you feel like you're not giving off the right message, if people are treating you a certain way and you don't like it, what I can tell you is that as you begin to develop your personal brand, which is going to require that you elevate your self-image to live that brand, you're going to notice that people start treating you differently. Because you can hear me say it on the podcast all the time, everything is about energy.

So, as your energy shifts, everyone around you, their energy is going to shift as well. We have more control over what people think than maybe we realize. So, that's another reason why I think personal branding is so important.

The other reason why I love personal branding is that it's a very creative process. Unfortunately, far too many women are spending their life energy, their time trying to fix themselves. And here's a newsflash you all, you're not broken. Believing you're broken is the problem.

But when you start to think about branding yourself, you begin to think forward. You begin to think into your future. You begin to think about who you want to be and create yourself versus wasting time trying to fix yourself. Because when you're in that energy of fixing yourself, have you noticed, you never seem to be fixed. Why? Because you aren't the problem. Your brain is.

The Power of Personal Branding

Your brain is telling you that you're broken and no matter what you do, you're not healing the core issue, which is the belief that there's something wrong with you. I want to challenge all the women that come and work with me that there's nothing at all wrong with you.

Now, from that place, who do you want to be? How do you want to create yourself? What does the next version of yourself look like? And personal branding will be your guide to becoming that woman. It is so much fun when you really sit down and you spend time thinking about your values and how you want to be known and your legacy and what colors represent you and all the stuff that goes along with personal branding.

It's such a beautiful, beautiful journey of truly just getting to know yourself, your truest self because I think whatever you choose as your personal brand is the woman that you came here to be. And so, the process is about being clear on that and then creating that version of you.

The other thing I like about personal branding is it's all about the story. And when you get clear on your personal brand, you begin to shape your stories to fit into your brand profile. So, for example, I'll just try to dig one up from my personal story archive.

But the facts of my childhood are that I grew up in a trailer and I grew up in a Pentecostal Holiness Church, in that religion. I grew up with parents who made not a lot of money. I don't even know the exact figure, but we were not probably even middle class. We were probably lower class. But even that is not a fact. That's just a label.

But when I think about my persona brand story, I would never tell that story in a way that disempowers me, that limits me. I would tell it in such a way of me being the heroine. Because if you think about company brands and their story, it's the story that inspires us and motivates us to want to be a part of it, and we have the same control over telling our stories in a way that serves us and fits into our personal brand, no matter what has happened in your past. You get to tell that story in a way that serves you.

Because as I tell clients, there's a difference between fact and fiction. A lot of you are walking around thinking that your fiction are the facts. But it's not because we could put three to five to 10 people in the exact same situation and they would have a different story about it.

So, with branding, it's all about the story. What is the story that you want to tell of your past? What is the story that you want to tell about your present? And what is the story that you are telling about your future? What is your mission? Where are you going with your life? And that's what branding is all about.

And so, when you start to be intentional with your brand, it requires that you're also very intentional about the stories that you tell about yourself, your past, your present, and your future.

The Power of Personal Branding

The final thing I want to say about personal branding and why I think it's important is that it helps you stand out. You did not come here to be like everyone else. You did not come here to fit in. I believe we are all here to be extraordinary and to live our own unique version of our good life, whatever that means to each of us. And you will never do that if you are trying to fit in and be like everyone else.

If you look at all of the great brands, there's something unique about them. Like when you think about Apple, what comes to mind? When you think about Disney, what do you feel? What do you think? What about Kate Spade or Tiffany's? These are all brands who have been very intentional with who they want to market to, how they want to be known, how they want to be seen, and we as human beings are no different.

And here's what I've come to learn, my friends. You can either create your brand, or other people are going to create it for you. Which one feels better to you? I have purposefully created my personal brand. And many of you see it in my business because I am my business. I create the content. I create the vision. I create where we're going. I am the creator of all of it and I have an amazing team, but it comes from me. So, what you see is a reflection of my personal brand.

And so, when we see that some of our top search keywords are words like elegance or life coach or luxury, it's no surprise. It's been very intentional. Why? Because I want to be an elegant woman. I enjoy luxurious things. I love the world of personal development. I also love the word of style.

And so, again, it doesn't surprise me when people see me that way because that was a conscious choice. And I began to build my life, my thinking, my wardrobe, my friends, everything around that. And that is why personal branding is so important. It allows you to create yourself and therefore your life on purpose and with great intention.

And it is worth the time to get to know yourself on that level and to express yourself on purpose, which is why I am so excited to be leading these women within the School of Self-Image through the personal branding process.

Again, that is going to be our focus this month, so if you want to come and join us in the membership and get clear on your personal brand, head over to schoolofselfimage.com/join. I cannot wait to see you inside. I'm going to be going way deeper into this and sharing more about my own personal branding process.

But again, I believe this is some of the greatest work you can do. And here's why. It is an invitation to get to know yourself, what you love, what lights you up, what emotions you want to create in your life, how you want to be known. And then, the work is to begin to make the decisions in your everyday life around those choices.

The Power of Personal Branding

Have a gorgeous week, my friends, and I hope to see you within the School of Self-Image membership. I'll talk to you all soon. Cheers.

Hey, have you grabbed your free copy of the School of Self-Image Manifesto? If not, what in the world? Head over to schoolofselfimage.com/manifesto and get a copy that teaches you how to think and show up in the areas of mindset, style, and surroundings so that you can transform your self-image.