EPISODE 236

How to Create a
Goal Friendly Environment

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How to Create a Goal Friendly Environment

Benjamin Hardy said, "Your environment will either push you or pull you towards your goal." In this episode, we are going to discuss how to create goal friendly environments, so let's dive in.

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

What is happening, my friends? I am so glad that you are here listening to this episode. And I just want to say, if you're new around here, welcome. And if you're one of those who have been with me for many, many years, I love you. Thank you for being on this journey with me.

So, I am recording this from my hotel room in Puerto Rico. The view is stunning. I love the Caribbean. It's so fun. There's something about island life where things literally slow down. We're like forced to go at a different pace because people here just aren't in a rush. I find it very frustrating at times and also so liberating, all at the same time.

But I came here for several different reasons. First of all, I've never been to Puerto Rico. I've been to many different Caribbean islands, but I've never been here. And what in the world? Why didn't anyone tell me I should come here? The food, the people, the culture, the music, there's such a pulse to Puerto Rico that's intoxicating.

I also came here because I met up with one of my mentors. And it's been quite an eye-opening experience. So, he lives on the property of the Ritz Carlton. It's called Dorado. It's where a lot of really wealthy people live and many, many entrepreneurs.

And spending time in his space, spending time on that property, spending time around other entrepreneurs who are like-minded – who I like to describe them as having big energy. It's like energy that allows for more of life – has changed me. I keep saying, this past year has been my biggest growth year in the history of Tonya Leigh. And when I say growth, I mean my own personal growth, just shedding so much of what has held me back and evolving to the next level of myself over and over and over again.

But being here around these entrepreneurs who think at such a bigger level, who are living, again, big lives, it's made me realize the importance of our environment. Within the School of Self-Image, we talk about three areas of our lives that shape our self-image. And if you've been listening to this podcast for any amount of time, you know that your self-image shapes your whole life.

How you think about yourself, how you see yourself is determining what you create in your life. And the three areas that we focus on that shape a woman's self-image, and a man's as well, but I tend to work only with women, so I'm focused on women here. But if you're a man listening to this, this applies to you as well.

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But the three areas are your mindset, your style, and your style is how you communicate, how you show up in the world, and then also your surroundings, everything that's around you forms your self-image.

Now, what I tell clients is, at the end of the day, your thoughts are what shape your self-image, what you think about you, how you see yourself. But I also know from my own experience that when you place yourself in certain environments, it can either produce a positive thought about yourself or a negative thought about yourself and what you're capable of.

Now, I need to repeat this. It is always your thoughts creating how you feel. And that is driving what you do or don't do, which ultimately creates your results. But I tell people, why not place ourselves in environments where it's so much easier to think positive thoughts?

Just because I know that I can think whatever I want to think, doesn't mean I'm going to place myself in places where it's harder for me to do so. It's why I choose to be around certain people and I choose not to be around certain people.

Now, those people are just triggering thoughts in my brain. But I want to be around people where I'm triggered to think positive, life-giving, exciting thoughts about myself and my future and what's possible, versus being around people where I'm having to constantly work on my own brain. It's just where I choose to spend my energy.

So, when I was here, I had the chance to meet up with someone who is very big in the personal development space. And I'm not going to say his name. But all of you would probably recognize him.

I was invited to his house and I got to be in his energy. And it was intoxicating. I loved every second of it, just being in his environment and having the conversations that we had changed me. It changed what I thought of in terms of possibility. He even challenged me to think much bigger than what I'm currently thinking.

I already think at a big level, but I feel like I'm just getting started too. It's crazy. There's so much more to experience, which means I'm going to have to think bigger than I've ever thought. I'm going to have to change my self-image.

But one of the things that he said was that by being in this place, in this environment in Puerto Rico, surrounded by these incredible entrepreneurs, he has 10Xd what he is capable of. The return on investment for being in this environment is 10X and this guy is already killing it. Like, he's heading towards being a billionaire.

And it really got me to thinking about one of the core tenets of the School of Self-Image, which is the power of your surroundings. As you elevate your surroundings, you're forced to see yourself differently.

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It's just like when I went to Monaco for the first time. Little me growing up in a trailer not being around wealth and riches, all of a sudden being in the playground of the wealthy, I started to think different about money and what's possible. Being in that environment changed me.

Now, could I have had those same changes by staying in a familiar environment? Yeah, you can. And I've done that many times as well. But what I can tell you is it's so much harder. So, I'm sharing all of this with you because at the end of the day, I feel like all of us are here to evolve and to grow. And we have goals that we want to achieve.

For some of you right now, it might be weight loss. For some of you, it might be more travel. For some of you, it might be moving to a new city. For some of you, your goal might be, I don't know, getting out of debt, making more money.

Whatever it is, I want you to know that if you want to reach your goals faster, it is going to require that you elevate your environment. Now, this is something we talk a lot about within the School of Self-Image, in depth. I'm a big proponent in that if you want to elevate your self-image, which you're going to need to do to achieve your goals, you must also elevate your environment.

But for the purpose of this podcast, I just want to give you something to think about and something to maybe go out and do to create a goal friendly environment. So, what is a goal friendly environment? I like to think of it as an environment that makes it easy to reach your goals.

And I want to talk about this by breaking it down into three things I want you to pay attention to. So, within the School of Self-Image, one of the first things that I have every woman do is pick an extraordinary goal for the year. It's so fun. I lead you through a process and you choose your extraordinary goal.

And the whole year is spent becoming the woman who has achieved that goal. Because when you become her, you achieve the goal. It's just the way the brain is wired. If you imagine something long enough, if you feel the energy of it long enough and you show up as the woman who has achieved it, you will ultimately create your goal.

But once we choose the extraordinary goal, we look at the three areas that we focus on within the school, which is your mindset, your style, and your environment. So, how you're thinking, how you're showing up in the world, and then what surrounds you, your surroundings.

So, when it comes to creating a goal friendly environment, I have found focusing on these three things makes it easier to achieve your goals. So, the first one is cues; having a cue in your environment that reminds you of what it is that you are trying to achieve.

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So, an example I like to give often is, I don't know, I think it was a couple of years ago, I wanted to get into better shape. I wanted to be healthier. And so, one of the things that I figured I needed to do was be more consistent in taking my supplements. The doctor told me I need to take certain supplements and I just would keep forgetting.

I had great intentions. I wanted to take the supplements. But it just sort of was something that I just forgot day after day. I was like, "Shoot, I forgot to take my supplements again today." You all know what I'm talking about.

And so, what I ended up doing was putting my supplements out the night before. I would take them out of the bottle, place them on the kitchen counter, the exact portions that I needed, the exact dosages so that when I woke up in the morning, it was right there for me to see. It was an environmental cue of what it was that I wanted to do.

I've also been known to put my workout clothes out in front of my bed so when I wake up in the morning, I see them. It's an environmental cue of, "Hey, you promised yourself you're going to work out today. So, here you go. Here's your clothes. Here's a reminder."

I've also found that setting reminders on my phone have been extremely helpful. No matter what it is that you're trying to achieve, I want you to think about how can I set up environmental cues to remind me of what I want? To remind me of my goal?

Because life happens and life can be busy and chaotic. And we start out our days, most often, with the best of intentions, and time after time women tell me, "I don't know what happens, but around three or four o'clock, I forgot what it was I wanted to achieve today. It's been put on the back burner. It's no longer at the forefront. I forgot."

But that's not a good enough excuse. I want you to set your environment up to win. And one of the ways that you can do this is to create environmental cues.

The second thing in your environment that I want you to pay attention to, to create a goal-friendly environment are your intellectual consumptions. These are the things you're consuming with your brain.

So, whenever I have any kind of goal, I like to think about what do I need to be consuming intellectually to, number one, maybe it's to educate me, or number two, it's to put me in the energy of the goal itself. So, I think about the version of me that's created the goal. And what is the energy that she's in?

So, how can I set up what I'm consuming intellectually to put me in that energy, or to give me the wisdom that I need in order to create it? So, here's an example. I think it was two years ago. Maybe it was three years ago. I don't know. I'm terrible with time. But I chose CEO as my word

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of the year. I wanted to become an incredible CEO. And y'all, I'm still working on it. But still, that year, I really focused on being a great CEO.

And so, one of the things that I did was I started to consume information about what it means to be a great leader, how great CEOs lead their company, creating company cultures. All of the things that I felt like I needed in order to be a great CEO.

Now, if you listen to last week's podcast, I talk about consumption versus creation. So, it wasn't just enough for me to consume that information. I also put it into practice. But by consuming that information, what I was really doing was putting myself in the energy of being a great CEO.

There have been years where my goal revolved around luxury and building wealth. And so, I would consume information about financial literacy, what it means to be a wealthy woman, which I love teaching. In fact, there's a course when you become an annual member of the School of Self-Image that's all about the wealthy woman. And it's taking all that I've learned and teaching it so that every woman can create a self-image of being a wealthy woman.

But I was able to create that course because I consumed information about it and I practiced it in my life. I put myself in the energy of my goal. I created environments that allowed my goal to come to fruition. But also, the intellectual consumption can be like, "What are you watching on TV? What are you listening to? What kind of music?"

For example, if you want to have a luxurious life, what kind of music does that version of you listen to? Set your environment up to produce the energy and the feeling state of your goal. I cannot tell y'all how powerful this is.

So, pay attention to your intellectual consumption. Also pay attention to the things around you. Here's a question for you all. Think about the goal that you have for yourself. And then go to the version of you that's already achieved that goal and look at her surroundings, the things that are around her, and compare it to your surroundings today.

And then the work is to upgrade your surroundings to be more like hers. Because by doing so, you're going to be creating a goal friendly environment that allows that goal to come to fruition.

So, last year – and I may have shared this on the podcast. I can't remember. I share so much on this podcast. But I know I've shared this with my clients, the members of the School of Self-Image. But last year, I moved into a penthouse. So beautiful. It overlooks downtown Denver, like the skyline of the city. It's stunning.

And a lot of the work that I did when I moved into that apartment, because it had never been lived in, it was brand new, it was empty. And I visualized the version of me that had created my extraordinary goal. And I started to imagine what her surroundings look like. And for me, it

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was elegant and simple, refined, sophisticated, and I started to build my surroundings based on that vision. I started to put things in my surroundings that matched my future vision.

And when I say this past year has been the best year of my life, I'm not kidding. It has blown my mind. And it's because of the work that I'm doing around my own self-image. And a huge part of that is exactly what I'm talking about today; upgrading my environment. Elevating my surroundings to be more of a match for the future that I want for myself.

And I'm seeing this in my clients, you all. It's crazy, the results that they're getting by these little daily upgrades to their environment that makes it so much easier for them to reach their goals.

So, for example, if you're someone that wants to lose weight, I just want you to imagine the refrigerator of the version of you that's lost weight. Is it cluttered? Is it full of garbage? Do you have like four-week-old leftovers stuffed in the back? Or is it clean and neat and full of nutritious, life-giving foods?

Maybe that version of you preps her foods on Sunday and they're in beautiful glass containers so when you open up the fridge, you see right there what your body wants to eat, because you've decided ahead of time. That version of you is very different from the version of you today. And her surroundings are also very different.

So, here's the beautiful thing. You can begin to elevate your surroundings right now to be more of a match for your goal. And it's going to change how you think. It's going to change how you see yourself, which is going to make it so much easier to lose the weight and to keep it off. So, that's the third one.

And I realize there's a fourth one. I know I said there are only three things to pay attention to in your surroundings, but there's four. And the fourth one is big. But just to do a recap, the first one is creating environmental cues. To remind you of what your goal is, to remind you of the actions that you've decided ahead of time that you want to take today to bring you closer to your goals.

The second one is the intellectual consumptions that you take in, whether it's to put you in the energy of your goal or to give you more knowledge that's going to help you reach your goal.

The third thing are the things, the literal objects that surround you. Think about your desk. If you're an entrepreneur and you work from home, the version of you that's killing it in her business, that is a boss, that's making things happen, that's making money, that's running things smoothly, what does her desk look like compared to your desk now?

Begin to get rid of things that detract you from your goal and begin to bring in things that make it easier to reach your goal. It might be a candle. It might be nothing at all but your computer.

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Maybe you like simplicity. But I want you to think about that. Imagine the version of you that has achieved your goal. What do her surroundings look like? You need to become a match for it now.

And then the final one is the most important one, by far. Part of your environment, part of your surroundings are the people that you spend the most time with. And study after study has shown that we literally become the habits, the beliefs, the actions, the image of those people that surround us.

If you're around people that complain all of the time, if you're around people that are glass-half-empty kinds of people, if you're around people that are broke, always talking about how they don't have enough money, or people that struggle with their weight, chances are you're going to take on a lot of those same beliefs. And as a result, you're going to show up like them. You're going to act like them. And you're going to create results like them.

I think about me. I grew up in the Deep South. And a large majority of the people that I saw were overweight. We ate a lot of fried foods, fried chicken, fried cornbread, fried okra. I still enjoy all of those things by the way, but it was a way of being, it was a lifestyle. Going out and exercising, eating organic, nutritious foods, it just wasn't a part of the culture.

And so, it wasn't surprising when I started to struggle with my weight. I had been surrounded by that for so long that I just took on that same identity for myself. Equally, when I started to hang around people who valued health, who worked out, who enjoyed eating well, when I went to France for the first time and I saw how they had a very different relationship with food and I started to immerse myself in that culture and understand it, I began to change as a result, just by changing the people in my environment.

Now, this isn't to say that you should get rid of everyone in your environment. There are people, I'm sure, in your life that you love. Maybe it's a family member. Maybe it's a close friend. And their energy doesn't exactly match the future that you want. But you love them. And you want to be a part of their life. I get it. I've been there.

I have people in my life today that I absolutely love and don't intend to ever not have them in my life. And at the same time, I have brought in people into my life who make it so much easier for me to reach my goals. And that's who I spend the majority of my time with.

Because listen, this is my one life. This is your one life. I do not want to spend it around people that's going to make it harder for me to live fully, to live out the best version of me, to reach my goals. So, I purposefully choose to be around people who create an environment where it's almost impossible not to reach my goals because of the way that they think, the way that they live, just their essence, their being.

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And you know what? I want to be that person for you all. I want to be that person for the people in my life. I want to be that person that people say, "I want her in my environment because when she's around, I feel unstoppable. When she's around, I change the way I think. My world opens up. I have so many more possibilities."

And that's what women say in my membership. They're like, "Just being in the energy of Tonya changes me." And I can tell you all, the reason why I am the way I am is because I choose the people in my life on purpose.

My life is so important to me. I don't want to spend it with people that take away from my own life force. Now, as I was saying earlier, there are some people in my life who have very different beliefs than I do and that I love tremendously. But I also know, a lot of the time when I'm around them, I have to work really hard on my own brain so that I don't start matching their energy.

And listen, it's not that they're wrong and I'm right. We've just chosen two very different ways of being in the world and we have different desires and wants. And that's okay. But at the end of the day, the people that I spend the most time around have helped shape me into who I am today.

So, with all of this said, I want you to understand that your environment influences you greatly and it can determine how successful you are in reaching your goals. If you don't leave reminder and cues of your goals for yourself, you're going to lose focus. You're going to get easily distracted.

If you place yourself in surroundings that don't paint the picture of what it is that you want and who you need to be in order to reach your goal, it's going to be way more difficult. If you're consuming things that are in opposition of your goal, whether it be books or podcasts like thus, or music, it's going to be way more difficult to reach your goal. And lastly, understanding that the people in our lives have a huge impact on our ability to reach our goals.

Place people in your surroundings that make it effortless, that make it fun, that make it easy. And when you focus on elevating these four areas, the cues in your environment, what you consume intellectually, the things in your surroundings and the people you spend time with, you're going to notice that you have created a goal friendly environment that doesn't require white-knuckling it, that doesn't require willpower.

But instead, that environment is shaping you in such a way that the way you show up is different, the actions that you take are different, the habits that you start to form become different just by changing your environment. Because here's the thing, you all. If you don't shape your environment, your environment will shape you. So, shape it on purpose. Shape it to be goal friendly. Where your goals are achieved without all the efforting. It happens because you've created an environment where it's almost impossible for you not to reach your goals.

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Have a beautiful week, everyone. And I cannot wait to see you in the next episode. 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.