

VIDEO TRANSCRIPT



EPISODE 241

The Power of Being Underestimated

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The Power of Being Underestimated

Did you hear? I am hosting another free self-image makeover workshop and I would absolutely love for you to be there. All you have to do is go to schoolofselfimage.com/makeover to get all of the details and join us. I cannot wait.

Now, for this episode, we are talking about the power of being underestimated. I saw a quote recently that said, “Underestimate me. That will be fun.” Are you ready to have some fun? 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.

Well hello, my friends. What is happening? Today, I want to talk about the power of being underestimated. I have been underestimated most of my life, and I know I’m not alone. Many of you have as well. Many of you have been told by your exes, maybe by your parents, maybe by your coworkers that you’re not capable, you’re not good enough, you are not worthy. And what I want to convince you of is that this is a gift.

So, as I was preparing for this podcast, I was thinking back over my life and why is it that most of my life I’ve been underestimated. Not so much now, because I’ve proven a lot of those people wrong, which is an amazing feeling, by the way.

But one of the things that came up for me is that my energy is soft. I’m not someone who shows up loud. I’m not someone who takes over the room. I’m a little quiet sometimes. I’m not necessarily an introvert. I think I’m a mixture of introvert and extrovert. I love being around people. I also love my alone time.

But I believe the softness of my energy causes people to underestimate me. And I don’t want to change that. I love my softness. I feel like soft things are unbreakable. Soft things are flexible. Soft things flow. And I believe in my softness is actually me strength. But when people meet me, they don’t necessarily know that.

They mistake my softness for a lack of confidence. They mistake my softness as a sign of weakness. And they could not be further from the truth. Actually, softness is one of my superpowers.

But the other thing is because I was raised in a humble home, I started out with humble beginnings, meaning I wasn’t born into money, I didn’t start out on the top. It seems like my whole life I’ve had to fight to prove people wrong about me. And I know some of you out there can relate to this.

But it’s been my superpower because I had really nothing to lose and everything to gain by proving people wrong. And I have to contribute a lot of this to my mother.

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So, my mom, when she was three years old, was diagnosed with polio. She underwent many, many surgeries, and to this day, she has a noticeable limp when she walks. And she wears a five and a half on one foot and an eight and a half shoe on the other. And so, as a young girl, they wanted to put her in the house to do domestic chores when all of her siblings were out in the field working.

So, my mom grew up as a share cropper. That's what her family did. And people underestimated my mom. They saw her polio as a disability. But my mom refused to see herself as disabled, ever. And so, as an adult, people doubted her, the things that he wanted to do. And I remember watching her as a child. When she had her mind set on doing something and people doubted her and sort of made fun of her, my mom had these two words that she always said.

And they were, "Watch me." And let me tell you, we did. We watched her. And there was nothing more delightful than watching my mom prove all of those people wrong and to build her own confidence in herself.

And so, watching her as a child was such a beautiful example of harnessing the power of being underestimated and overcoming it and coming out on top, to the point now – of course, my mom's older. She's in her 70s now. But she's proven to herself and to others for so many years that people know, when my mom says she's going to do something, it's as good as done.

When my mom has a goal, we already know it's already been reached in her head and therefore it is going to happen. But I believe that my mom was fueled by being underestimated. She refused to buy into other people's limitations and stories about who she was and what was possible for her.

And listen. We all have that same opportunity. This is something that I coach women around often. The people around them are underestimating them. And the problem occurs when we begin to underestimate ourselves as a result.

The problem occurs when we start to believe other people's limitations of us. The problem occurs when we choose to let other people's underestimation of us become our reality. But there is a better way. And that is to harness being underestimated and use it as fuel to prove yourself right and others wrong.

I'll never forget when I started my coaching business. I had so many people underestimate me. People said to me, "You're crazy. How could you leave a very secure nursing job to go pursue something that is very uncertain?" I had people tell me that it wasn't a viable industry. I had people tell me that I didn't know enough about business to be successful as an entrepreneur.

And I think now back to those statements and what would have happened had I listened to them, had I believed them. I wouldn't have had the courage and the confidence to go out there and take the steps and the actions that have led me to where I am today.

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So, basically, if you think about this in terms of self-image, had I listened to those people, my self-image would reflect exactly what they believed me to be. But I chose to prove them wrong. I chose to show up, take action, to believe in myself and to create results that now people – I’ve actually had some of those same people come to me and be like, “Wow, I’m so impressed with what you have created.”

And I want to tell them, “A lot of it was thanks to you.” And this is where our ego can actually serve us, my friends. Because my ego wanted to prove them wrong. But deeper, I wanted to prove to myself that I could do it.

Sometimes, it’s the people closest to us, the people who love us the most who underestimate us the most. And what I’ve come to understand about this is it’s because of their own limitations. It’s because of their own fears. And they project them onto us. And if we’re not careful, we’ll take them on as our own.

That’s why managing your mind is the number one tool to creating results in your life. Because when people offer me thoughts about what’s possible and what’s not possible, what I do is I ask myself, “Does this serve me? Does this thought serve me? Does it help me create the result I want?”

And if I don’t, then I just energetically and spiritually just hand it back to them. I’m like, “That’s their stuff. That’s not mine. That’s not mine to take.” Equally, sometimes we’re around people who are like, “That’s all you’re dreaming? Can’t we dream a little bigger?” Those are the people that I want to borrow beliefs from. So, we have to be very careful where we take our advice from. We have to be very careful about the beliefs that we take on as our own.

So, when people are underestimating you, I want you to be mindful not to take on those beliefs for yourself. If I’ve learned nothing else about human dynamics and relationships, it’s that everyone has an opinion about how you should live your life.

Everyone has an opinion about the goals you should set and what’s possible for you. And at the end of the day, you have to get to know yourself on such a deep level and have such a crystal clear vision of where you want to go that you know exactly what to tune out and what to bring into your life.

Because if not, when people underestimate you, you’re going to be easily swayed. You’re going to start to underestimate you. And I want you to flip that around to use being underestimated as your greatest power, as your fuel.

And I know some of you right now know exactly what I’m talking about. Every day, you’re underestimated. And you continue to believe people instead of proving them wrong, instead of going out there and collecting evidence and creating results where you can show up and people will be like, “Wow, I underestimated you. But no more.”

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And then, they'll want to learn from you. I've had so many instances where the very people who underestimated me are now coming to me for advice. And that's because I stayed true to myself. I knew what I wanted to create. And I work daily on cleaning up my mindset.

So, when people underestimate you, what's really happening is they don't believe in your capabilities. They don't believe in your dreams. And ultimately, they don't believe in you. That's just how it is. And in those moments. You have two choices. And those two choices are to prove them right or to prove them wrong. Or, said in another way, to believe them or to believe in yourself.

Now, cultivating that last statement, believing in yourself is a skill that will serve you your entire life. So, I want you to focus on proving them wrong, proving yourself right, and practice believing in yourself.

So, here are three things I want you to think about when it comes to being underestimated. The first one is I want you to focus on the results that you want to achieve. Decide what it is that you want to create.

And then the work is, number two, to believe hard in yourself. What does it mean to believe hard in yourself? It literally is waking up every single day and cleaning up your brain. Releasing the thoughts that tell you it's not possible. Releasing the thoughts that you're not good enough. Releasing the thoughts of it's going to take too long or you're going to fail; all of the thoughts that slow you down from taking action that is necessary to create the results that you want.

So, number one, focus on the results that you want to achieve. Number two, practice believing hard in yourself because that's going to be the fuel that drives you to take the actions that will create the results.

And then lastly, when it comes to being underestimated, I want you to consider the source. And this one has been huge for me. What I mean by this is that people who underestimate you most likely underestimate themselves.

We are always projecting onto others what we believe about ourselves and what's possible for ourselves. So, don't take on other people's limitations that they've placed on themselves. Consider the source. What I have noticed is that the people who underestimate me usually aren't living lives that I want to be living. They're not the kinds of people that I want to be. Why would I listen to them? Why would I consider their advice something that I want to use in my own life?

On the other hand, the people who believe in me, the people who don't place limitations on me, the people that don't underestimate me are often the ones who have lives that I admire. They're people who have qualities and characteristics about themselves that I want to cultivate more in me.

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So, when it comes to being underestimated, always consider the source. People who are judging you, who are thinking you can't do it, who are constantly the negative-nellies in your life, I want you to understand the energy in which they live. And if you listen to them, you're going to create the same energy in your own life.

Listen to the people who are on a completely energetic plane. Listen to the people who are creating the results that they want in their lives. Because they're going to be the people that believe in you, that don't underestimate you, who convince you that it is possible.

That's why I love the work that we do within the School of Self-Image. When I'm coaching a woman, I seriously refuse to believe and see her as anything less than extraordinary. And I know, whatever it is that she wants to create, it is possible for her. And so, I hold that vision for her and constantly ask her to step into it while also helping her to understand and be aware of her own blocks that are keeping her from stepping into the results that she wants to create in her life.

And this all comes down to self-image. You know, when I think about my self-image in terms of being underestimated, I think about my mom. I see myself as a woman who is like, "Hey, watch me. This will be fun."

I see myself as a woman who is constantly proving people wrong. I see myself as a woman who when she commits to something, she goes all in and she creates it. I see myself as a woman with a strong work ethic. I see myself as a confident woman. I see myself as a woman who knows how to create results in her life. And so, because I see myself as that, that's what I go out and create.

Everything in this world, you all, boils down to your self-image, how you see yourself. So, here is the question that I want to leave you with. When you are being underestimated, how do you want to see yourself? Pay attention to that answer because chances are, especially if you're someone who is constantly underestimated, you're going to have a chance to practice this really soon.

I want you to step into being that woman. How do you want to see yourself when you're being underestimated? Next time you're underestimated, you have a lovely opportunity to practice, my friend. Have a beautiful week and I cannot wait to see you in next week's episode.

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.