

VIDEO TRANSCRIPT



EPISODE 246

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# Keeping Your Promises

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## Keeping Your Promises

I'm going to give you the number one secret to having an extraordinary life. Are you ready? Keep the promises that you make to yourself. It really is that simple, and it's what we're talking about in today's episode.

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

Ola, my friends. I am in Puerto Rico. In fact, I am a Puerto Rican resident. How crazy is that? I never thought I'd be saying that at the beginning of 2021. But it just goes to show you how quickly life can change when you're willing to follow your gut, when you're willing to make big decisions, audacious decisions, and you're also willing to get it wrong.

One of the promises that I made myself is that, if I don't love it here in six months, I'll leave. And what I can tell you all is that, when six months comes and if I'm not in love with it here, I'm out. Because I like keeping promises to myself. Which is what this episode is all about.

This month, within the School of Self-Image membership, we are working on practicing being the new versions of ourselves. Many women are saying it's the best month yet. And one of the things that I have noticed that becomes a part of your practice as you are elevating your self-image is that you start keeping promises to yourself.

Nothing will erode your relationship with you more than constantly breaking promises to yourself. Which unfortunately so many of us women are doing. I did it for years, so I know what it's like. And it's really hard to be with yourself when you don't trust yourself. Which is what breaking promises leads to. It leads to a lack of trust with yourself.

Think about it this way. How do you feel about the friend who constantly promises that she's going to show up for lunch week after week? And week after week, you show up at the restaurant and she's not there. At a certain point, you stop showing up at the restaurant because you just believe she's not going to show up. She's always a no-show.

Well, think about how we do this to ourselves. How often do we promise ourselves things like, "I'm going to get in shape starting tomorrow. I'm going to quit my job next year. I'm going to..." fill in the blank of the thing that we promise ourselves we're going to do and we never do it.

Think about that part of ourselves that's like our best friend that we just keep letting down, we keep not showing up for. And before you know it, the friendship, the trust, all of that has been eroded. And it's really hard to live an extraordinary life if you don't trust yourself, if you don't have a good relationship with yourself. Which is why keeping promises to yourself is one of the most necessary skills that you need to practice in order to elevate your self-image.

I remember when I struggled with my weight, probably for two years. I would constantly promise myself that I would start tomorrow. It became such an ingrained habit.

## Keeping Your Promises

So, the way this looked for me is I would wake up in the morning and I would have a lot of willpower. Like, “I’m going to really do this whole diet thing. I’m going to really eat well today.” And then, by noon, my willpower was gone and I was looking for the chips, the cookies, anything to put in my mouth.

And then, because I knew I was going to do the same thing to myself that night, promise myself that I’m going to start tomorrow, I would engage in what I call The Last Supper. It’s as if my brain thought it was the last supper I would ever eat. And I would eat so much food. And then, the promise would come.

“Tonya, you’re going to do it tomorrow. I promise, you’re going to do better tomorrow.” This cycle, again, would repeat day after day for like two years. And I want you to see the deeper issue. More than just gaining weight.

The deeper issue was me having a relationship with myself where I didn’t trust myself, where I didn’t value myself. Because when you make promises to someone and you follow through on those promises, what you’re really saying is, “I value you enough to keep my word to you.”

When you make promises to someone and you don’t follow through, what you’re saying is, “I don’t value you or our friendship enough that I need to follow through on this.” So, day after day of breaking promises with yourself, you’re just confirming this belief that you’re not valuable enough to honor your own word to yourself.

So, when I became aware of what I was doing to myself and the kind of relationship I was creating with myself, I decided to take a different approach. And that approach was I was going to start keeping my promises to myself. Which meant I was going to no longer promise myself things that I knew deep down I was not going to follow through with, furthermore creating evidence that I’m someone who doesn’t follow through, I’m someone who breaks promises with herself.

I didn’t want to create that evidence any longer. I wanted to create evidence of, “I’m a woman who shows up for what she says she’s going to do, who keeps her promises to herself, who’s confident, who is strong, and who is creating forward momentum.” That is the story that I wanted to prove true about myself.

And so, I scaled back my promises and I tell my clients all of the time, I’m like, “Listen...” when we’re talking about scheduling, when we’re talking about weight loss, when we’re talking about anything, I tell them, “I’d rather you keep a small promise to yourself than to break a big promise to yourself.”

Because what we often do is we set ourselves up for failure. We’re like, “I promise tomorrow I’m going to go and workout three hours in the gym. I promise tomorrow I’m not going to

## Keeping Your Promises

overeate. I promise tomorrow, I'm going to clean out my whole house," knowing good and well when we say it that we're not going to do that.

We want to believe we're going to do it, and we could do it, but because we have been having the momentum go in such a different direction for so long, we've got to slow down that momentum and start pointing it in a different direction. Which is why I have found the most effective way to do this is to back off on the enormity of the promises that we make to ourselves.

Because remember, the real issue here is the mistrust. So, we have to build trust with ourselves again. So, I would rather you make a small promise to yourself that you're going to show up and keep and do that day after day. Be consistent with it so that you can begin to trust yourself again.

So, the example that I was talking about earlier with me and food, I remember, one of the promises that I made myself was that I was no longer going to beat myself up for it.

Now, this is huge if you think about it. Because I would overeat and then I would beat myself up for it, which would make me feel awful. Which guess what I'd want to do when I felt awful. I'd want to eat more.

And so, I started with that simple promise. Like, "Tonya, if you overeat, okay. We can deal with that. We'll figure out why. But we can't figure out why as long as you're beating yourself up." And so, I made a promise to myself, when I caught myself overeating, I would no longer beat myself up.

Now, believe it or not, that was a hard promise to keep. Because I had a cycle of beating myself up and I believed that by being hard on myself, it was going to make me change. But I had so much proof that that wasn't true. I was like, "Let me try this other approach. Let me try being kind to myself, curious with myself, fascinated with myself so that I can begin to change this behavior."

So, that was a promise that I made to myself. I've been keeping that promise to myself for over a decade. It is very rare for me to beat myself up any longer. Do I get frustrated with myself? Yes. Am I sometimes disappointed in myself? Yes. Just like I would be with a child. But at the end of the day, I never beat myself up. I love myself. I listen to myself. I trust myself. And all of that started because I kept the promise to myself that I would no longer beat myself up for overeating.

And here we are today, that one promise has impacted my life in such a huge, huge way. And it actually started out as a little promise to myself because I kept breaking the big promises. But keeping that little promise to myself is what helped me get over a weight issue. I started to trust myself again.

## Keeping Your Promises

And because I was being kind to myself, I was paying attention to myself. I was watching my own brain. I was watching my own patterns from a place of love and compassion. And so, yeah, keep your promises.

One of the things that I teach when I'm working with women around scheduling, their goals, overwhelm is be very careful about what you put on your calendar.

Many women just throw a lot of stuff on their calendar because they think being busy is cool. They think being busy is a badge of honor. And most of the time, they cannot do everything that they've put on that calendar, and they end up feeling disappointed in themselves. They end up feeling frustrated. They end up feeling overwhelmed, not understanding that they created all of it.

I would rather you put three things on your calendar every single day that you know you're going to show up for than 15 things that you hope you're going to get done. And then, when hope isn't enough and you don't get it done, you use that as a reason to feel bad about yourself and to beat yourself up.

I want you to see everything that you put on your calendar is a promise. It's either a promise to yourself for something you're going to do for you, or it's a promise to other people. Now, here's the really interesting thing, my friends. When it comes to the promises that we make to other people, almost all of the time notice how they get done.

When we tell our boss that we're going to have something on his desk by two o'clock, when we tell our children that we're going to be there for their recital, when we tell our friend that we're going to pick them up for lunch, when we tell our sister that we're going to keep her kids, notice how we almost always, always, always keep those promises to everyone else.

But when it comes to our promises to ourselves, the promises that will make us healthier, the promises that will make us richer, the promises that will make us happier, the promises that will make us feel more joyful, how we break those promises. It's crazy, right?

And why is that? Why are we so willing to keep promises to other people but break them with ourselves? When I ask clients why they do this, they'll often say, "Well I don't want to disappoint people. I want people to like me. I want people to trust me." And then I turn the camera around and I ask them to explore if they like being disappointed in themselves, if they enjoy not liking themselves, if they enjoy not trusting themselves.

Because ultimately, that's what happens. If you think other people aren't going to like you when you break your promises to them, how do you feel you're going to think about you? If you think other people are going to be disappointed, what about you disappointing yourself? If you think other people aren't going to trust you, what about you not trusting yourself?

## Keeping Your Promises

Because at the end of the day, my friends, we have to be with ourselves for the rest of our lives, 24/7. So, if we want to have an extraordinary life, it means we have to have an extraordinary relationship with ourselves, which means we have to be women who keep promises to ourselves.

I'm always using our future selves as our guide. When I think about our self-image and elevating our self-image, I'm always thinking about coming from that image of ourselves and showing up and being that version of ourselves now.

And one thing I can tell every single one of you is that that future version of you, she would be more willing to break a promise to others than she would herself. Why? Because she values herself that much. She loves herself. She believed in herself. She has a great relationship with herself. And that kind of relationship only can happen in an environment of trust.

And the only way you can build trust with yourself is to stop breaking promises to yourself and to start keeping them. So, be mindful of the promises you make. Don't make promises so big that you're almost guaranteed to break them, therefore just feeding the story that you have about yourself about how you never follow through, how you never finish anything, how you are constantly sabotaging yourself and you're disappointing yourself.

Stop making these big promises. Let's start healing that relationship with yourself by making smaller promises that you will commit to showing up for. And the more you do that, the bigger your promises will get. And the bigger your promises get and the more you follow through on them, the bigger your life gets.

That is the power of keeping promises to yourself. So, what promise are you going to keep to yourself just this week? I'd love for you to share it with me. You can go to my Instagram @tonyaleigh, send me a message, and let me know, what promise are you going to keep to yourself this week? Cheers, everyone. I'll see you next week.

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](https://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.