

VIDEO TRANSCRIPT



EPISODE 247

An Expansive Focus

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An Expansive Focus

Could you be sabotaging yourself because your focus is constrictive? What if a simple tweak in your vocabulary could lead to success in whatever it is that you want? Well, that is what we're going to be talking about in today's episode. I'm going to be talking about an expanded focus. 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.

Hello my beautiful friends. So I was having a really interesting conversation with my man, and I wanted to share it with you because I think it's really powerful. It's also something that I'm experiencing as a result of a decision that I've made. So I find that my "mistakes and failures" are meant to happen. In fact, everything we experience is meant to happen because it's happening. On a deeper level, I feel like it's meant to happen so that I can pass it along to you.

So here's what we're going to talk about today. That is how to create an expansive focus. I'm also going to be talking about expansive vocabulary. So here's what I mean. In any moment, you can be focused on things that feel expansive or things that feel constrictive and restrictive. At any moment, you can be talking about things in a way that feels expansive or in a way that feels restrictive. For example, if you think about saving money versus building wealth. Notice which one of those feels exciting, expansive, motivating, inspiring and which one feels restrictive, depriving, like you're being shackled.

I recently made a decision from a very constrictive place. At the time, I didn't realize it. It felt like a good decision. Now looking back I realized that I was making the decision from a restrictive place. So the result of that has been a restrictive and constrictive result. I'm so glad I've experienced this because it just reaffirms and puts me back on the path of where I want to be.

So if you think about this in terms of your ideal self-image, that version of you I think is the most expanded version of you. It's the version of you that's constantly pushing the edges, it's expansive, right? You won't get there by making constrictive decisions and placing your focus in constructive areas or using constrictive language.

I want to give you another example of what this may look like for you. I know many of you listening to this are wanting to lose weight, or you're focused on your health and your fitness and your wellbeing, the physical wellbeing. I want you to notice the difference between your focus of losing weight versus a focus of becoming the healthiest version of you.

I worked with a woman many years ago. In fact when I first started my coaching business. I'll never forget her name. Her name's Diane. If she's listening to this still, hello. It's been a while. She came to me because she had been trying to lose 10 pounds for 10 years. It was an obsession. It was something that she was focused on day in, day out 12 months out of the year. So when we started working together and she told me that was her goal, I immediately asked

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her how does that goal feel? She said, “It feels heavy. It feels boring. It doesn’t motivate me at all.” So I asked her, “How can you get that same result but through a different focus? Changing your vocabulary.”

What she came up with was it felt really good to think about building her strongest body ever. At the time, I think Diane was like in her 60s. She was like, “That just seems exciting to me. It’s way more exciting than trying to lose 10 pounds. Within a few months of working together, the 10 pounds just came off. She felt great. She was fit. She told me, she was like, “I never realized how powerful our language is.”

But it’s true. Everything is energy. The words you use, the people you hang out with, the places you go, the clothes you wear. It’s all energy. Are you choosing things that expand you, especially when it comes to your focus and your language? Are you focusing on things that feel like love? Are you focusing on things that are exciting? Are you framing things in a way that inspires you to get out of bed every morning and get to work on your goals? Or are you subconsciously sabotaging yourself because you’ve created goals for yourself, and you’re placing your energy and your attention on things that are restrictive.

If the latter is the case for you, what I want you to know is that all it takes is a little tweak in your attention and your language to change everything. It’s shifting your language from let’s say saving to building. Or you could even replace building with growing. Or losing to gaining. A lot of times when it comes to weight loss, for example, we think about what we’re going to lose. No one wants to lose anything. It doesn’t feel good.

Even though we think we want to lose weight, there’s a negative vibe, a negative energy to the word losing. Immediately when we think about losing weight, we immediately go to what we’re going to be depriving ourselves of. The foods we can’t eat, the things we can’t do. Versus what do you have to gain? What about the foods you do get to eat? What about taking good care of your body and the things that you’ll be able to do? When you start to place your focus on that, all of a sudden, you’re more inspired versus placing your attention on everything that you think you can’t have. Placing your attention on what you think you’re depriving yourself of versus what you’re getting, what you’re gaining from the choices you’ll be making. Such a big difference.

This all comes down to the pain pleasure principle. We are designed to avoid pain and to pursue pleasure. When it comes down to it, our first line of defense is going to be to avoid pain. We will choose avoiding pain over pursuing pleasure. So when you frame your goals as painful, when you place your attention on painful things, you’re automatically going to want to move away from it. So you’re setting yourself up to move away from what will potentially be incredible for you simply because of how you’re thinking about it. How you’re talking about it. How you framed it. Your perspective of it.

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Again, think about saving money, budgeting money. That is painful to the woman who wants to live an expansive life. It's not going to help you build wealth. This is a prime example of playing not to lose versus playing to win. When you start to place your attention on expansiveness and making expansive choices and using expansive language, you are going to be called to be an expansive woman. You'll be making expansive actions that will lead to an expansive result. It's just the way it works.

Let's think about this in relationships. A lot of you are talking about your relationships. You have relationship goals that are framed in a way that's very constrictive. How does it feel to think about looking for love? Trust me, I know. It feels terrible if you think you don't have it. If you think that love is something outside of you. If you think that you're going to find that love in another person, and it's something that you're lacking in this moment. That goal is not going to feel good. I say that from my own experience.

Now when it comes to any of these, what I want you to know it's about how you feel. If it feels amazing for you to think about saving money, then that should be your focus. For most people, it doesn't. Just like saying that you're looking for love often makes you feel like you're lacking love. So we have to be very mindful how we talk about our goals, where we place our focus, and is it placed on expansiveness, or does it feel constricting?

When it comes to love, what if we just framed it as I want to become the most loving version of myself and attract that kind of love in my life? Something like that feels way better to me than sitting around saying, "I'm looking for love in all the wrong places." Because it's always right here within us, right?

So I just want you all to pay attention to how you feel when you're talking about your goals. How you feel when you're placing your attention on certain things. You will know if it expands you because of how it feels. If it feels heavy and dark and uninspiring, chances are you need to change your language or change your focus.

A great example is right before I started recording this. I didn't want to do a podcast today. I just wasn't feeling it, which is very rare for me. I'm usually pumped to do these podcasts. When I looked into my own brain, it was saying things like, "Ugh, you gotta do it. You promised you'd do one every week." There was so much obligation and heaviness. I was talking about it in such a way that was so uninspiring. No wonder I didn't want to do a podcast today.

The moment I changed it to, "I get to do a podcast. There are amazing people in my community that look forward to this every single week. I love sharing and I love giving. It doesn't have to be perfect. It just has to be from my heart. Isn't it fun that I get to show up and do this every single week for my community." I started to go on this rampage of positivity and expansive vocabulary around this thing that I had committed to doing and that I wanted to keep my

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promise of doing, which is what we talked about in last week's podcast. I felt totally different. All of a sudden, I was pumped. I was like, "Let's go. I'm excited to do this podcast."

It's no different than all of those years when I talked about, "I gotta lose weight. I really need to get in shape." It was so uninspiring and so heavy. No wonder I kept failing at it over and over again versus when I changed my focus to, "You know what? I just want to be a woman that takes exquisite care of herself. I want to be the best version of me. I want to be physically strong. I want to be a woman who keeps promises to herself. I want to have a closet full of clothes that I really feel good in." It is an honor to wake up every single day and take care of myself mentally, physically, emotionally.

When I started to place my focus in that direction and I started to talk about my goals in that expansive way, that is what inspired me. To show up for my dreams and my goals and for the promises that I made to myself. That is the difference, my friend, in expensive focus versus constrictive focus.

If you feel uninspired, if you feel like you're not showing up for your goals, if you feel like you're bored and you want to add some spice back into your life, then really change how you talk about your goals. Change your focus. You don't necessarily have to change the result that you're wanting. In fact, I don't encourage you to change the result at all. If you want to make a million dollars, lose 100 pounds, move to a house by the beach. I want you to want what you want without apology. I don't want you to limit yourself ever.

However, you may want to reframe it in a way that's exciting for you, that tastes like freedom, that expands you, that delights you. If it feels like deprivation, if it feels restrictive, constrictive like shackles, you need to either examine if it's for you. Or chances are it is, but the way you have framed it your focus around it just feels constrictive. That is an easy tweak. It is changing the vocabulary. It's changing your attention to that which feels expansive.

I will tell you all. I'm going to be doing this work right alongside you. After my recent decision that I made from a very constrictive place, and I had a very constrictive focus when I made it has just reaffirmed this whole concept. So I really want to be so intentional this year of making expansive choices and coming from an expansive energy and living from my expansive future self. That is my work, that is your work. Let's do it together my friends. Have a beautiful, beautiful week. I can't 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.