

VIDEO TRANSCRIPT



EPISODE 261

A Love Letter to Those Who Feel They're Behind

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A Love Letter to Those Who Feel Behind

Do you ever think to yourself that you're behind? Maybe you go on social media, and you see what everyone else seems to be accomplishing. Or you think about where you thought you'd be at this point in your life, and suddenly you have feelings of disappointment and frustration, and maybe even hopelessness because you're not further ahead.

If you can relate, then this is my love letter to you, to all of those who feel like they're behind.

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. I'm recording this from my parents' attic. They wanted to provide me a place to come and work, a quiet oasis, a little refuge when I'm at home. And so, they built out their attic for me. And it's actually quite cute. For those of you within the membership, you probably have seen me doing some of my calls from this little place.

But I've been spending my time here not only enjoying being with my family, but also taking time to really think about next year, 2022, and the things that I want to accomplish, the initiatives that I have, the projects that I'm excited about.

And while in that space of excitement I felt this overwhelm start to creep up within my body. And I identified what was causing it. And it's two words that I hear so often from my clients, from my listeners, from those of you who maybe send me a message on Instagram. And these two words, I want us to eliminate from our vocabulary because they do not serve us.

If anything, they keep us in a perpetual rush. They keep us stressed out. They keep us feeling like we're never enough. And so when I felt these two words come up, I recognized them because I used to think this all of the time. And I told myself, it's such a lie.

So, do you want to know what these two words are? "I'm behind." You know what that feels like. We feel like we should be somewhere other than where we are. We look around at our lives right now and we think, "I never thought this is where I would be at this point in my life. I thought I would be further ahead."

And then, we go on social media, and we look at everyone's outside world, the parts that they let us see, and we think, "Oh my goodness, they're so much further ahead than me." And we use them as a reason to beat ourselves up and to tell ourselves the story that we're behind.

What I want you to notice is how you feel when you tell yourself that you are behind. What is the emotion that those two words create for you? As I was saying earlier, when that thought snuck into my head, I felt overwhelm. Some of you may feel anxiety. Some of you may feel frustrated. Some of you may feel depressed. Some of you may feel hopeless when you use these two words in your life.

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And from those states of being, I want you to notice what you do. I know for me, when I'm feeling overwhelmed or anxious, I want to avoid the very things that will help me move my life forward. I want to go curl up on the sofa, turn on Netflix, and just tune the world out. Because then beyond that, the brain will tell you, "What's the use? You're already behind. Just give up."

Or the other thing that some of us do is we try to do more. We're like, "Let me try to outrun this belief of I'm behind, so let me go and have 20,000 goals for 2022, let me add more on my calendar, let me prove to myself that I'm not behind." But do you notice that that never works?

It just keeps perpetuating the same feeling state because, "I'm behind," is simply a thought. How do you know that you're behind? Compared to who? Based on what? "I'm behind," is simply a thought that we keep thinking that keeps us in a stressed-out state. And still, even knowing this, it creeps up in my brain. Not nearly as often as it used to, but it still happens, especially when I have some big goals for myself.

My brain will say, "You've got a long way to go. You're so behind. This is going to be hard." And here's why that happens. The brain doesn't like change. And so, the brain's going to throw out all kinds of thoughts to try to keep you in the same familiar state that you're accustomed to.

So, if you're accustomed to feeling hurried, if you're accustomed to being overwhelmed, if you're accustomed to packing your calendar full, that's what is familiar to the brain. And so, it's always going to try to convince you of the belief that created that familiar state in the first place.

But when you understand that "I'm behind," is simply a thought that you keep thinking that results in you keeping that perpetual state of being going, that's actually where you can get all of your power back.

I remember when I went to France for the first time. And I looked around and I saw a culture of people who really savored the moment, who embraced the present. It didn't seem to me that they were trying to outrun their own belief system, which is what we often do.

"I'm not good enough. I'm behind." If you notice, those kinds of beliefs cause us to continue to take action, to try to prove to ourselves that we're not behind or that we are good enough. But you can't outperform a belief system. Instead, you have to change the belief system to create a new performance that feeds itself.

And so, I remember coming home from that trip wanting to emulate the people that I had seen. I wanted to slow down. I wanted to really enjoy where I was instead of always thinking that over there was better, that once I got there, then I could slow down and enjoy, because I was behind, so I need to hurry up and get there so I can then take a deep breath.

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And the really crazy thing is that I had accomplished a lot. I graduated nursing school when I was 20 years old. I'd had my daughter when I was 22. I had reached these milestones, and yet, in my brain, I still felt like I was behind. For what? According to who? And so, it dawned on me, if I really wanted to enjoy my life and appreciate my life, that was one belief I was going to have to get rid of: this belief that I'm behind.

I also started to think about self-image, and I started to think about the future version of me that, in that moment, I thought, "If I could just get to where she is, then I'd feel like I had arrived. But in order to get to her, I had to practice being her. And one of the things that I knew deep in my heart she wasn't saying to herself is that she was behind.

She always believed that she was right where she needed to be. And so, I started to practice that belief. In this moment, this is exactly where I need to be. And how do I know it? Because it's where I am. How could it be any other way? If I was supposed to be over there, if I was supposed to have accomplished this, then I would have. It wasn't my time yet.

And so, by practicing these new beliefs of, "I'm right where I need to be. It will happen when it's supposed to happen," actually fast tracked my results. The reason being is that I was in a new energetic state. The more I practiced this, a few things happened. Number one, I felt more relaxed.

I don't know about you all, but I have a sneaky suspicion we're probably a lot alike. When I'm relaxed, I'm way more focused and productive, creative. But more than that, I was just happier. And from that happy state, I attracted more things to be happy about. I was less stressed. I learned how to savor the moment.

And this is a practice that I continue to do on a daily basis. Because even now, my brain tries to convince me, "Well, Tonya, if you were just over there, if you just knew those people, if you just reached this goal, if you just made this much money, if you did X, Y, And Z, then you would be better off, then you could relax, then everything would be unicorns and rainbows.

But that's not how life works. All along our journey, we're going to have moments of sadness and happiness. Life is always going to have the contrast. And yet, we believe that there's going to be this place where it's all perfect, where it's all buttoned up, wrapped up in a nice bow. And as long as we believe that, we miss out on the beauty and the blessings of this moment.

"I'm behind," is one of those modern-day curses. When you look around at the world, it feels like it's moving so fast. You look at technology, you look at science, you look at us as a civilization and things are moving so fast. And because of the intensity of that movement, we can easily think, "Oh, I've got to hurry up or I'm going to get left behind."

But in all of that hurrying and all of that rushing, we don't appreciate the life we have right now. And my experience has been that when I'm in that state of anxiety and stress because I've

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convinced myself that everyone's going so much faster than me and that I'm behind, I actually end up taking action that slows me down.

So I was saying before, I'm less able to focus. I procrastinate more. I end up proving myself true because that's how the brain works. The brain always looks for what you tell it to look for. So, if you're going around saying, "I'm behind," the brain is going to filter through every experience, every detail of your life to provide you with evidence as to how that's true.

And I want you just to ask yourself, how does that serve you at all? It doesn't. It keeps you from enjoying the life you have right now. It keeps you in this grass-is-greener mentality that never allows you just to relax and see the beauty of what is in this moment.

When I think of the woman I want to be, I always see a woman who is loving her life. And I'm sure you feel the same when you think about who you want to be. If you can envision her, you probably see a woman who's just enjoying and appreciating her life. But the problem happens when we have all of these contingencies, that we'll do it when; when we've reached that goal, when we've moved to the new town, when our home is fully organized, when the kids are behaved, when we get that new job, when we meet the love of our lives, when this, then I'll stop feeling like this...

But that's not how it works. If that's the woman you want to be, you have to be her now. You have to practice her mentality, her state of being now. And then, what you're going to notice is that you show up in a very different way. And then the world starts to rearrange itself to mirror that back to you.

So, as we approach this holiday season, the season where many of us can feel behind, we feel like, "Oh we haven't gotten out the Christmas cards yet. I haven't planned the Christmas dinner yet. It's the New Year, I haven't accomplished my goals yet. I'm so behind. I'm so behind. I'm so behind."

I want you to take a breath. And what if you are exactly where you're supposed to be? And I want you just to notice what happens in your brain when I say that. Because I know that tendency to think, "But no, Tonya, I want this, and I want that. I have this goal and that goal..." and listen, I want you to keep your goals. But what I want to offer you is that you slow yourself down when you tell yourself that you're behind.

Your action isn't as powerful. You're not as intentional. And it's coming from fear and scarcity. And when you take action out of fear and scarcity, guess what you perpetuate? Fear and scarcity.

So, here's my love letter to you, for all of you who feel like you're behind. You are an amazing human being. And you are doing an amazing job. You are exactly where you need to be. Take a moment and appreciate all of the accomplishments you've had, all the things that you've

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created, and the person that you are in this moment. You are exactly where you're supposed to be, where you're meant to be. Appreciate it. Take it in. Take a deep breath.

And then, from that place, be excited about your future and what's about to come. But don't hurry to get there. Don't think that over there is better than here because over there can only be as good as here. So, make her the place to be. Appreciate it. Look for the goodness in it. Look for the opportunities in it. Look for the blessings in it and know, again, that you are not behind. You are exactly where you need to be.

I love you all 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.