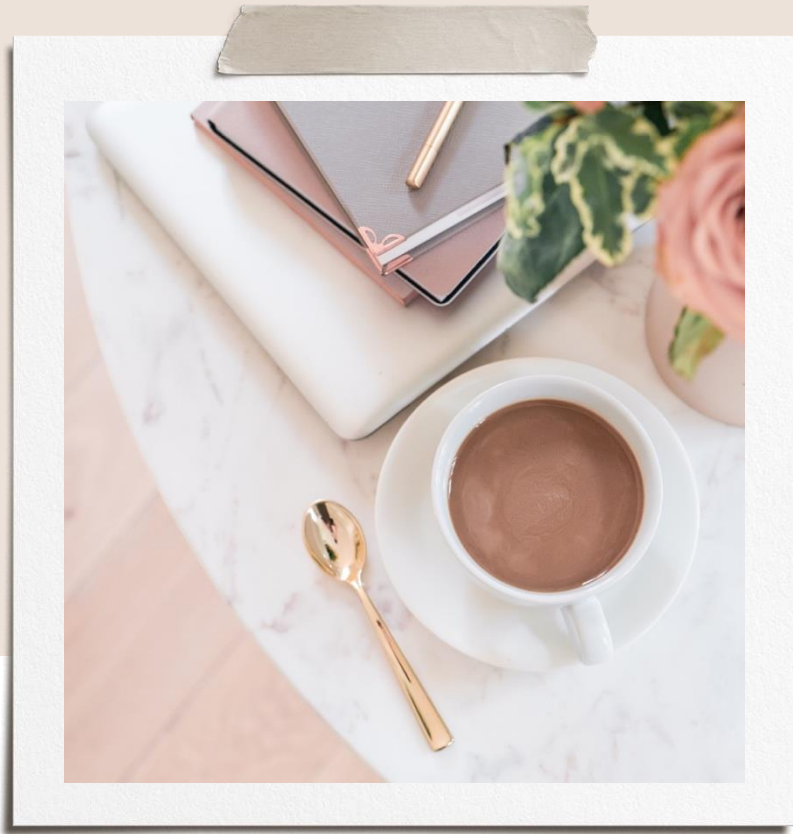


VIDEO TRANSCRIPT



EPISODE 276

My Business Image Evolution

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My Business Image Evolution

Today is a special day because I am choosing to talk about something that I rarely talk about on this podcast. In fact, I don't think I've ever had an episode dedicated to business. But behind the scenes, I'm always talking about business. I love talking about business. And I especially love talking about your business image. So, in this episode, I'm taking you behind the scenes of my own evolution of my business image, 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.

Well hello, gorgeous friends. How are you doing? How are you feeling? What's happening? I am excited because, in this episode, I am talking about something that I've never really solely addressed on this podcast, which is business.

I know I've got a lot of business ladies in the audience. And so, today's episode is for you. However, if you are not in business, I still want you to listen because what I'm going to be sharing is applicable to you as well.

I get to talk today about two of my favorite things to talk about. And that is business combined with self-image. And I refer to this as your business image. So, for those of you who don't have a business, I still want you to see yourself as a businesswoman in your life. Maybe it's within your home as a homemaker. Maybe it's you in the community as a volunteer. It's still applicable to you.

I'm also going to be sharing something that I have been working on behind the scenes that is so good, it is so unique, and it is so needed. So, stick around for that because that will come towards the end, I think. Or maybe not. It might pop up in the middle.

But I just want to share with you all my own business image evolution. And for some of you, you have witnessed it. You have been with me since the very beginning. You say baby business Tonya and now you see the grownup business Tonya. And I'm still growing.

I feel like I'm in my 30s in business, so I've still got a lot of years ahead of my own business image evolution. But I want to start out with, first of all, talking about what is your business image? And there are two parts to this. So, I like to call it your inner business image and your outer business image.

So, the inner image of yourself as a businesswoman consists of how you see yourself, your thoughts about yourself as it relates to business. So, pay attention, for those of you who are in business, what is the dialogue that you have in your own head about your capabilities, about what's possible for you? Because that's shaping your inner business image and how you see yourself.

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But then there's the outer business image. And the outer business image is how the world sees you and what the world believes about you. And you have a direct influence on what that is. And yet, do you spend a lot of time curating that on purpose? Are you telling yourself and telling the world how you want to be seen and what you want to be thought of? That is within your control.

And while it's nice to have strategy and good marketing and sales tactics, nothing will advance your business as much as expanding your business image. And I say that with the most confidence. It's like a 100% money-back guarantee on that. And the reason why I know this is because of my own journey.

So, I want to take you on my business journey and share with you how my own business image has evolved over the years. So, I'm going to take us back to before I even started my business, when I was working as a critical care nurse and I was also starting to explore this other side of me that I was being drawn to step into, the parts of me that you all see today. It's the part of me that loves style, that loves life, that enjoys food and wine.

So, I was in that awkward in between of leaving an old identity and really becoming someone new. And it was during that phase that I really started to understand the importance of image.

Now, when I talk about self-image, I'm talking about how you see yourself, how you think about yourself. But when I talk about image without the self, I'm referring to what other people see. And it matters, especially if you are in business.

Most likely, unless you have found this miracle little niche that no one else is doing what you're doing, you have many other people that are offering the same service as you. And while you may be able to get people amazing results, initially, people are buying you. They're buying what you represent. They're buying into your values, the energy that you put out there.

Which is why some people – let's just take my industry, for example. Some people are drawn to me and not someone else. However, the other woman is drawn to one of my friends who coaches and not me. And it's because we have a very clear business image.

You think about, let's just say weight loss, for example. There are a lot of weight loss coaches out there and they all can help you get results if you want to lose weight. However if you are seeking a more feminine, pleasurable, and less strict approach to weight loss, you're not going to be drawn to the woman who has a very bold business image of being in your face, holding you accountable. She's going to attract a very different woman.

So, in creating and building your business image, you have to decide who you want to be and how you want to be known and what you want people to think about you. So, back to my journey.

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Early on, I understood that image was important because, as I was changing my image, I was starting to figure out my own personal style. I was starting to carry myself differently. I even started to speak differently. I completely transformed my accent.

My friend Melissa was over last night. She was like, “That still blows my mind that you did that.” But I did. If I can do anything, I know what it takes to change your identity because I have done it several times in my life.

However, it was during that period that I was like, “Wow, this image thing is really powerful.” People started to treat me differently. And one of the examples that I’ve often told my clients is, I remember when I was going to sommelier school. And I started to talk about my love of wine when I was out in company with other people at social gatherings.

And all of a sudden, over time, in a matter of months, I noticed when we would go out to dinner, everyone would just automatically hand me the wine list. It’s like I had created this image of myself as someone who is knowledgeable of wines. And all of a sudden, it is being reflected back to me. Even to this day, I am the one that gets the wine list. And I like that because I feel like I always pick out really good wines.

However, that was my starting to understand, wow, what we say about ourselves to other people, how we show up, all of this impacts how the world sees us and how the world interprets us and how the world treats us.

And this is so important in business because you can begin to position yourself in your market as the best in the world at what you do and figuring out what makes you iconic, and boldly and unapologetically standing in that energy.

But it took me a little while when I started business. No, one thing that I will say, early on – and I feel like this was an advantage, was because I had done all of this personal work and I knew the power of image, and I also understood what I was drawn to. My very first website, I really invested in it.

Now, if I go back and look at pictures of it, it’s like, “Oh, that was sweet. That was cute, Tonya. You were really trying,” because I’ve grown so much since then. But I’m really proud of myself that really put some thought into, how do I want to be perceived? Who am I trying to attract? Who are my ideal clients?

So, my very first business was called Just B Living, and that’s with just a B, just the letter. And I hired a videographer and a photographer. And I’ll never forget, my color palette was, like this plum purple and like a beige. And the photographs were very, sort of vintage-looking, a little old-world.

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And there was even, I remember, an image of me on a bicycle. I was trying to capture that French essence of just be, just enjoy life, just love where you are, right? But at the same time, there were so many areas within my business where I felt out of alignment. Mostly with my content and my program and my offerings.

And this is very normal, you all. So, for any of you that are just starting out, I want you to give yourself permission to play around. It's like finding your signature style. You need to go in, you need to try on a lot of different outfits. You need to see how they feel on you.

But this was a stage where I was looking around a lot. I was looking at what other people were doing. I was trying to figure out what kind of packages to put together. And my very first program that I offered to the world was called Health, Happiness, and Baggy Jeans. So cute, right?

But I wanted to work with women around weight loss because that was the one problem that I knew I could help solve. I felt very good in my ability to serve women and add value to their lives through the lens of how I lost weight.

So, that was my very first offering. But this was a time, when it comes to my business image, the way I saw myself, I was very unsure. I didn't have a lot of evidence yet that I could do this. so, my work at this level was just to practice believing, keep showing up, keep taking action, and then always paying attention to when I felt lit up and when I felt heavy within my business.

And whenever I was looking around, I always felt heavy. Whenever I would try to copy something that somebody else had done, because I was like, "Well, if it worked for them, I'm going to try it too," and mostly I'm talking about strategies, I always try to be original, but there's really nothing original in the world, especially within personal development. It's all leading to us being the best versions of ourselves and there are some basic laws that govern that, that we're all teaching, but we're all doing it in our own unique way.

But back then, I was trying to figure out what that was for me. And so, I felt very out of alignment. And business is not fun, you all, when you feel out of alignment. But I also equally was excited about figuring it out. And so, it wasn't so detrimental that I gave up, as you can see. I'm still here doing it.

But it wasn't as fun, so I thought, "Okay, next evolution is I'm going to switch from Just B Living and I'm going to step into my name, tonyaleigh.com. And this was when I actually feel like I regressed in terms of my web presence.

The website was not good. I was trying to get to a more sleek, modern look. And so, I remember, that website – and some of you, you might be able to go on the Wayback Machine and see this. I feel like you need to see it for yourself. But Wayback Machine is where you can go back and look at websites from back in the day.

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But this particular website, I decided to go with this color palette that I would never in a million years use today. Some of you y'all remember it, I bet. It was like this deep red and like a teal blue. And it had my name in all caps, TONY LEIGH at the top. And I had this little French girl sitting on the O with, like, a beret on her head. She had blonde hair. And then my picture was off to the side.

But this was when I started to align more with my message. I stopped with the generic how to be happy kind of talk and I started to infuse my business and my content with my passions, which were travel and food and wine and France, and most notably Paris.

And this was a very interesting shift because I felt like I was moving away from the mainstream and I was starting to position myself as this bon vivant, someone who loves life, someone who enjoys good food and good wine and pleasure and all of the things that had really been a part of my own evolution.

And I started to own that space unapologetically. And the result of that was that I started to attract women into my circle who were like, "Yeah, me too. I want to learn from her because that's the kind of life that I want to live."

And so, I stayed with that brand – gosh, I should go back and actually do a timeline, but I want to say probably four years, maybe, maybe less. When it comes to time, you all, it all runs together. But I had that for a while. And this was when I started to do retreats and I started to run retreats in Paris.

And at the time, no one else that I knew of was doing international personal development retreats. And this is really important when it comes to your business image. You have to be willing to do things that have never been done before. You have to be willing to make bold statements. You have to be willing to show up boldly to have a bold business.

And this was the era of my business when that started to happen. And I remember when I was going through this process of allowing myself to tap into my genius and to what makes me stand out in my own unique way, it was scary. I had all the thoughts. What if people don't like it? What if people judge me as superficial or vain because I like to talk about beauty and style and travel? And I want to talk about personal development and having goals while also talking about enjoying the journey.

But I did it. and I started to share it. And inside, my inner business image at this time was still on shaky ground. Not only was I putting myself out into the world in a bigger way. I was also learning how to be a businesswoman. And the tendency to want to be overwhelmed, the tendency to look around at what is instead of what is becoming was still there.

Now, I've practiced it so much I understand the psychology that goes into building a successful business. And I don't get freaked out as much anymore. But this was the – I like to call it the

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awkward in between of my business becoming. And it was amazing because I was creating and being playful and it was also terrifying and scary because, as I said earlier, I was standing out in my own uniqueness, my own genius. And my business was growing. And that is what happens, my friends, when you focus on expanding your business image.

Now, we enter into a very interesting part of my journey, and it's one that many of you entered into. And that is when I decided that I didn't want it to be my name. I had played in that arena for a while and I was like, I want to build something bigger than my name. I want to create a movement. I want to create a community.

And French Kiss Life was born. And that's when my company really started to take off. The term French Kiss Life means so much to me. And sorry to bore those of you who've heard this story before. But some of you don't know this story, so I'll tell you how it came to be.

When I went to Paris for the very first time, I was a hot mess. I was overwhelmed. I was struggling with my weight. I felt really lost in life. And being in that city for a week, just being in that energy, being in that environment gave me sort of like a beacon to guide me. I wanted to go after the feeling that I had there.

And on my very last day there, I was walking through Luxembourg Gardens and I was looking around and I was looking at mothers having picnics with their kids, lovers kissing, people sitting by the fountain reading books. And I just said to myself, "These people are French Kissing Life." And that term is what got me on this journey of what was possible and for how I wanted to my life to feel and to look.

And this was before I even started coaching. And so, when I decided to move away from my brand of Tonya Leigh, French Kiss Life was very obvious to me. I was like, "This is it."

Now, let's face it. It's a very intriguing name. And it immediately draws some people in. And for many people, it turned them off. Some people thought it was a porn site. They're like, "What is this?" However, the people that got it, we were such a match. They wanted what I had wanted all those years and had been able to create in my life, which was this feeling of luxurious ease, while also being ambitious.

It was showing up stylish. It was showing up with a sense of joie de vivre. And that's what I was teaching. And this is when I developed my signature program Slim, Chic, and Savvy. And that was the main program that I had for many, many years. And I loved French Kiss Life, and I still do.

I am so grateful for that version of my business and all that I learned within it. However, when it comes to business image, I started to notice something. And this is where the story gets very interesting.

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I feel like, when I started French Kiss Life, I would say I was like a 16-year-old in business. I was in that stage, like teens. It's exciting. I'm trying out new things. I'm dreaming. And French Kiss Life was perfect for that stage of my business.

But behind the scenes, I was growing as a woman. I was becoming more confident. I was becoming more opinionated. I was becoming more unapologetic. And in many ways, I feel like I was becoming more sophisticated.

And one day, I remember someone asked me the name of my company, and I said it, and it did not feel right. It did not feel like it represented who I had become. I felt like I had outgrown French Kiss Life.

And this is a painful place to be in. It's like outgrowing a relationship that you loved and served you, but you look over at the person one day and you're like, "Wow, we're in two totally different places. And if I'm going to make this work, I'm going to have to sacrifice a part of myself." And that's what it felt like with French Kiss Life.

And I was so grateful for her. I call her, "Her." She's my girl business. But I was just so grateful for her and who I became in the process of really focusing on creating a brand. And this is a really interesting place that we often find ourselves in when we're in business.

We sometimes are in a place of you've created this external great image of your business, and on the inside you're working on becoming it, aligning with it, matching with it. And then, there's the opposite of where you've created a business and you've grown so much, you look at your business and it no longer represents who you've become.

So, when I think about my very first website, I put this beautiful website out into the world and, on the inside, my internal business image was not there yet. And so, the work was to practice being there, being the woman that was running Just B Living with a lot of confidence.

But this situation was different. I had grown so much and now I look around at my business and it no longer represents my business image and what I want to express to the world. And this was one of the hardest and most amazing years of my life.

This was during the pandemic. This was also the year that I left a long-term relationship. There was a lot of letting go and becoming in that year. And one of the things that I had to get really honest with myself about was, do I see myself having French Kiss Life in five years? And my answer was no.

I was ready to create something that represented the woman I had become. And I thought about other brands. If you think about Gucci or Prada or Anthropologie, like any brand, you will notice their own image evolution.

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And so, I spent a lot of time thinking, “Do I just need to stay with French Kiss Life and really rebrand it and think about it differently?” But I could not see myself investing five more years in that brand. I felt like it was complete.

It was a beautiful chapter in my business book that was complete. However, I must tell you all, the hardest thing to let go of is not something that is bad. It’s something that is good and it’s working.

I was doing really well in French Kiss Life. My community, awesome. And so many of them have continued with me. But some of them left. Some of them were really upset. And that’s part of expanding your business image. You have to understand that not everyone around you is going to like it and you have to make peace with that.

But you also have to think about your future clients and who you’re going to attract that now is a better match for who you’ve become. And so, that’s when School of Self-Image entered into the picture, in October of 2020.

I spent the early part of 2020 dreaming about what was next in terms of my business and it became so obvious to me that the work that I had done, that has changed my life, was all around my self-image. And I didn’t know of anyone else teaching self-image.

And I knew, I had hit on something that was life-changing and transformative and embodied the fullness of who I had become, where I could talk about style and the importance of what you wear and how you show up. I could talk about the importance of your surroundings, the places you go, the people you hang out with. And I could talk about the thing I love to talk about the most; your mindset.

And it all came together. And now, I can say, for the first time – the last two years have been business bliss for me. And it’s not because we haven’t had issues behind the scenes, because every business has issues. It’s not because it’s always been easy. But it has felt aligned. And it has taken me 10 years to get to that place where I feel 100% aligned with my business. And that is the goal.

And doing the work around your business image is to align your inside and who you want to be with what the world sees, so that when you talk about your business, when you show up and represent your business, it feels good, it feels exciting, and you know that you are in flow with the business that you were meant to create and to put into the world.

And what’s really interesting about this whole process is, in October of 2020, I started to experience quantum leaps in my business growth. Whereas before, it was just like chugging along with my revenue, with my team. It was just like, a little bit better, a little bit better, a little bit better.

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But in October of 2020, things took off and I am 100% convinced that it's because of me doing this work on my business image, getting very clear about my work, how I want to be seen in the world, what I want people to think about me and the company, reverse-engineering all of that to create an extraordinary business that truly fits the woman I've become.

This is the most important work you will ever do as a businesswoman. You know, the tendency is to want to go find the next business book, the next business secret, the next formula. But if you want to create a business that feels fully aligned and that represents you in the most extraordinary way, that is not going to be found in someone else's formula.

Sure, you can get inspiration from people. There are certain rules of success that are applicable to everyone, but the expression of that, how you do your business, how you show up in the world, your values, how you interact with your clients, with your students, with your customers, that needs to be very intentional.

And when it is, everything else becomes so much easier. Your marketing becomes easier. Your programs, your services become easier. You'll know how to price things and you will begin to attract your ideal clients. You don't want to attract everyone. I know some of you all think you do, but you don't, trust me.

When I was in my early stages of business, I thought I wanted to attract everyone, until I started to attract people that we just weren't a good fit. And it made business not fun.

You want to attract people that are in alignment with your business image. And you want to repel the ones that aren't. There are enough to go around. We are a society, a world that's always looking for services and products and things to help us make our lives better.

And when we get into that lack mentality, we start to get very clingy. We start to get very desperate. And we start to become mainstream and dampen our message out of fear. What I want for you is to get into a place of abundance and confidence and, "Who is she? What is she saying? Who is she serving? How is she showing up?" And let's shape her business image to be a match for the business that she wants.

So, I told you all at the very beginning that I had something exciting to share. For two years – has it been two years? Almost two years – I've just focused on my membership, which I love. For those of you who are not in business and you want to do this work for yourself, come and join us within the School of Self-Image membership.

But for those of you who are in business, I am so excited to tell you about what I have been working on. And I thought a long time about this. And at one point, I was going to put together a program. But it didn't feel right for me in this moment.

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Because I was thinking to myself, “You don’t need another program. You don’t need another formula. What you need is to transform your business image.” And I want to do that in a very intimate way with a handful of women.

I want to get in the room with you, mentor you, work with you, coach you to help you stand out, to help you make more money, and to help you do business in your own unique way so that business is fun and exciting and not overwhelming and dragging you down.

And that’s why I am excited to announce that we are opening enrolment to the Business Image Mastermind. Women have been asking me for years to do something around business. And I’ve also had many women ask me for a mastermind.

But the reason why I chose a mastermind is because I did a lot of journaling when I was thinking about what this next offer was going to be and I just wrote down my business journey and really was looking for, what has had the biggest impact on my business?

Now, granted, all of the little things that I’ve done have added up because all the little things count, right? One thing I read in a book that I applied that changed things, or listening to one podcast and getting an idea. Those things have had an impact.

But the two biggest things that have impacted my business the most is, number one, focusing on my business image, getting that aligned and clear and feeling like the best representation of myself. And then the other is being a part of a mastermind.

I noticed, when I looked back over my business journey, the years I’ve been in a mastermind have been my best years in business. And they’ve also been my hardest because of who I had to become.

A mastermind, if it’s a good one, is going to expect a lot of you. It’s going to require that you bring out the best parts of you. It’s going to require that you do hard things. And that is uncomfortable. Which is why a mastermind isn’t for everyone. But if you are interested in growing your business, a mastermind, I think, is one of the best investments you will ever make in your business, and in yourself. Because your business can only grow to the extent that you’re growing.

I mean, you can put a big business out into the world. But if you don’t grow into it, you will sabotage yourself. And likewise, you can grow so big that your business hasn’t kept up. And so, this work is about constantly aligning your business with who you are becoming and who you want to be in the world.

I know that some of you may not be familiar with a mastermind, so let me just explain to you what it is. Because even if you don’t join mine, I want you to keep it in the back of your mind that this may be what you need to support you in your own growth.

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So, a mastermind is a group of people who come together with the same intention. And there are masterminds for many different things. There are masterminds around fitness. There are masterminds around marketing. There are masterminds around finance. You can find a mastermind for just about anything.

And the reason why they're so powerful is that when you're in a community that all are after the same thing and you all are committed to supporting each other and you all are bringing diverse ideas and tools and strategies to the table, magic happens.

In fact, it was within a mastermind that I decided to change my company to School of Self-Image. And those women were there to support me when I was freaking out, which I did, and to constantly encourage and offer feedback and support and coaching.

Having that level of support, I think, is necessary for women in business. Because depending on your business, for a lot of us, we're at home working alone. We don't have a network. We're just getting through day to day, trying to serve our customers and also taking care of our families. Being able to step away and think on your business, think on yourself instead of being in it is a beautiful thing.

And then, to do that within a group who's there to support you, I'm telling you, it's magic. But the best benefit of being in a mastermind is not only do you end up meeting some of your best friends ever. But you will think bigger than you have ever thought.

If it's a good mastermind, you will be challenged to think in ways you've never thought before. And if you've been listening to this podcast, you know how you think is determining your entire life. And it's determining the results that you're getting in your business.

So the purpose of this mastermind is to expand your business image to allow for more clarity, more money, more confidence, and we're going to have fun. Because I have this belief in business and in life. If it's not fun, what are we doing? We're doing it wrong.

And so, if you are interested in joining us, you can head to businessimagemastermind.com and you can fill out the application. This is going to be a small group of extraordinary women. I cannot wait. And we are going to kick it off in May in Denver for a three-day intensive workshop.

So, you're going to be coming to Denver and hanging out with me. And I'm going to get all up in your business. Because that's the purpose. You want feedback. You want support. And so, I am thrilled and beyond excited for the 30 women that I get to spend this time with.

So, if you are interested in being one of those women, head over to buisnessimagemastermind.com. All of the information is there. Fill out the application, and

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who knows, I might get to see you in Denver really soon, where we're going to work on expanding your business image.

This has been so much fun, sharing my business image journey with you. I hope you enjoyed it, and I can't wait to see you in next week's 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.