

VIDEO TRANSCRIPT



EPISODE 282

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# When People Don't Like Your Changes

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## When People Don't Like Your Changes

When you start to change, one of the things that almost everyone experiences is someone in your world not liking it. So, what do you do? Well, that's what we're talking about in today's episode, 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, friends. Hold on, I just realized I have jazz playing in the background. Let me turn that down. Although, I'm always for a little jazz. But my podcast producer may not be happy that it's playing.

How is everyone? Are you good? How are you feeling? What's going on? I have been in it, you all. I am getting ready for the Business Image Mastermind. Everyone's coming to Denver next month and we are going to be diving deep into our business image. And I've been doing this work for myself, I've been doing it for the business, and it's been bringing up a lot of stuff, in the best of ways.

I've been looking at how I am limiting myself. I've been looking at things that have helped me win in my life that are no longer helping me win. And one of the things that's been coming up for me is people not liking my changes.

And I just had a client who reached out to me on Instagram, and she said, "I am loving who I'm becoming because of the work that we're doing in the School of Self-Image." However, the people around her are not loving it. Mostly her mother and one of her friends. Although her husband loves it, which I think is fabulous.

And so, I wanted to talk today, in this episode, about when people don't like your changes. One of my first experiences of this was when I was in high school. I think it was my freshman year. And if you've been around for a while, you know that my mom used to put me in beauty pageants. It was a thing in the South.

And most of the time, I kept coming in first and second place. It seemed to be a common theme with me in the pageant industry. However, I did win a few titles. And upon winning one of them, I came back to school only to basically get beat up by a group of girls. They didn't like the change that I had made, being on that stage and winning.

And I think, on some level, I have internalized that for a long time. I've done a lot of work on people pleasing and trying to not let other people's opinions stop me. I mean, you don't get to where I've gotten and create what I've created without doing this work.

However, to get to the next level, I've been looking at where it's still showing up in my life. And I do believe that we can have deeply internalized trauma that we don't even realize is still there

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until we start to spend a lot of time with ourselves and being very curious with ourselves and digging into, “Where did this come from in the first place?”

And this happened the other day. I was talking with Fonz, and he was doing a lot of questioning about this fear of mine to not disappoint people, to not let people down, to not be disliked by others.

And that's when I uncovered this trauma that happened years ago. I mean, I knew it was there, but I hadn't really put two and two together. And so, it's real, you all. It's real that we are raised to be good girls and to be liked and to not piss people off. And if we do, the fear is we will be cast out of the group. We will not have a sense of belonging. We will be alone. We will lose everything.

That is what our brain tells us when we step into the magnificence of who we really are with the possibility that we may lose people. With each death and rebirth – which is how I describe it. It's what it feels like. Every time I have expanded in a big way – I'm not just talking about a little shift, but literally a completely new version of myself – I've had to let parts of myself die so that other parts of myself could be birthed.

And the people who did not like my changes were the people who likes the parts of myself that I had to let die. And looking back now, I realize they benefited from those parts. So, when I stopped being that version of myself, it threatened their existence. It threatened what they were getting from me.

For example, when I decided that I really wanted to become a healthy woman, I had a friend in my life at the time that we were used to going out and eating all kinds of stuff. Our whole relationship was built around food.

And so when I decided, “I want to get healthy. I don't want to live like this anymore,” it threatened her existence because she didn't want to change. And as long as I was in it with her, she didn't have to look at how she was showing up in her life. And she benefitted from having someone who kept feeding this cycle of being unhealthy.

And so, when I made this decision, I was met with a lot of resistance by her. She would say things to me like, “Who do you think you are? You're not going to be able to do this. Why don't you just enjoy life? You think you're better than me.” That kind of dialogue.

And eventually, I had to decide, am I going to choose her and live an unhealthy life, or am I going to choose me? And thank goodness I chose me. And she exited my life. And it was not easy. I missed her. I had known her for years. However, looking back now, I can't imagine choosing her and that lifestyle over myself and how that decision has changed my life in such amazing ways.

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But in the moment, it feels awful. I get it. Because you don't know yet what is waiting for you. You don't know yet the life that you are about to step into as a result of staying true to yourself and what it is that you want. But you have to be willing to step into the mystery of life to discover what is waiting for you. If you're not, you will never know. You'll just keep choosing the familiar over and over again and nothing will ever change.

I've also experienced this in my romantic relationships. I am unapologetic that I've been married twice, and I had another long-term relationship that lasted eight years that I left in 2020. And choosing me in those situations definitely caused a lot of backlash. There were a lot of people who did not like my changes and who I was becoming.

And I personally had to process a lot of shame and a lot of guilt for those decisions. But on the other side of it, I am so grateful that I had my own back. I am so grateful that I made those decisions. Because again, it's led me to right here in this moment where I am so proud of myself for the work that I've done and the woman that I've become.

But to be that woman, I had to first of all make the changes, and second, be willing for people to not like them. I had to be willing for people to say really mean things about me publicly. I had to be willing for people to leave me. I had to be willing to feel the death experience of that in order to birth that new version of myself.

I have definitely felt this in my business. And I continue to because, as I evolve as a woman, so does my business. This is the work that we're doing within the Business Image Mastermind. Which means there will be clients and people who have known a version of you, and they're attached to that version, so when you change, they are not happy.

They will come after you. They will tell you all kinds of things about yourself. And sometimes, they will do it publicly for everyone to see.

I had a very dear client that I still love to this day, but she went on a retreat with me years ago when I was a different person. It seems like every year, I create myself anew. It's just like the cells in your body turn over, what, every seven years, I think. Well, my identity shifts, like, every year because I'm growing so much.

And so, she came on this retreat with me years ago and then she had such a good time, she came back for another one, years later. And it was a very different experience. Now, the women who were with me for the first time thought it was amazing. They loved it. They didn't know the old me and the old experience.

But this client was comparing the two, and there was no comparison. And she was upset. And I totally understand why. Because she was attached and she liked the version of me that I had to let die to keep growing, not only personally, but also keep growing the business so I could get my work out to more people.

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The same goes for the School of Self-Image. When I decided to let French Kiss Life die so that I could birth something new, the women who met me and knew me through that brand, many of them were upset. And again, I totally get it.

That brand had meant so much to them and had affected their lives in such positive ways, they were afraid to let that go. They were afraid for me to change because what does that do to their world? It rocks it a little bit.

But the ones who have kept going with me, I've watched their growth and it's been so fun because we just keep growing. We just keep expanding. We just keep stepping into that mystery of life. And I will tell you all, there are some beautiful things hanging out there.

But if you want to experience that, you have to be willing for people to not like your changes. Now, what we often do – and listen, I have done this, so I know this pattern. But we'll make a change, and then when someone doesn't like it, we will either, A, think that we made the wrong change. Because the people around us don't like it, we'll start to doubt our own change and the decision that led up to it.

Or, we will start apologizing and justifying our change, “Oh, I'm so sorry. I'm sorry if that offended you. I'm so sorry. Let me tell you why I am doing this. Let me convince you to like my changes.” Or, the discomfort becomes so great that we'll abandon our change, and we'll revert back to the self that we were being that pleased those people who were attached and liked the version of ourselves that we want to let go of.

So, it comes down to the question, what do you do when people don't like your changes? And the answer is, you do nothing. You don't try to convince them. You don't try to justify your changes. And you certainly don't go back to who you were that you're trying to get away from.

You let people be upset with your changes. Now, that sounds easy, right? And in theory, it is. But when you've spent a lifetime being afraid of people not liking you or being afraid of disappointing people, or at the core of it, being afraid of being abandoned and being alone and being crucified and for people saying bad things about you, when you've avoided that your entire life and it's helped you survive, this is not easy work.

And this is why you must have emotional mastery to grow. In fact, all of – let's see, what is it? April. So, March within the School of Self-Image, we did a whole month on emotional mastery, learning how to feel our emotions, learning to understand them and not react to them.

Because if you're reacting to them, the moment someone comes along and says, “I don't like your change,” you're going to start trying to change your external world to make them happy, at the sacrifice of yourself and who you want to become and what you want to create in your life.

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I did this at the beginning of my business. I would put something out there and someone wouldn't like part of it. They thought it should be different. And so, I would want to change it, "Oh, that one person doesn't like it. Let me go change it and make that one person happy," versus just staying true to myself and putting out into the world what felt aligned and good for me, trusting that the universe is always working with certain principles and that the universe is always sending you what is aligned for you at that moment in your life.

Which means, some people aren't going to like it. Some people are going to have thoughts about it that are not favorable. But that's just the way the world works. And when you really understand this, when you really understand energy, you will not waste your energy trying to please a few at the expense of yourself and the many that you will attract.

Trying to please that one friend who you don't even like hanging out with because she's complaining all of the time, because she's never happy, you're going to miss out on the many friends and people you would attract who would be a better fit for the woman you're becoming.

But yet, this is what we do. Until the day comes that we are tired of doing it. I think this is why you hear so many women of age speak of the beauty of getting older. I feel like we all have a threshold of what we're no longer willing to tolerate. And sometimes, it takes us years to get there, and we realize, "Hey, listen, life is too short. I only have so many years left. Do I want to spend it trying to please people and miss out on who I could become?" who I believe you came here to be?

And it just dawned on me, as I was speaking, that from a biological perspective, this all makes sense. When you're young, your drive internally is to reproduce. For most people. Some people choose not to. It's all good. But that biological drive is there, so that means you need to be liked, mostly by the opposite sex.

You need to have a sense of belonging to build a family, to do all of those things that we're biologically wired to do. But you know, when you start hitting your 40s and 50s and those eggs are drying up, there's like a whole new life that awaits you, a life where you get to shed these patterns that have held you back for so long, a life where you get to become the best version of you, a life that is hanging out in the mystery.

Are you willing to step into it? And if so, are you willing for people to not like it? Because that will be part of that journey. Now, I know, as I'm talking, some of you are probably thinking, "This sounds very selfish. This sounds like you just don't care about what people think."

And in a way, it is selfish. It's me taking care of self. Because if I'm not taking care of me, what good am I to you, to my daughter, to my family, to my community? Full of resentment, full of fear and anxiety. That's not helpful to the world. But also, I know us, meaning I know the kind of women that I attract. And at our core, we will always be caring. We will always love and love hard.

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We will always have a sensitivity about us. And I think that's a beautiful thing. I don't ever want to stop caring about people. I don't think I could even if I tried. That's why I was a nurse for so many years. I love people. But what I don't love is when I let my fear of people stop me. And that's what this whole people-pleasing thing is about.

It's not about loving people and caring about people. It's about being afraid of people and their brains. Because when someone doesn't like your changes, they just have thoughts about you, so you're afraid of other people's thoughts about you. You're afraid of their brain.

However, when you get to know your own brain, you realize all of our brains are a little scary, and amazing. Brains are not something to be afraid of. Therefore, people aren't something to be afraid of.

So, when people don't like your changes, all that matters is that you like your changes. Do you like who you're becoming? And are you willing to feel the discomfort of other people's rejection in order to keep stepping into more of her?

I love you all. Have a beautiful week and I will 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](http://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.