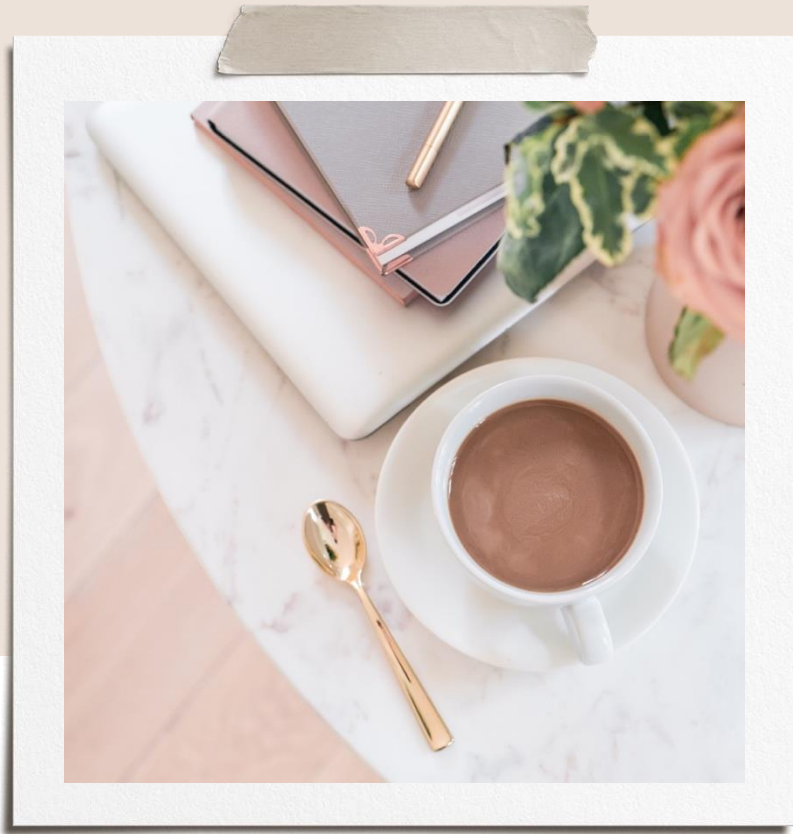


VIDEO TRANSCRIPT



EPISODE 283

The Outside-In Approach to Change

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The Outside-In Approach to Change

If you're familiar with personal development, that means you're also familiar with the inside-out approach to change, which means your thoughts and your feelings create your reality. But in this episode, I want to talk about the outside-in approach to change.

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. Welcome to another episode. I woke up in a funk this morning, so this is going to be really fun. Does this ever happen to you? You wake up and you're in a funk and you don't even know why?

And I've really been thinking about why I was in this funk because, the truth is, life is good. I woke up this morning healthy. I had a great weekend. I went to not one but two NBA games. I've never been to an NBA game. I had the best time. I have so many amazing friends and I have a family that I love.

Life is good, and yet I was in a funk this morning. And I find that we don't talk about this often enough. Especially people who you may think are successful, I think we can build a narrative of, "Oh, their life is just so great. They just have it all figured out." Well, I am here to tell you, this is not true, my friend.

And for me, what I was able to discover this morning as to why I was in my funk-ness, was I am in a big growth state. I've set some really big goals for myself this year. I have many different projects going on. And I'm growing into it. And it's painful because with growth states, it also means you have to let parts of yourself die. And that is not fun, especially when those parts have served you on so many levels.

And so, it's me going through that and also me trying to find my leisurely hustling mode. I've talked about this concept many times of leisurely hustling. And as I'm growing, I don't want to grow and hustle my way there. I'm trying to grow with the same energy that's gotten me to here.

And so, I'm figuring a lot of things out. But the point is, I was in a funk. And this actually inspired today's podcast because I know this happens for so many of you. You get in a funk and you sit around in your house with your same thoughts that put you in that funk, trying to get out of a funk.

And yes, I'm sure many of you listening to this podcast, you're not new to the personal development world. And you understand the idea that your thoughts create how you feel.

Nothing outside of you creates how you feel. It is always your thinking. So, with that knowledge, what a lot of people do, myself included, is we sit around and just write down all of our thoughts and we do a lot of thought work.

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And listen, that is a beautiful thing. Doing thought work has gotten me to where I am today. And I also think we can use it against us. We can use working on our thoughts as a way to escape life and not show up. Y'all know who I'm talking about. And you know who I'm talking to.

And so, I want to address the outside-in approach to personal growth. Not a lot of people are talking about this in the personal development space. In fact. Many people will tell you not to do this. Don't go and try to change your external world to feel better. Just sit at home, write down all your thoughts, and try to feel better.

And you can do that. But listen, you all, we live in a material world. We are spiritual beings having a very human, physical experience. And I want us to use all of the resources that we have available to us to grow and to make our lives better.

One of my dear friends said recently that what makes my approach unique and what is unique to the School of Self-Image is, while we do a lot of internal work – we work a lot on our thoughts, don't get me wrong. We also do a lot of external work.

We work on the outside-in and the inside-out. So, my whole coaching philosophy is built around that we have two worlds. We have our inner world, which consists of our thoughts, our beliefs, our feelings, and our overall general state of being. And then, we have our outside world, which is everything outside of us.

Now, the reason why so many people get this wrong is that they try to change their outside world to feel better and to escape doing the work that's required, which is elevating your thoughts. If you don't do that, it doesn't matter how much you change your outside world.

But what I'm presenting to you is that you can begin to change your outside world to help you think better and to see yourself in a different way. And as you begin to see yourself in a different way, which is what self-image is, you open up and you expand your possibilities because you can only ever create to the edge of your self-image.

Whatever you think you're capable of, whoever you think you are will determine the results that you create in your life. And what creates your self-image? It comes down to your thoughts about yourself. But let's talk about how we can use the outside world to see ourselves differently and to begin to elevate our thinking.

Let's talk about the outside-in approach to change. So, as I was mentioning, this morning, I work up in a funk. Now, here's the cool thing, is that now when I get into funks – unlike the old me who was very dramatic about it – now I just see it as a part of the human experience.

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So, I don't add another layer of resistance thinking, "Oh my god, my life is falling apart. I should know better by now. This shouldn't be happening. What did I do? What am I attracting?" all of that stuff. I just don't go there anymore.

I'm like, "Okay, you are having a funk day. And it's all good. Nothing to be upset about." And then, I do go into inquiry of, "What's going on here?" And sometimes, I'll do a thought download and look at my thinking. And then sometimes, I just change my outside world.

So, let me give you an example. Today, when I was feeling like I was in a funk and I identified, "Okay, I'm just growing. I'm stepping into a new version of myself. This isn't fun. It's a little painful, and I'm figuring out my leisurely hustling mode with all of this expansion," then what did I do?

I was like, "Alright, girl, go put on a gorgeous outfit and let's get out of this house." I focused on changing my outside, my style, and my environment to spark new thoughts. It made it so much easier.

Now, notice, I didn't do that just to escape and not address what was going on within me. I used it as a tool to access better thoughts. So, as I was getting dressed, I was thinking, "I'm just so proud of you. I'm proud that you're just not wallowing in this. I'm proud that you still get up and you still get out and you still show up. I love the way you look. I love when you put effort into how you present yourself to yourself."

And those kinds of thoughts, I started to spiral in a different direction. By using my outfit, and then getting out of the house, which for me is always symbolic of getting out of my head – when I'm in my house, that's usually when I'm in my head. When I step out of the house, it's like, "Okay, we're not going to focus on that craziness in your head right now. We're going to just go out and appreciate the world. We're going to change the focus."

Because here's the thing, you all. I know that we often say your thoughts create your reality. And there is some truth to that. But it goes even deeper. Because your thoughts are creating your feelings and your feelings are creating your energy. It's actually your energy is creating your reality.

And so, I will do whatever I can, whether it's work on a thought or change up the environment, or how I'm sowing up, to elevate my energy. Because different energies are attracting different things.

And so, an example is, today, when I got dressed and I was feeling better because I liked what I saw in the mirror, I was like, "Okay, alright, I see you. You're getting it together. You're not going to let this funk take you down." And then, I went out into the world from that elevated energy, guess what happened? I met someone who was like a missing piece to the puzzle that I've been working on recently. And from that, I started to really reach for elevated thoughts.

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Now, I think about what would have happened if I would have just sat at home and just worked on my thoughts, in my PJs, in my house, in my head, which I have done many times. There is nothing wrong with that. But this is a more advanced approach and it's also way more fun. But I think about, had I done that, it would have been so much harder to access that higher energetic state.

This month, within the School of Self-Image membership, we are focused on enhancing our environments. And it's been so much fun to see the changes that these women are experiencing on the inside because they are focusing on elevating the outside.

During this month, I've also had some really good questions that have been posed to me in our Q&A calls, in our coaching calls. And one of them I thought was really interesting because she asked, "How is this different from outsourcing our emotions?"

So, I actually have a podcast where I talk about outsourcing your emotions to other people. And that's when you're like, "Hey, you behave differently so that I can feel better." So, her question was, outsourcing your emotions to your environment, "Hey, let me change this thing on the outside so that I can feel better on the inside."

And so, I wanted to address that because I think it's such a great question. And the way I see it is that we are given resources and we are given choice. And how we choose to use our resources can either enhance our lives or it can do the opposite.

This is very different than trying to control and manipulate other people to feel better. This is about you making intentional conscious decisions about how you dress, how you show up, the environments you place yourself in, how you keep your home, how you keep your car, where you go shop.

Because all of those things, number one, are telling a story about how you see yourself and they are affecting how you think about yourself. They are affecting your thoughts. So, why not work on the outside-in while you're also working on the inside-out.

Over the past few days, I've been sitting down and writing a lot about my own journey. I've been asked to speak at my friend Aprille Franks' conference in Dallas called Epic Woman. I'm so excited. And she's asked me to speak on reinvention. Because I have reinvented myself many times.

And if you know my story, you know that's true. But if you think about where I came from, how I grew up, and you take that version of me and you put it beside the version of me today, a lot of people don't even think it's possible. And many people will look, even at my photos, and say, "No way, that's not you. That can't be you. You look nothing alike"

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And so, in doing this introspection of my own story and my own journey, one of the things that I notice that I have done throughout this journey was, while I was working on the inside, I was always, always elevating the outside at the same time.

Now, one may say, “What came first, the chicken or the egg?” Did your thoughts cause you to elevate the external? Of course, because I had a thought, like I want to make the external better.

However, when I would make these changes in my external world, on the outside, it birthed these new thoughts and beliefs about myself. And those thoughts and beliefs opened up a more expanded self-image that allowed for greater results in my life.

Now, I feel like I have to say this again so that I am super clear. I am not suggesting that you skip thought work. Because, as I said earlier, the thoughts and the feelings that those thoughts generate is what is forming your self-image. So, you can dress up all day and live in a beautiful home and be around certain environments that most people would love to be in.

But if you have negative thoughts about yourself, who cares about any of that? Because at the end of the day, the one thing that we’re all after is a feeling. We want to feel better. And so, if you’re not feeling better by making these external changes, you’ve got to go within and figure out what’s going on.

What I’m suggesting is that we use the world and its resources as tools to help us to think different thoughts about ourselves and what’s possible. This is why I love style.

At the end of the day, it’s just clothing. It’s just fabric. But when you think about what style can do for you, when you think about how style allows you to express your truest self and how it allows you to see a version of yourself that maybe you haven’t seen in a while, it is a powerful tool to change your self-image, to change your thinking about yourself.

The same goes for environments. I am 100% convinced that the reason why I am where I am in my life right now is that I consciously and intentionally put myself in different environments and around different people. And being around those people gave me access to possibilities and thoughts that I didn’t know I was allowed to think, or that I didn’t know was possible.

I tell my clients all of the time – because we get this idea within the coaching world that because our thoughts are what’s creating our feelings and therefore how we show up in the world and the results we create, then we should tolerate being around people that don’t serve us and just work on our thoughts.

Now, I will say, in the beginning, there is a beauty to that because you get a lot of practice on thought work. But at a certain point, I’m like, “Life is too short, y’all. I don’t want to be hanging

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around a bunch of people that I have to sit around and work on my thoughts to be able to tolerate them.”

No, I would rather put myself around people where I can use my brain and its energy to solve bigger problems than how to feel decent around someone. You know what I’m saying? It’s why there are certain relatives that I just choose not to be around. And I love them, but I love me more.

I spent a whole lot of my life not loving myself. I’m not doing it anymore. It’s not fun and it certainly doesn’t help you create better results in your life. But when you start loving yourself unapologetically and deciding on purpose who and where and how you want to spend your time in a way that feels good and elevates your thinking, you might be surprised how you have to do a lot less thought work.

And you can use your thoughts and your brain in much more creative ways, to grow and expand and to make your dreams come true.

I’m taking this concept of outside-in and inside-out and applying it to the work that we’re going to be doing within the School of Self Image membership next month. The topic is going to be on how to be attractive. And the work that we’re going to be doing within the membership is going to help women become the most attractive woman they’ve ever met to themselves.

And yes, we are going to be working on our thoughts and our feeling state because that can be attractive or not attractive. But we’re also going to utilize the external world to do things for ourselves that help us to feel more attractive.

And when you can combine your inner and outer world and you’re constantly reaching for more elevated experiences in both of those worlds, I think that’s when the magic happens and you can grow so much faster and it’s way more fun.

Now, I get it if the argument is, “Well, it’s always starting on the inside.” Because it’s true. You have to have a thought, “Hey, I’m going to clean up my bedroom,” or, “I’m going to put on a beautiful outfit.” That thought is what inspires you to go and take that action. I get that 100%.

But the nuance here is – let’s take my example from this morning where I woke up in a funk. The inside-out approach is, go sit down with your journal and write down all of the reasons why you’re in a funk. Look at all the thoughts in your brain.

And there are many days that I do this, especially if it’s something that’s really ignited within me and I’m having some big feelings. I will get that journal out in a heartbeat. But sometimes, I feel like we do thought work in a way that doesn’t serve us.

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We use it to avoid getting up, getting out, and taking action in our lives. Because we tell ourselves, “Well, as long as I’m having shitty thoughts, I probably shouldn’t go and do anything.”

So, what I’m suggesting is, sometimes, the answer might be to get up, get dressed, and get out of the house. Go do something different. Go try something. Go meet some new people. Or leave the room where a bunch of people are complaining. Shake up your outer world to help you access new thoughts and new possibilities about yourself.

I was talking to a dear friend of mine who does a lot of thought work, and yet, she was feeling really dull and like she was in a slump. And so, she moved to a new city, and all of a sudden, she had all this new inspiration. She was excited again about life.

Now, could she have gotten there without the new city? Yeah, I think she could have. But it would have taken a lot more work. So, why? We’re already working hard enough, ladies, and gentlemen, if you’re listening. Why add that extra hard work to something we can make more simple?

But the beauty is, you don’t have to move to a new city. I’m not moving to a new city any time soon. Sometimes, for me, the outside-in approach is buying myself flowers, putting music on in the house, going out to dinner, watching an inspiring documentary.

Last week, we went to the ballet and then we went to the two NBA games. And then, spur of the moment, we decided to go to our favorite place to eat and we sat at the bar and we ended up meeting this gentleman. It was divine. Just meeting him gave me access to new thoughts that I could have never accessed had I been sitting at home working on my thoughts.

Now, here’s the really important thing. And I want you to leave this this. This is not just about outside in. Because as I said earlier, if you don’t change the inside, I don’t care how many changes you make on the outside, you’re not going to get what you’re really after, and that’s to feel better.

You have to do this simultaneously with the inner work. Using the outside world and the changes and the upgrades and the elevations that you’re doing externally to consciously think new things about yourself.

It’s not just inside-out and it’s not just outside-in. It is both. So, I want you to think about, what are some changes that you can make on the outside that reflects a new image back to you?

Maybe it’s a skincare routine. Maybe it’s dressing in something beautiful. Maybe it’s hanging out with a different group of people. Maybe it’s shopping at a different store. But work on the outside in while you’re also working from the inside out. Because as I said earlier, when you focus on both of these at the same time, magic happens.

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Have a beautiful week, everyone and I cannot 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.