

EPISODE NO. 302

10 Little Ways to Boost Your Self-Image



There's an old proverb that says, "It is better to take many steps in the right direction than to make a great leap forward only to stumble backward." This episode is about 10 little things you can do to boost your self 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.

Hello, hello, gorgeous friends. How's everybody feeling right now? I don't know about you all, but I've been going through it. I think it's so important that we share these moments. Especially someone like me, who is a coach, who is in the public quite a bit. I want to be transparent and open about my process and what goes on behind the scenes, because I want you to know that no matter what you're going through, you're not alone. No one avoids this. This is part of the human experience and it's important that we share this with each other. Because nothing is worse than going through it and feeling like you're the only one. Then you start telling yourself that something's wrong with you because everybody else seems so happy on Instagram or Facebook or out in public.

What I want you to know is that no one escapes this, my friend. This is part of the human journey. It's part of growth, it's part of expansion.

10 Little Ways To Boost Your Self Image

That's how I look at it. I don't look at it any longer, like something's going wrong. I look at it as, "Oh, I'm hitting my own self-image ceiling. I need to understand what's going on in my brain so that I can break through it." So that's where I am. But I'm also having an amazing time in my life.

My parents just came in last night around 10 o'clock. So my mom got up this morning, cooked some grits and eggs. She is a true Southern mama. My daughter came over this morning, which is super fun. So we've all been hanging out and now I'm in my office getting to work. So let's dive into this topic. I think it's very apropos for where I am right now. And for maybe where you are. So let's talk about 10 little ways to boost your self image.

Now I want to start off by saying that I am a big advocate of big decisions and big action and big changes. Those serve a place in our life. But when you're in it, and when you're first starting this journey, I will tell you from experience, it's the little tiny things that you do every single day that end up creating big results over time. When I look back over my own self-image journey, I've had some moments where I took big action, made big decisions and had like quantum shifts, which are fun. But the majority of my journey has been the little daily actions that I've been consistent with, that in the moment did not feel like a lot. But what it was doing was confirming a new self image, building evidence for the future me. Versus the daily actions that just kept reconfirming an old version of myself that was keeping me stuck.

The reason why I want you to consider focusing on the tiny, the small. Is that number one, you have less resistance around it. When we have a lot of resistance around an action, the likelihood of us taking that action is very small. So for example, if you've been eating meat your entire life and tomorrow, you're like, "I'm going to just go and start being a vegan." That might be too big of a jump for you. Maybe you would start by just adding a little bit of vegetables into your diet, maybe eating one more serving of spinach. I don't know, whatever your vegetable of choice is. Instead of saying, "Starting tomorrow, I'm going to go to the gym every single day and work out for 90 minutes." When you haven't been working out at all. You're going to have a lot of resistance around that.

What if we just started with a 20 minute walk. And by doing that 20 minute walk or taking whatever this small step is, you begin to create momentum, you start to create evidence for your new self image. We will always create to the edge of our self image. So as you create more evidence for this more expansive self image, you're going to be creating new things.

10 Little Ways To Boost Your Self Image

Then you may find that one day you're so close to being a vegan because you've been adding in all those veggies. Or you have been walking and upping your minutes and now you're out in the park doing your walk and you're deciding to do pushups. The next thing you know, you're like, "I feel like going to the gym." And next thing you know, you're working out 90 minutes a day, if that's what you want to do.

But the small things turn into big things over time. Because what you're really doing is you are creating evidence for a future you. You are telling your brain, "Hey, listen, this is who we're becoming. We are taking steps in that direction. Versus standing still and reconfirming the self that keeps us stuck in so many patterns." Everything, everything is about energy. Your self image is a collection of energy. Your self image is the result of the thoughts that you have about yourself. Well, every thought you think has energy. So as you begin to think about yourself differently, you're going to start to feel differently. That's going to produce a different energy.

Now, what we're wanting to do is we're wanting to move it up and spiral upwards towards your expansion. Versus thinking a way that keeps you spiraling either downward or spiraling in circles and reconfirming and recreating the same types of energy. We want to expand your state of being so that we can expand what's possible for you. So this work is really about feeling better about yourself. Because when you feel good about yourself, you are willing to go out there and try new things. You're willing to go out there and believe in yourself. You're willing to go out there and be devoted to your dreams. You're willing to show up for them until you create the result you want.

When you're feeling good about yourself, everything comes back to you and your self image. This is why I'm so passionate about this work. It's why I want to share it with every woman possible. Because I know that when you transform your self image, the doors open for so many more opportunities. What you're really doing is aligning yourself with what it is that you want. But it really comes back to the every day, right now. How can you feel better about yourself right now?

So I'm going to share 10 little ways to boost your self image. These are the little ways I like to practice. Especially when I've had a week, like I've had this past week. And not that I haven't been feeling good about myself, I've just been having a lot of stuff come up for me. I've needed a self-image boost. So here are 10 little ways that you can boost yours. You ready? The first thing you can do, and I recommend this often to clients is to sit down right now and write a success list.

10 Little Ways To Boost Your Self Image

We are often so busy looking at how we think we're not doing well, looking at how we felt in the past, looking at how we're not good enough, looking at how we're not successful. That we fail to recognize all the ways that we have been successful.

I did this recently, actually. Because I'm like a lot of y'all, I'm so focused on the next thing I forget to really just slow down and look at, "Wow, look at what you've already done." So I spent an hour with my journal, just writing down all of the successes that I could think of. I even went back to being a kid. I learned to ride a bike, I learned to swim. I dropped out of high school, but then I immediately went back and got my diploma and went straight into nursing school and graduated with honors. I had the courage to leave a nursing career and start my own business. I just went on and on for hours. I got up this morning, I got dressed. Success.

I will tell you, after an hour of just stopping for a moment to recognize and honor and appreciate all of my successes, I felt successful. Just by doing that one exercise. If you think about your future self, she's probably successful. So you need to feel successful now in order to be a match for the success you want. This is a mistake that I see so many of you make. You're waiting to feel successful until you've checked off some box in the future. So you hold yourself out of alignment with the very feeling that you need to be feeling now in order to be a match for the success you want. So writing a success list is one way to feel good about yourself, to recognize all of the things that you've already accomplished.

Okay, number two, and this is important, ladies and gentlemen, if you're listening. You're not going to be surprised by this one, but it's something that I believe in 100%, money back guarantee. It's why I'm such an advocate of style because it matters. Number two is get dressed up. Now what getting dressed up looks like for you is maybe different from me. But it's about you dressing up into your future. It's about you being that version that you imagine yourself to be in the future. That's up there, in the future, being her now. One of the ways to do that is to get dressed up.

Because here's the thing, every time you look at yourself, you're having thoughts about yourself. So if you wake up and you're in a funk and you choose clothes to feed that funky feeling, it's going to be hard for you to get out of that thinking loop. You'll simply just keep reconfirming, "See, I'm in a funk. Things don't work out for me. This is taking too long. This is too hard. I'm not good enough. I don't have enough." Whatever it is that's causing the funkiness. Your clothes, if you're not intentional, will just reconfirm that to you.

10 Little Ways To Boost Your Self Image

However, when you get dressed up, what you're really doing is telling the universe, "Listen, I'm available for more. I am going to be that version of me that I imagine in the future right now because I want to welcome that future into my life." Now, sometimes when I say things like, get dressed up. Your mind wants to be overwhelmed, you want to make it way more complicated than it actually is. I often say, "It's just as easy to put on a dress as it is to put on a pair of sweatpants or yoga pants." In fact, I find it easier many times. So we're just wanting to take those little steps in the right direction. So when you wake up tomorrow or even right now in the middle of the day, if you look down and you don't like what your clothes are saying about you, you don't like how they feel, go change. Don't do that to yourself. Go put on something that makes you feel confident, beautiful, bold, whatever it is that you want to feel. Dress up into that feeling.

Number three way to boost your self image is to do something for someone else. Oftentimes we can be so in our own head about ourselves, that we forget that there's a big world full of people who can use a hand, who can use an act of kindness or a kind word that doesn't take that long, it's such a little thing. What I love about doing this is that it not only takes you out of your own head for a bit, when you start thinking about someone else and how you can support them, help them, do something kind for them. But it's also reconfirming a self image of, I have a woman that has value. I have things to offer the world. It also is an alignment with your future, most likely. Because when I imagine our future selves, she is so full of life and she just wants to pass that on. So doing this one little thing of helping someone else or doing something for someone else, will boost your self image.

Number four, tidy up an area. This one is big. I experienced this one this past weekend. I have been traveling a lot and my bedroom looked like a bomb went off. I have been living out of my suitcase, taking clothes out, having like a day to unpack, wash clothes, repack. I walked into my bedroom this weekend and it just irritated me. I didn't like what it said about me. Now on one hand, I can make it mean I've had a really full summer and it's true, very proud of it. But it was also saying, "Girl, get yourself together. This is not how you like to live. Cluttered really messes up my psyche."

So I took the morning out and I got it clean. I will tell you, I feel so much better because now when I walk into my room, it says what I want it to say. I am a woman who has a beautiful, clean space. I am a woman who takes care of her things. I am a woman who's organized. I am a woman who values really beautiful spaces. Those are things I love thinking about myself. So I use my environment to reconfirm those beliefs. Sometimes I add something into my environment, which is another way you can boost your self image.

10 Little Ways To Boost Your Self Image

You can add a vase of flowers or a book that really fits into your future.

But in this case, if you've got a lot of clutter, find one small area, maybe it's a drawer in your bathroom, maybe it's your desk, maybe it's in the corner of your living room, maybe it's the pile of papers on your kitchen counter. But find one little area and tidy it up, clean it up. And notice how you feel better. You look at that area now and all of a sudden you have better thoughts about yourself and that area. It is so much easier to think beautiful thoughts when you're in beautiful spaces. So tidy up one small area, because again, remember, that momentum will start to happen. You're going to feel good about yourself, you are going to see immediate rewards of your actions. That momentum you will notice will start to carry over into the next part of your day, filling a little bit better. And who knows what that better feeling will drive you to do?

Okay. Step number five, keep a small promise to yourself. This one is so important. Instead of making big grand promises that you know you're not going to keep. Let's just make a little promise that you are going to fulfill in your days. Maybe the little promise is, I'm going to stretch for 10 minutes this morning. Maybe the little promise is, I'm going to write one page for my book. Maybe the little promise is, I'm going to clean up that one bathroom drawer. But when you create little promises that you follow through on, you start to feel good about yourself, you start to build your own self trust and therefore self-confidence. So don't negate the power of these little promises. Because these little promises, once you get the momentum going, is going to lead to bigger promises that you will keep to yourself because it feels so good to keep promises to ourselves. So, that's number five.

Number six, I love this one. Give yourself a future self pep talk. This is something that we do a lot within the school of self image membership. It's something that I do every single day. And listen, over the last week, I've been talking with my future self a lot. But a future self pep talk is you going into the future and visualizing who that future you is and then talking to yourself from her. She is the part of you that's going to tell you things like, "Oh honey, you're doing great. Don't be so hard on yourself. Keep going. I love you. You don't realize how amazing you are. But keep going until you do. Show up for the workout, it's going to be worth it. You're going to feel so good after. Post the blog. I got you. If you get some negative comments, I've got you. We've got each other. We're going to show the world what is up. We're going to show the world what we're capable of."

When you start to give yourself these future self pep talks, you start to build your confidence, your courage. And those emotions are going to cause you to show up for your dreams.

10 Little Ways To Boost Your Self Image

So one of the ways that you can boost your self image is to channel that future you, let her give you a pep talk when you're feeling down. When your best friend's not around, or you can't get up with your coach, or you feel like you have no support, guess what? She is with you all of the time. So give yourself a future self pep talk.

Number seven, go for a workout. Get moving. Now I know some of y'all have resistance around this. Some days I do, too. But what I know is there has never been a time that I went for a workout that I didn't feel better afterwards. It's not going for the workout that makes me feel bad about myself. Because not only am I not doing something that I know my body needs, but I'm breaking a promise to myself. So it's this downward spiral. So start small, get up right after you listen to this podcast and go for a 10 minute walk or stretch for 10 minutes. Get moving because energy needs to move. The more you move, the more you're going to invite energy in. It's just like this beautiful dance with life when you're in movement. The act of moving, the act of exercising. Think about what that is telling yourself about you.

I am imagining it's telling yourself, "Hey, listen, I'm a woman who loves and respects myself. I am a woman who wants to take care of myself. I am a woman who does what she says she's going to do. I am fit. I am healthy." That's what exercising actually is doing, it's building that fit and healthy self image. When you see yourself as fit and healthy, guess what you'll be more inclined to do? Work out, eat well, take care of yourself. So go for a workout, get moving.

Okay, number eight. Do a future act. Okay, here's what I mean. This is very similar to the future self pep talk. But instead of asking yourself what she would say to you, ask yourself this question, what is one little thing my future self is doing that I can do today? Such a good question, right? What is one thing my future self is doing that I can do today? So maybe your future self is buying herself flowers. Maybe your future self is getting dressed up. Maybe your future self is going for a workout. Maybe your future self is relaxing and reading a book. Maybe your future self is indulging in a spa treatment, or she's giving herself a facial. Think about something that your future self is doing, that you could be doing today and do it. It will give yourself a self image boost and it will align you with your future self.

Number nine, try something new. If we want to experience new things, we have to be willing to try new things. I find that trying new things is one of the fastest ways to change your self image. Because in doing that, you're going to have new thoughts, you're going to see yourself in new ways and you're going to learn new things. But let's really dig into how trying new things boost yourself image. When you try new things, what are you telling yourself?

10 Little Ways To Boost Your Self Image

That you are courageous, that you're not afraid to fail, that you've got your own back, that you're curious, that you want to experience more life.

Those kinds of thoughts, think about the results of them over time. Think about what you will create, think about all of the newness that you will have in your life when you see yourself that way. It's going to give you the courage to go out there and try even more new things and maybe fail, maybe have the time of your life. We don't know yet until you experience it. But it's saying, "Hey, listen, I am here to learn, to grow and to experience." That is a powerful, powerful self image.

Okay. Number 10, here's a little way to boost your self image. Now it may not seem little, but it actually is. It really comes down to you deciding and putting it on your calendar. But it's to plan a trip. Those who travel have access to new experiences, new people, and therefore new ideas, new ways of thinking. I will say when I started to travel was when my world opened up. I didn't even know what was possible until I actually experienced it and saw it. I was like, "Oh, we can wear a scarf as a top." I didn't know that until I was out traveling one day and I saw a woman doing that. Oh, we can eat escargot. I didn't even know that was a thing. Well, apparently it is. I would've never known had I not been in a country where they serve escargot. By the way, I'm not a huge escargot fan, but it was fun to experience it and try it once.

But without that exposure, I wouldn't even know these things. I wouldn't even know what was possible if I were not in rooms full of people who were thinking of things that I had no idea that we could even think. That was all by me having the courage to plan trips, small and large, that gave me access to new possibilities that I did not even know existed for me. So do you have a trip on your calendar? If not, what in the world? Let's get one booked. Listen, I can help you out here. We only have a few tickets left for SOSI Desert Live. This is my upcoming event that's going to be in Scottsdale, Arizona, November 3rd through the 6th. It's the most gorgeous time to be in Scottsdale. Just so you all know, the events I throw are extraordinary. You will not find another event out there like the ones I throw. They're an experience.

I don't want to just put you all in a room and bore you all day with content. I want you to experience the content. I want you to put it into practice. I want you to have life altering conversations. I want you to dance, I want you to laugh. I want you to experience what your future can and will look like by doing this work on your self image. This theme for SOSI Desert Live so excited about, it's called Your Stylish Life. Because listen, style is about so much more than what you wear. It's you designing your thoughts on purpose, you designing your surroundings on purpose. And yes, it is also about how you express your inside to the outside.

10 Little Ways To Boost Your Self Image

And that is what we're going to be covering over the course of this event. I have guest speakers coming in, just we are planning a phenomenal event for you all.

My last event was in Miami, back in February and 75% of the women in that room signed up immediately for this upcoming event. That's how good it was and this one is going to be even better. So if you have not gotten your ticket yet, and you want to plan a trip, boost your self image, come get in a room with us. I promise you, you will not be disappointed. You can go to schoolofselfimage.com/desert. And that is with one S because I used to spell it with two. I like dessert, too. But schoolofselfimage.com/desert. Get your ticket, get your Fanny in one of those seats and get ready to live your stylish life. I would love to meet you. I would love to see you there. Again, schoolofselfimage.com/desert.

Have a beautiful, beautiful week, everybody. Do these little things to boost your self image. Because boosting your self image will change your life. 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.