



EPISODE NO. 306

How To Shift From Doubt To Confidence

Okay, truth talk. I have been in a season of doubt. You all probably know what that feels like. It's when you have this overwhelming sense of uncertainty with a lot of fear and anxiety and worry. Not fun. But I think about a quote from Robert Hughes where he said, "The greater the artist, the greater the doubt. Perfect confidence is granted to the less talented as a consolation prize." So as you can see, doubt is normal. Nothing has gone wrong. But I don't want us to sit and doubt. We need to turn that doubt into confidence. And that is what I'm 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.

Hello, hello, my gorgeous friends. What a week it's been. I don't know about y'all, but I have been feeling a lot of doubt, and I don't like it. It's super uncomfortable and it makes me want to do things that I know don't serve me. So that's why we're talking about this topic today, because I've been working through my own doubt a lot recently, and I wanted to share with you how I am turning my doubt into confidence.

So let's start out by defining doubt and defining confidence. When you look up the definition of each, they're actually the opposite of each other. The definition of doubt is the feeling of uncertainty, and the definition of confidence is the feeling of certainty. Both feelings. And if you've been listening to this podcast for any amount of time, you know what creates a feeling is a thought.

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So when you have a lot of thoughts that are not positive about yourself, about what you're doing, what you're creating, you are going to have doubts. On the flip side, when you have thoughts about believing in yourself, when you have favorable thoughts about the power of what you're doing and imagining that it's going to work out in your favor, that you are going to achieve your goals. When you choose to believe those things, it creates confidence. It creates a sense of certainty in your brain.

Now, it seems so simple, right? We know if we think certain things, we're going to feel doubt, and if we think other things, we're going to feel confidence. So why does it feel so hard? Here's why. What you know now is certain. What is uncertain is that future that you are creating, so your brain is going to work hard to keep you in the certainty of the familiar. So anytime you go out to do extraordinary things, to reach extraordinary goals and you start changing your self-image, it is going to feel awful. It is not going to feel like rainbows and daisies, because your brain is going to be working against you. Not because the brain is out to get you. Not at all. Just because the brain is afraid of what's over the horizon.

Even though what's over the horizon are your dreams and everything you want, the brain is not convinced, and so it's going to give you all of these thoughts that will cause you to stay where you are if you listen to them. Thoughts like, "This isn't going to work. You're going to fail. People are going to judge you. Who do you think you are? It's never worked in the past. Why is it going to work now? You're not good enough." Right? All of the BS thoughts. And if you listen to those thoughts, you'll end up not doing what is required in order to achieve your goals.

Now, I've been dealing a lot with this lately. It's like I go through seasons of doubt. I know some of y'all can relate. There are moments in my life where I feel super confident. I can conquer the world. But there are moments where I just want to go hide in a cave, and this has been one of those seasons for me. And I've been really fascinated with myself. And this is something that I wish more people would talk about, because everyone deals with this. If someone tells you that they don't deal with doubt, then they're probably a sociopath. You probably should run. Because it's part of the human experience and it's part of being healthy, actually, because it's your brain trying to protect you. However, it's not very protective. So we have to be bigger than our own doubts.

But when you are changing and you are creating a new self-image that will open up new possibilities for you, it's going to be super uncomfortable and it's going to feel really true to you. When your brain says things like, "This isn't who you are," it's going to feel really true because you are becoming her.

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So it's not quite who you are yet, but the brain wants you to believe that it's not who you are so you'll go back to who you've been.

Are you with me? Can I get an amen? God, I wish that you all could amen me back so I know that we're all on the same page, because I want you to understand this. Because one of the ways to turn your doubt into confidence is that when the doubt arises, to know this, nothing has gone wrong. Nothing. What you are experiencing is absolutely normal. This is a big mistake that I see people make is that when they start to feel doubt, they use that as a reason not to go on. They think it's wrong that they're feeling that. So they want to do anything to stop feeling it, which often means them sabotaging themselves so that the feeling will go away.

Let me give you an example of what this looks like in a normal person's life. We're talking about myself. I am working on something really big. This is the next evolution of Tonya. This is what my closest friends have told me for years is my gift. And they've been begging me, begging me to create something around this topic, around this industry. And deep down, I know it is my gift. It's something that I'm just so naturally good at now, that I don't even see it as a gift. I'm just like, "Yeah, doesn't everybody know how to do this?" It just seems so intuitive to me. And the crazy thing is it hasn't always been that way. I had to learn it, but now that I've learned it, I'm like, "This is just so easy."

So anyway, getting back to what I was sharing with you, I'm creating something and because it's new, because I've never put something like this out into the world, I am having a lot of doubt, a lot of doubt, which is absolutely normal. And because I know it's normal, it's not wrecking me. I understand how the brain works and I understand this is just my scared little brain afraid for me to evolve to the next level because it doesn't know that the next level is okay. In fact, it's better than okay. So I am forging my way towards the doubt, and I am going to sashay right through it. And on the other side will be confidence. But you don't become confident by avoiding the hard things and avoiding the doubt. You become confident by doing the things that the doubt tells you not to do.

I also remember all of the times that I have felt this way. When I started my coaching business and I had my first coaching call, I was so full of doubt, but I was also so full of commitment. I showed up and I coached the best that I could. It would be quite interesting to hear a recording of that coaching call today. However, that's where I started. And then I think about a program that I ran for years called Slim, Chic & Savvy. It was my signature program. Women loved this program. I loved this program. And when I first put it out, I was having the exact same feeling.

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The same thing happened when I started my new company, School of Self-Image. I had a lot of doubt, but I kept going. I kept doing the things that doubt told me I shouldn't do.

That's the other way to overcome doubt. Whatever doubt is telling you to do, you need to do the opposite. So if doubt is telling you that you shouldn't record the podcast, record the podcast. If doubt is telling you that you're never going to be able to find your partner, then go on the dates. Whatever doubt is telling you, you're going to have to do the opposite, unless you want to get the result that doubt is telling you that you're going to get.

Okay, are we all on the same page? I'm imagining that you're saying yes.

So let me share with you some other ways that I turn doubt into confidence, because it's something that I'm doing all of the time, which is how I'm able to continuously create results. I want you all to know that when you see me, it's not that I don't ever have doubt. I want you to know that probably a lot of what you're feeling, I feel too. It's part of growing. It's part of evolving. It's part of changing our identities. That's all normal. The difference is I don't let it stop me. I continue to grow and overcome my doubt, instead of letting doubt control me.

So here's some other things that I do to turn my doubt into confidence. I love to doubt my doubt, meaning whatever doubt is telling me, I love to doubt it. I love to look at all of the reasons why that may not be true. I like to give my internal microphone to the part of me that believes in me, that knows that it's possible, that can see a future that maybe I cannot yet see. But if we don't give that part of ourselves some microphone time, then the other part is going to take over naturally. It's just the way we're wired.

So as I was saying in the beginning, doubt is the feeling of uncertainty. So it's a lot of thoughts that make you feel uncertain. Where confidence is the feeling of certainty. So a lot of thoughts that create certainty. So I like to spend time creating thoughts that build certainty. This is inevitable. It's going to happen. I'm so excited. Everything just keeps getting better. I'm growing, I'm learning, I'm getting better. The world is a beautiful place. I'm excited to be a part of this. I have so much value to offer. You can see how I can just go on this rampage to build my confidence, to build my excitement.

Because listen here, you all, I want to give you a news flash. You get to decide what you want to think about everything. And one of the questions I love to ask people, "Of all the thoughts that you can think, why would you believe and think that shitty thought?" It doesn't serve you at all. And yet if we don't manage our brain, that's just where it goes.

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So we have to constantly be aware of what our brain is thinking and direct it, guide it, cheer it on, tell it where to focus, so that you can begin to create that feeling of confidence.

The other thing that I love to do, and this is one of my secret hacks to feeling better and to building confidence, and I call this a future self act. Okay, so here's how it works, and I want you all to try this with me. I want you to think about your goal. Maybe you have a business goal. Maybe you want to grow your business to six or seven figures. Maybe you have a goal around your health and wellness. Maybe you want to be able to run a marathon. Maybe you want to lose weight. Maybe you have a goal around your social life. You want to build a community of friends, or you want to meet the love of your life. Maybe you have an environmental goal. Maybe you want to move to a new place or buy a new home. Okay? So just think about your goal.

Now, I want you to imagine yourself having achieved your goal. Okay, so you have achieved the goal and you're in that version of you. You're in that moment in the future where the goal is achieved. And I want you to see yourself and I want you to see what you're doing in that future, having achieved that goal. Are you going out to dinner with friends? Are you laughing? Are you working out? Are you up on stage speaking to people? What are you doing in that future? And you're going to come back to today and you're going to do some sort of version of that today. Okay?

So let's say, for example, in your future, you are up on stage speaking to thousands of people. Well, maybe that's not possible today. But do you know what is possible? You pull out that iPhone or a Samsung, if you're a Samsung person, which I'm confused by, but okay, no judgment. But you pull out your phone and you open it up to an app called Instagram, and then there's a button where you press live. You just press it. And all of a sudden, you get broadcasted to a bunch of people who are going to be watching you on Instagram. That is a future self act.

And every time I feel a lot of doubt, anytime I feel like maybe I'm stuck, although we're never stuck, we just are thinking the same thoughts over and over again, which makes us feel like we're stuck, but whenever I'm doing that to myself, I think about the future version of me and what she's doing. And sometimes she's not even doing anything related to the thing that I'm being stressed by. Right?

So for example, if I'm being stressed by something at work, when I go into my future, she might be doing something totally different unrelated to work. In fact, that happened recently. I was thinking about my future self when I was dealing with this obstacle in the business. Something I just could not figure out. So I was like, "Okay, I'm going to do this future self act."

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I was like, "Okay, what's my future self doing?"

And she was out playing pickleball. That's what my future self was doing when I thought about her. And this is how crazy this is, you all. So I was like, "Okay." I called up my daughter, I'm like, "Hey, you want to go play some pickleball?"

And she was like, "Yeah, let's go." So I go and I meet her and we play pickleball, and I swear to you, while we were playing pickleball, I got an idea about the obstacle that I was dealing with. I was like, "This could be the answer." And I was like, "Oh my goodness, this works."

When we live in our future today, we start bringing that creative, fun, vibrant, loving, joyful, light, excited energy into our present. That's when magic happens, and that's when doubt melts away. And there, you find your most confident self.

So ask yourself, what's a future self act that you can do today to build confidence, because taking action, creating evidence for what you want to believe, taking action to put you in the energy of your future is magical. It helps to build your confidence in action. Procrastination only builds doubt, so stop it.

Another thing that I do that helps me to turn doubt into confidence is I work out. I've been working out a lot lately. Y'all are about to see Tonya version 5.0. I'm so excited to get healthy and fit and to feel great as I'm getting older. And anytime I go to the gym and I do hard things that my brain is telling me that I can't do, and I do it anyway, it provides evidence that I can do hard things, that I can be uncomfortable and overcome it and impress myself. So working out is another way that I turn my doubt into confidence.

And then the last thing that I'm going to say here, and I think this is so underrated, and most of y'all need to be doing this, is dressing like your most confident self. I am telling you all, when I put on an outfit that just makes me feel myself. You know what kind of outfit I'm talking about, right? When you look in the mirror and you're like, "Wow, I put forth some effort. I love the way this looks on me. I'm feeling good," that impacts how you see yourself. It impacts how you feel. You can dress in a way to fuel your doubt, or you can dress in a way to fuel your confidence.

This is why during the season of doubt that I'm in, I am dressing to the nines. I am taking it up about five notches. Not for anyone else. I don't care what other people think. In fact, they probably think I'm crazy dressing as fancy as I'm dressing, but I'm doing it for myself.

There's this term called encloded cognition, which means what you clothe yourself in affects your cognition, your cognitive, your thinking, how you see yourself, therefore, how you feel.

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So one of my secret hacks to creating confidence is dressing as my most confident version. And that's going to look different for all of us. Like for you, it might be more rocker chic. Maybe it's having leather pants and a leather jacket. For others, it might be a beautiful flowy floral dress. What's important is how it makes you feel. Are you dressing in a way that builds your confidence, that helps you think thoughts of certainty?

And if you look at how it's connected, like when you've taken the time to dress yourself well, when you've taken the time to be intentional about what you wear, think about what is going on in your head. You're telling yourself that you have power to influence how you feel, that you are intentional, and that just flows over into your life. You start to feel more certain about yourself. You start to believe in yourself. You start to show up more powerfully, and then you start creating more results for evidence of what it is that you want to believe. So don't discount the power of dressing up for your confidence. I'm telling you all, it works. I am living proof.

So these are just a few ways that you can turn your doubt into confidence. I hope you all enjoyed today's episode. And I almost forgot to mention, if you have not signed up for next week's workshop called The Worthy Woman, what in the world? This workshop is going to be so good. Five days, me and you. And there's just one main goal, that you own and step into your worth. It's already there, I'm just going to help you uncover it. Because when you see yourself as worthy, the world really does become your playground. So head over to schoolofselfimage.com/worthy, and I will see you in the workshop. We get started next week, so let's go. Schoolofselfimage.com/worthy. Have a beautiful week, everyone, and I will see you in the next 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.