



EPISODE NO. 317

# My New Year's Eve Tradition

What in the world? How is it almost 2023? Can you believe it? I am so looking forward to a new year, and I'm also so grateful for this year. And to wrap up an amazing year, I want to share with you my New Year's Eve tradition in hopes that you will join me. 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, my gorgeous friends. How are you doing? How are you feeling? Are you excited for the new year? As you are listening to this, I am in Aspen with my family. We have spent Christmas here and I'll actually be leaving on New Year's Eve to go back to Denver and to spend it with my friends doing two of my favorite things, and that is getting dressed up and going to a nice dinner followed by game night. If you've listened to this podcast, you know I love a good game night. I can't think of a better way to ring in the new year.

So I was thinking about what I wanted to leave you all with as we wrap up another year. What can I share with you to help you really end your year in style, to end your year on a positive note? And what I decided to do is to bring back an older episode that I recorded a couple of years ago. Actually, I recorded it in 2019, right before we were about to head into a year that nobody could have imagined.

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And what's really crazy is that in this podcast, I share my New Year's Eve tradition. This is something I have been doing for years. And when I say years, I mean like 10 years and it has never failed me. It allows me to really celebrate the year I just had and also to set my intention for the coming year.

And I was thinking about when I recorded this in 2019, New Year's Eve and how I had no idea the year I was about to have. And it ended up being an extraordinary year in so many ways. I spent half the year crying and half the year celebrating. It was a year that I made so many big decisions and experienced more life than I can remember ever experiencing up until that point. And so even though my celebrations like what I had celebrated, and you'll know what I'm talking about when you listen to this episode, it all didn't pan out exactly. That energy helped me to create a phenomenal year that I could have never, ever expected. And so I want you to consider joining me on this tradition that I do every single New Year's Eve. It is beautiful in that it really just helps you honor your life and how far you've come and where you intend to go.

Now, one more little side note, when I was listening to this, and this was only what, two years ago? I realized how far I've come and how much I've grown in two years. And when I recorded this episode, I actually had a company called French Kiss Life. Some of you may not know about that. Some of you probably stumbled upon me in the last year. Some of you have been with me since the beginning, so you know all about the French Kiss Life days. But since that episode, I have completely transformed my own life. I started a new business, I moved to a new city. I'm about to move again. I met the love of my life. Just amazing things have happened. And it is because of me doing things like I'm about to share with you. It is a result of me constantly expanding my own self-image, which means expanding my energy, which is what this tradition is all about.

I just want to say really quickly, happy, happy New Year to everyone. It is such an honor to be on this journey with each of you. So without further ado, here is my New Year's Eve tradition and I hope that you will join me.

Now, I don't know if you can relate to this, but I used to start the new year with so much excitement, so many goals, unfortunately, usually it was weight loss being my main one, but I would be determined that this was going to be the year that I was going to finally reach my goals. And then fast forward to the next year, I was disappointed, I was frustrated, I was like, "What is wrong with me?" And that was often the cycle that I would start the new year with. And I realized, what craziness. In every moment of our lives, we can be focused on what we think we're doing terribly. We can be focused on what went wrong, we can focus on all the bad things that happened, but I want you all to understand that you can equally find things to celebrate, find things to focus on that feels good.

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And I want us to enter into 2020 with an energy of celebration because again, when you celebrate life, I promise you, life will start to celebrate you back.

So in episode 57 of the French Kiss Life podcast, I talk about the two questions I ask every New Year's Eve. It's a tradition that I've been doing for many years and it's such a fun way to end the year and to kick off the new one. But I've added another question to the mix. And so on this podcast, I'm going to go over those two questions, plus the one that I've added to the mix that really helps me to look upon my year and glean the gifts as well as pre pave for the coming year and what it is that I want to create. So this entire process is all geared towards helping me get into a good feeling state because I've said it many times on the podcast, but the reason why you want anything is because of the feeling that you think having that thing will give you. And the more you can practice getting into that feeling state, the more likely you are going to be to attract it and to show up in such a way to create that result that you want for yourself. So the way that I go about this exercise is I journal it and then also on New Year's Eve, I gather with my closest friends and we go through this tradition together. It's so fun. And of course I love to get dressed up. Shocking, I know. But it's just so much fun to be in the spirit of wrapping up a year and then stepping into a new one. And so for you, maybe grab your journal and go through these three celebrations and then on New Year's Eve, if you want to get some friends together and do it with them as well. Again, it will just change the energy. It will set you up to step into 2020 with clarity and excitement for what is to come.

So the first celebration that I want you to think about is what do you want to celebrate from this year? This is so important because typically, most people are in such a hurry. We're in a hurry to get to the next goal, the next place, the next thing, the next year that we don't just stop and take it all in and really celebrate the moments that have shaped us, celebrate what we've accomplished, celebrate all that's gone really well in our lives. And unfortunately, this happens because we think that our joy and our happiness is in that next moment. And so we're always chasing it. But what if you just stopped and celebrated your lives in this moment? Think about how good that would feel.

And I've also seen women especially just discount all of their accomplishments. They don't want to talk about it. They think they're bragging and they're boastful. And I want you to know you've worked hard, you've created results in your lives, you've done incredible things this year, even if you didn't hit all of your goals. So what? You get to decide what you make that mean, number one. I would just make it mean that you're a work in progress and you're always going to have goals, and you may or may not always hit them, but it doesn't matter. What matters is how you feel, and it doesn't feel good to rush through life and never just stop and take it all in.

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So I promise you, I've already started my list for my celebrations of this year, and honestly you all, I'm just blown away. So much goodness this year and it would break my heart if I didn't stop and just take it in and thank God and the universe and all of the people and life itself for this incredible, incredible year.

And so please promise me on New Year's Eve, you will just take a pause and look back over 2019 and glean the gifts, glean all that went well and right, your accomplishments, the beautiful memories, all of the goodness that you created and that this year offered you. Okay.

The second celebration is the new one that I've added to the mix, and it's actually so much fun. When you hear me say this, you're going to be like, "What? That's fun?" But it really, really is. I want you to celebrate your regrets and your mistakes from this year. There's a great passage by Neil Gaiman that says, I hope that in this year to come, you make mistakes, try new things, learning, living, pushing yourself, changing yourself, changing your world. You're doing things you've never done before, and more importantly, you're doing something. So that's my wish for you and all of us and my wish for myself. Make new mistakes, make glorious amazing mistakes. Make mistakes nobody's ever made before. Don't freeze, don't stop. Don't worry that it isn't good enough or it isn't perfect. Whatever it is, art or love or work or family or life, whatever it is you're scared of doing, do it. Make your mistakes next year and forever. Amen. Hallelujah. Mr. Gaiman. This is amazing, I love it.

But we're so afraid of making mistakes and I want you to see mistakes as something to celebrate. It means you're going for it. It means you're living life out loud. It means that you are trying new things. You're learning and you're growing. And this year for me, has been full of mistakes and I am celebrating every single one of them. Just this morning, I was writing down my mistakes and my regrets from this year, and I realized that I am more proud of the failures and the mistakes than I am my successes, because I know the courage that it took me to actually go out there and try something and fail at it and still get back up and know that that is part of the process of creating.

And I know how this holds so many of you back. You're afraid to fail, you're afraid to make mistakes, but what if you looked at them as something to celebrate, as something to be actually really proud of? Mistakes and failures are how you learn. I always think about little babies when they're learning to walk. They fall down so many times and they keep getting back up because I feel like intuitively, they know that's how they're going to learn. That's how they're going to learn to walk. And their desire to walk is so great. They just keep getting up and they fall and they get up and they fall again and they keep doing it until one day they're walking and they're like, "Oh, I'm a walker now." And that's what it's like to create what it is that you want.

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But a lot of you are so afraid to fail. You're so afraid to make a mistake that you hold yourself back. You don't do what is required to create what it is that you want.

And then let's say you go out there and you try something and it doesn't work. A lot of you beat yourself up over it and you start to run these terrible stories about how you're not good enough, you don't have what it takes, that you're never going to be able to reach your goals and to create your dreams. And that is all such BS. One of my favorite stories is by Sarah Blakely, who's the founder of Spanx, which happens to be a billion dollar company, plus plus. And she talks about when she was growing up, that her dad in the evenings when they were having dinner, would ask them, "What did you fail at today?" He didn't ask them, what did you succeed at? He was like, "What'd you fail at today?" Because he wanted his kids to be so comfortable with failure because he knew that failure is the process to get to success.

At the beginning of 2019, I chose CEO as my word of the year. And oh boy, what a year it's been, full of so many mistakes. One of them is I made a hiring mistake and I could have easily beat myself up over it. I could have easily told myself the story of, you're not good at hiring people, but I didn't do any of that. I'm like, "Yes, look at you. You hired someone and it didn't work out. This is how you learn. This is how you grow. This is how you get better at hiring." And so I'm celebrating all of it. But the other part of this is that I want us to look at our regrets.

So I will tell you when it comes to regrets, I've been in two different camps. I used to spend my life just indulging in the misery of regrets. You all know what this is like. It's, "Oh, I wish it could be different. I wish I would've done things differently if I could only go back and change it." And I would just live in this toxic state of just arguing with my past and that is no fun. But then I discovered the world of personal development and whoa, did my pendulum swing in the opposite direction because I was hearing things like live a regret free life, live life with no regrets. And I translated that into just ignore, just keep moving forward. Whatever you do, don't look back. And that's not healthy either.

Now I am a future focused person, but I think the past can teach us a lot and it's all in how you translate it. And so I think it's really healthy for us to take inventory of what regrets do we have, but don't indulge in them. Just look at them and ask yourself, what did those regrets teach me? How can I use what I learned from that in the future to create better results for myself? So when I was thinking about my regrets from this year, I only had a few, which is a miracle because I used to have so, so many. But that's just a testament to the work that I practice every single day. But the few taught me so, so much, and one of them seemed so frivolous, but because I was just experiencing so much regret over it, I really had to just stop and look at what is this teaching me?

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One of my regrets was actually a purchase. I bought this handbag that as soon as I bought it, I started to feel regret. And typically I feel really good about my purchases. But when I looked at what did that teach me, I realized that number one, don't be in a hurry to buy something. And I also realized that I was spending money out of alignment, meaning that I felt rushed. I felt like I needed to have a purse to go with this dress I had. It felt yucky, and I learned from it, and I'm celebrating. It was an amazing purchase because of what I learned because of it. I'm not beating myself up over it. It's good to know. It's like, "Noted universe. Thank you for teaching me that."

Another regret I have is hanging onto someone in my life when my intuition for a long time was saying, "You need to let this person go." And I finally let this person go and oh my God, everything just blew up in the most glorious ways afterwards. But I'm not beating myself up. I'm realizing it happened perfectly. And that regret is teaching me, listen to your intuition, Tonya. She is there to guide you. She knows what is happening, so trust her. And so I'm so grateful for that. Even though the lesson came from regret, it's something that I'm going to be celebrating and I want you to join me.

I want you to make this a practice because when you're not afraid to make mistakes or to fail or to have regrets, I want you to imagine what you'll go out there and try and do and all that you're going to learn in the process. It's not something to be ashamed of. It's not something to avoid is not something to start running a negative story about in your head. Use it for you. Use it as fuel to create what it is that you want to create. Celebrate those mistakes. Celebrate the failures, celebrate the regrets.

So let's talk about the final celebration to wrap up your year in style. This is my favorite. So fun. I want you to celebrate ahead of time. So the way this works is I want you to fast forward to a year in the future. I want you to pretend it's December 31st, 2020, and I want you to celebrate as if it's already happened. I want you to think about what it is that you want to create this year, and I want you to go to the place of it already being done and I want you to celebrate as if it's already happened. And I want you to get into the energy of it. I want you to think about who have I become? What did I have to do differently this year? What did I have to let go of? What did I have to become no longer available for? And I want you to feel so proud of yourself for already having created it.

I will tell you, I've been doing this practice for many years now, and it's crazy what happens when you get into the energy of it already being done. Because inevitably as you're creating it, you can keep going to that future and reminding yourself it's already done. So when something happens that you didn't plan, and then you go to that place of it already being done, you don't make it mean a big deal. You're like, "Oh, of course I'm still going to create it." It's already happened.

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This is just a little bump in the road. It's not something to be all dramatic about and you just keep showing up for your dream.

I was coaching a woman recently who she is really committed to losing weight and we did this exercise of her going into the future and it's already done. And she was just describing how she's changed and how her life is different and who she had to become in order to create the weight loss. And then a couple of weeks later, she had a setback. And I said, "But let's go to the place that you were in a couple of weeks ago of it already being done. What do you make this moment mean?" And she was like, "Oh, it's no big deal. It's just part of the process." And because she was able to access that future her one year from now, that's already lost the weight, she didn't make it mean anything negative. She just realized, "Oh, this is a mistake. I get to celebrate. It's part of me losing weight."

I tell my clients all of the time, weight loss is going to have many, many failures. But if you start telling yourself things like, oh my God, I've fallen off the wagon, this isn't going to work for me, right? All the things that I used to say, then you're going to give up on yourself. But when you practice celebrating ahead of time, a couple of incredible things happen. Number one, you get into the energy of the end. You start at the end. And as you embody that energy of what it is you think that thing will give, you start to show up different and you become a magnet for what it is that you want.

And the other beautiful thing that happens is that when you get into the celebrating ahead of time, energy, and you come across a challenge or an obstacle or you have a setback, you don't make it mean anything other than, oh, this is part of the process. And you keep showing up for what it is that you want.

Now, when I first started this practice many years ago, I would keep it to three main celebrations because I knew that I needed to learn the skill of focus and commitment and showing up for that. But as I've done this over and over for many years now, I've grown my list of what I'll be celebrating. And last year, I had a pretty intense celebration list, and I got into the energy of it already being done, and I spoke as if it was already being done. It wasn't next year this time, I'll be celebrating. It was like, "I'm celebrating." And I listed all of the things that I intended to create an experience this year.

Now, fast forward to almost the end of 2019, I have created all of those results for myself, and I had to keep getting into that energy throughout the year. I had to keep reminding myself of what my celebrations were. And again, I had many obstacles and many challenges, but when I got into the state of it already being done, I realized, "Oh yeah, of course this happened. It's here to teach me and grow me." And I just kept going. That is the beauty of celebrating ahead of time, my friends.

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So to wrap up this episode with the three celebrations, to wrap up your year in style, I want you to celebrate this past year, all the beautiful memories, all of your accomplishments, the people that came into your life, the lessons learned. I want you to celebrate your mistakes, your failures, and your regrets, because it tells me you're living. It tells me you're trying. It tells me that you are growing and it's not something to be ashamed of, but something to be super, super proud of, something to celebrate. And then I want you to go into the future one year from now and what will you be celebrating? And I want you to celebrate as if it's already happened. So with that said, my friends, I am raising my flute to you and celebrating a beautiful year together and excited about what we are going to create. Cheers.

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