



EPISODE NO. 319

My 2023 Word of the Year

It's that time of the year. I'm not talking about New Year's resolutions. I'm talking about something that's so much more fun and more effective, and that is choosing your word of the year. And in this episode, I'm revealing mine for 2023. 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 friends. How is your 2023 going? If you're already a little bit disappointed, maybe you started out the new year with a goal or a resolution and you've already disappointed yourself, I have some good news. First of all, the Lunar New Year does not start until January the 22nd, so you can just consider this first couple of weeks of the year to be your getting ready for the new year. And the second piece of good news is what I'm actually going to talk with you about today. I'm going to encourage you to choose a word of the year. I've been doing this exercise for many years and I've written blog posts about it. I've recorded a podcast about it, and I am devoting this episode to it because I think it's very important and very effective. So, what is a word of the year?

I want you to think about it as a singular energy that you want to focus on experiencing and embodying for the entire year. Now, this does not mean that you will not experience other things, but this is a very intentional energy that you want to practice feeling, being, so that you are an energetic alignment for what it is that you want. So I'm not going to discourage you from having goals. I personally love a goal.

My 2023 Word of the Year

I love a goal because they inform who I need to become in order to reach them. They become my guide to reveal to me what's holding me back and also to reveal to me my own becoming. But we don't just set a goal and go after it without doing this internal work because oftentimes, what happens is you don't change your beingness. And so, all the doing in the world just keeps backfiring on you because you will always come back to who you see yourself as, to your beingness.

And this is why I love choosing a word of the year because it focuses on the being level. I went back and did a little research on my very first word of the year because I couldn't remember, because I've been doing it for so long. And it turns out my very first word of the year was abundant. I wanted to practice being an abundant woman. And this was when I first started my coaching practice, I was probably two or three years in. And that year, I made my first six figures. Now, I had tried to make six figures in the years prior, but it felt so hard. I was always working against myself. And the reason why is because I was just focused on the action level and not focused on the being level. And so, I was being poor while trying to create abundance and it just doesn't work.

But that year, I focused on being abundant. How does that woman think? What does she do? What does she wear? How does she carry herself? How does she spend her money? How does she think about money? How does she think about her business? How does she think about her clients? And by embodying that energy, that is how I was able to make my first six figures. So, I've been thinking a lot about this year. And up until a couple of hours ago, I didn't know my word of the year. I was wrestling between two, and I knew I was doing this podcast. So I was like, "Okay, girl, you got to decide, pick one." And I actually just did a bonus call within the School of Self-Image membership on my process, like going deep into how I chose this word. So if you are a member, I highly encourage that you go and listen to that bonus session that I just did.

By the time you listen to this, I would've just recorded it the day before. And again, I think this will help you and getting clear on what you want your word of the year to be if you haven't chosen one yet. And if you're not a member, we just opened the doors, what in the world? Head over to schoolofselfimage.com/join and jump into not only the Live Like an Editor Week, which is available to all of the members, but also the bonus calls that I'm doing this week. So, are you ready to hear my word of the year? Drum roll, please. My word of the year for 2023 is energized. At the core of my coaching, at the core of self-image transformation is the study of energetics. We are all a ball of energy, and that energy is attracting certain things and repelling certain things.

In addition, we also need energy to create.

My 2023 Word of the Year

And so, when I was thinking about my extraordinary goal for the year, and I was thinking about everything that I've planned for this year because I've already planned out my entire year, which is super fun, and I will definitely be talking about that within the membership. But when I think of all of that, the one word that just kept coming up for me is energy. It's all about energy. The environments that you place yourself in, the books that you read, the music that you listen to, the words that you choose, the thoughts that you think, the clothes that you wear, the conversations that you have. The shows that you watch, it is all energy. And what I have noticed is that when I am feeling energized, and when I say energized, I'm talking about not only at the physical level, which is going to be a big focus for me this year, but also at the spiritual and emotional level.

Everything falls into place. It feels like effortlessness. I don't have to "work so hard" to create a result, it's because I am energetically aligned with it. Here's something I want you all to know, and I have seen this over and over in my life and my client's lives and my friends' lives. What you do isn't as important as who you are when you're doing it. For those of you who are members of the School of Self-Image, I created an entire class on your Self-Image Word of the Year, and I've been working through the workbook that accompanies that class to do the work for my word of the year this year. And I wanted to read this to you out of the workbook. It's under the section that says the Be-Do-Have model.

Here's what I said, "I'm about to hand you the secret to the universe. When you deeply understand this concept and you apply it to your life, prepare to be delighted. Navigating life without this model will lead you to frustration and hopelessness. As desperately as you want things to be different, you'll keep feeling stuck. You will go on a diet only to slip back into old patterns within weeks. You'll commit to getting your finances in order only to go weeks without looking at your accounts. You'll waste time on social media even though you've decided that this is the year to grow your business. You'll continuously self-sabotage and you'll wonder what is wrong with me? Nothing is wrong with you, however, your approach is ineffective. I know this from a lot of experience of trying to reach my goals, but spinning in circles. I struggled with my weight for over a decade, ranging from over 200 pounds to under 120. I desperately wanted to have a slim body, so I would do diets and workouts only to come back to being an overweight woman."

My thought process was this, I'm going to go on this diet. This is at the due level and lose the weight, that's the have level so that I can be confident. But I didn't approach my weight loss from confidence. I approached it from fear and self-loathing. I was trying to lose weight while being overweight. Eventually, my actions would match my energy and I'd self-sabotage, creating results to confirm my self-image.

My 2023 Word of the Year

Early on in my business, I was hustling, taking a lot of action, working a lot of hours, and burning myself out. Action is an important part of reaching our goals. However, when that action is being fueled out of desperation, stress and fear, the results you create are not impressive. In order to get what you want, you must be the person who has it. I kept telling myself that when I reached a certain level, the having level by doing certain things, the due level, then I would be a relaxed woman.

Yet, who I was being anxious and stressed, was driving me to do things. Procrastinate caused me to have the same results, stay at a certain level. Many people live their lives this way believing that when they get what they want, then they'll be a certain way. This approach is backwards. The do have be model is destined for failure because you will always create results to confirm your self-image, who you're being. In order to get what you want, you must be the person who has it. If not, you're not an energetic match for it. If you want to fast track your results, you must embrace and live by a very different model that requires being intentional and working from the inside out, the Be-Do-Have model. So the question is this, who do you need to be in order to take the inspired action to create what you deeply want?

That is such a great question, and it's the question that you need to think about as you are choosing your word of the year. Now, again, if you are in the membership, this workbook is so good and there's so much that I left out of it. But I used this workbook to help me not only figure out my word of the year, which I will talk about in that bonus class that I was sharing with you. But I'm also using this workbook to decide how I'm going to embody this energy for an entire year. And the cool thing is I also have a class within the membership that's all about my word of the year, which is energy. And so, I've been going through a lot of that work as well. But for me, it's having this word at the forefront of my days. I want to focus on doing more, thinking more, feeling more things that give me energy and doing less of the things that don't.

My big focus this year as it relates to my word of the year is number one on the mental and emotional level is being extremely mindful, more than I've ever been before about the thoughts that I allow myself to focus on and the words I choose to speak. I want to speak from my future more than I've ever done before. And members of the School of Self-Image, there's a whole class on that as well, speaking from your future, but that's one of the things I want to do. I want to have high vibe, language that goes on in my brain and that I speak out loud. And I already feel that I do a pretty good job of this, but I have noticed how certain things just slip by. For example, I was sharing with Vons the other day. I'm like, "Oh my God, I have so much to do," and the way I said it was not useful.

And he just looked at me, he was like, no, you just have things to do. Just taking so much out of that one phrase felt gave me more energy.

My 2023 Word of the Year

I was like, "Oh yeah, I just have things to do." It wasn't heavy. And so, I want to be even more mindful than I've ever been before about what I choose to focus on, because we're all going to have crazy thoughts. But it doesn't mean we have to choose to focus on them and hang on them and feed them and believe them. We can let those just go on by and then, choose to focus on the thoughts that will help us to create the energy that we need to create what we want. The other major area that I will be focusing on being energized in is my environment. This one is so big. I am all about changing our environments. I know that when you place yourself in expansive environments, you start to see yourself in expansive ways. I want to only work with clients who light me up. I am done taking on clients that drain my energy.

And this is a difficult one you all, because part of me is like, okay, I have such big energy anyway that I can handle it, but this has also been a pattern that I've seen in my life. Like I will suffer because I can handle it. I'm big enough and I just don't want to do that anymore. If we are not an energetic match, that's okay. We can walk our paths separately for a while, and both of us doing the work on ourselves, I feel that we will come back together if we're meant to. But if we're not, that's okay too. It doesn't make me better than or worse than, or there's no hierarchy here. It's just energetic differences. And I, in the past have taken on clients who haven't been an energetic match, and I'm just done with that. I want to work with the people that when we get together, we are fueling each other.

We have momentum going, we are excited, and we all rise together. Also, the people that I spend a lot of time with, this for me, has not been an issue this year. But now that I'm moving to a new place, I'm going to be very mindful about who I involve myself with. Life is too short to be around people whose energy just doesn't match yours. And to create something that you don't yet have, you're going to have to raise your energy to be a match for it. So if you're surrounding yourself with a lot of people who, when you're around them, tend to bring your energy down to their level, it's going to hold you back from reaching the goals that you have. In addition, as it relates to my environment, I just want to constantly pay attention to the places, the spaces, the music, the people, the art, the buildings, the surroundings that light me up, that give me energy and vice versa.

Pay attention to the places that I go and the people that I'm around and the things that I listen to that drain my energy. And that will be my work this year on a daily basis to do more of what lights me up and less of what doesn't. It really is that simple. The other area of my life where I'm going to be focused on my energy is my physical energy. And this one is big. I tend to have a lot of emotional energy, but as I've become older, and my hormones have changed, I have to work harder at increasing my physical energy in addition to the changes in my body.

My 2023 Word of the Year

One of the things that I've noticed about myself is that I'm very cognitive. I am in my head a lot. I love my work, and this causes me to want to just sit around and work and sit at my desk.

And I love it. That actually gives me energy. But I've noticed at the end of the day, I'm like, "But my body is tired. My body didn't get the TLC it needed." And I have been actively working on my physical energy over the past two years, but I know I can do better. So this year, I want to move more. I want to be alive and lively things are always in movement. If you think about trees that are alive, they bend, they flex, they sway, they move. Dead trees don't move, they break. They're stiff, they're not flexible. And so, I want to feel so alive this year. And so, I've been asking myself, what does that look like? And for me, it's starting my day out with movement. It's getting up, it's stretching, it's playing a lot of pickleball, is being outside in the sunshine.

And also, it's just like with the thoughts that we think that give us energy and take away our energy. For me, it's paying attention to the things I consume, the things I eat that give my body energy and the things that I consume that take away my energy. For example, if I eat a lot of sugar, I am lethargic. Sugar does not work in my body. I also know if I drink too much, it takes away my energy. And so, I want to use all of this data that I have on myself, for myself. I want to use this intelligence to help me and to support me in being energized this year. I want to release the patterns, the people, the places, the things that cause me to be out of alignment with my future self. And I know that if I do this for 365 days, you all will be meeting a brand-new version of me a year from now, hopefully like Tonya 7.0.

And I do believe that that version will be even more loving, more kind, more powerful, more expansive than ever. And that my friends, is the power of choosing a word of the year. So you need to think about, for you, what is that energy that if you were Tim Body for one full year would have such a huge impact on your life that would help you to achieve your extraordinary goal that would help you evolve into that version of you that you know is within you? Who is she? What is that word that will support you this year? And of course, I always love hearing everybody's word of the year. So come find me on Instagram at Tonya, T-O-N-Y-A, Leigh, L-E-I-G-H, and share with me what is your 2023 word of the year.

I'm excited to spend this year with you all. We have some exciting things on the horizon, and it's just a joy to be on a journey with such extraordinary humans. So let's go 2023. 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.