



EPISODE NO. 323

My 6-Month No Shopping Update

Around four months ago, I made a decision to not shop for six months. In this episode, I have an update for you of what that challenge has been like for me. 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.

Hey, my beautiful friends. I am sitting here in an Airbnb still awaiting on my furniture to arrive from Denver to Charlotte. It was supposed to be here two weeks ago. When we booked this moving service they said, "We'll have it to you within a week." Three weeks later, I still don't have my furniture. They keep delaying it.

They keep saying, "Oh, we're going to be there in a couple of days, and then something happens." I don't want to put this energy out into the universe, but I'm starting to wonder if we've been scammed. Now, they told us it's going to be here tomorrow. I will have an update for you all next week as to where in the world is Tonya's furniture.

But until then, I'm so grateful for this little Airbnb that we've been staying in, but we're going to be kicked out tomorrow because they have another reservation. It is an adventure over here. I am so grateful for all of it. I'm especially grateful for the tools that I teach within the School of Self-Image, because if it weren't for those tools, I would be a basket case right now.

But I've remained calm. I'm staying focused. I'm dealing with the things that I can manage and control and letting everything else go, because there's nothing I can do about it. I invite you all to do the same. I mean, that's not what this episode is about.

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But I want you all ... When you're in a state of worry, when you're in a state of stress, one of the things that helps me is I write everything down that I'm worried about, and I create two lists, on one side, it's my list, and I move things to that side that I can influence, manage, control with my actions.

For example, I can manage right now without my furniture belongings, I can manage figuring out where we're going to stay next. I can manage calling the company and badgering them every single day asking where's my stuff? If my stuff doesn't arrive, I can manage calling an attorney. Those are things that I can manage. But I don't have control over the furniture right now.

We stress ourselves out when we try to control the things that we don't have control over, our partners, our children, other people. We have to focus on what we have control over. On the other side of the list, I move everything to that side and I call that God's list.

I'm like, "That's in God's hands, God's plan, as Drake would say. I just let that be what it is. I cannot control that." That is how I'm able to stay so calm, my friends, right now with no belongings and all of my things out there somewhere.

But today, I want to talk with you about my six-month no shopping challenge. This is my three-month update on what this has been like for me. About three months ago, I decided that I was not going to shop for six months. I gave myself parameters. I wasn't going to buy anything that goes into my closet.

I can still buy my beauty products if I need them. I can still buy shampoo, like those types of things. I can still buy for other people and I can still buy things that I need for the house, which right now is not a big thing because I don't have a house right now, although that's not 100% true. I'm renting a townhouse that I'm paying for, but we can't live in it because we don't have furniture yet.

I may have to purchase some air mattresses and some sheets and blankets, and we will glamp in the town home. Those were my parameters. Basically I was not going to buy clothes, shoes, accessories, anything that goes into my closet. The reason why I decided to do that is I was starting to be unconscious.

I was just starting to buy things out of habit. I noticed that my closet was getting more and more full and I couldn't find things. I was starting to feel suffocated by stuff. I wanted some space in my life and in my brain to just breathe and assess and use the self-image method to go through my closet.

The self-image method basically is five steps where you assess where you are, what you have, what's working, what's not working. You define where you want to be, so you get clear on what is my wardrobe, what do I want that to be in this particular example. Then you begin to edit, getting rid of stuff, letting go.

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From that place, you can begin to look at what's missing? What do I need to add to help me to create what I have defined that I want for myself? Then it's just a process of constant refinement, editing, adding and refining to continuously create that picture that you have for yourself.

For me, when I was assessing my closet, and the way this happened is I walked into my closet one day and I've been traveling a lot, and I just had stuff stuffed in different areas of my closet, and I didn't like how that felt. When you can't find things, it's a sign that you need to stop and assess the things that you have.

I decided to spend some time thinking about how I want my closet to look, what I want my relationship to be with my closet, what I want my relationship to be with spending and investing in my wardrobe. Once I got clear on that, I knew I needed to take a break. I needed to spend some time editing my closet. I needed to spend some time on step three.

I knew this was not going to be just a weekend thing of pulling everything out. I needed to do a detox from shopping and notice what came up for me and what continues to come up for me. I am almost four months in, and it's been really eye-opening and liberating in so many ways.

I wanted to share with you some of my takeaways so far that I've had into this six-month no shopping challenge. The first thing that I noticed is that your friends are going to think you're kind of crazy. When I announced to a couple of my friends that I wasn't shopping, they were confused. They did not understand.

It's probably very similar to the person who is used to partying with their friends and drinking a lot. Then all of a sudden they announced to their friends, "Hey, listen, I'm taking a break from alcohol." Friends are like, "What?" But this is what we do. I don't understand.

It's okay that they're confused. It's okay that they think you're crazy. What's been really fascinating is to watch one of my friends decide to join me on this challenge. She thought I was crazy at first, and then she was like, "I think that I need to do this as well." She started with baby steps. She decided to do a month of no shopping, which is great. It's all about being intentional.

If you need something so badly, then you are a prisoner of it. Really think about that. If you need to shop, if you feel like you can't live a month without shopping, even though you have so much stuff, then where's the freedom in that? There is none.

You are addicted. You are a prisoner of that thing that you need so badly. That was one of the reasons that I wanted to take a break. I was like, "listen, I don't want to need anything so badly that I can't go time without it." But my friends have thought I'm a little crazy. That's okay.

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Another thing that I noticed is that the first month was the hardest because if you've been in a habit of just buying whatever, whenever you want, not really thinking about it, and all of a sudden you don't do that, you're breaking that habit. It's going to be super uncomfortable. You're going to notice how often you go into Amazon.

You're going to notice how often you pop into Target just to get a dopamine fix. You're going to notice how many times you go on to Revolve or Ford or whatever your website is and just buy things. Anytime you are changing a habit, breaking a habit, those first 30 days are the hardest. Knowing that ahead of time, you can prepare for it.

You can have a plan for when that voice comes in your head and says, "Hey, this is dumb. Why are you doing this?" That's my other takeaway. You need to have a plan for when that voice pops into your head. You need to have a plan for those excuses ahead of time. I teach this in the Dream Atelier.

It's why so many of my members have such extraordinary results is that they plan for the obstacles. They plan for the excuses. When it happens, they're not like, "Oh, my God. I fell off the wagon." They know that they are going to be tempted to fall off the wagon. They planned for that.

For me, I didn't know exactly what excuses I was going to have because I've never done this before. But I did know that I was going to have them, and I guessed what they might be. Now, the one that I was not expecting was the one that my brain loves to offer me. That is no one will know if you buy anything, because I announced this to my whole community that I was going to have a six-month no shopping challenge for myself.

My brain loves to be sneaky and say, "Listen, if you get that little thing, no one will ever know." But you know what? I'll know, and energy is everything. If I'm sitting around here talking about not shopping for six months, but I'm shopping, then that is incongruence. I always want to be congruent.

Now, that doesn't mean being perfect, my friends, as I'm about to share with you, because I have not been perfect in this. However, it is about telling the truth, sharing my challenges so that I can hopefully inspire you. Now, the other lesson that I've learned is that you're going to fail. The bigger the challenge, the more likely you are to fail along the way.

But that doesn't mean you give up. That doesn't mean that you beat yourself up. It just means that you learn and grow. I have purchased three things since I started this. One I feel really good about. The other two, I don't. I was being sneaky with myself. Let me start with the one that I felt really good about. I felt like it was justified.

Was it last week or two weeks ago? I can't remember. Anyway, I took a quick trip to the Caribbean to meet my friend Brooke. She called me up and she's like, "Girl, I have

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an extra bedroom and they have a pickleball court." She just had to say pickleball. I'm like, "Okay," because we are living out of an Airbnb right now. It's not like I need to be here. They had a direct flight.

I went on, I booked a flight, me and Vons went down there, and it was such a quick trip, and I just packed a carry-on that when we landed, I said, "Vons, did you grab my tennis shoes?" He was like, "No." I knew that I didn't grab them. I had no tennis shoes and I wanted to play pickleball, and you can't really do it barefoot.

I did purchase a pair of tennis shoes, and I felt really good about it. Two purchases that I didn't feel great about after the fact, because I was just being sneaky with myself is it was my birthday and my daughter had on the cutest, cutest vest. As a side note, one of my commitments this year is walking a minimum of a mile every single day for the whole year.

I have so far completed my mile every single day, and we're into February. With that, I have also decided that once I'm done with the Snow Shopping Challenge, I want to really invest and focus on athletic leisure wear. But something that I wouldn't mind popping into having lunch with the girlfriends, but I also can go for a quick walk. That means comfortable shoes, comfortable clothing, but elevated.

My daughter had on this outfit that was so adorable. It was just that. She had on a cute baseball cap. She had on a pair of ... I want to say maybe aloe leggings with this down black vest. It was just cute the way she put it together. It was my birthday, and I was like, "I'm going to get me a vest."

Not just one vest. I always need a black and a camel or tan vest. I bought two vest and I justified it because it was my birthday. But after the fact, I was like, "Tonya, that was your brain playing tricks on you. That was you breaking the commitment to yourself." I didn't beat myself up. I was so fascinated. I was fascinated not only with how our brains can convince us to do things, but also how we act like we can't live without stuff.

Listen, you all know I love beautiful clothes. I love style. I think style has the ability to transform your life. However, I also know that we can have excuses and sabotage ourselves in the name of certain things, in the name of style, in the name of money, in the name of whatever.

I was just fascinated by the whole thing. I learned from it. I'm like, "Okay. Let's start again. Let's move forward. Let's look to the future. You've got a few more months at that time. Let's go." I can already see how my brain is wanting to convince me to stop this challenge sooner than I had planned. I can see how some of our spending decisions come out of lack and scarcity.

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Here's an example. I'm supposed to speak at an event really soon, and my brain is like, "Girl, you can't wear that again. What are people going to think? You need to go buy something new for this event." I'm just watching my brain do this. I'm like, "No. I have plenty of clothes to choose from. I don't need to go and buy new things."

But you can see how that decision is not coming from, "Oh, my God, I'm so excited to invest in a new piece." It's coming from, "Oh, my God, what if someone happens to see me in an outfit that I've worn before and they have things to say?" That's coming from fear and lack and scarcity. I do not want my life nor my wardrobe to be built on that, because I know I'm not going to be happy with the result.

I'm going to end up just stuffing my closet and my life full of things to impress other people. The downside to that is that I won't be impressed because I will know what drove those decisions in the first place. On the flip side, and this has been really helpful for me, it feels good to decide something, commit to it and follow through.

You have to keep your 'why' in front of you. I was in Miami with my friend Brooke and Abriel and some other people, and we were walking around, what's it called, the Design District in Miami. It's all of the She-She stores. It's Chanel, Dior, Eve, Saint Laurent, all the good stores.

Everybody was shopping, some people were buying things. I was so happy to just look. I did not feel at all. I was missing out. In fact, I felt like I was getting so much because visually I was so just happy. I was also happy knowing, number one, that I was honoring my commitment, even though I saw beautiful things. I was like, "Ooh, that looks like me, but not today."

That felt good just knowing I was honoring my word and my commitment. Then it also felt good to know that I was investing in my future. By not spending money mindlessly, that money is going to exist in my future. Therefore, I'm investing in my future. Now, sometimes purchasing that dress or those shoes or that handbag, that can also be an investment in your future.

When it's deliberate and you understand your 'why' and you feel great about it, the energy of that investment can have a positive impact on your future. But if you're buying things mindlessly and putting your money and depreciating assets and then feeling bad about it, that's not how a wealthy woman thinks and spends her money. She's very deliberate.

It's interesting. I was just having a conversation with one of the members within the School of Self image, and she was talking about in her effort to be wealthy, she finds that she spends a lot of money because she thinks that's what her wealthy version would do. I'm fascinated by that because the wealthier I become, the less I just want to spend on stuff.

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I realize how so much of my spending in the past has been out of lack, has been because, "Ooh, I may not have money in the future. Let me spend it right now. Let me enjoy it right now." Or coming from that place of, "Oh, my goodness. I need to look amazing at this event to impress other people." Do you and do people even care?

I want to impress myself, which for me is always showing up as the best version of myself and looking put together, feeling put together. But that doesn't mean I have to go out there and spend a lot of money. I have things in my closet right now where I can do that. This experience for me has also been about separating out abundance from spending, which I've known for a long time. They're two separate things.

A lot of times my clients want to put them together. They want to say, oh, well, being wealthy means spending a lot of money and spending a lot of money means that you believe you're wealthy. That's just not true. There are a lot of people out there spending a lot of money, and they are feeling so full of lack and scarcity.

I've actually felt so abundant during this experience. Here's why. Many times we are always off to the next thing. Let me get that. Let me go here. Listen, I love a big extraordinary goal. For those of you within the membership, you know that that's one of the things that we do. But the purpose of that goal and for having that guide is to grow you and to give you direction. It's not to always chase and not appreciate where you are.

In fact, I think the best way to create your goal is to appreciate where you are right now, because that is the energy of your future. You need to be practicing it now. But for me, the abundance that I've been feeling from this no shopping challenge is about appreciating what I already have.

When you are constantly buying new things, you're not most likely appreciating the things that you already have. That's what I needed a reset with. I was like, "I have so many beautiful clothes, shoes. I don't have a closet full of designer handbags, although I love them." I really do love a great handbag. "But I just want to appreciate and enjoy the ones that I already have."

By doing that, I have really felt the abundance and the appreciation of what I already have. When you're feeling abundant and you're appreciating what you already have, you don't have that urge to go and spend more. The more I've done this, and the more I've gotten into this challenge, the easier it's become because I'm feeling more and more abundant because I'm noticing what I already have.

The other cool thing is that this time has allowed me to really think about the next version of me and what is in her closet. I've been spending time thinking about what pieces maybe I'm missing, what other things I need to let go of, and curating my next

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wardrobe in my mind so that when my no shopping challenge ends, I will have specific things that I am looking for, specific things that I want to invest in.

This could not come at a more perfect time, you all, because I am about to start a brand new program that has been in the making in my heart and in my mind, and people have been asking from me for a long time. It's called The Style Experience. Part of this pause and this reset was to get me ready to lead an extraordinary group of women through this process of living a stylish life.

I've had so many epiphanies, so many awakenings from doing this, and I can't wait to share them within The Style Experience. But more than anything, it's made me realize how so many of us, probably you, you have so much already, how can we maximize that? How can we enjoy it more? How can we appreciate where we are? I do believe that that is the way to fast track yourself to where you want to be.

Now, in thinking about the future, someone asked me the other day, they're like, "Are you going to do this again?" I want to make this a part of my yearly routine, a yearly habit. But I don't want to do six months. This was good. This was a great reset. I do see doing a three-month no shopping challenge every single year, maybe even twice a year, split up where I take a break and I enjoy what I have. I assess what I have. I let go of things.

I don't know. When I think about doing it, I feel so much space and freedom. I don't want to do six months in a row again. But splitting it up three months and three months, or maybe just three months a year, that feels really, really good to me.

The other thing that I've noticed is the money that I've saved in this, I'm able now to think about how to invest it in appreciating assets. For me, appreciating assets or coaching any kind of physical, tangible object that you put your money into and it appreciates. I've just been having fun thinking about, "Okay. I'm not putting this money in clothes over the six months, where am I going to invest it?" That's been fun as well.

I'm curious to hear from you. Have you ever done a no shopping challenge? If so, what was that like for you? What were some of your takeaways? I would love, love to hear. Come find me on Instagram at Tonya Leigh and let me know. Have a gorgeous week everyone. Cheers. I'll see you soon.

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