



EPISODE NO. 334

Emotional Fluency

So I have a question for you. Are you sold on yourself? Meaning do you believe in your own value, your worth, what you're capable of, what's amazing about you? If not, what in the world? You need to listen to this episode because my goal is that you are a woman who is sold on yourself.

Welcome to the School of Self-Image, where personal development meets style. Here's your hostess, master life coach, Tonya Leigh.

Hello, beautiful friends. We've been blessed with another week. Take that in. I saw this video on Instagram where this guy was talking about in 20 years, you're going to wish that you were in this exact spot, in this exact body with these exact people doing this exact thing. And I sat there and thought about that because so often we're resisting where we are right now. And I was like, but wait, 20 years from now, what if we look back and we're like, God, I wish I was there again. And it's just a reminder to appreciate where you are right now. Now, I know some of you may be thinking, but Tonya, I don't want to be here right now. And I get it. I've been in those moments too. And what I can offer you is that fighting where you are right now is not helping you get somewhere else. So from where you are now, where can you begin to reach? What can you begin to look for to help get your energy going in a different direction?

This has been such a fabulous week. I'm in the middle of teaching the Royal Treatment Workshop. And for those of you who have joined us, we are having the best time, aren't we? It's so much fun. And I've had many of you reach out and tell me, "This is the

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best workshop I've ever done." And I've been getting that a lot. Every time I run a workshop, I'm hearing, "Oh my God, this is better than the last time you did it." And it's because I keep growing. It's because I'm expanding and I'm bringing that more expansive energy to the workshops. And so you all are watching me in real time change my self-image.

So for me, it's such an honor to do this work and to support you all and to watch you create your after story, which is my mission. I want to help 5,000 women create their after stories, documented, proven that this method works and we are well on our way my friends. They're coming in every single day and it's just so much fun for me to witness women step into their after story all by changing their self-image. Self-image really is everything.

Now, since I started the membership back in October of 2020, I've had many women come into the community with the extraordinary goal of losing weight. And the crazy thing is, within the membership, there are no weight loss focused classes. However, when my team and I were going through the after stories that were being submitted, we noticed this trend of many of them were of women losing weight in the membership. And I thought to myself, that is so fascinating because so many people think, "Oh, I need a diet. I need to join a weight loss course in order to lose weight."

But we were seeing this trend of women losing weight by applying the material and changing their self-image. And the reason why is that you are always working subconsciously. You probably don't even realize you're doing it, but it's this subconscious mechanism that's always at work and it works to keep you living within harmony of your identity, your self-image. And this explains why it's so difficult for those people who are trying to lose weight, to actually lose it and keep it off. You can lose it, but if you don't change your identity, you put the weight back on.

Now, some of you remember back in the day when I had one of my very popular programs called Slim, Chic and Savvy, and I was teaching this concept without understanding and having the language around it to know it was self-image. But the work that we were doing within that program was around changing your self-image to that of a slim, chic and savvy woman. And I retired that program. However, women have been asking me, not just asking, begging, "Please bring something like that back. We want support around losing weight with your unique method." And so I thought about bringing back Slim, Chic and Savvy because it's such a great program. However, I have grown so much since then as I was just mentioning, and I've learned so much more around self-image as it relates to weight loss even since that program.

And so I've been thinking about what I could offer you that would really help you become a slim woman, not something that's going to help you lose weight because we all know, again, you can lose weight. You've probably done it 1,000 times. But

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something that help would help you be state of being a slim woman because when you are a slim woman, you are subconsciously going to work to create that result, to live in harmony when you change your self-image. And when I use the word slim, I know it can be triggering to some people. They're like, "Oh, Tonya, you're trying to tell people to be skinny." No, I'm not. I'm not skinny. I am, as my mother says, a healthy size. And that's the key word: healthy.

And when I use the word slim, and the way I've always used it is that it is about letting go of the excess, letting go of what no longer serves you, letting go of what's weighing you down and holding you back. And from that, let's see what evolves because your body has this harmonious and set point place that it thrives. And that's what we want to find for you. I don't know what that is for you, but I know that if you want to find out for yourself, you're going to have to be willing to break up with who you've been in order to birth who you're becoming.

So I've been thinking about the next evolution of what I could offer you around weight loss. And I use those two words very hesitantly because those are the two words that we actually want to get you away from. We want you to stop thinking that you have a weight problem so that you stop perpetuating that you have a weight problem. But for the sake of this podcast, we're just going to say to support you around weight loss. And so I was journaling and going through my creative process whenever I'm creating anything. And I started to think about all of the women within the membership who have lost weight using these principles. And it occurred to me that there has been some parts of the conversation that have been left out of the membership that could actually fast track women getting results in this area. And it's still following the same process within the membership, the self-image method, but applying it to being a slim woman.

And so I am so excited about what we've come up with. It's called the Slim Self-Image, and it is an eight week program where we are going to use the self-image method, which I've talked about in a previous podcast, as well as focusing on the three pillars that we talk about nonstop within the membership. And I'm calling them your slim mindset, your slim surroundings, and your slim style, to birth the slim woman within you so that you can be done with the struggle that you may be going through if you're someone who deals with weight issues. And I'm excited to be teaching this alongside our community manager who, this is her wheelhouse. This is how she got started. She's lost I think 70 pounds and she was a weight loss coach before she came and worked for the School of Self Image. And so we are going to be supporting the most extraordinary group of women in this process.

Now you may be thinking, "Oh, Tanya, I want to do this. Sounds amazing. How do I sign up? Where?" I'm including this in the membership for annual members. So by joining

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the School of Self-Image and making a one year commitment, you get access to everything that's in the membership. The coaching, the classes, the community. You also get access to the Wealthy Woman, which is a course for annual members. You get access to Charm the Room, and now you're going to get access to the Slim Self-Image program that we're going to be running live. So you're going to have live support during these eight weeks together. So if you want to join us, what in the world, head over to schoolofselfimage.com/join and make sure you choose the annual option. And I'm excited to see you in the Slim Self-Image program.

Okay, so now let's talk about today's topic, which I am so excited to talk about: emotions. I'm intrigued by them. They are creating our entire lives. They are woven into our self-image. So it's a topic that I am fascinated about. And this concept of emotional fluency came up for me when I was teaching a class not too long ago, and I thought I had made it up, but it turns out that it's a common term. And so when I went to get ready for this podcast and I started doing research, I'm like, oh, this is not just me. Other people have talked about emotional fluency before. But the way I was talking about it in the class is that we all are fluent in our language. So for some of you, your first language most likely is English if you listen to this podcast, but I know some of you speak other languages as your first language and English is your second language, and you may have two or three or four more languages that you know fluently. You're one of the gifted ones.

Because I struggle in learning a new language. I have been trying to learn French for over a decade, and it's very difficult for me. And I share that because it's the same with emotional fluency. For many of us, it's difficult to learn to speak a language that we are not accustomed to, that isn't our first language. So to become emotionally fluent, you first need to understand what is an emotion and where does it come from? And I like to think of an emotion as a vibration that I can feel, I can sense in my body. Now, I use emotions and feelings interchangeably, even though you can separate them out, I just like simplicity. And so for me, it's like feelings and emotions. I use them, I interchange them. But for me, it's like this sensation in my body that I can feel.

So anxiety, I usually feel it in my stomach. It's like very fluttering. Sometimes I feel it in my chest. Joy, I feel in my chest. It's very expansive. It's like big bubbles that are just opening up. So that's what an emotion is. It's a vibration that you can sense in your body.

Now, where do emotions come from? And there are different schools of thought on this. Scientists have agreed that most emotions come from your thoughts, which is why two people can encounter a dog and have two very different reactions. Same dog, two different people. Why? Because of their thoughts about it. One person can feel absolute delight when they see a dog because they're thinking delightful thoughts.

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Another person can feel terror because they are thinking thoughts of terror. So the majority of our emotions come from our thinking. But I've also been thinking about these emotions or feelings that we have sometimes that we just can't explain. Has that ever happened to you? You wake up and you just feel a certain way and you're like, there's no logical reason as to why I'm feeling this way. And scientists have shown that it can be biochemical factors, it can be subconscious stored thoughts that you can't even access.

But for the most part, I would say 95% of the time, you can trace your emotion to a thought. And I think that's a beautiful thing because then you can begin to ask yourself, why am I feeling so worried? Why am I feeling so afraid? Why am I feeling so insecure or sad? And you can find that thought and you can change it to feel something better. And that is how you become fluent in new emotions.

Now, I want you to think of your first emotional language. What is your primary emotional language? And for most of us, it's going to be the language that we spoke as a child. So if you think about your childhood, what was the emotional language that was spoken in your home most often? Was it anger? Was it worry? Was it joy? Was it gratitude? Now, hopefully you had a mixture of emotions, not just one negative emotion, but usually there was a predominant emotion that ruled over a house. And that's usually the language that we picked up and we speak so fluently now. We don't even have to try to speak it. It's just the one that we go to. It is our go-to emotion. When I think about my primary emotion that I grew up with, it was fear. And secondary emotion was gratitude.

So it was an interesting mix because I mean, there was so much love in my family, but in the religion that I grew up in, I was always afraid. I was always afraid of the second coming because that was something that was taught in my religion. And as a little girl, you're taught if you sin, Jesus is going to come back and you're going to be left behind. And I remember you all, my parents. One day I woke up, I was probably like seven or eight years old, and I woke up, it was a weekend and I couldn't find my parents, and I started panicking and freaking out. I remember running out into the yard to see if there were cars and wrecks and carnage because I thought, oh my goodness, the rapture has taken place and I have been left behind. And so I was always on edge of that kind of stuff. I remember having to watch films about it. It was pretty ingrained. And so I grew up and even as an adult, being afraid of the world, being afraid that something bad was going to happen.

Now, I also had a lot of gratitude because I was also taught that emotion as a child. And so learning a new emotion was very uncomfortable. I wanted to feel calm, I wanted to feel confident, I wanted to feel at peace. And those emotions were so foreign. And what's interesting is they feel foreign in your body when you try to speak

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them. And that too makes sense from a scientific point of view because every emotion carries with it a chemical cocktail. And so when you have introduced that cocktail to your body over and over and over again, even though it doesn't serve you, even though it's uncomfortable, it's also very familiar to the body.

And so when you try to introduce a new cocktail into the body, the body wants to reject it. The body's like, oh, this is unfamiliar, this thing called joy. We're not used to feeling this. And so the brain then gets involved and tries to get you back to harmony with your self-image. All comes back to self-image, my friends. And if your self-image is of a woman who worries or who is afraid, you keep thinking at that level, feeling at that level and creating evidence for that level. And you ingrain that self-image deeper and deeper into your beingness. And so you have to hire a language teacher and you have to practice these new languages that you want to speak fluently.

Now, who should you hire? Where should you hire them? And I don't know that answer for you. Your language teacher could be a book, a podcast like this. Your language teacher could be a therapist. Your language teacher could be a coach. But I encourage you to find a language teacher who has struggled in becoming fluent because they're going to know where you get tripped up. They're going to know the tweaks and the workarounds. It's just like when I was learning French, I tried to learn from a native French speaker, and it was very difficult. I had a way more success with an English speaker who now spoke French fluently because she understood me speaking English as a first language and all of the trip ups that I was going to have and how to get through them.

So I have found that you're better served by having a teacher who maybe speaks scarcity or used to speak scarcity, but now speaks wealth and abundance. Maybe the teacher used to speak worry or anger, but now speaks calm and confidence. And so finding your teacher is going to be so important if you want to become emotionally fluent in another emotional language.

And then the second thing is you must practice, and it is going to be awkward, and you are going to fail, and it's going to feel like you're not getting anywhere, and you're going to want to go back and speak the language that is most familiar to you and the one that is easiest for you. And you can do that. But you know by doing that, you're never going to become fluent in the emotions that are going to help you create what you want. So the practice is understanding what you're feeling, going within to figure out why you're feeling that way, and then redirecting, turning towards what you want and thinking in the direction of that. And then feeling the discomfort of change, feeling the discomfort of letting go of an emotion that is so familiar to you but is no longer serving you.

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And so the way this works, I call it the Self-Image Cycle. You have a thought that creates a feeling, an emotion. And when you are fluent in a certain language, that thought is just usually by default. Something happens and your brain goes somewhere. Now, your brain may go to, I'm such a bad person. Another person's brain may go to, they're such a bad person, just depending on how you were raised and how you see the world. One may go to shame, one may go to anger. But you will have default thoughts that you just go to without even trying. And that creates that default emotion that you are accustomed to feeling. And you're going to think it's because of the outside world. But what I want you to understand is no, it's just an emotion that you're so fluent at speaking. And so you're always looking for reasons to feel that emotion because it's so familiar to you.

And so you have the emotion and then that emotion causes you to go out there and create evidence for more of that. And so you begin to really cement the self-image into place. So the way to start shifting that is just to change your thought just a little bit. If you're used to feeling despair, which is one of the most constrictive emotions, maybe we reach for pessimism, which is a more transitional emotion. So going from a thought like the world is ending, everything is so messed up, there's no hope for me, like those kinds of thoughts. Maybe you could go to, maybe there's some good in the world, maybe it's possible that there is some hope for me. And even just that little bit of shift in your thinking helps to get you out of this language, this emotional language that is keeping you stuck in a self-image that doesn't serve you.

And what I want to encourage you to do is you keep practicing this until one day you are speaking joy, confidence, abundance, gratitude, excitement, passion, love. And it's no longer something that you have to practice because you have practiced so much, you are now fluent. These kinds of emotions have become your primary first language. You have left the languages of the past behind, and now you are speaking the languages to help you create your future on purpose.

Now, here's the thing. I just said, you left those languages behind, but that's not true. As I was saying that, I'm like, nope, that's not quite how it happens. So let me state that in a different way. It's not the language that you go to as your first language any longer. Because there are days you all where I still have anxiety and it feels familiar. Like I'm like, oh, I used to speak that so fluently. I don't speak it that much anymore. And so therefore it feels awkward and odd when it comes up. The same with overwhelm. That's an emotion I used to feel a lot, and I could speak that language better than anybody. I could teach that language I was so fluent in it, but I haven't practiced that emotion in so long that if it happens to come up, it feels very foreign now. I have to work to practice it. I'm like, whoa.

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But if I kept practicing it, if I let it take over, I could be back in that place in no time because it's in my subconscious and it's a language that I used to practice a lot. And then there are going to be languages that you're very conversational in, but you're not fluent yet and that's okay. A language that was really hard for me to pick up was abundance, and I was conversational for a long time in that one, and I still don't quite feel fluent in it. But I can definitely speak it and I speak it really well, but it's not where I go. And it makes sense because I grew up in a lot of scarcity. And so that's where my brain can take me easily.

But I have been practicing abundance for a long time now. I've noticed that I'm more on the fluent side of things than I used to be, but it still takes a little bit of effort and that's okay. We're human. We're not here to be perfect. We're here to experience life. And the only way to experience life is to open yourself up to all of the emotions and learn from them and grow from them, and then become emotionally fluent so that you can choose your emotions on purpose, and you can speak them so that you can create a self-image that will allow you to create what it is that you want.

So I'm curious, what is your current first emotional language? And all you have to do is just look at your life, look at your days, and what is the emotion that you experience most days? And what would you like it to be? What is the emotion you would love to speak? For me, my favorite emotion is love. I think it's the highest vibration. I love the way it feels in my body. I love what it produces. And so that is the language that I love speaking and practicing and being fluent in. But what is it for you? And maybe during this season in your life, it's something else. Maybe you're wanting just a transitional emotion. You're like, "Tonya, I can't get to love yet. I'm so full of anger." I get it. What can we get to? Maybe remorse, maybe guilt, maybe impatience, maybe frustration? We just want to move in the direction of the more expansive emotions.

Okay, my friends, I love you. I hope you have the most beautiful and awe-inspiring week. And don't forget, the School of Self-Image membership is open right now for a short time. So you can go to schoolofselfimage.com/join. And remember, if you join as an annual member, you'll be able to participate in the Slim Self-Image Program that's coming up, and it would be an honor to be your emotional language teacher. So come on, what in the world? Let's do this. Have a gorgeous week. 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.