



EPISODE NO. 337

How to Take Time to Think On Your Life

SCHOOL OF SELF-IMAGE

When was the last time you set aside time to think on your life, to ask the juicy questions, to listen for guidance, to make really great plans? If you are feeling stuck or you feel like your life is not heading in the right direction, then it's important that you take time to think on your life, and that's what this episode is all about. 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 beautiful friends. How are you feeling? I am feeling really relaxed. I just spent the last hour journaling about my life. I've been spending time thinking on my life, which is very important for us all to do. I remember when I was a little girl, my grandmother would tell me, "You got to take time to plan your garden, to bear the fruits of it." And I thought about how that applies to our life. You need to take time to plan your life on purpose in order to bear the fruits of a well-planned life. And yet so many people are going so fast, and they're going so fast in a direction they don't even want to be going in. But they tell themselves that when they have more time, when things slow down, then they'll take the time to figure out their life.

But we can see that's just craziness, and yet we've all done it to ourselves. It feels like there is no other option but to keep going. And I think this is why COVID was such a big reset for the world, is because during that time, we were forced to literally slow down. People couldn't go to work, people couldn't go to church, people couldn't go to events. People were forced to be at home by themselves with their own brain, which if you

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haven't done that in a while, it can be scary what's in there. But this is why I feel like a lot of people made some big decisions in 2020 and 2021, because they had time to think, what do I want? Where am I going? What's really important to me? What do I value? Where do I want to be? Who do I want to be with? What kind of person do I want to be?

Where do I want to work? What kind of work do I want to be doing? And maybe for the first time in a long time, people had time to really think about those kinds of questions. And it was during COVID when people were making big life decisions. They were changing jobs, changing careers, moving, leaving relationships, getting married, having babies. It's like the time to think caused a big reset. So now that life is getting somewhat back to normal, are you creating time to think? My creative director and I were meeting this past week and she asked me, "What does it mean to you to be wealthy?" Because one of the courses that's within the School of Self-Image membership is called The Wealthy Woman, and we were talking about that program in particular. And immediately, what I thought about was space. Space to breathe, space to think, space to create.

To me, that's wealth. I don't think about big cars and big houses. I think about time and space. And maybe that's why even though I grew up poor, fiscally speaking, in many ways my life felt rich growing up in the deep South because we valued time. There was time to just be. And ironically, my very first company was called Just Be Living. I don't know if any of you have been with me since the very beginning, but that was my first company because I knew deep down inside, this is what people need. We need space to be, to be with ourselves, to be with our own thinking, to be with nature. Because if you don't take the time to be with you, then you're constantly going to be reacting to life. You're going to feel like you are going through life without purpose. You're going to feel like you're going through life without a guide, because you haven't taken the time to think on your life as to what's important. What do I value? What do I want to create, what I want to do.

Back in 2020, during COVID, as most people, had a lot of time to think, and what I've noticed is that when you remove yourself from your usual environment and you place yourself in a new environment with the purpose of thinking on your life, that's when you can get some really great downloads because you're not being triggered by the same stimuli that's triggering the same thoughts. You've got new things around you, which is why I love to have working retreats where I go away from home. And it might be in the same town. I just go check into a hotel. But I place myself in new environments because I find that that's when I'm most creative, and that's how I can shake myself out of old ways of thinking. So going back to COVID during 2020, I went to California, went to Beverly Hills. And California was still pretty locked down.

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So I was in the hotel a lot and I had a lot of time to just think, but I was in a new environment, and it was there that I made some big decisions. I decided to leave a relationship, I decided to completely change my business, and I decided to move. And that was because I had time to really think on my life, to really just sit there with pen and paper and ask myself some really good questions. Because the quality of your life really is determined by the quality of your questions, but we need time to ask ourselves the questions and then have time to actually hear our own answers. And sometimes that takes a little bit of time, to hear the truth of ourselves. I like to spend 10% of my time in deep thinking. So that could look like one day a week.

I consider Mondays to be my thinking days. It could be in terms of weeks in a year, 10% of 52 is a little over five weeks. So you think about that's our vacation time. That's time for us to unplug and spend time thinking on our life. You can also think about 10% of your day. So it depends on how many hours you are awake, but on average, 16 hours most people are awake. So that's like one and a half hours of thinking on your life. This is why I love journaling in the morning. It's why sometimes during the day, I just like to step away and go for a walk and think, because my best downloads, my creative moments come from that time where I am unplugging from reacting to life and thinking more meta, thinking bigger picture. So what does one do during thinking time?

Well, it can vary. For me personally, sometimes I use my thinking time to dream and create. And so this is when I ask a lot of questions about my future. What would I love? That's one of my favorite journaling questions. What would I love right now? What would I love to create? What would I love to see more of in the world? What would I love to experience? What would I love to be? And just allow myself to write and dream and use my imagination in fun ways. Sometimes I use my thinking time to work through an obstacle, a challenge, a struggle. So if it's a relationship that I'm wanting to work on, then I'm going to do a lot of journaling about my thoughts about that person. If it's my business and there's an obstacle that I'm facing, I'm going to write down all of my thinking around that obstacle and look at how I might be contributing to it, how I might be helping co-create the obstacle, or I may just brainstorm what are all of the potential solutions to this obstacle?

And then sometimes my thinking time is more logistical, where I am just putting pen to paper and I am writing out plans for a project, or plans for my life, like A, B, C, D kind of thing. So thinking time can be used in many different ways. But for me, the distinction is I'm using my brain very purposefully, and it's a creative moment for me, where I am thinking and putting ideas and plans onto paper versus consuming. Because a lot of people spend a lot of time in consumption versus creation. And if you feel like you're not creating results, just look at what your ratio is. How much time are

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you spending consuming things? And how much time are you spending in creating? And this is why the members of the School of Self-Image get such great results, because I preach this. I'm like, listen, come to the calls and learn, but now I want you to take that one thing and go out there and create something with that.

Go use that tool to create evidence to create something new because it's really important that we create, as human beings, or we can start to feel stagnant. We can start to feel stuck. So creativity from our thinking time is key. In fact, the word creativity is derived from the Latin creare, which means to make. And then there's a Greek term called [foreign language 00:11:10], I think is how you pronounce it, which means to fulfill. And I feel like creativity is the secret to our own fulfillment. And in order to create, you need time to think because everything that is created is result of thinking. Look around you right now. Everything that you see started with a thought. So we need thinking time in order to be creative. Another very intentional thinking time that I create for myself is by going to events, being a part of my mastermind. These are moments where not only am I removing myself and putting myself in a different environment, but those environments are serving that purpose. That is the purpose of those environments, to provide thought-provoking questions, to provide inspiration so that I can think on my life in a new, fun, and creative way. And so I want you to ask yourself, how often are you thinking on your life? And if it's not a daily practice, I really encourage you to make it one. Even if it's for five to 10 minutes in the morning, thinking about what would you love? Where are you being challenged? What do you want to create? Where do you want to go? What goals do you have?

Maybe it's about making plans for those goals. And if you're within the school of self image membership, we have a more structured way to go about this thinking time. You can find it in your daily three journal. It's our daily practice within the membership. I also encourage you to take this concept and apply it in a bigger way. And the way that looks is to take a weekend and plan on having a retreat for yourself with yourself. Now, you can go to a retreat. That's one option, or you can create one yourself. I even did a podcast talking about working retreats and how I go about that. But sometimes it's fun to put yourself in a retreat that's been created for you around inspiring people in an elevated environment and where you're guided in this kind of thinking, where you're guided to really process your life in a much bigger and more expansive way.

This is one of the reasons why I really love hosting events. I love seeing the big ahas and the big shifts that happen, when women finally get a moment to breathe and to really think on their lives. Because we know when you're a mom, when you're working, when you have a lot of responsibilities, maybe you're taking care of your parents, when you're running a business, when you have all of these things that are taking up so much of your time or attention, it can become more difficult to have this thinking time.

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But when you attend an event and you set aside that time for this purpose, and then you are being guided, you are being supported, that's when magic can happen. I've had women leave my events with plans in hand that forever changed their lives. They quit their jobs, they started their businesses, they left relationships, they got married, they moved, and it's all because they had a moment to really ask themselves, what do I want for my life?

What's really important? And then having the support around you to believe in you, and to hold you and to cheer you on is so, so powerful. And if you've never been to one of my events, what in the world? I know I'm biased because they're are events, but I've been told by many people who attend that it's the best event they've ever been to. And many of the women come back because it's so good. And if you want to experience a SOSI event, we are opened right now for our SOSI South, which is going to be held in New Orleans in November, first weekend in November. And this is going to be the best one we've ever done. And the whole theme of this event is your charmed life. I want to teach you how to create everyday magic in your life, and that's what we're going to be doing at SOSI South. So if you're craving this kind of thinking time and you want to be in a beautiful location with extraordinary people and have time to think on your life, come join us.

You can go to schoolofselfimage.com/south and read all about it. It's a party, it's a celebration, it's learning, it's applying, it's being with extraordinary women. It's the event of a lifetime, so go check it out. We would love, love to see you there. And most importantly, just commit to taking the first step to creating thinking time in your life. That 10% of my thinking time is creating 90% of my life. It's that important. So if you want to create your life on purpose, if you want to be intentional, if you want to be deliberate, then you must, must, must create space to think on your life. Have a beautiful week, my friends, and I will see you and 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.