



EPISODE NO. 361

Savoring the Slow Life

There's a really great quote by a man named Eddie Cantor where he says, "Slow down and enjoy life. It's not only the scenery you miss by going too fast, you also miss the sense of where you're going and why." In this episode, I want to talk about how to savor the slow life. 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. I am having the most leisurely morning. I am sitting here having my cup of coffee. I just turned the music down because I didn't want you to hear that in the background. And I've been journaling. And this is typically how most of my mornings go. I like to ease into my day, and I've been doing this for the longest time. Even when I worked as a nurse, I would wake up early enough to just have some space to just be, to not be in a rush, and to live a little bit slow. And that's what this episode is all about. It's about savoring the slow life. And it's something I've been thinking a lot about recently. Years ago, before I started the School of Self-Image, when I was French Kiss Life, I talked about this a lot. I talked about our desire to want to slow down. And inevitably, whenever my friends go to Europe, they'll come back and they'll be like, "Oh my God, I feel so much better. What is it?"

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And when we sit around and talk about it, what we all discover is that there's a sense of slowness that we often don't have in our everyday lives. And the question for me ever since the beginning of my journey into personal development has always been how do we combine ambition with ease? In fact, I wrote an article years ago called How to Leisurely Hustle. And it was an article that actually went viral. The whole term people started to use because I feel like it's something that we all struggle with, especially those of you who listen to this podcast. I'm sure all of us have these big goals and these big dreams that we want to go after, we want to achieve, we want to realize, and we also have this desire to slow down and not to be so rushed and not to be so stressed and overwhelmed and hurried.

And so for many people, there seems to be this internal conflict between going fast and going slow because we associate ambition with fast and we associate ease with slow. And it seems as if we can't have both. But I want to argue for a case where you can. And let me just say that this episode is as much for me as it is for you. This has been a very interesting and fascinating year for me. I think for many of us, when we start approaching certain milestones in our lives, and for me, the milestone is 50, we start to question what's really important. What do I want the next chapter of my life to look and to feel like? And what's become abundantly clear for me is that I want to live a slow life.

And I want you to think about what comes up for you when you hear me say that. I was talking to a friend of mine recently and we were talking about this very topic. And she was saying, "When I hear you say that, I hear you saying you want to slow down from your business, from your goals, from that fast pace." And I told her, I'm like, "I get why you think that, but my goals are still there and they're still big. I have extraordinary goals, but it's the energy in which I go after those goals and the energy in which I live my daily life." And what I have found to be true over and over again is that when I slow down my mind and I become present, there is a level of clarity, a level of intention, and a level of peace that I experience. And I go in and out of this, you all. I'm coming off of a season where I feel like the energy has been really fast, and I'm craving that season of slow.

I'm craving to get back into that energy of not feeling like I'm going 100 miles per hour. And the irony in all of this, there have been seasons in my life where my calendar was pretty bleak. I didn't have a lot going on, and yet I felt so hurried. And then there have been seasons of my life where my life is full of things to do and obligations on the calendar, and yet it felt very slow. In fact, right now, it's one of those seasons. I am in the middle of running The Money Garden. We are going to be going to New Orleans

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next week for a SOSI South event. There's a lot happening in my business. And on top of that, I'm building a house. There are a lot of things going on, but in a weird kind of way, it feels like it's slowing down because I set this intention that I want to live more slowly.

The analogy I like to use around this is skiing. I don't know if any of you all love skiing, but you'll get this if you do. But I love a good ski day. It's one of my favorite days. Skiing with friends, bright blue skies. I don't like to ski when it's super cold or snowing. I like that perfect ski day. You all know what I'm talking about if you ski. And on those days, I am going down that mountain pretty fast, and yet it feels like I am moving so slow. And it's a moment where time feels like it just stops. And that is how I want my life to be. It's that feeling of being in flow. It's that feeling of being so present that time becomes irrelevant. And it doesn't mean you are moving slow. It just feels as if you are because of the state of your mind and the presence in which you are approaching that moment in time.

Savoring a slow life is really about being here now, being in this moment. And I know this is so hard for us to wrap our minds around, especially if you follow me and you're in the membership because we talk about our future selves a lot. I love setting big goals for my future. I love getting to know my future self. But what I know about her to be true is that she's very present. And so I need to practice being her now. And she is very much appreciative of the day she has right now. She is not focused on the past or worried about the future. She is in this moment looking around for what she wants to see, what she wants to celebrate, what she wants to appreciate, what she wants to place her attention on. And so how do we get into that energy?

How do we get into that slow life energy, that soft, slow, sensual, sweet presence that's available to all of us? I'm going to give you some tips on how I do it because I haven't always been like this. And again, I sometimes slip out of it. And I'm feeling that pressure and that rush and I'm like, "Whoa, whoa, whoa, whoa. This is not how I want my life to feel." And using the tips that I'm about to give you is how I get back into that sweet spot of living slow. The first thing that you must do, or none of the other things I'm about to share with you will work, and that is you must learn how to manage your mind. It really does come down to mindset, my friends. And that is the core pillar within the School of Self-Image. Mindset.

I have watched our members go from super stressed, super overwhelmed, hurried, rushed, busy, exhausted to very calm, focused and deliberate women. And it's because they've learned how to manage their brains. And if this is something that you know

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deep down is missing from your life and you keep thinking, "Oh, I'll take time to do that when I get over there," what I can tell you is that you won't get over there until you master this because over there is something that's available here because there really is no over there. There is only ever here. My heart really does go out to people who don't have the tools to manage their minds because I remember my life when I didn't have these tools, and it was hard. I felt sad and depressed and overwhelmed most of the time. And now those are emotions that I rarely experience only because I have learned how to do this one thing.

And I think about this day and age and how much is coming at us all of the time. If you don't know how to manage your mind, that should be your number one priority. It should be your number one focus because that is creating everything in your life. And that is why I love the work that we do within the School of Self-Image. Because when you can master that, everything else becomes so much easier. And right now, we are open for enrollment. You can go to schoolofselfimage.com/join. You can read all about the membership. But one of the main things that we do, the number one thing that we do always comes back to this, your mindset. And what I can promise you, if you come into this membership and you do this work, you will not recognize yourself one year from now.

You will create a whole new after that will blow your mind, and you will know it because of how you feel. You'll look around hopefully, like many of our members, and say, "Wow, life has finally slowed down." It's because you slowed your brain down and you learned how to manage it effectively. But when it comes to mindset, there are two things that I did that forever changed my life and helped me to slow down. One thought that I stopped saying and one thought that I started practicing. The thought that I stopped saying was, "I am so overwhelmed." "I am," two most important words you will ever speak because you're claiming it as your identity and you will always work to prove your identity true. And so a lot of you all are walking around talking about how overwhelmed you are, and that just causes life to speed up.

Think about it. When you're saying, "I am overwhelmed," did things slow down? No. Your perception is that things are moving so fast that you can't handle it, and then you don't make effective decisions. A lot of times when you tell yourself that you're overwhelmed, you procrastinate, and so you build more evidence to support this thought that you're overwhelmed. I stopped telling myself that because I just realized that that thought was not leading to an effective result. And the thought that I have been practicing for years, and I practiced this thought especially when I can feel that overwhelm wanting to seep in, and the thought is, "There is no hurry." Really think

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about it. When should you ever be in a hurry? I can only think of a few times where you really need to be in a hurry. If someone is chasing you, threatening your life, you probably need to hurry.

You need to get out of that situation. If you are driving a loved one to the hospital in an emergency, probably need to press that gas a little bit harder. But a lot of the hurry in our brain is just our imaginations being misused. A lot of the hurry in our brain is just being driven out of unfounded fear. Think about it. A lot of you right now are saying, "I need to hurry up and get to my goal. I need to hurry." And that feeling of hurry is actually slowing you down because you can't think effectively. You can't come up with creative solutions. It may feel so paralyzing. You're not doing much at all. You're in inaction. Oops, my mic just cut off. That was so weird. But what I was saying is that when you are putting that pressure and that hurry on yourself, it can actually slow you down from reaching your goals.

What I have found to be true is that when I slow my brain down, I often get to where I want to go much more quickly. That's the irony of it all. And so it's so important that you monitor the thoughts that you have and just ask yourself, "What is driving this thinking?" And the reason why most people are in a hurry is because they think over there is better than here. But listen, I've seen it time and time again. People get there and because they've never learned to manage their mind effectively, they just repeat the same energy over there that's here. They're just in a hurry from over there because now they think over there from where they are now is better. I especially see this with business owners. We reach certain milestones, the milestones that we once dreamt of that we thought if we could just get there, life's going to be so much better.

And then we get there and because we didn't change our thinking, it's just the same you and a new situation. I always tell my members, I'm like, "Listen, over there will only ever be as good as here because there is no there. There's only here." However you think you're going to feel over there, we got to start practicing that feeling here. And that's one of the strategies of slowing down, savoring the slow life. The other tip that I have for savoring the slow life, living more slowly is to have one big goal that you are focused on. Now, I know this scares so many of you. I have coached many of you on this issue because when you come into the School of Self-Image, it's one of the first things that you do. You choose your extraordinary goal, and that becomes your focus.

But a lot of times, we're feeling like life is moving so fast because we're so scattered. We're putting our focus on 10 different things, and then we feel like we're not getting momentum, we're not moving forward, and then we get frustrated and it just creates

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this feeling that we are running fast and getting nowhere. I know you all know what I'm talking about. And so the process of just having one main focus in your life will begin to help you figure out what needs to go and what needs to stay. Now, listen, this does not mean that you don't have your daily life and obligations at the same time, but it also means that you're not trying to achieve 100 things at a time.

You have that one main goal and then you schedule everything else around it. And I have just witnessed personally so many people struggle with this, fight it. And when they finally embrace it, that's when things take off for them because who they become in the process of reaching that goal begins to spill over into the other areas of their lives and they end up reaching other goals anyway. But that focus is key to slowing things down. Another tip that I have for living the slow life may sound counterintuitive, but it's been very helpful to settle my brain down and to give me focus because where there's focus, things do slow down. When you feel scattered, and a lack of focus often makes it feel as if things are speeding up. And that tip is to schedule your life. Schedule your life. So many people want to argue with me on this.

They're like, "But if you want to live slow, you need to be spontaneous and you need to just go with the flow." Those are the very people who are struggling the most. And I used to be one of them. I thought I was so commendable. I thought I was so just footloose and fancy-free because I didn't schedule anything. I knew when I was supposed to go to work and I knew when I got off. Nothing else was scheduled. And even when I first started my business, I would work when I felt like it. There was no intention. There was no focus. And guess what? My results showed. Now, there were some things I was consistent on. I knew every week, I was going to send out my newsletter, I was going to show up for my clients, but I didn't have the level of focus that I have today.

And when I look at my life today, the result of what I've created, I always back it up and look at why. And one of the key things that I see is that I schedule. And the better I schedule, the slower my life feels because I can look at the schedule and I can begin to take things off. I can be like, "Nope, this schedule feels too much. It feels too compacted." And so it's a way for me to look at just the practicalities of what do I want to remove. What is not necessary right now? But the other thing is all of that clutter in my brain is now dumped out, and I've organized it and I've placed it on a calendar, so I know when I'm supposed to be somewhere, what I'm supposed to be doing, and the results that I'm creating within that timeframe. Within the School of Self-Image membership, one of the programs that you get as soon as you join is called the Dream Atelier.

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And this is my personal process of taking big dreams. I'm talking about crazy big extraordinary goals and breaking it down and accomplishing it 30 days at a time. And I have witnessed women come into that process and doing things that they said they've been trying to do for five to 10 years because it teaches you how to prioritize, how to schedule, and how to get things done without the overwhelm, without the hurry. It's a very intentional, deliberate process. If you want to learn more about how to do this and go into this in depth, I even take you behind the scenes of me scheduling out my week, make sure you go through the Dream Atelier process if you're in the membership. It's one of the things that I recommend that you do early on just so you can learn that process and begin to apply it so you can enjoy your life more, actually.

And it really does slow things down. That's my third tip. First tip, manage your mind. Second tip, have one extraordinary goal that you're focused on. And third tip is to schedule. And within the scheduling process, I talk about self-care and rest and play. That needs to go on your schedule. It needs to be one of the first things actually that you put on your schedule. But it's so important in order to live a slow life. To savor the slow life, you must take care of you. If you are running yourself to empty and you're exhausted, there is a level of pressure and a level of hurriedness behind that. And so many of you right now are telling yourselves, "When I get over there, I'll do this. When I finally get the kids raised, when the kids are older, when the business is doing better, when we get into the new house," whatever it is, "Then I will take care of myself."

And what I can tell you is that you are the key to the kingdom. Without you, there is no house. Without you, there is no business. Without you, there is no family. At what point are we all going to wake up as women and realize that we must take care of ourselves in order to better serve, to take care of other people? And if you want your life to slow down, you must make self-care a priority. Imagine if self-care became a non-negotiable. It became more important than your children, your job, your family. What would have to change? Well, I'm guessing you'd have to say no more, no to the things that you actually don't want to be doing anyway. You would probably have to ask for help, which is hard for many of us. It would demand a whole new version of you. And that in and of itself is the reason to do it.

And the result of that is no longer being a woman who puts herself in the back row of her own life. She puts herself on the stage. And that will produce the most healthy, energetic, and vivacious version of you who then is better able to go and create those things that she deeply wants, which will then serve your family and your community at a much greater level. Another tip that I have in order to savor the slow life is to take moments throughout your day and ask yourself this question. And the question is,

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what is going well? So often if we don't manage our minds, this actually goes back to number one, but if we don't manage our minds, we can be walking around in a bounty of blessing and thinking that our life is falling apart.

And asking yourself what's going well trains your brain to look around in this moment and give honor to the fact that maybe you have food and you have a home and you have a job and you're feeling good today and you have a good hair day and your kids got up on time and made it to school on time today. And it just trains you to start looking for what's really great about this moment, so you're not always trying to get out of it. And then that leads me to my very last one. I have so many tips on this, but this is the last one I'm going to leave you with. As we head into the holidays, take time to appreciate what you already have. Last year, I went on a six-month no spend challenge. And I'm actually considering doing it again this year because it was so profound in so many ways.

I realized, "Gosh, I have so much already." And it forced me to really use what I have, appreciate what I have, get creative with what I have, and enjoy what I already have. And this no shopping challenge was basically for my closet. I just said, "You know what? I'm not buying anything that fits into my closet," but I noticed it spilled over into other things. I just found this desire to not want to put anything else into my life for a period of time. And I realized that so much of our hurriedness is because we have put so much into our lives that it can feel suffocating and we're running from the very thing that we've created. So stopping to appreciate what you already have creates this feeling of abundance. It creates this feeling of just deep satisfaction. And at the same time, we're holding space for more, not because more is better, but because more is asking for us to expand into a bigger version of ourselves.

And listen, more does not necessarily mean more material things. It is up to us to define what more means for us. I have seen women who have declared that more means getting rid of everything except the bare basics because that was a true desire of their soul. But creating more, whatever that looks like for you, will require that you look around and you appreciate all that you have right now because if you can't appreciate what you have right now, more is not going to make that better. I always say the energy in which you create something will be the energy in which you experience it. So if you create more money out of fear and scarcity, if you get that money, you're still going to feel fear and scarcity. You're not actually going to get what you want. And so as we approach the holiday season, I encourage all of us to embrace the slow life knowing that it's not going to slow you down from what you deeply desire.

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If anything else, it's going to help you speed up. I think about what one of my mentors told me years ago that had such a profound impact on my life. She said, "Tonya, sometimes you have to slow down to speed up." And what I have found to be true is that when you slow down, you speed up as a result because then you're on the right path. You are moving at an intentional pace, and you are enjoying the life you have now, which isn't that what we're all after? When I do the self-image work with women, what we all discover is that what we're after is a version of ourselves that's always available right now, but we're putting her on hold until one day. And so slowing down is a call for each of us to begin to be her now, a woman who appreciates and enjoys her own life. And I've been saying for years when you love your life, life will begin to love you back in the most beautiful ways.

So who's ready to slow down, embrace and savor the slow life? I would love to hear your thoughts about this episode. Come find me on Instagram at Tonya Leigh, or on Facebook. And if you're in the membership, let's have a discussion about this. How do you intend to savor the slow life? What are some of the practices that you're going to put into place to embrace a slower way of being? And hey, listen, if you want to come join us in the membership, the doors are about to close. You can head over to schoolofselfimage.com/yes, and I will see you inside the community. Have a beautiful and intentional week, my friends. And I will see you in next week's 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.