

EPISODE NO. 386

The Decision Switch

Have you ever felt stuck in your life, like you're unable to move forward? Or maybe you find yourself constantly wavering between choices, or worse, making the same decisions over and over again, hoping for a different outcome. If this sounds familiar, then this episode is for you. Today, we're going to talk about the power of the decision switch and how you can use it to change your 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, beautiful friends. Today we are talking about decisions, and more specifically, we're talking about the decision switch. I was inspired to do this episode because I often hear from women, "I don't know. I don't know what I should do. I don't know where I should go. I don't know if I should stay or leave. I don't know if I should move." They're facing a decision and oftentimes they are paralyzed by it, and that paralysis just keeps them stuck.

So many of you that are feeling stuck in your life right now, it's because you aren't making decisions, and therefore, life doesn't change because decisions require that you select a course of action and then you move in that direction. It involves evaluating options, considering potential outcomes, and then choosing, choosing the most suitable option based on your preference, what you want, your values, your goals, your circumstances.

These decisions can range from very simple choices such as what should I eat for breakfast to big impactful ones like changing your career or starting a family or leaving a spouse. But decision-making is the fundamental aspect of being a human, and it influences the trajectory of our lives and it shapes our whole experience.

So to have this conversation with you all, we need to first look at why are you potentially afraid of making decisions. Well, some of you are just afraid of the unknown. Making a new decision means you're going to be stepping into territory that you're not familiar with. And so that can trigger a lot of anxiety, a lot of uncertainty, and you don't yet know what the consequence of that decision's going to be. And because you don't know, sometimes you just choose to stay where you are because you know it and it's familiar even if you don't like it.

The other reason I've seen people not make decisions is because they fear they're going to fail. As humans, we have this aversion to failure and making the wrong decision. You may worry about the possibility of making a mistake or facing criticism or judgment from other people if your decision doesn't work out the way you had wanted it to. So you let the fear of failure stop you.

Another reason why you may have a hard time making a decision is because of loss aversion, which is when you are more sensitive to your losses than you are to your gains. People fear losing things more than they get excited about gaining things. A great example of this one in my own life is when I decided to start the School of Self-Image.

I'd already created a successful company. I was making seven figures. It was working at that time better than it had ever worked, but I felt so called to start the School of Self-Image. I wanted to take my work to the next level, but I could see that fear in my brain as I contemplated this decision. And so I began to really focus on all of the gains that were possible, and I had to really comfort myself when all of those fears would come up. But it's very normal for our brains to do this.

Another reason why we often don't make decisions is we're overthinking it. Analysis paralysis, when you overthink your decisions and you become so overwhelmed by the possibilities and you're just unable to make a choice. The fear of making the wrong decision will lead you to making no decisions, and therefore, no action.

Another reason why we often don't make decisions is because we are perfectionist. We have such high standards for ourselves and we fear making a mistake, and so we delay the decisions. We hope that that perfect opportunity will come along where we can

guarantee a perfect outcome, because that doesn't happen ... With decisions, you don't know what the outcome is going to be. You can guess, you can pray, you can hope, but there is no guarantee. And so often with perfectionism, you'll find yourself just delaying decisions which results in indecision.

And then the last thing that I've identified that makes decision-making so difficult is external pressure. The societal pressures, the family opinions, the cultural norms, it can contribute to this fear of making a choice. You may have that pressure to feel like you have to conform to other people's expectations, or you fear disappointing others with your choices, so you just don't make them. I've definitely been in that camp. I've been in all of these camps.

But I want to introduce you to the decision switch. I've experienced this at different moments in my life, and what I'm about to share with you is around those bigger decisions, those decisions that will change the trajectory of your life, it will change your being. It will completely pick you up and set you in a whole new way of being, and therefore, different results because our results come from who we're being, our self-image.

I recently experienced this on an emotional level. I found myself unusually worrying about my business, and it's so odd for many reasons. Number one, I have practiced being a woman who doesn't worry a lot because I used to worry all of the time. So I put myself on a worry-free diet because it was just a habitual place that my brain would want to go.

And so recently, when I found myself worrying again, I'm like, "This is so odd, especially considering that my business is going really well." I feel more excited in my business than I've ever felt. My team is happier than they've ever been. We are working on some really amazing things behind the scenes. Things are good, and yet I was worrying.

I would read a post in our group about someone, and I found myself worrying about them. It was this all-encompassing emotion around my business and my community, and that's not the energy that I want to create from. And yet, I'm a human being and sometimes I worry, but this was a different flavor. This wasn't just a worry here and there. It was almost like I had hit an upper limit.

If you've ever read Gay Hendricks, *The Big Leap*, they talk about in that book about upper limits and how when you're growing, you will start engaging in self-destructive

patterns to keep you where you are. And for me, this is how I saw the worry. I was like, "Oh, this might be an upper limit."

And so in that moment, I flipped the decision switch. I literally said out loud, "I am no longer available to worry about my business." It is not even an option, I took it off the table. I made a bold decision, a declaration, a line in the sand of who I was going to be in relationship to my business because when you decide something, you commit to it and you begin practicing living out that decision.

Now, did the worry go away immediately? No, but every time a thought would pop into my mind that told me I needed to worry, I was like, "Nope, that's not the decision we made." I did that day in and day out and before I knew it, I realized that I was in a completely different head space. I'm not worried about my business at all right now, and I haven't been for weeks now.

In fact, one of the team members, we were on a call and she was worried about something that was going on in the business, and I was like, "Listen, this is nothing to worry about. Let's just look at it. Let's figure out what we need to do. Let's handle it." But I told her, I'm like, "I'm not worried at all." And sometimes your team just needs to hear you say that to calm them down. I was like, "I'm not worried at all about this. This is all good."

And it turned out amazing, but even if it hadn't, I know that that energy of worry is so unproductive. It doesn't create better results. If anything, you feel paralyzed, you're not as creative, you are not as productive. And so even if there's something presenting to me that my brain wants to go to worry, I just remind it of the decision we made, that switch that we made.

Because if you look up the definition of switch, it means a device for making and breaking the connection in an electrical circuit. You break the connection, you switch it, and you've broken it. A lot of you need to break connections in who you're being. You need to switch on the decision of who you want to be and break that connection. Make yourself no longer available for it.

Another interesting definition of switch is an act of adopting one policy or way of life, or choosing one type of item in place of another, a change, especially a radical one. What is the decision switch that you need to make in your life right now? One that I made years ago that completely changed my life, and it's one that so many of you need to make, is I made the decision switch of I am no longer a woman who beats herself up. It's just not an option.

I don't care if I make a big mis[REDACTED]. I don't care if I fail. I don't care if I act out in a way that I'm not proud of. I no longer beat myself up for being a human being. And that one decision, I remember when I made it, it seemed so impossible because I was in such a habit of being hypercritical of myself. But I remember thinking, "I don't want to be this anymore." And I made a decision, I am not going to be this. And then it was about me committing to that decision and then practicing and living out that decision.

A lot of you make decisions and then you forget about them. You're like, "Oh, yeah, I did decide that a year ago. I forgot I made that decision." And that's because you don't commit to it. You don't go all in on that decision. And then you wonder, "Why isn't my life getting momentum?" And for some of you, you're just not making decisions. You're so afraid of getting it wrong. You're so afraid of the uncertainty.

But everything you want and don't yet have is going to require that you make decisions that put you in that new place. There is no other way. And the only way, the only way to do that is to learn how to manage your own emotional life, to learn how to manage the fear. Your brain is just afraid of the unknown. It's afraid of being uncomfortable. And so it is going to fight you to convince you to stay where you are.

And the best way to get you to stay where you are is to make you so afraid of making new decisions that you either, A, don't make decisions or you just keep making the same decisions over and over, and you get to live in that familiar land that your brain can comprehend what's going on. But if you're unhappy, if you feel stuck, if you want more from your life, if you want more for you, it is going to require that you make decisions.

And here's what I've noticed, the more decisions we make, the more our lives move. The decisions create the movement, the momentum, and every decision you make, however small or big, contributes to the direction and the progress of your life. And consistently making decisions day in and day out that align with your goals and your values, they just propel you forward.

And then the bigger decisions that you make, the more you must grow. And that's why a lot of people don't make those big decisions because the growth that's going to be required, they either, A, are too afraid of doing it or they don't know how to manage it. But major life decisions, they require us to stretch our self-image.

Recently I decided to build a house, and it is almost complete. We should be moving in, in the next couple of months, but that was a decision switch that really changed me. All my life, I have prided myself in being carefree, not being tied down, being able to move

through life. And I associated [REDACTED] me with a lot of responsibility and being burdened and all of these things, but deep down, I really wanted a home. I wanted a home base, and yet I was afraid.

I was afraid I would have to break up with certain parts of myself and some parts I probably needed to break up with. But the part of me that loves to travel and loves to go places, I didn't want to break up with her, but I had this either, or. I can either have a home and not travel, or I can travel a lot and not have a home.


Now, granted, there's so much evidence that you guys do both, right? I see my members do it. I'm like, "Oh my goodness, they have a home and they travel, brilliant. Maybe I should use them as evidence that I can do the same." But I remember sitting down with my attorney and we were just going over finances and things, and he was like, "You've got to invest in something." He's like, "You've got all of this cash just sitting there." And I felt just numb, I didn't know what to do. I was just like, "Ah."

And the reality is I was just scared. I was scared to make the decision. But the moment I signed the papers, immediately my identity changed, immediately. It was like, "Oh, now I am a homeowner. Now I am adulting officially." And it was the best feeling. It was the next version of me that I needed to step into. It's the first home I've ever owned. I'm almost 50 years old. So for any of y'all that think it's too late for you, I'm here to tell you it's not. We can do extraordinary things until the day we die.

And so that was another major decision switch. In that moment, I made a decision, and here's the great metaphor. When you think about a switch, if you're in a room and it's dark and you turn on the switch, you flip it, you now can see. And the moment I flipped the switch, I could see the path of where I needed to go, next decisions, how I need to set up things. It became so clear. But as long as I was in the dark of indecision, I couldn't see what was next.

And so I was hee-hawing around saying, "I don't know what I should do. I don't know where I should live." The moment I decided, hey, I'm buying this land, we're building a house, I flipped that switch. Now, it was also clear. And that's what I have often found out, sometimes the clarity comes once you've made the decision switch, because before that switch, you're just in the dark, so you can't see. But the moment you decide, the next steps will reveal themselves to you.

How many of you are trying to decide, should I stay or should I go? That was me for a long time in a former relationship. I was in the dark, and because I was in the dark, I couldn't see, and so I just stayed stuck in that dark room. Now sometimes the decision

is, I'm going to stay, and then  light turns on and you're like, "Okay, here's what needs to happen. Here's how I need to change. Here's what needs to happen within this relationship." For me, the decision was, I need to go. And the moment I decided that, next steps started appearing.

For some of you, you're trying to decide, do I start a business or don't I? And so you're in the dark, decide and switch the light on. Either way, just switch the light on. That's what decisions do, they turn the light on so you can see what your next steps are. But the indecision keeps you literally in the dark where you can't see, you don't have to make a decision.

And some of you are very comfortable in those dark rooms. You've got your little blanket in there, maybe a little fridge you know how to get to even though it's dark. So it feels safe to you, but it's a dark room. And that's what indecision does essentially, it keeps you in the dark. And so I want to share some of my thoughts about decisions that hopefully will support you in making your own.

One of my favorite quotes by Hafiz is, "Between right-doing and wrong-doing there is a field, I will meet you there." When it comes to decisions, I've learned just to take the label of right or wrong off, it's just a decision that either will work out or I'll learn a lot from. There is no right or wrong decisions that we will make from a place of wanting the best for ourselves.

And so what would happen if you weren't afraid of getting it, quote, unquote, "wrong?" What if that wasn't even on the table? What if you didn't label it? It's just a decision, and that's what I've learned to do that has given me the courage to make more decisions in my life.

The other reason why a lot of us don't make decisions, and I was saying this earlier, is that we're so afraid of a negative consequence, and that often is because we think that our happiness is out there. We think what we're after is going to be either a result of the decision or we won't get it because of the decision. And when I finally understood that I create my emotions, not things outside of me, in a strange way it gave me the courage to make more decisions. Because I know, hey, even if I fail, even if I make a mistake, even if it doesn't work out, I can still be happy because it all comes down to the thoughts that I choose to think.

The other thing that has really helped me in making decisions and moving forward is what I call the decision after the decision, which I think is the most important one. And what that means is when you make a decision, if you don't manage your mind, your

brain will immediately start convincing you to doubt it, to regret it, to question it, and that can slow down your energy. It can slow you down from taking the steps towards the decision that you made. And so when I make a decision, the next decision is how I'm going to feel about that decision.

Take the house, for example. When I signed those papers, when I made the decision to purchase the lot and to sign the contract, in that moment I decided that I was going to feel confident in that decision. So when my brain wanted to offer me thoughts like, "That was a mistake. Who do you think you are buying a house?" I was just like, "No, that doesn't support my decision to feel confident in this decision."

And so I started to think on purpose to build that confidence in my decision, because nothing is worse than deciding something and then spending maybe the next year to five years doubting and regretting that decision. The decision's done, now get your energy behind it. Support yourself, cheer yourself on, be there for you, because what you don't need after you make a decision is you beating yourself up for the decision that you made.

I see this a lot with women around money. They'll make an investment, they'll buy something, and then they'll have so much guilt and shame and regret about that decision. It is done. Now, can you learn something from it? A hundred percent. I think about the time I felt like I got scammed on the streets of Aspen. I spent way too much money on these NASA-approved infrared lights that they promised was going to keep me young forever.

But I'm proud of myself because I didn't spend a lot of energy beating myself up for it. I was like, "Oh, that's good to know. Why did I allow that to happen? What was going on? How did I get pulled into that?" And what I know is it'll never happen again. So I'm glad it happened because next time it might be bigger. But sitting around and beating yourself up for your decisions is only going to make you a more indecisive woman and keep you stuck.

And so when you make a decision, even if it leads to an outcome that you don't like, don't ever use that as evidence that you don't make good decisions. I think decisions in and of themselves are good because they're teaching you. You're learning so much. You're learning what works and what doesn't work. You're learning about who you are and why you do what you do so that you can course correct more quickly maybe next time.

And so when you look at decisions from that perspective, it just frees you up to make more of them. And sometimes to get it wrong, maybe it doesn't turn out the way you want to, but what I do know is that you're probably closer to where you want to be than had you made no decision at all.

And so I want you to think about in your life, what is the decision switch that you need to turn on? Where are you tired of being in the dark? And what is one decision that you can make that has the possibility of radically changing your life in ways that you can't even imagine right now? But you have to have the courage to flip on the switch, and I promise you, when you do, the next steps will be illuminated.

Now, if you're over there thinking, "I don't know what decision I need to make," I've got one for you. Did you know that the School of Self-Image is open right now? And month after month, I have women share with us that it was the decision that helped them make so many more powerful decisions in their lives, and now they are experiencing the results of having made that one initial decision that had a domino effect in their life.

When I look back on my life, investing in my own brain, investing in my own personal growth has been the best decisions that I've made. And I remember, especially in the very beginning when I didn't really know what to expect and I felt really stuck, it felt so scary. I remember hiring my very first coach and I was equally excited, but I was also super afraid. I was stepping into an unknown, and I knew deep down that things were going to change in my life. And sometimes we're afraid of that change, oftentimes we are, but I knew it's what I needed.

And now thank the sweet heavens above that I did. I cannot imagine my life not having these tools. I can't imagine how I would navigate my days. I can't imagine I would handle so much that's going on around me if it weren't for the tools that we teach within the School of Self-Image.

And ultimately, our goal within that membership is for you to see yourself in the most extraordinary ways because you're always creating to the edge of your self-image. You can't outperform it. Whatever you think about yourself is ultimately going to be how you show up in the world and what you create. And so doing this work is one of the best decisions you will ever make.

So if you're serious about making decisions, if you're serious about elevating your life, if you're serious about getting results, I'm very serious about helping you and supporting you. All you need to do is go to schoolofselfimage.com/join and get inside

that membership. That's one decision I know, one year from now, you'll be so glad that you made. Now, go flip on that decision switch in your life, my friends. Let it illuminate your next steps in your life. Thank you all so much for tuning in, and I will see you next week. Cheers.

Hey, are you ready to transform your self-image but lack direction and support? If so, I'd like to invite you to join the School of Self-Image. This is an exclusive monthly membership where you'll create your own powerful before and after story. Through weekly classes and coaching, you'll learn powerful techniques on how to elevate the quality of your mindset, style, and surroundings to change how you see yourself and create extraordinary results in your life. Head over to schoolofselfimage.com/join to learn more.

