



PODCAST TRANSCRIPT

EPISODE N° 131

How to Create an Elegant Morning

FRENCH KISS LIFE

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How to Create an Elegant Morning

I believe that every moment is a chance to start again. I believe every moment has fresh possibility and creative potential. But I've come to understand that mornings especially are the perfect time to start fresh, to reset, to get clear on your day, to examine what's holding you back, and to infuse your soul with inspiration and beauty and delight.

I think a beautiful life consists on many beautiful mornings. So, in this episode, we're going to explore how to cultivate an elegant morning so that you can live an awe-inspiring life.

Bonjour and welcome to The French Kiss Life Podcast, where personal development meets style. I'm Tonya Leigh, certified master life coach and the hostess of this party, where we explore how to live artfully and well. Each week, I'll be sharing inspiring stories, practical tips, and timeless wisdom on how to elevate the quality of your everyday and celebrate along the way. Let's dive into today's episode.

Hello, my beautiful friends. Or, should I say, Bonjour. By the time you listen to this, I will be in a chateau in the French Alps celebrating my friend's birthday. I am so excited. And I was thinking, wouldn't it be fun to actually bring you along on the journey? As most of you probably know by now, especially since my company is called *French Kiss Life*, France has a very special place in my heart.

It's the place where I really woke up to what it means to leave a life of joie de vivre, how to live artfully and well. And so, I got this idea; why don't I create a week of joie de vivre where I give you challenges to help you add more joy into different areas of your life, everything from eating, to your style, to movement. So, if you want to join this week of joie de vivre, make sure you go to frenchkisslife.com/joy.

Now, not only are you going to be getting very simple challenges for each day, you're also going to be eligible to win a box of joy. How fun is that? This is actually a box that I am putting together with some of my favorite things, and one lucky woman is going to win it. So again, head to frenchkisslife.com/joy.

Now, it is time for the part of the show where I do a Community Spotlight. This is a shout-out to someone in the community that has benefitted from the *French Kiss Lifestyle*. So today's shout out is to Sarah-Jean. She actually sent in an email that really touched my heart. Sarah is one of my Slim, Chic, and Savvy ladies and

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it's been such an honor to get to know her and to support her and to see her really create her life on purpose.

So, here's what Sarah-Jean had to say, "When I discovered Tonya, I was newly divorced, broke, broken, and struggling to recreate my life. I wanted to excavate the elegant woman I used to be that had been buried under years of trying to be someone I wasn't in order to please someone else. I have always had a love of the French culture so I Googled two words; French and elegance, and Tonya Leigh's website popped up. I felt like I had a spirit sister.

I gobbled up her blog posts. Then, in the summer of 2016, with shaky hands, I hit the yes button on her Slim, Chic, and Savvy program. It was scary to me, but I was even more scared of staying stuck where I was. Through Slim, Chic, and Savvy and Tonya's dynamic coaching, I have been able to bloom into the woman I want to be. I graduated honors with my Associate's degree and I am currently on the Dean's List at the university working towards my Bachelor's Degree.

I started a cooking blog because of Tonya's encouragement and am in the process of writing a cookbook. But what's even more incredible is that my inner world has completely shifted. I am calmer, more confident, joyful, and creative because Tonya gave me the tools to restyle my own mind. Now, instead of feeling like a broken piece of pottery that needs to be fixed, I feel like a piece of art that is being created."

Sarah-Jean, you are amazing. I am so, so proud of you, I'm so excited for you, and I just want to touch on the last statement in your email because I think this is so important for all of us. You said, "Instead of feeling like a broken piece of pottery that needs to be fixed, I feel like a piece of art that is being created." You all that are listening, this is everything.

This is what I teach my ladies in Slim, Chic, and Savvy. When you start looking at your life as a masterpiece and you stop this perpetual and toxic cycle of trying to fix yourself, that is when the world becomes ridiculously fun. And you will blow your mind with what you're able to create when you're not trying to fix yourself.

I think the biggest myth that is keeping us stuck, and sometimes the personal development world can even reaffirm this belief, is that we're broken and we somehow need to fix ourselves before we can go out there and do amazing things in this world, and it's simply not true. You are so amazing right now just the way you are.

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I believe the only thing that is broken is our thoughts about ourselves, and we clean that up, it's literally crazy what it is that we can create in our lives. So, Sarah Jean, thank you for that beautiful email. I am so excited for our next round of Slim, Chic, and Savvy. And, by the way, if you have not joined us, what in the world?

Seriously, I always say that Slim, Chic, and Savvy is as good as my mom's coconut cake, which is literally the best thing in the world. But seriously, if you're wanting coaching, if you want to be a part of such an incredible community and if you want to create results in your life, go check it out, slimchicandsavvy.com. And, if you want to be featured in an upcoming Community Spotlight, send me an email like Sarah-Jean, letting me know how the *French Kiss Lifestyle* has touched your life, or give me a shout-out on Instagram or Facebook. I'm in all the places these days. Now, let's dive into the main part of the show.

So, I have a question for you; how do you start out most of your days? Really think about that. I want you to think about what you're thinking when you wake up, the first thing you do every morning, how you feel. Our mornings are setting ourselves up for the rest of the day. And because I've been coaching women for almost a decade now, I know the power of what happens in a woman's life when she creates the space to cultivate elegant mornings.

So I wanted to just share with you my morning routine and why I think it's such a big part of the results that I've been able to create in my life. Now, I want to rewind the clock a little bit and talk about what my mornings used to look like.

So, first of all, I would wake up really tired and exhausted because I had not gotten appropriate sleep the night before because my mind was always stressed and I was always worried and I was always reacting to my life, that energy just caused me to be up all night. It was in my head 24/7.

So usually, I would wake up and I would already feel behind and I would already feel like my life was happening to me. And so then the first thoughts of my day were things like, this is going to be hard, I'm so overwhelmed, I'm never going to get it all done, why is life so hard... So immediately, I would feel overwhelmed and frustrated and hopeless.

And that was the energy in which I was starting my day. So back then, I was actually working as a critical care nurse, and so I was waking up at 5:30 to get to the hospital by seven for a 12 hour shift, and so when I got to work, the energy in

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which I was starting my workday was, again, of overwhelm and stress. And so the cycle just kept repeating itself over and over and over again.

And this, my friends, is why I'm so passionate about the work that I do because when you learn to manage your mind, like a CEO, number one, you sleep better. And when you're sleeping better, you wake up and you feel a little bit more refreshed. And it all begins to change the trajectory of your life.

So, if you're someone that feels like you're on the hamster wheel, you feel constantly overwhelmed and frustrated and it feels like you just can't get ahead, I first of all want you to know, I understand. And at a certain point, you have to decide at what point you're going to enter into a new journey. And I think mornings are a great point to start changing the trajectory of your life.

So here's what my mornings look like. I really do feel like they're elegant. They're intentional, they're simple, and they're effective, which is the definition of elegance. Now, I'm not sharing my morning routine with you thinking that it should be your routine. I just want to challenge you to really take a look at how you're starting your days and begin to tweak them so that you feel better, so that you feel more empowered, so that you feel more excited about your day.

I also want you to understand, I've been practicing this for a long time. So my mornings actually begin weeks before, meaning I am very clear on what my vision is, what my goals are, and I have planned those things out accordingly. So when I wake up in the morning, first of all, I have to have the best cup of coffee. I am such a coffee snob, you all, but I own that unapologetically.

In fact, I talked about my love of the Chemex coffee, the pour over coffee machine, and that's my routine every single morning. I wake up and I go and make my coffee. And then it's time for me to do a few things. Number one, I journal. This is, I think the secret to everything.

I know a lot of you don't like to journal, but I think that you don't like it because you haven't been doing it right. I journal into my future. I journal the woman I intend to be for the day. I journal anything that's holding me back, and it will always be thoughts in my head.

And so that is my first practice of the day. I get very clear on, who do I want to be today? I give myself pep-talks for my future self. I know what is on my agenda and what I've committed to creating for the day, and then I ask myself, like, who

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do I need to be? How do I need to feel to actually create this? And then it's almost like I'm reverse-engineering my life.

I am deciding ahead of time what it is I want to create and then what do I need to do, how do I need to feel in order to create that, and then what do I need to think? And so that's the first thing I do every single day. And the reason why I think many of you may struggle with this, part of it is that you haven't decided what you want. And if you don't know what you want, then your brain wakes up and it has no direction or focus. So what it's going to usually do is just recreate what you did yesterday because you haven't given it focus and direction of, like, here's my commitment, here's what I'm creating.

So, for example, I've shared in previous podcasts, but my big vision is to reach a million women in the next five years. And so I've designed my calendar around this. And so when I'm journaling in the morning, I am just allowing myself to be open to ideas that are coming through me, I write them on the paper, I write anything that is making me doubt that that's not possible, and I journal it all out.

I want to clear my mind of any mental or emotional baggage that is holding me back from stepping into my vision. And so, my journal process, it changes day to day, but the framework is basically the same. So if I wake up with a lot of anxiety, I will journal that out. But if I'm not dealing with a lot of anxiety, I'm more open to being a channel for a lot of ideas.

So whatever needs to be expressed or looked at or discovered, that is what I'm open to within my morning journal practice. Now, my Slim, Chic, and Savvy ladies, you are going to be receiving a hardcopy journal where I explain my practice to you so that you can begin to create your days on purpose.

But if you're not in Slim, Chic, and Savvy, that's okay. Just start journaling in the morning. Get it out. Make bold declarations. Write your ideas down. Look at anything that is holding you back.

The other things that I do every morning is I go on an appreciation and celebration rampage because I know that the more you celebrate your life and appreciate your life, the more life celebrates you back. And it really is a mind training.

I remember waking up and thinking, oh god, another day, here we go. And of course, as Rumi says, "What you seek is seeking you," so every time I woke up

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feeling that way, I would look for more things to dread, I would look for more things to be overwhelmed by. But by training my mind to be in a constant state of just gratitude and joy and excitement, it starts my day out on a very different level. And as a result, I am finding new things to be excited and joyful about.

So be mindful of your first thoughts of the day. My favorite thing to ask myself when I wake up is, what amazing things are going to happen today? And it's so much fun because now I'm telling my brain what to look for. I'm like, "Brain, look for amazing things." And guess what I find – amazing things all day every day. So really be mindful of your first thoughts of the day.

Now, listen, I know, if you have been thinking for a long time how life is so hard and how you're so overwhelmed, it's going to be difficult to get to, "Oh my gosh, today is amazing." But start somewhere. Start with one thought that feels a little bit better than, "Oh my god, here we go again."

Maybe you wake up and you're like, "I have another day. This is a fresh start. I'm going to practice something different. I'm going to look for things to be grateful for." That feels better than waking up with dread. And I promise you, as you start to feel better, you're going to show up in life differently and your life will begin to change.

So notice your first thoughts of the day and I highly encourage you to start your day out with gratitude, with celebration. Find something that is going well and right. And what I know is, if you're listening to this, you have a phone or some kind of technology that's allowing you to listen to it, that means something is going well and right in your world, my friend.

Start looking for it. What you focus on expands. Your energy flows where your attention goes. Where are you putting and your energy – first part of your day. This is a beautiful opportunity for you to begin to change the direction of your focus, to change the direction of your attention. I want you all waking up with so much gratitude for your life. I want you to wake up in awe of, "Oh my goodness."

I always tell my clients this, I'm like, "The sun came up today and I didn't even have to make it happen." Seriously, how crazy is that? Talk about goodness. Like, I'm breathing without even having to try. These are little things that we take for granted. But the reason why I'm so in love with the idea of creating elegant mornings and starting your day off right is because you realize, all along, the power has been within you.

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What most people are doing, they're wanting their world to change first in order for them to feel better. But when you start feeling better, the world outside of you will change. It's just the way it works. And do you want to know what's crazy? Even though I've been practicing this for such a long time, my brain still wants me to just be miserable sometimes and I'm like, "Nope, brain, I know that trick. We're not doing that today."

And I really force myself to redirect my mind, to find things to be grateful for, and to get back on track, or as we call it in Slim, Chic, and Savvy, back in my sweet spot, because I know, when I'm in my sweet spot, everything I want is available. When I'm in my sweet spot, I show up differently. I create different results. What I'm hoping you understand is that this is an internal process. This is something you get to create for yourself, no matter what is happening outside of you.

So, let's recap so far. The first thing I do is I journal. And because I'm very clear on what I want, I designed my journal practice around that. So you all have to decide what it is that you want to create. What are your goals? What is it that you're wanting to experience? What do you want to do? Who do you want to be? You must decide. Don't live in confusion. Don't live in, "I don't know," because that's just going to keep you recreating the same day, day after day after day, like Groundhog Day.

So, with that journal practice, then I go to a state of gratitude and appreciation and celebration, so I'm creating those good feelings first thing in the morning because I believe that the way you started the day is generally how your day is going to go. And so I want to get my energy moving in the right direction first thing in the morning.

The other thing that I do is I create space in my morning for inspiration. This is a chance for me to watch something, read something, listen to something that is going to inspire me in some way. Now, usually, music is always involved. I always have music playing in the background, except when I'm recording this podcast. But maybe I should do that in the future, I don't know.

But I love music. Music really gets me in my zone and I use music to design my day. So if I'm wanting to be more productive, I have a playlist for that. If I'm wanting to feel more excitement, I have a playlist for that. If I want to feel more sexy, I have a playlist for that. So I use music to help me co-create my feeling state.

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But then, what I do, is that I think about my goals and my dreams, and then I infuse my morning with inspiration around those. So here's an example; some of you may know that my word of the year is CEO. I want to be an amazing CEO. I want to be a leader, not only in my company, but also in my life. And so I've been reading a lot of books around how to be a better leader, how to be a great CEO.

And so, my mornings have been filled a lot with those kinds of books. And I read for like 30 minutes, and then I'm ready to start my day. But my morning inspiration is also very fluid. Like, some mornings, I wake up and I'm like, "I don't want to read a book about leadership today." And then I'm inspired to maybe pick up a book in French and practice reading French, or maybe watch a YouTube video. I allow my soul to guide me in the mornings as to what I need to be inspired.

So trust yourself. Ask yourself, what can I take in right now that would inspire me? Maybe it's a YouTube video. Maybe it's listening to this podcast. Maybe it's reading a book. But I want you to take ownership of creating your own inspiration. I have women tell me all of the time, they're like, "Well I'm waiting to be inspired." And I'm like, "No, you inspire yourself." If you wait for inspiration, you may be waiting forever. I create my inspiration and mornings are a beautiful, beautiful time to do that.

So, let's recap. I journal, I celebrate and appreciate, I gratitate – is that a word? I just made it one. But no, I really focus on gratitude. And then I inspire myself. I create space of inspiration.

The last thing that I like to do in my mornings is meditate. Now, my meditation practice is not that impressive. I usually meditate anywhere from 15 to 30 minutes, but I have the Muse Headband, which is my favorite meditation device because I am still geeky. I love science. I love seeing what my brain is doing, and so I love using this headband so I can actually watch my EEG waves and see where I was during the meditation practice. But there are many different apps out there and different practices that you can use.

If you want to learn more about Muse, you can actually go to frenchkisslife.com/muse. But I love to meditate at least for 10 minutes, just to clear out the rest of the cobwebs, and then I'm ready to start my day.

Now, I want you to think about how you start your day. A lot of times, what we do is we wake up and we're rushed and we instantly go on our phones and we check

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Facebook and Instagram. We check our emails. And before we've even gotten clear on what are my commitments today, who do I want to be, how do I want to show up, how do I want to feel, we've already plugged into the chaos of the world.

Your mornings are a chance for you to take back your power. Your mornings are a chance for you to be creative and to decide ahead of time what you're going to do today, what your commitments are, how you're going to show up.

And so my challenge for you is that you take back your mornings as your own. Now, you may be thinking, "But, Tonya, I don't have enough time." I don't allow these kinds of excuses to stop you because I know you're a creative woman and I know, even if you carve out 10 minutes in your morning before the kids wake up, before you have to get ready for work, and you just grab a journal and you start getting clear on a few things, over time, that practice will change your life completely.

Elegant mornings are all about being creative, about getting clear on what you want and how you want to be and the kind of life you want, to understand what is holding you back. If you don't do this, the chances are you're just going to continue to react to your life, like I did for so many years.

Now, for me, I've created a life now where I typically have an hour for my morning routine. But when I first started out, remember, I didn't have a company. I was working as a nurse. And these little 10 minutes every morning slowly began to change the trajectory of my life.

So even if you just choose one of my practices, whether it's to get inspired or to practice meditation or to journal or to celebrate and express gratitude, what you're going to notice is that you start to feel better. And isn't that what we're all after? I mean, really think about it. I know we want all the things and I want you to have all of the things, but at the end of the day, what we're all after is a feeling. And you get to create that for yourself.

And I just happen to think mornings are a beautiful time to do it. The sun is just coming up, the birds are starting to chirp. We can let go of the day that happened yesterday and we can decide again. Now, again, I think you can do that in every moment, but why not start practicing it every single morning and just notice how your life begins to change.

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When I lead my clients through my morning routine and I show them specifically, like, here are things to journal about, here are questions to ask yourself, here's how to design your day on purpose, and I watch how they start carving out the space in their mornings to actually do it, and then a year later, I get to see the results in their life, I am convinced that an elegant morning routine will absolutely, without a doubt, change your life.

Create 10 minutes, 15 minutes, 30 minutes to take care of you, to have a date with you and your life, to get clear on what's holding you back, to create that inspiration, that inner fire to get your day started off right. I am convinced because I am living proof, and I have hundreds and hundreds of testimonials of other women as well, that many beautiful mornings really do lead to a beautiful life.

It is time for a J'adore. This is the part of the show where I get to share something that I love with you. And I just have to say that I have loved the feedback about this part of the show. This is something that we recently added and I've had so many of you sending me DMs and emails just saying, "Thank you for sharing all this cool stuff." So I hope you're enjoying it as well.

Now, for today's J'adore, since we're on the topic of mornings, I have to talk about something I'm really passionate about. I'm passionate about a lot of things, but ladies, what you wear in your leisure time. I'm talking about at night, when you wake up in the morning, it is impacting you, whether you realize it or not.

Now, if you love wearing the holey sweatpants and the tattered t-shirts then rock on. But, do you really love it? Or would you feel more beautiful, would you feel more inspired if you had some really beautiful leisure wear. I actually did a podcast on this topic alone, and it's episode 42. So if you go to frenchkisslife.com/42 you will find the podcast called Are You Living a Double Life? Because I was.

I looked down one day and looked at what I was wearing around the house and I was full of shame. I was like, girl, you deserve so much more. And so I made a commitment to myself to really start upgrading my, just, around-the-house clothing.

So, for today's J'adore, I want to share with you one of my new favorite things, because I collect robes. I love robes. I have silk robes, I have terry cloth robes, I

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have all kinds of robes. I have robes that I wear in the winter, and now I have this new robe that is a part of my collection and it's by a company called Lunya.

So, if you go to lunya.co – not com, just co – you will land on their website. And you want to search for The Robe. That's what it's called; The Robe. And, you all, it seriously is the best thing you'll ever put on your body. It feels so good and it's so beautiful, it's so well designed. It comes in three colors; white, black, and charcoal. And I love what they say on the website.

They say, “This is truly the best thing you'll ever own, or at the very least, the greatest robe of all time.” And I tend to agree. It's beautiful. It's simple. It's very, very comfortable and it's very luxurious. So if you are looking for a way to upgrade your morning routine with a beautiful robe, go check out Lunya; lunya.co, look for The Robe. And, as always, you're welcome. You can thank me later.

Thank you so much for tuning in this week. I cannot wait to see you in the next episode. And do not forget to join us for a week of joie de vivre. Head over to frenchkisslife.com/joy. Have a beautiful week. Take care.