



PODCAST TRANSCRIPT

EPISODE N° 134

The Habit of Worry (and How to Change It)

FRENCH KISS LIFE

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The Habit of Worry (and How to Change It)

“You know what, Tonya? If I could go back and do it again, I’d worry a whole lot less. All those sleepless nights, all those days spent fearing the worst, none of it ever happened. What a waste of energy.” Those were the words of Bill. I was Bill’s critical care nurse at the end of his life. He was about 85 years old and we spent many nights talking in the intensive care unit.

And I remember, when Bill said that to me, I thought about all of the things that I was worrying about. And in my mind, I was thinking, “But it’s different for me, I really need to worry about these things.” But now, I realize Bill was right. Worry is so unnecessary.

Bill’s comment reminds me of what Winston Churchill said, “When I look back on all of these worries, I remember the story of the old man who said on his deathbed that he had a lot of trouble in his life, most of which had never happened.”

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. Happy Wednesday, or whatever day you’re listening to this. I record these on Wednesdays, they go out on Wednesdays, but I don’t know, maybe you’re listening to this at, like, 11pm on a Monday night. Wherever and whenever, I hope you are having a lovely, lovely experience. I know I am. In fact, I am so full of joy and gratitude right now.

And I share this with you because I want you to understand that when you hear me say that, you may be thinking, “Well, Tonya, it’s easy for you.” But let me tell you, this week has been full of so many challenges and obstacles. I mean, you all, crazy the things that I’ve been dealing with, and yet, life is incredible. It is wonderful.

The Habit of Worry (and How to Change It)

And because I think that, even with the obstacles and the challenges, everywhere I look, I find things that are incredible and wonderful about this experience. You may have heard me say this before, but isn't it miraculous that, number one, you woke up this morning? That is miracle number one.

Miracle number two is that the sun came up and none of us had to do anything to make that happen. Like, really think about that. It's like, whoops, there she is again, hello, sun, good morning. And then think about this; you are breathing right now and you don't have to make that happen. It's as if life is breathing you and you just get to experience it.

And then, can we talk about heartbeat? It just keeps beating away. We don't even have to think about it; it just happens. Like, it's crazy, all of these little miracles that are happening all of the time. And at *French Kiss Life*, I want you to wake up to them.

And here's the reason why; you begin to feel better. And think about this; the reason why you want anything is because of how you want to feel. And what we all want is just to feel better. And yet, we're complicating that process so dramatically. And when you feel better, you start to show up in the world better. You get a little pep in your step, your eyes start to radiate love and joy and passion. And people start to notice, you start calling in new opportunities, all because you wake up to this experience called life.

Now, let me just say this; I was not planning any of that and I'm debating whether I should take it out of the show or not, but you know what? I'm going to leave it because I have really come to trust that what is meant to be shared will flow through me. This is not a podcast where I'm reading from a script. I've done that before and it just did not sit well with my soul. This is a podcast where I just want to trust that I am sharing what is meant to be shared and trust that it will have a positive impact in your life, because that ultimately is what *French Kiss Life* is all about.

Okay, maybe I just need to create a new section of this show that we call the Tonya Rant or the Tonya Love Smack, or just Tonya Love, T.L. Love. But nevertheless, I hope that you will look for the miracles in your life today.

The Habit of Worry (and How to Change It)

Okay, so now let's move to the part of the show called the Community Spotlight. This is the where I highlight someone in the community that has benefitted from the *French Kiss Lifestyle*. So, today's Community Spotlight is on Ikonora. And I hope I said your name right.

Ikonora left me a five-star review on iTunes and the title says, Tonya Touches My Soul. "Every podcast makes my soul smile. Every podcast makes me feel like I'm special. I don't remember how I found Tonya, but I do know that everything happens for a reason. *French Kiss Life* made me realize that I need to put myself first in a healthy way whilst still taking care of others. I love how Tonya tells us to be proud of who we are, knowing that we can always change the things we don't like about ourselves with elegance and joie de vivre.

These podcasts make my day brighter and happier, like my morning cup of coffee. When, for some reason, I stay away and don't listen to her, I feel like I lose myself again. Tonya makes me remember the true meaning of living a happy life. And I have a tear in my eye now because no words will be enough to express my love for Tonya and the *French Kiss Life* community. I hope to meet you someday, my dear Tonya. Thank you for inspiring us to be the best version of ourselves. Much love from a Brazilian girl living in sunny Florida."

Ikonora, thank you so much for that lovely review. And I have to say, I really appreciate you associating me with a morning cup of coffee because, in my world, that is one of the best things ever. So hey, listen, if you want to be featured in an upcoming Community Spotlight, all you have to do is leave me a five-star review on iTunes. Now, without further ado, let's dive into today's episode.

Who is ready to talk about worry? Such a fun topic, let's talk about worry. But listen, I know it's something that many of you do a lot of. And I also know it's a habit and it can be a very destructive one. And the reason why I know that is because I got caught up in this habit of worrying about six or seven years ago. And it got to the point that I literally felt paralyzed.

I was unable to take action, and at one point, it got so bad that I found myself in the fetal position on the sofa just afraid of everything. And so I know what it feels

The Habit of Worry (and How to Change It)

like to be so inundated with worry to the point that you feel like you can't even move forward.

Here's the thing; our emotional state drives our actions. And I want you to think about how you show up in the world when you're worried. Does it inspire you to take action? Does it inspire you to find solutions? Does it inspire you to be more productive? For the most part, worry keeps us in a state of paralysis. And because I coach women a lot around worry, I've been thinking about why it is that we embrace it.

If it doesn't really create useful actions then why do we embrace worry? And I think it comes down to some core beliefs that we have around worry. So one of those beliefs that I've been able to pinpoint is, if I worry then bad things won't happen. And I feel like the reason why we've created this belief is that we have worried so much and most of what we worry about never happens, and so we think that it didn't happen because we worried.

For me, I used to worry every time I'd get on a plane. I was convinced it was going to fall out of the sky. When I hit turbulence, I would start sending text messages to my daughter, knowing full well that it was not going to happen. Like, the chances of an airline crash is so miniscule compared to all of the other things that I could be worrying about.

But every time the plane landed safely, as it always does, I think, in my mind, I started to associate, "Oh great, because I worried, I landed safely," which is crazy when you think about it. I mean, the truth is, there was one statistic that I read that 85% of the things that we worry about never ever happens. And so, I think in our mind, we've started associating worry with preventing bad things from happening.

But the thing is, those bad things in our mind would not have happened anyway. But because we worried, we think it's because of the worry that we were able to create that positive outcome. Another belief that I have seen create our worry is, if I love you, then I must worry about you, or worrying shows that I care. And I've seen this with my mom.

The Habit of Worry (and How to Change It)

Things will be good and she'll call me up and she'll say, "You know what, I'm just worried about you." And I'm like, "Why, mom? My life is pretty good, why are you worried?" And I realized that she associates worry with love. And I've even seen this with my own daughter, you know, when she was really in the heart of her health crisis, I found myself worrying and thinking to myself, if I don't worry about this then I'm a bad mother.

But here's the really interesting thing; whenever my daughter would feel my worry or I would say something that I was worried about, she would beg me, "Mom, do not worry. That is not useful right now." So we get to just love people and take the worry out of it.

In other words, in our minds, we can begin to disassociate worry from love. Like, I just get to love you. I don't need to show you I care by worrying about you. I just get to love you and care for you, minus the worry. The other belief that a client brought up to me recently, she said, "Worry motivates me." So there's this idea that if you're not worried about something, that you will be completely unproductive and complacent and not do a thing.

But what if you could be productive, that you could still take action minus the worry? And this is very similar to the first one where we think worry keeps bad things from happening, chances are, if you think worry has motivated you, it's because you've taken a lot of action out of a feeling state of worry, so now you think that worry is the reason why you took action.

But think about the kind of action that you take when you're in a state of worry. For me, if I can get out of fetal position, the action that I take is so based in fear. And so here's the thing I've come to notice; when I take action out of fear, typically it only produces more fear because my thoughts never changed.

I may be able to produce an outcome, but I'm still full of worry and still full of fear. An example of this is I used to worry about my weight. And I thought if I could just fix my weight then I would not worry. And so, I starved myself down to a size two, the weight that I thought, "When I get here, I will no longer worry about it." I was still full of worry.

The Habit of Worry (and How to Change It)

Then I was worried about, “Am I going to gain it back? What am I going to do? How am I going to keep this weight off?” And so then I finally got a grip on my weight, but guess what, I started worrying about other things. I started to worry about money. I started to worry about relationships. I started to worry about my daughter. And I realized a very important truth about worry; it is a habit.

And we think that if we can just control the outside world, if we can fix things, then we’ll no longer worry. But how many times have you finally fixed that thing that was causing your worry only to find your worry pop up somewhere else, like Whack-A-Mole? Like, there it is, it’s displaced in a different area of my life.

Again, I’ve seen this time and time again in my own life. It was weight, then it was money. Like, Oh if I could just make \$100,000 a year, then I won’t worry. And then I made \$100,000 in a year and then, guess what, I was still worrying. And it really hit me; wow, this has nothing to do with the outside world. This is a state of being that you’ve trained yourself into and you’re doing it for a reason because, at some level, you think that worry is protecting you, that it’s supporting you.

But the reality of it is, it is optional. I could still go out there and take action and do all the things that I was doing without the worry. And guess what, life is so much more fun when you’re not worrying your way through it.

So, you may be wondering at this point, “Okay, Tonya, I hear you. But what do I do about it? How do I stop worrying?” Well, I’m going to tell you what I shared with some of my clients, I don’t know, like four years ago. When I was in that dreadful place of worry, seriously, it was like three to six months where I was just debilitated with worry. I was convinced I was going to be homeless. I was convinced that I was not going to be able to take care of my daughter. I was convinced that I would be lonely forever. I was convinced that I was a failure; all of the things that felt terrible, I was convinced was happening to me.

And one day, I was just fed up. I could see my own self-destructive pattern and I knew that if I stayed in that place, it was not going to end in a good way, my friends. It was ugly. And I finally just one day said, “I’m done. I’m done with this worrying. Number one, it’s boring. Number two, it is not helpful.”

The Habit of Worry (and How to Change It)

But here's the thing; when you have thought in a certain way for so long, it becomes your default. You don't even have to think how to think it, it just pops up. And so what I did is I put myself on a worry-free diet. I was like, okay, you are not allowed to worry for the next 30 days.

Now, that does not mean that my worrisome thoughts just magically disappeared. But whenever they would chime in, I'd be like, nope, I'm not grabbing onto you today, I've got things to do. And I literally trained myself out of worry.

With all of that said, there are still moments and occasions where I have worrisome thoughts. They still pop up, I just don't entertain them. I know that it's optional and I know that it's not going to help me create the result that I want. Now, I can go out there and create a result and think that worry is the reason why, but I know that's not true.

I could have created that same result with joy and excitement, and guess what, I will love the outcome so much better. So the first step is to decide that you no longer want to be someone who worries your way through life. The second step is to notice the thoughts in your head creating the worry. Why are you worried? What are you scared of? Sometimes we're worried and we don't even know why. Like, get honest with yourself. Why are you worried?

Are you worried you're not going to have enough money? Are you worried you're never going to have a partner? Are you worried that you're not going to have good health? Like, really get honest with yourself about why you are worried. And I want you to realize, it's like your imagination gone wild in a bad way.

You're projecting fear into the future. And what I've come to understand is you can easily project joy and health and vitality and abundance into the future. In this moment, which one feels better to project? You get to decide. And I just realized, how I feel in this moment is the most important thing.

And guess what; worry doesn't feel good in the moment. And so my practice was, when it came up, just to let it go. Let it go, redirect my mind, redirect my attention to something that felt better. And over time, I wasn't tempted to pick the worry about up because I was still creating results, even better results, because I was

The Habit of Worry (and How to Change It)

creating them from a better feeling state. So I can worry and pay the bills, or I can get in a place of joy and pay the bills.

I can worry about the launch, or I can get in a place of excitement and joy and do a launch. I can worry about my daughter's health, or I can get in a place of determination and love and take care of my daughter's health and do what I can do. Can you see now that worry is optional?

And what good does it do? How does it serve you? And this is going to require that you look at the associations that you have with worry. Do you associate worry with love? Do you think worrying shows that you care? Do you think worrying is protecting you or is preventing bad things from happening? Or do you think that worry is motivating you?

Because if you have those associations in your mind, you will be very tempted to hang onto the worry. But why not experiment with what life could be like without the worry. And what I can tell you, from someone who's practiced being on a worry-free diet for a long time now, it is so much better; so much better.

So decide you want to go worry-free. That's step number one. Now again, those thoughts are going to come up, but challenge them. Like, all of those worrisome thoughts, really challenge them. Find thoughts that feel better, that bring a little bit of relief.

The other practice that I have when I start worrying about something, I create a list. So what I do is I write down everything that I'm worried about and I put it on a piece of paper. And then I take that piece of paper and I grab another piece of paper and I draw a line down the middle. And on the left-hand side, I put God's list and on the right-hand side, I put my list.

Anything I have control over, that I can do something about, goes on my list. And then I schedule it. I look at it, like, what do I need to do? And I make a plan. Everything else goes on God's list. And I will tell you, 75% of the things that I worry about goes on God's list. And I'm like, okay, God, you handle that, this is on you, I've got my side. It's like a team effort.

I'm like, I'm going to do my part, you do your part, and then I just focus on what I have control over. An example of this is I found an old journal recently from

The Habit of Worry (and How to Change It)

about two years ago and I had done one of my lists around my daughter's health. And I wrote things down like, I'm worried my daughter is not going to get better, I'm worried that I'm not going to have enough money to pay for all of the medical bills, which were coming out of pocket because of the type of treatment we were having to get. I'm worried I won't find the right doctors that can help us. I'm worried that this is going to be her life forever.

So I had wrote all of these things down. Well, I don't have control over if my daughter is going to get better, right? Like, I had to put that on God's list. I'm like, okay, God, this one's yours. Finding the right doctors, I put that on my list. And I started calling people and researching and finding resources that could help steer me in the right direction. So that went on my list.

The money, I put I don't know if I'm going to have enough money to take care of all of these medical bills. So I was like, okay, how much do I need for this particular doctor? Okay, what do I need to do in order to create that money? That went on my list. But the big scheme of the money went on God's list. I'm like, you've got to help me with this one, right?

And so that is how I broke it down and all of a sudden, I felt empowered. All of a sudden, I felt relief. I'm like, okay, now I know what to do. But a lot of times, you all are worrying and you don't even know what you're worrying about, number one. And number two, you don't know what to do about it.

And sometimes, you're worrying about things that are out of your control. And so the call to action with that one is to work on your mindset. Like, are you projecting nightmares and worst-case scenarios into your future? Because you can easily project best case scenarios, beautiful outcomes, things that feel better.

So when I was in that state of worry about my daughter, what I started doing was a practice of seeing her healthy, seeing her living an abundant fun happy and meaningful life. And in the moment, that felt better. And when I was feeling better, I was more clear-minded. I was able to make better decisions. I wasn't being paralyzed by the fear and the worry.

So if you are in a state of worry right now, write it all down on a piece of paper, all of it. Look at what you're worried about and then create your list. On one side,

The Habit of Worry (and How to Change It)

that's God's list, the universe's list; whatever you want to call that force, that being, that energy that is supporting you. And on the other list, that's yours, my friend. Those are things that you have control over.

If you're worried about money, what kind of plan of action can you put into place so that you'll feel empowered, so that you don't just sit there and worry, but you're actually doing something about it and you're moving your life forward? And then put everything else on God's list. Let him, she, or it handle it.

And here's the best news ever; are you ready? Worry is a habit. So if you've trained yourself into worry, you can also train yourself into something else. What would you rather trade worry in for? Maybe it's confidence. Maybe it's joy. Maybe it's gratitude. Maybe it's determination. But you can just as easily practice those emotions and the best part of that is how you get to feel every single day.

So the big takeaway from this episode that I want you to have is, number one, worry is optional, it's never useful, and you can trade it in for something that feels so much better, that will drive you and inspire you to take action from a very different feeling state.

So, if you tend to worry a lot, I am going to challenge you to go on a worry-free diet and refuse to let worry steal the joy out of today.

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 since we're on the topic of worry, do you know something I don't like worrying about? What I'm going to have for dinner.

Yep, I used to worry about that too. But I found a solution to my problem. It's called Plated. I stumbled upon this company a while back when I was telling a girlfriend how I just wanted a chef. I'm like, I just want to find someone to come in and cook for me because, some of you all can relate. As moms and running a household, we've cooked our whole lives and there's just a point where you're done.

And when I really thought about it, I didn't want someone to cook for me, I just wanted it to be easier. I was tired of grocery shopping. I was tired of trying to figure out interesting new menus. And so my friend said to me, she's like, why don't you check out some of these food delivery services?

The Habit of Worry (and How to Change It)

And at the time, I didn't even realize they existed. Now there's so many of them. But I did try several and I settled upon Plated. And I like them for many, many reasons. Number one, they cater to all kinds of pallets and dietary needs. So if you want gluten-free, they can provide that. If you want vegetarian, they can provide that. And their recipes are really, really good.

Now, I also like it because they deliver everything you need to cook a meal. And it's portioned out, you don't have to do a lot of chopping and cutting. They've really made it as simple as possible because, again, I do enjoy cooking. For me, it's a very meditative experience. I was just tired of all of the thinking that I had to put into creating dinners.

And so, Plated has just really made my life so much easier. So each week, I can go in and I can choose from 20 different recipes, I can mix and match. They use really good quality ingredients. I typically buy four dinners per week and it comes down to about \$11 per person.

Now, for me, that is seems like such a bargain because there's no food waste. And when I think about what it takes to go out to dinner, I mean, sometimes we'll spend over 100 bucks for dinner when I take the whole family out. So again, I feel like I'm, number one, saving time. I'm not having to make as many decisions, which I feel like, in our day and age, we have such decision fatigue. I want to, like, save my brain power for the really big decisions, not are we going to have artichokes or Brussels sprouts tonight? You know.

And then the recipes are really, really good. So if you've been frustrated by dinner time and you're looking for a really healthy option to feed you and your family, go check out Plated. In fact, if you go to frenchkisslife.com/plated, when you join, you can get up to 25% off of your first four weeks and you can just try it out and see if you like it. And hopefully, you will love it as much as I do.

Thanks for tuning in and I will see you in the next episode, cheers.

If you enjoyed this episode and you want to dive even deeper into the French Kiss lifestyle, let's start with a makeover; a mindset makeover. You can download

The Habit of Worry (and How to Change It)

my free training, The 3 Mindset Makeovers Every Woman Needs by visiting FrenchKissLife.com/mindset – because after all, mindset is the new black.