



PODCAST TRANSCRIPT

EPISODE N° 140

7 Tips for Elegant Decision Making

FRENCH KISS LIFE

[FRENCHKISSLIFE.COM](https://frenchkisslife.com)

7 Tips for Elegant Decision Making

Dodinsky said, “Do not plant your dreams in the field of indecision where nothing ever grows but the weeds of what-if.” If you’re a woman who struggles with making decisions, maybe you’re always afraid that you’re going to make the wrong one or you make decisions but then you spend so much of your energy second-guessing yourself, this episode is for you.

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 whatever day it is that you are listening to the podcast. For me, it is a Monday afternoon at 2pm and I just got so much work done this morning. It’s probably the most productive morning that I’ve had this entire year. And the reason being is that I am about to embark on a crazy travel schedule; one that I’m super excited about. But I also know that while I’m traveling, I want to have space to enjoy my travels.

And so I basically reverse-engineered the process and asked myself, “What can I get done now that I won’t have to do later and that will free up my time when I’m off gallivanting?” Of course, I’ll still be working, but I want to make sure that I get as much done now so I can enjoy my time while I’m away.

So yeah, I’m just feeling super proud of myself, which, by the way, is an amazing feeling. It’s something that I want you all to feel every single day. Ask yourself, what can I do today to make myself proud? Because it is such an amazing feeling that I think drives us to create a beautiful life.

So, now it is time for the Community Spotlight. This is where I highlight someone in the community who has benefitted from the *French Kiss Lifestyle*. And today’s spotlight is on Lydia.

She left a five-star review on iTunes that says, “Life-changing podcast. I have been listening to Tonya for several years now and, over time, her words of wisdom have completely changed my life. I cannot thank her enough for the amazing work she does and what an impact she has had on me. I feel happier and freer and more beautiful than I ever have before. And so much of that is due to

7 Tips for Elegant Decision Making

the mindset shifts that have taken place in relation to Tonya's podcast and her courses. Thank you, Tonya, for doing what you do. You are a beautiful human being inside and out."

Well, thank you, Lydia. That truly means the world to me and it's exactly why I do this podcast. It's exactly why I do all the things that I do, because I want women to feel beautiful and confident and excited and in love with themselves and their lives because I know that when you're in that place, we just make the world a better place.

We create new things. We keep expanding and evolving, and then everyone who comes in touch with our presence benefits. And it's what my mentor, Martha Beck, calls the butterfly effect. One little change within you has a ripple effect on the entire world.

So, 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. And if you want to learn how to do that, just go to frenchkisslife.com/itunes.

Let's talk about decision-making because it's something that we're doing all day every day. We are deciding what to eat or what to wear. Is it a yes or a no? What do I start on first? Do I stay or do I go? Where are we going on vacation? Where are we going to stay when we're on vacation? How much money can we spend while we're on vacation?

Decision-making is part of our everyday lives, and yet I know the tendency to do one of two things. Number one, avoid decisions, because somehow we think we're going to make the wrong one. We are paralyzed by our perfectionism and so no decision is the worst kind of decision because a lack of decision-making equals a lack of forward progress. As long as you're not deciding anything, you will feel stuck. You will feel like life isn't moving. And what I can tell you is that you are just one powerful decision away from changing everything.

But then there's the second camp, and that is making the same decisions over and over and over again. And when you keep making the same decisions, you keep getting the same results. And I was thinking about why that is, like, why are we so afraid of making decisions or why do we keep making the same decisions over and over again?

7 Tips for Elegant Decision Making

So when I looked up the definition of a decision, it says a choice made between alternative courses of action in a situation of uncertainty. And there within lies why it's so hard to make a decision or why we keep making the same decisions. Because the moment you make a powerful decision, or what I like to call an elegant decision, you are stepping into that uncertainty.

But I've said this many times on the podcast; everything that you want that you don't yet have is in that place of uncertainty. It's hanging out in the mystery of life. But when you're so afraid of the unknown, even though I think being willing and courageous enough to step into it changes everything, but when you are so afraid of it, what you will often do is make the same choices over and over again because that is certain. You know the outcome of those decisions.

But the moment you make those elegant decisions, the decisions that are simple and effective – which is what elegance is really all about – it's being simple and effective in your thinking to help you reach your goals or to live life the way you want to live it. So I want to offer you seven tips for elegant decision-making. Are you ready?

Okay, let's do it. Tip number one, limit your decisions. A study came out that said that we typically make 70 conscious decisions per day. And when we're constantly making decisions, we start to experience what researchers have called decision fatigue, which is the deterioration of our ability to make good decisions because we've been making so many decisions.

It's really hard to make good decisions when we are mentally exhausted. It's like, what happens at the end of the day when you've been at work and you've been making decision after decision after decision and then it's time for dinner and you're like, screw it, I'm just going to eat whatever, even though your intentions are to take exquisite care of yourself, you're mentally exhausted.

And this isn't just my opinion. They have actually done studies that they've looked at how decision fatigue impacts our decision-making process. In one particular study, they looked at 1100 parole hearing decisions made by judges in the US. And it's fascinating what they discovered.

Prisoners who appeared early in the morning received parole about 70% of the time while those who appeared later in the day were granted parole less than 10% of the time. So when we have been making so many decisions in our day, at the end of our day, we don't have a lot left to give. And that's usually when we get the

7 Tips for Elegant Decision Making

attitude of why bother, it doesn't matter, just give me whatever, and we end up sabotaging ourselves.

So, one of the ways to combat decision fatigue is to actually limit your decisions. So here are some ways that I do this in my own life. Number one, what I eat – I tend to eat the same things over and over every single day and I save that need for diversity in food for when I travel or when I go out to dinner with my friends or with Glen or with whoever.

And so by limiting what I eat, it also limits the trip to the grocery store because I know – and I don't actually do my own grocery shopping anymore, but I know the list and I can just pass it off and it's done. I don't have to think, what am I going to have for breakfast? What am I going to have for lunch and dinner?

It's already planned and it's limited to a certain few recipes that we tend to eat over and over again. Although I do use Plated now, and so that helps me with diversity. But still, I don't have to make a decision. I signed up for it and it just arrives – which by the way, if you want to learn more about Plated, just head to frenchkisslife.com/plated – but it's one less decision I have to make every single day.

Also, what I wear – now, you all know I love me some fashion and I love style. But on a day to day basis, I tend to wear the same few things when I'm working at home. So I don't have to wake up and think, what do I wear today? I just have my – my daughter calls them my uniforms. They look cute. I enjoy them. But even if you work out of the house, you can have a really good capsule wardrobe that you can mix and match and create beautiful outfits and you're not always wondering, what do I wear today?

I also limit where and how much I shop. So for example, with the grocery store, which I rarely go to anymore, but there's one that I go to for everything. I also limit my shopping decisions, and I'll tell you how I have done that. So when it comes to groceries, Glen actually buys all of our groceries. That is like his contribution to our relationship because I don't like grocery shopping at all and it's something he enjoys. And so I send him a list and he knows what to get. And the list is basically the same week after week after week.

Now, when it comes to shopping for clothes, the way I have done that is, number one, I restrain from buying a lot of clothes online. Because then, what ends up happening, is they ship it, you try it on, it doesn't fit, then you have to take it back

7 Tips for Elegant Decision Making

and it's just so much time that I don't want to be wasting on shopping. But I do love clothes and I do love style.

So I have someone who is my stylist and she finds things for me that she thinks I'll like and then we talk about it and she takes care of it. Or I save my shopping for when I travel because, for me, I'm a very aesthetic kind of person, I need to feel the fabric, I need to try it on.

So my favorite way to shop is actually when I travel. And so I really try not to buy a lot of clothes in between my travels because, for me, I miss out on the experience. Now, that's unless I need to get something for a special occasion. But I also have a lot in my closet already, so it's, again, one less decision that I need to make.

The other way I have limited my decision-making is through my finances. So I have an investment company that I use called Wealthfront. You can go to frenchkisslife.com/wealthfront to learn more about it. But it's automated. It's just so easy and it's done and it's getting great returns. And so I can just relax. It's one less decision I have to make every single month.

The other way that I limit decisions is within my company. So I want to empower the people who work with me to make decisions, but I also know they need framework in order to make better decisions. And the way we do that is by having processes so that they know how things are done, where to find things. I also teach them my preferences, like what time of the day do I like to travel? What kind of places do I like to stay? What aesthetic do I like? So that when it comes to these little daily decisions, I'm not being bombarded because my team is confused.

So I want you to think about where can you limit your decisions in your daily life so that you're not so fatigued, which makes it even harder to make really good decisions? So that's tip number one. I'm realizing that could be a whole podcast in and of itself, but let's move to tip number two.

Make decisions from where you want to be, not from where you are. This one is a game-changer. So what we often do is we look around at what is right now and we base our decisions off of what we currently are experiencing, which when you think about it, our current experience is a result of past thinking and past decisions. And so if you keep looking around at what is and making decisions

7 Tips for Elegant Decision Making

based off of that, what is going to happen? You're going to stay right where you are.

So what I love to do is I love to think about my future self, the next evolution of Tonya, so to speak, and what decision does she make? And I use this every single day. In fact, I just made a big hiring decision two weeks ago. And my brain was telling me, what are you doing? You're crazy. This is a lot of money.

But I thought about the future version of myself that's created what she wanted to create and she was very clear, like, you make this hire. And this is the uncertainty that I was talking about. It's scary. There's no guarantees, but this is where you have to have confidence in yourself and have faith and trust and know everything you want that you don't yet have is in that unknown and you're going to have to make some courageous and bold decisions because here's the thing, you all; if you make a decision based upon the same energy that created the situation in the first place, chances are you're going to keep creating the same results.

I remember when I bought my first designer handbag, I was terrified, again, my brain was telling me you're not worth it, you don't deserve it, what are you doing? You're going to spend all of your money. You're going to take from Sarah. Like, all kinds of craziness in my head, which if I would have listened to that and not bought the handbag, I would have kept perpetuating actions built out of fear and scarcity.

But when I thought about my future self, a woman who is abundant, who loves style, who doesn't feel guilt about what she buys, who spends her money with integrity and by her values, she buys the handbag. And so I remember, it was about so much more than the handbag, you all. It was about the internal shift of me making a decision that aligned with the woman I wanted to be.

Now, I'm not saying you need to go out there and buy a handbag because sometimes we're buying for the wrong reasons. We're buying because we think that we are being deprived or we're buying out of a place of fear and scarcity, of trying to be enough. But for me, that decision was me deciding I was worthy enough to actually have the handbag. The energy, even though I was scared to do it and my mind was going crazy, underneath that it felt like a good decision because I was making a decision from where I wanted to be, not from where I was.

7 Tips for Elegant Decision Making

So the next time that you're faced with a big decision, I want you to think about the you of the future, the wise happy joyful abundant you and what decision does she make? She may say don't buy the handbag. Or she may say buy it. She may say hire the person. She may say not. It's going to be different for all of us but I want you to learn to trust that intuition and to begin to look towards your future and to make decisions from that place.

Okay, let's move onto tip number three. And this is a big one, you all. I know some of you all are guilty because I've been guilty. But tip number three is stop asking everyone else what you should do. How often do we delegate our decisions, and inevitably our life, to other people? Tell me what I should do.

Now, I do believe it is really beneficial to have outside perspective and to have mentors that you trust, but a really good mentor is never going to tell you what to do. They are going to help you figure out your own answers. But here's the thing, you all; if you are asking other people, should I do this? What do you think? What would you do? Tell me what to do... Chances are, if you ask enough people, you're going to get very different answers because everyone is filtering the world through their own past experiences and their own beliefs and you are going to end up being confused.

I see this with women and diets. Like, tell me what to eat. When women come to me for weight loss, I don't tell them what to eat. I want them to become the experts of their own body. Now, I can share my experience. I can make suggestions of maybe just try this, experiment with this. But ultimately, I want you to own your decisions. I want you to be the one making them because when you make them, it's a very different experience than when someone makes it for you.

And I think the reason why we do this is because if someone else told us to do it and it didn't work, we can blame that person. But when we make our own decisions, we have no one to blame but ourselves. And I don't think we should blame ourselves. I just think we should honor that I made this decision, it didn't work the way I wanted, good to know. Life is just one big experiment for all of us. I'm going to go out there and try a new decision. I'm going to try something else.

But when you constantly ask everybody else what to do, where are you in that decision-making? Where is your soul? Where is your deepest core truth?

7 Tips for Elegant Decision Making

Because no one has access to that but you, my friends, so stop asking everyone else what you should do and start trusting yourself.

So for this one, the next time you have a decision to make and you are tempted to ask your sister and aunt Betty and uncle Bob what you should do, I want you just to take a moment. Now, again, this does not mean that you don't gather facts and research, because sometimes you need that to make an educated decision. But ultimately, I want it to be your decision. So ask yourself, if I knew what to do, what would my decision be? And just see what comes up.

Okay, tip number four, what does your body tell you? You all, how often do we override our gut, our intuition, our bodies because so and so told us we should do it this way? And I have done this. Especially in business I have been guilty of this; bringing someone on and they're like, "You should do it this way," and I'm like, "Okay, well maybe they know more than I do," and I go out and do it. And the whole time, my gut was telling me it was a no, but I did not listen to it. And I will tell you, 100% of the time, when I don't listen to my gut, it never works out.

It's like our gut knows. Someone told me, and I don't know if this is true but I'm just going to share it anyway, that when Japanese businessmen go to make a business decision, they eat a meal and they notice how they digest it as to whether they should say yes or to say no. Now, again, I just heard that through the grapevine, but it does make sense.

It's like our gut has its own brain, its own intuition. And yet so many of us are so busy seeking answers outside of ourselves and looking at what everybody else is doing that we're not trusting our own intuition. And you all, you will know the truth because it will set you free. Everything that I share, it resonates with my soul, which is why I share it.

Now, some of that information is from other people; my mentors, my advisors, people that I trust, people that I learn from. But when I hear it spoken, it speaks to my soul and so I know it's my truth. My gut is like, yes, this is your truth. And I even tell my clients with what I'm teaching, if it doesn't resonate with you, it is not your truth.

More than anything, I want to coach women to trust themselves and to lead a beautiful and courageous and *French Kiss Life* that only their soul has the blueprint for. And in order to access that blueprint, you have to tap into what

7 Tips for Elegant Decision Making

feels hot and what feels cold. And that is found in your gut, in your body, not in your head.

We don't give our bodies enough credit in the world of personal development. Now, a lot of what I do teach is around mindset and thought work, but I also want to teach women how to get in touch with their bodies because I believe our bodies long for freedom and beauty and love and passion and ecstasy. And if you learn to tune into it, it will guide you with your decisions. It will tell you what is a yes and what is a no.

Now, here's the thing; your brain is going to get involved and it's going to start spewing off all these old beliefs based on the past. But when you get into your body and you check in with your body around a decision and you do that and you practice it, you will learn that your body is so full of wisdom.

So the next time you're faced with a decision, feel what it feels like in your body to say yes or to know or to choose A or to choose B and just notice what feels expansive and what feels contracted and learn to trust your body when it comes to your decisions.

Okay, tip number five, let your values guide your decisions. I actually talked about creating your core values in the last episode. So if you go to frenchkisslife.com/139, listen to that episode if you haven't. But when you know what you value, you can use those values to guide your decisions.

So my personal values are beauty, inspiration, and connection. Like, I know that if I build my life around those three values. It's going to be an extraordinary life. And so when I'm making a decision, I can always go back to my core values and let them help me with that decision.

So, for example, just this week, I was given an opportunity. And on paper, it looks amazing. Like, I would make lots of money. But when I checked in with my body and then alongside that looked through the lens of my core values, it isn't a good fit. And so I know that if I make that decision and if I override my body and my core values, it's not going to end up well.

Okay, I might make some money, but my life is about so much more than money. Now, I love money. I think it's great. But I believe that I will have a much more abundant life if I honor my values and what is important to me. And so if you do not know your core values, please, please, please go back and listen to the last

7 Tips for Elegant Decision Making

episode, episode 139, and define what those values are because you can use them to help you make better decisions for yourself.

So the next time you're facing a decision, ask yourself, does this decision align with my core values? And if not, maybe it's not a good decision for you.

Okay, moving along to tip number six, give yourself a deadline. This is for my beautiful and amazing and wonderful friends who love to live in indecision. And, you all, I have been there. I know what it's like to just postpone that decision day after day, month after month, year after year. And then we wonder why our life isn't changing.

If I'm facing a big decision, I may give myself a week. That's pretty much the max for me right now. But some of you all can't even decide what to eat. It's like, I don't know what to eat. If I can make a big life decision in seven days, surely you can figure out what to eat in like five minutes. And so for me, just having that deadline is the space I need to gather the information that I need to gather and then on that day of the deadline it's just make a decision, Tonya. Yes or no, decide option-A or option-B and just move on.

And I think the reason I'm able to do this now is that I've discovered that there are no wrong decisions. There's just a decision. And so because I no longer believe that I'm going to make a wrong decision, I'm just going to make a decision that I learned from, then I don't put so much pressure on myself and I just decide.

And the other thing is I no longer believe that there is a decision out there that's going to make me happy because my happiness is created within me by how I think and where I focus and what I do on this day. And so because I don't put the pressure on myself to make the right decision and I don't believe a decision is the source of my happiness, I just make decisions without a lot of drama.

So the next time you're facing a decision and you don't know what to do and you're spinning in confusion and you're postponing the decision, just give yourself a deadline. I will make this decision by September 30th at 8pm. It's going to be done. And you're going to notice how empowered you feel just to make a decision.

And that leads me to tip number seven. And this one is huge; huge, huge, huge. I tell my clients this all of the time. The most important decision that you make is

7 Tips for Elegant Decision Making

not the first decision, it's the second one. And the second decision is deciding how you're going to feel about your first decision.

So many times, we make a decision and then we doubt ourselves. We live in this state of regret. I've decided this, but maybe I shouldn't have done it. And what that does is it causes split energy. You can't even go fully in on your decision because there's a part of you that's saying, "But maybe you should back out," or, "Maybe you shouldn't do it," or whatever it is. And that is just miserable to live in, because I've done it to myself.

Even the smallest things – you all may be able to relate to this, but I would decide to go to a restaurant and the whole time I'm sitting in that restaurant, I'm thinking, "Oh maybe I should have picked that other one." Crazy, here I am, sitting in this restaurant, there's food in front of me and my brain is telling me, "You know what, you picked the wrong one. You should have gone to the one down the street instead of this one. Now you're just missing out on everything."

And so that would happen to me over and over again, from the smallest things of picking out a restaurant, to the bigger things like choosing to leave a marriage. And I finally just got fed up with it. I'm like, you know what, when I decide something from now on, I'm going to decide to feel good about it. I'm going to go all in on my decision and get all of my energy behind me, pushing me towards whatever it is that I chose.

And what I can tell you all, it is so much more fun to live this way. You just decide, and then you decide to feel amazing about it. It really is that simple. You stop fighting with your decisions. And to me, that is elegant. It's simple and it is effective.

It is not effective to make a decision and then spend the next weeks or years doubting that decision. Move on. Decide that was a good decision for you in that moment and keep making decisions and keep deciding how you're going to feel about them.

So, to wrap this up, just make decisions. Enjoy the process. Get the momentum going in your life and understand you can't make a wrong decision. It's just a decision that you'll either like, it will create the result that you want, or it's a decision that you'll learn from. But that is the process, my friends.

7 Tips for Elegant Decision Making

Do you realize how many decisions that I've made that didn't work out? And yet here I am. But if I had not made those decisions and I would have just kept making the same old decisions or been paralyzed to the point that I was making no decisions, I wouldn't have gotten here.

I was willing to make the decisions, to fail, to learn, to see what works, what doesn't work, and just kept making decisions. And I continue to make decisions on a daily basis. But I always want to be making higher level decisions; the decisions from my future self. And then I want to decide to feel good about all of them, no matter what the result is, because I'm either learning or I'm getting the result I want.

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 do you know what I love almost more than anything? I had to sit here and think, do I love it more than anything? No. I mean, I love my family and my friends and my dogs. But this is definitely at the top of my list. And that is music.

Today's J'adore is not something that you have to necessarily go out there and buy, although you can buy music, but it's something rather I want you to open up to enjoying. I believe that music has the ability to change our internal state. I mean, have you ever been driving down the road and a song comes on and you start crying? Or equally, a song comes on and you want to dance?

I believe that music has the ability to help us reach our dreams because it can change our energy and how we're showing up in the world, and that changes everything.

So, every day, I have music playing in the background, unless I'm recording a podcast. Maybe I should have music playing, but I don't want it to be a distraction. But I listen to Spotify, but I really enjoy Pandora because Pandora just streams similar artists to the station that you're listening to.

So you have to know that I like all kinds of music. I think the only music that it has to be a very special song is country. I'm not a big country fan. I think maybe because I grew up with it and it just doesn't speak to me. It's always sad and someone loses their dog and their wife and it's almost like Hollywood. You can always tell the ending of a country song. I tend to like old country if I'm going to listen to it. But other than that, I listen to all kinds of music.

7 Tips for Elegant Decision Making

Having a daughter and growing up in the south, I mean, we listen to hip-hop. But on an average given day, I tend to listen to the same types of music. I think sometimes you could even call them ethereal types of music because I like music that takes me to a different place in my imagination.

I also use music to help me create the mood that I want to be in. And that changes on a day to day basis. It depends on what I want to create for that day. But if I'm working, I'll choose a different type of music versus when I'm cooking dinner or when Glen and I have a night alone.

I have playlists for everything, but I thought I would share with you some of my favorite Pandora stations because people are always asking me, like, what kind of music are you listening to? So let me give you some of my favorite Pandora stations.

So, the first one is Hotel Costes. And I think this one has a very special place in my heart because Hotel Costes is in Paris Rue Saint-Honoré. And I remember the first time I went there. I was like, "Ooh I belong in this place." It had, like, red velvet walls. They had a French Kiss cocktail. I'm like, this is home.

And so every time I go to Paris, I always go to Hotel Costes for lunch or maybe to meet friends for a cocktail. But they have, just like Buddha Bar, which also another good station. But they have their own playlist of music. So Hotel Costes is one of my favorites.

And I'm actually just rummaging through my Pandora stations – Kat Edmonson for that very jazzy soulful Parisian vibe. I love her station. And then I also really enjoy Avener. And I have to tell you how it's spelled because a friend of mine, she typed it into her Pandora and it was like a heavy metal band. I'm like, no, girl.

That's another one I'm not into. Not into heavy metal. But it's Avener. That's a really good station. Let's see what else I have here. I also love Café Del Mar. That's a really good one. And then here's a really interesting one. And I will tell you that this station takes me to that ethereal place that I was telling you about, and that is the Gregorian Chant radio station. I literally feel like I'm in the Vatican or I'm in the Notre Dame.

And there's something about that music that just takes me to a different place. So yeah, those are some of my favorite stations. And I mix it up. Like, you come in my house and you never know what kind of music you're going to be listening to

7 Tips for Elegant Decision Making

because so many different genres speak to my heart. And I use them in a very intentional way. So I want you to be thinking about how can you incorporate music into your daily life to change or shift your state of being?

And another thing to think about is when you think of your dreams and your goals and the kind of life that you want to create for yourself, is there a genre of music that aligns with that? Start listening to it on a daily basis. Everything is impacting us, especially our environment. So use music to inspire you, to motivate you, to take you to that different place, to spark passion.

I think music and style are two personal development tools that we don't talk about often enough. But I think about the quote by Plato where he said, "Music gives a soul to the universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination, and life to everything."

So turn on some music this week and go out there and French kiss your life. 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 my free training, *The 3 Mindset Makeovers Every Woman Needs* by visiting FrenchKissLife.com/mindset – because after all, mindset is the new black.