



EPISODE N° 160

When You Lose Your Confidence

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When You Lose Your Confidence

Virginia Woolf said, "Without self-confidence, we are as babes in the cradles."

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.

I'm not sure that you all are ready for this sexy Marge Simpson voice that I've got going on right now. I have to get the podcast recording to my producer today, and I've had this crazy cough. I just think it's because it's so dry and cold here in Colorado. And, I just got to do it.

But you know what? That's actually the beauty of French-kissing life, is that you just show up, you just embrace all of it. You just keep doing the things and enjoying the process, and knowing that that is good enough.

So, let's dive into a community spotlight. This is the part of the show where I get to highlight someone in the community who has benefited from the *French Kiss Lifestyle*. And today's spotlight is on Charity Gonzalez Vibe. She left a five-star review on iTunes and here's what she wrote.

"Tonya is a game-changer. I am an ambitious hustler and thought – no, believed – there was only one way to success. Barreling towards it at full throttle and at sacrifice to anything else in my life, including simple pleasures, romance and fun, creative things that don't get gold stars when you finish them, I didn't realize these were also critical pieces that fuel success. Through inspiration, ease, and elegance, Tonya gave me the spark for a new way to operate, a new way to think, and a new possibility for how I live my life.

I love Tonya's podcast, her blog, and daily Instagram reminders. She is a living, breathing embodiment of what she teaches, and that genuine essence comes through in every nugget of wisdom. Highly recommend for ambitious, make-it-happen women who are in need of a revamped way of being that includes success, and the creation of a beautiful and fascinating life."

Charity, thank you so, so much for that beautiful review. And yeah, I just, as I was reading that, I was thinking about most of the women that I work with, who believe

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that they have to hurry and hustle and sacrifice everything to create what they want. And at the end of the day, what ends up happening is they're exhausted and they're miserable. And they're wondering, "Wait. What happened? I've created all the things that I wanted, and yet something still feels lacking in my life."

And that's why I'm a big believer in making the journey to the dream as beautiful as the dream itself. Because if you don't, then what you end up doing is spending a lifetime chasing a feeling. And, at the end of the day, the more we can feel the way we think we'll feel "one day when", the more we become a match for it. The more we are inspired to show up in different ways, and then we can just relax and show up for what we want, and then let the universe take care of the rest.

So hey, listen, if you have not left a review, what in the world? My COO, she's like, I love when you say "What in the world?". She's like, "I haven't heard that in years." But seriously, go leave a five-star review if you enjoy listening to this podcast, and maybe I will feature you in an upcoming community spotlight.

So I had a very different topic planned for today's episode. But one of the things that I constantly do is to pay attention and tap into the energy of what I'm being called to share. And over the last couple of months, I've experienced this common theme from the women in my community, the women that I coach, from messages that have been coming in through Instagram and Facebook, and even in my own Friendship Circle.

And it's this idea of losing your confidence. And what really sort of put me over the edge to talk about this is, I received this message from this lovely woman on Facebook. And she was just sharing with me that a couple of years ago, she felt very confident and believed that she could switch her career. And she's competent and educated, and she's been job hunting for a full year and has not found a job. and she's devastated. And her confidence has taken a hit.

And she shared with me, she was like, "I did see myself as successful. But now I find myself in this downward spiral and I don't know how to get out." And she's not alone. I have been there. Right? There have been so many situations that have rocked my confidence. But it doesn't happen as much anymore, because I've learned a very important truth that I want to share with you all.

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It's easy to feel confident when everything's going your way. When you're hitting your goals and you're creating the results that you want and all is rainbows and daisies. But what about those times when life is not operating that way? Maybe you've lost your job, maybe you've lost a spouse, maybe you went through a really difficult time and you didn't have the tools to deal with it, so you started to turn to food to eat. And now you find yourself 50, 60, 70 pounds overweight. And you're like, now what?

Or, maybe you've been putting yourself out into the dating world, and you just can't seem to find the one. Those are the times that rock our confidence. And those are the times when you need the most confidence. And I will tell you, for me, now that I understand, on a deep level, that part of being successful is failing and being rejected over and over again, when it happens for me now I'm like, oh, yeah, this is the way it's supposed to work.

In fact, there's a really good book out there that's called, *The Obstacle Is the Way*. And basically, the whole premise of the book is that obstacles are there to grow you. They are there to guide you. They are part of the process. And yet, so often when we hit an obstacle or we have a challenge, we give up on ourselves. We feel like something's gone terribly wrong. We make up stories in our head that we don't have what it takes, and life must be against us, and then we give up.

And I really want you, as we head into the New Year, to decide to be a woman who never gives up. Because I really believe that what separates the people that create results and those that don't, the ones that create the results are just stubborn. Like, we never give up. We're like, yep, this is what I signed up for. I'm going to keep going.

So let's talk about, what is self-confidence? So the dictionary says that self-confidence is a feeling of trust in one's abilities, qualities and judgment. So, one of the things that I see with my clients is that there's something that they want to create, there's something that they want to experience that they've never done before, they've never experienced it before. And they'll run this story that they don't have confidence, because they've never done it before.

But I want you all to understand, for every single one of us, there's something that we've never done before. But that doesn't mean that you can't be confident. In fact, that's when you need your confidence the most.

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And if you think about it, confidence is an emotion, and your emotions are created by the thoughts in your head, right? So, often what happens is that a woman is coasting along. My mentor, Martha Beck, she calls it the promised land. Like, you've gotten to a place where life is good, you're coasting along, you don't even need confidence at that point. The confidence is easy to generate when life is going well.

And then, all of a sudden, something happens in your life. You lose a job, you lose money, you lose something that means a lot to you. Or, maybe someone comes along and just tells you how worthless you are. Like, it could be anything, right? And all of a sudden, we're jolted into the state of, what just happened? And we start to feel self-doubt and insecure and sometimes self-pity and a lot of fear and a lot of anxiety.

But what I want you to understand is that the only thing that happened is that your thinking changed. That's all. And when you find yourself jolted into these life circumstances that are scary, and you are full of doubt and anxiety and worry around them, that is when you need to practice confidence the most.

And it really comes down to the question, can you believe in yourself, even when it's hard? Are you willing to believe in yourself even when you're not getting the results you want yet? Are you willing to overcome the obstacles versus try to avoid them? And that is hard, y'all. It's so hard.

And I think I've talked about this on the podcast before, but I remember when I went through my divorce, and suddenly, my confidence was shaken to the core and I started to spiral. And I started to live in this anxiety-fueled state. I was worried 24/7, to the point that I felt paralyzed. And that's when I decided that I was going to go on a worry-free diet, and I started to look into my own mind. And I was like, no wonder I have no confidence.

I was telling myself crazy things like, you'll never be able to make it on your own. You've never done it before without a man. You're not smart enough. You're not capable enough. You've never been able to manage money. Look at all this evidence from your past, right? No wonder I lacked self-confidence. I was looking into my past for all of the things that I didn't like, for all of my mistakes, for all of my failures, and using that as a reason to not feel confident.

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And then, guess what I did? It's what a lot of you do. I didn't take action. I was so paralyzed. And it was a perfect example of a self-fulfilling prophecy. If I would have kept thinking that way, feeling that way, and staying curled up on my sofa, I would not be doing this podcast right now. Right?

Like, I had to start changing my narrative for the future I wanted. I also had to embody and practice what self-confidence truly is. Self-confidence is not about you doing things perfectly, and it's certainly not about things going well all of the time. Confidence is who are you being when things aren't going well? When things do get tough? Where is that grit?

To me, that is what self-confidence is all about. Because again, it's easy to be confident when you get the job, or everything is going well and right. But we need it the most in those most challenging times.

So, I want to break down how I have personally dealt with rebuilding my self-confidence. So, the first thing is that you need to know why you're not feeling confident. Now, what a lot of you are going to do, when you start looking for reasons why you're not confident, is you're going to start looking outside of you, at what is happening in the outside world.

You may say, "Well, Tonya, the reason why I'm not feeling confident is that I didn't get the job." Or, "The reason why I'm not feeling confident is I've been trying to lose weight for a year, and it's not coming off." But what I want you to know, is that anything outside of you is never the reason for your lack of self-confidence.

At some point, in your journey, you began to change your thinking about your abilities. And then, you started to create results to confirm that thinking, and that is why you're not feeling confident. So you need to look into your own mind at what are your thoughts about your abilities? Do you trust yourself? Do you trust your judgments?

Because again, what is self-confidence? It's a feeling of trust in one's abilities, qualities and judgment. So when you look into your own mind, you'll understand why you're not feeling confident.

Again, for me, I was telling myself terrible stories. Like, I can't trust myself. I've never done this before. I need a man to make it in the world. Which, by the way,

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turns out, that's such a lie. I've been more successful without a man helping me financially than I've ever been with one.

So, I went out there and proved to myself that all of that B.S. that I'd been running around thinking, it was all a lie. And I wanted to prove to myself that it was. So, look at why you're not feeling confident. Again, it's going to be a lot of thoughts in your head.

And then the next thing that I think is so important, because, again, your brain's going to look to the past for reasons why you should or shouldn't feel confident. And here's the really interesting part. Studies have shown that when it comes to self-confidence, it's more about your recent past than your long-term past, which means you can begin to practice creating little wins that you can refer to.

To be like, yeah, look, I can trust myself. Yes, I do have abilities. I can make good judgments. And so, think about how you can set yourself up for some little wins. You know, I tell my clients in Slim, Chic and Savvy, that when you've lost trust in yourself as a woman, it's so hard to create what you want.

An example that comes to mind, like how many of you have said something like, today is the day I'm going to work out. Or, today is the day where I'm going to follow my food plan. Or, today is the day I'm finally going to write that chapter of my book. Or, today is the day I'm going to clean my closet.

And then what happens? You don't show up. And it's like the friend who always promises to meet you for lunch and then after five scheduled dates, and she doesn't show up, you're like, I don't trust her. She's not going to show up. That's the kind of relationship that we can begin to create with ourselves.

And so to rebuild that trust, which creates self-confidence, you need to set yourself up for some little wins. And I encourage you to make it super small. Not to be like, oh, I'm going to work out for three hours today at CrossFit, when you haven't worked out for two years. That doesn't make any sense.

Maybe it could be, I'm going to go for a five-minute walk. And then you show up for yourself. And you begin to build a beautiful relationship with you, one of trust, one of self-respect, one of self-love, one of self-discipline, right? That's how you can begin to create the confidence, so that when your brain starts scanning your past for why you should feel confident, it will be like, "Oh, but yesterday you did

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show up for that five-minute walk. Good job." And you begin to build your self-confidence that way.

The next thing that I do, when I feel like my self-confidence has taken a hit, is the opposite of what insecurity tells me to do. So, can you all relate to this? Like, you're feeling insecure, and that insecurity breeds inaction. You sit around and you worry, you don't do anything. And you end up proving yourself true.

And so, I've just learned to do the opposite of what insecurity and self-doubt tells me to do. And, here's the crazy thing. When you just go out there and take action, and stay committed to your dreams and to your goals, and you're the kind of person that, "I'm going to do this no matter what." You eventually end up creating something incredible. It may not be exactly what you thought you were going to create, but you end up creating something that doesn't exist right now, in this moment.

But what I see my clients do, and I've certainly done it, and I bet you can relate to this as well. Is that, they sit around and they want clarity. They want to know exactly how it's going to pan out before they ever take the action. And when you sit around and do nothing, it breeds more insecurity, more self-doubt.

And here's the thing. If you want clarity, you've got to take action. You can't become clear on something without moving your life forward. One of the things I'm always telling my clients is that the answers are found by living out the questions.

So, for example, if you want to know, is it possible for you to make a million dollars? You've got to go out there and take action, and find that answer for yourself. Go find the evidence for what it is that you want to experience. And that requires confidence. It requires confidence and believing in yourself, believing in your ability to show up for what you say you want, believing in your ability to be okay, even if you fail.

And by the way, you're going to fail sometimes. That's all a part of the process. I can't remember who said it, but there's a quote that says. "Success is built on a mountain of failures." And what a lot of you do is like, when you have some failures, you start creating this terrible story in your mind about how you're not capable, how things never work out for you, how you're doomed for misery.

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And because you don't manage your mind, you end up creating that result for yourself, confirming your narrative. And so, part of creating confidence is taking action. And part of taking action is creating the confidence. They feed each other so beautifully and so well.

The next thing that I like to do when I'm struggling with my confidence is to look for evidence that it can be done. Because unfortunately, if we don't manage our own brains, we will look for all of the reasons why we can't do it, right? And as long as you think you can't do it, you won't even try.

Or, if you try and it doesn't work, maybe you fell, or you get rejected, and you allow your brain just to do what it does, you'll start to spiral, as the woman told me on Facebook, what was happening to her.

And so, look for people who have been rejected and they overcame it. Or, look for people that have created the result that you want, and let them inspire you. So many times I borrow beliefs from others for myself. I'll never forget someone telling me, "You do know it's easy to make money?" And I was like, "What?"

Because my story was how hard it was, how you had to kill yourself in order to make money. But, I wanted to borrow her belief. I wanted to wear it like a dress, to see how it felt. And I did. And over time, I realized, wow, money is just a game. Money is just energy. Money is just whatever you make it mean.

One of the quotes that you've probably heard me say over and over again on this podcast, and I tell my clients this all of the time, but it's a quote by Rumi that says, "Whatever you seek is seeking you." And so begin to train your brain to seek what you want to see, what you want to experience, because it's all available.

You can look for all of the reasons why it will never work out, all of the reasons why you're not capable, all of the reasons why you failed in the past, and therefore use that as a reason why you can't succeed in the future. And you can find that. But equally, you can look for all of the reasons why you can do it. You can look for evidence of other people who have done it before you, and use that to create your confidence.

Lastly, when I am facing a situation that is unfamiliar and a little scary, and I have no proof that I personally can do it, I love to ask myself a few questions. I like to envision the confident Tonya. The Tonya who believes in herself, who trusts

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herself, who knows that she can do whatever it is that she's wanting to do. And I like to ask myself, "What is she thinking right now? How does she think about the situation?"

If I'm facing an obstacle, that's especially the time that I love to ask myself this question. "What does confident Tonya think about this? What does she feel about it?" If she were already there, would she be stressed out and worried and spiraling into oblivion? Or would she be like, "That's no big deal. You're going to get through this."

And then finally, I love to ask myself, "What would Confident Tonya do right now." And I've talked about this in a previous podcast, where I talk about how five seconds can change your life, but it's in those moments of like five seconds, where we have a choice. We have a choice to be the insecure, anxious, worried version of ourselves. Or, we have a different choice, a much more effective choice, to step into the confident version of ourselves.

And here's the thing. Whatever you practice the most is what you're getting the best at. So if you continue to practice confidence, to show up confidently, to take confident action, over time, it will be your default to just be confident. And I've seen this in my own life. I feel like sometimes people can look at me and they just assume I've always been this way, because they're looking at my after story, and not my before story.

But when I think about old Tonya, the Tonya I used to be, she was so full of self-doubt and worry and fear, and she didn't feel good enough or smart enough or capable enough, or she didn't have enough. She was full of not enoughness. And now, to experience the me that I've created, where my default is to be confident.

Now, that doesn't mean I don't have self-doubt. I do, a lot, and I think that's just part of growing and creating, it's inevitable. I just don't let it stop me. I'm just like, all right, this is part of it, and I know my brain is creating it. And I just keep showing up. I keep taking action. I keep believing in my dreams and the impact that I want to have on the world. And that drives me, and that inspires me to keep practicing confidence.

So, to wrap up this part of the episode, I want to talk to all of the ladies and gentlemen, if you're a gentleman listening, who you've had a setback, and you're

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really struggling with your confidence right now. First, I want you to know that you're not alone. We all experienced this. It is part of the human experience. So I want you to feel like you're not alone, and that you're just experiencing being a human.

And, your confidence doesn't come from outside of you. It comes from within. And if you look into your mind right now, you'll understand why you're feeling a lack of confidence. Be willing to go there. Be willing to look inside your own brain and look at the thoughts that you are thinking over and over again, that's creating your lack of confidence.

Because that will give you a starting point of, "Well, if I'm thinking this, it's clearly not working. What are some other thoughts I can begin to practice in order to begin to rebuild my confidence?" And then, I want you to focus on setting yourself up for those little wins. Maybe you pick one thing that you're going to commit to every single day, and you've got to show up for it. You've got to prove to yourself that you can trust yourself.

Also, take action. Seriously, your confidence is not going to grow by you sitting at home focused on not being confident and not taking action. Confidence and action go hand in hand. So, what can you do right now? What actions can you take to build your self-confidence?

Also, look for evidence that it can be done. You may not have evidence in your own personal experience, but I can guarantee you that whatever you want to create, someone's already created it. They are proving to you that it can be done. Use them as inspiration. Use their stories as fuel for your own confidence.

And then finally, in those pivotal moments of your life, when you can either choose doubt and insecurity or confidence and faith, choose the latter. Practice it. Ask yourself, what would my most confident self think right now? How would she feel about the situation? And then finally, what would she do? Then, go out there and do it.

It is time for J'adore, the part of the show where I get to share something that I love with you. And for many of you, it will not be a surprise to know that I love accessories, handbags and shoes and statement jewelry pieces and scarves and hats and even hair pieces. Accessories have an ability to turn an ordinary outfit into a

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remarkable one. And so, when women asked me for style advice, I'm like, just have a basic wardrobe of clothes that fit you well that you enjoy, and then build out your accessories.

So, for this particular J'adore, I want to talk about handbags and purses. I don't know what the correct term is. My grandmother always called it her purse, and then I feel like the more chi-chi people call it handbag, so doesn't matter. But anyway, I have quite a large collection of handbags. Some of them are designer, but for the most part, I have been really good at finding inexpensive statement bags.

When I was in New York back in, I think it was September, I wanted to find a handbag to take with me to Paris that I could wear out in the evenings. And I came across this Jimmy Choo bag, it's called the California bag. It's a beautiful bag. It's got crystals, it's like gold, and it's like a wristlet. You put it on your wrist. It's sort of slouchy, but also very elegant. I can wear with jeans or I can wear it with a gown.

And I will tell you all, as much as I really enjoy this bag, I have some regrets because of what I paid for it. Now, I do not mind paying a lot of money for a handbag that I'll be using every day and it's like classic, it'll never go out of style. But for these more statement bags, I don't think it's necessary.

And so, here's where I'm going with this. My friend came across a bag that looks very similar to the bag that I have, that I wish I would have bought instead. In fact, I am going to be buying my daughter one as a gift. I hope she's not listening to this. But, I wanted to share it with you, because I think having an evening bag is so important and you don't have to spend a lot of money.

In fact, this bag is less than \$50. That's right, my friend, less than \$50 and it's so adorable. So, I had to share it with you because again, when I come across something that I really love, it's my duty. And so, if you're a woman that wants to build out your bag collection, or you know that you're missing that evening bag, go check it out. Go to frenchkisslife.com/wristlet. And I'll be sure to put the link in the show notes so you can go and check it out.

Okay, my friends. That's a wrap for this week. Next week is Christmas. My podcast will be coming out on Christmas Day. I know that you'll probably be with family and friends, but do make a point of listening to it at some point, because I'm

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going to be talking about wrapping up 2019, and how to set ourselves up for an incredible 2020.

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 www.FrenchKissLife.com/mindset – because after all, mindset is the new black.