



PODCAST TRANSCRIPT

EPISODE N° 162

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(Part One)  
My 2020 Word of the Year  
+ How to Choose Yours

FRENCH KISS LIFE

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## (Part One) My 2020 Word of the Year + How to Choose Yours

My friends. It is a new year, and do you know what that means? It's time for us all to choose our word of the year.

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.

Happy 2020, my friends. I don't know about you, but I am so excited for not only a new year, but a new decade. The other day I was thinking about the Tonya of 2010 and I'm a very different Tonya today, and I love the idea of us constantly growing and evolving and creating because if we're not mindful, we'll just keep repeating decade after decade in the same way.

I mean, do you all know those people that when you see them and you ask them, how's it going? How have you been? What's been happening in your life? Their answer is always the same, year after year after year.

And not that there's anything wrong with that, but I feel like people that listen to this podcast, you listen to it because you know deep down inside that the purpose of our lives are to grow and to evolve and to see what is possible in our lifetimes.

It's why I called it French Kiss Life. Like really just embracing life and seeing what you are capable of. I think that is the most beautiful gift that you can give to yourself, to your family, to your friends and to life itself.

I will tell you 2019 was my best year yet and it wasn't that I didn't have some challenges because I had plenty of them, but when I really take a step back and I look at what I created in 2019, and more importantly who I became in 2019, it blows my mind. I'm like, what?

I remember the years when I would look back on my year and had not reached any of my goals and had not changed at all. And that is very discouraging for women like us who want to grow, who want to reach our goals, who want to see what's possible.

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And if you can relate, you probably know, you start to ask yourself questions like, what's wrong with me? Like why can't I get it together? Why is everybody else out there creating results in their lives and I just feel stuck?

I remember asking myself the question, what is wrong with me? And the truth is there was nothing wrong with me, just like there is nothing wrong with you. The issue is that no one ever taught us how to go about change in a fun and healthy and creative way. So it's not that we don't want to change, it's not that we don't have the ability to change, it's just that we don't know how.

And I will tell you that when I learned the process of creating the outcomes that I wanted in my life, it was a game changer. And do you all know that after I've struggled with something for a long time and I finally figure it out, I have to share it. I have to teach it.

So when I was in Paris not too long ago, I was walking down the street and I stumbled upon an atelier, which is a workshop or a studio for artists. And I got this idea. I was like, wouldn't it be cool to have an atelier just for dreams, where I teach women the process that I've been using for a while now to constantly help me create the results that I want in my life.

And so last year, for the very first time, I opened the doors to the Dream Atelier where women bring their ideas to life 30 days at a time, and it was the most fun. And what I loved about it the most was seeing women finally get it and for them to see what they are capable of when they have the right tools.

I had one woman, Margaret from the UK, shout out Margaret, but after the Dream Atelier, she said, I accomplished more in 30 days than I did the entire year before.

We had women finally start the YouTube channel that they had been dreaming of starting. We had women start their businesses finally. We had women make an extra \$5,000 in one month. We had women who were losing weight. We had women who were improving their marriages. It was like so fun to see again what can happen when you decide, when you create the confidence and you have the courage to make your dreams a reality.

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And so back by popular demand because throughout the year, women who went through it in January, they were asking, when can we do this again? They're already excited to take this framework and take it to the next level.

And so I'm so excited to kick off 2020 with the Dream Atelier. Currently I am only running this program one time a year and it's such a powerful framework that you can use again and again and again throughout the year. In fact, the way I have structured it is that you can use this month by month to really make 2020 your best year ever.

And I have to tell you all, the workbook that we mail to you for the Dream Atelier is gorgeous, and it's so powerful when you work through these exercises and get super clear. I'm going to lead you through how I do my own dream mapping, how I schedule things, how I create so much ease in my life, how I get over my obstacles. Because trust me, when you are creating your dreams, you're going to have lots of obstacles. It's going to happen.

But I walk you through all of that and help you get into the right energy and into the right mindset so that you can be so proud of yourself. Because to me, that is the best feeling ever.

And hey, listen, when you join by today, so today is January the first on a Wednesday. So if you're listening to this on a Wednesday when this podcast comes out, you can take advantage of a special offer that's going to be ending tonight.

So if you want to step into the atelier with an incredible group of women who are committed to making this their best year ever, head over to [TheDreamAtelier.com](https://TheDreamAtelier.com) so that's [TheDreamAtelier.com](https://TheDreamAtelier.com). Did I spell that right? I hope so.  
[TheDreamAtelier.com](https://TheDreamAtelier.com).

It is time for a community spotlight. This is the part of the show where I get to highlight one of you who has benefited from the French Kiss lifestyle and today's spotlight is on Liz Moore. She left me a five-star review on iTunes that says A Helping Hand.

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“In this chaotic world of to do list expectations of yourself and others, the guilt we place on ourselves, the confusion and drama, Tonya Leigh and her wonderful programs and podcasts offer a light at the end of the tunnel.

I happened upon Tonya's website, blogs and podcasts several years ago and I have been growing along with her. She infuses femininity, grace, levelheaded sense, fun, joy, vulnerability and luxury all wrapped into one with her beautiful podcast.

Her soothing voice offers the most awesome advice. I can't say enough about her and the work she puts out into the world. She has inspired me to become an even better version of myself. Thank you, Tonya, for helping me through life's challenges.”

Liz, hey can I call you Liz? Because I just did, but I just want to thank you so much for that beautiful, beautiful review and I'm truly excited for this community and 2020 because we are all growing together.

And I have clients sometimes who'll say to me, who've been with me for a long time, they remember the version of Tonya 10 years ago and it's so fun that we get to grow together and that we get to be a witness to each other's journey.

And so thank you again so much for that review and hey listen, if you enjoy this podcast, saunter on over to iTunes or Stitcher or wherever you may listen to this podcast and leave me a review. Thank you so much in advance.

Since it's the beginning of a new year, I love the idea of us as a community starting the year with intention, with clarity, with purpose. And for that reason, I am going to be doing a two-part series all around choosing your word of the year and this is part one where I'm going to give you some tools and some things to think about when it comes to choosing a word of the year.

Now, if you're new to this concept, I learned about this, gosh, probably 10 years ago from one of my very first mentors, Christine Caine.

She taught me about having a word of the year and the importance of it and I've been doing it ever since and it's really powerful for me to look back over the last decade and to really see how these words have shaped me, how they've helped me

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grow, how they've inspired me, how they've given me direction and momentum, which is the whole purpose of choosing a word of the year.

Another reason I fell in love with the whole word of the year process is that it is true, you get good at what you practice. So imagine practicing a feeling or a quality that you want to embody for an entire year. It would change your life.

You know, and if we bring this down to the law of attraction. The law of attraction states that you attract into your life whatever you focus on and feel strongly about. So as you practice embodying this word that you choose for yourself, you are going to begin to attract experiences and people and things that are a match for that quality.

And again, it also creates momentum. When you have clarity around who you want to be, you begin to move your life forward versus changing your mind every day or not being intentional. It can feel like life isn't changing at all, and it's simply because you are not being intentional with how you are showing up.

And the other thing that I love about having a word of the year is that it focuses on your being versus your doing and having. It really is that be/do/have model that makes creating your life so much easier. Because a lot of us think that, well, when I lose the weight, then I'll be confident, right? Or when I have more money then I'll feel abundant.

But when we are not living in the feeling state of what it is that we want, it makes it so much harder for that thing to come to us. And so the word of the year is all about your beingness that will again help you attract and create what it is that you want to do or what you want to have.

So in the last 10 years, I was going over all of my previous words of the year, and there was a year when I chose the word committed because I was very noncommittal, especially to my own goals. And having that word just really on a day to day basis reminded me, here's your intention. You need to commit and go all in.

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And so that year I really created momentum in my life because it was the battle between the old me and the new me. But I kept practicing the new me who was committed until I proved to myself, you are a woman who can commit.

Another year, I chose a really fun word. In fact, I talk about it in episode 58. Yeah, episode 58 so if you go to [Frenchkisslife.com/58](https://frenchkisslife.com/58), you can read all about the year that I chose the word Hermes as my word of the year. And that year was really about quality.

Another year I chose the word rising. Rising is actually my maiden name. And the previous year, it felt like I had had so many challenges and it was a point where I started to feel really stuck and I literally saw myself as the phoenix rising out of the ashes.

And so that word really helped me during those challenging moments, reminding me of like, hey listen, you have a say in this matter. You don't have to stay stuck. Be creative, ask yourself better questions, refuse to stay stuck. And so again, having that word really guided and shaped me that year.

Last year I chose the word CEO, chief executive officer. Someone else said it's chief elegance officer, which I love as well. But when I really thought about 2019 and what it was that I wanted to create, I knew deep down that learning to be a better CEO was going to serve me in such incredible ways.

And so really 2019 has been a year of me immersing myself into what does it take to be a great leader, not only in your company, but in your life. And so again, I feel like this past year I have just evolved into a stronger version of myself. I've evolved into a better leader. Do I have a lot more to learn? Absolutely. I'll still be learning about what it takes to be a great CEO probably for the rest of my life.

But again, having that focus and that clarity helped me make better decisions. Helped me to decide, what am I going to read today? What difficult decisions do I need to make? So again, having that focus was a game changer.

And so I want to help you figure out what your word of the year needs to be. And so I want to give you some tips in choosing your word of the year and then I'm going to give you some questions on how to really hone and choose that word.

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But when it comes to choosing your word of the year, I know it's the beginning of January and we already want to know it already. You're like, I should know my word right now, but I want to just invite you to slow down and do not rush this process. I want you to take it very seriously because this word again is going to shape you throughout the year. And so don't rush it. Don't rush this process.

I also want to encourage you to not do it in a state of stress because I've done that before. One year I chose a word that was a reaction to my life versus a word that was in the spirit of creating my life.

And so get into a place where you're relaxed, play some beautiful music. Really make this a sacred ritual where you take the time to ask the important questions and you're not doing it in a rushed state or in a stressed state.

I also want you to trust yourself because I know that we can get into the state of distrust of, is this the right word for me? I don't know. I'm confused. What if I pick the wrong one? And then we end up just spinning in confusion and end up not even picking a word because we're so afraid to pick the wrong word. You can't do this wrong, okay? so just trust yourself.

And then finally, don't worry about the how, and I see this so often. A woman will say to me like, this is my year of abundance, and then she'll suddenly go into, but how am I going to do that? How am I going to figure out how to create more wealth?

She gets caught up in the how versus focusing on just the embodiment of the word and trusting that the how will reveal itself. And so don't worry about the how right now. You don't have to worry about the how. You just need to worry about the what and the why.

So I'm going to invite you to actually grab a journal and a pen for this particular episode because I'm going to be asking you some questions and walking you through the process that I use in choosing my word of the year.

So step one is what I call the brainstorm and I want you to brainstorm your past year and maybe even your past decade. And I want you to ask yourself questions like, what are you tired of tolerating?



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And if you want to dig into this question even more, I encourage you to go back a few episodes to number 159 so if you go to [Frenchkisslife.com/159](https://frenchkisslife.com/159). There's an episode that I did called what are you available for?

And this is all around, what are you tired of tolerating? Because sometimes we don't know what we want, but a lot of us are very clear on what we don't want. And that's a great place to start. So ask yourself, what are you tired of tolerating? And just write it all down.

And then ask yourself, what do you want to experience more of this year? So maybe you want to experience more surprise. Maybe you want to experience more confidence. Maybe you want to experience more abundance or commitment or discipline or joy. There's so many things for you to experience and it may be a feeling that you want or it may be things outside of you that you want to experience. Don't judge it. Just allow yourself to dream, right? Write it all down.

And then I do encourage you, if there are things outside of you that you want to experience. For example, maybe you want to experience more travel, more money. With those things, I want you to drill it down to the feeling that you think those things will give you.

Because remember, the reason why we want anything is because of the feeling we think having that thing will give us. And so the more you can create that feeling in your life, the more you're going to be a magnet for it to come into your life. So have fun with this. What do you want to experience more of in 2020?

The next question I want you to think about is what quality would drastically change your life for the better? So words that come to mind for me. So last year my word was CEO, that was all about leadership. I knew that if I could cultivate better leadership skills, it was going to have a drastic change on not only my business but my life.

But other words are confidence, commitment, determination, discipline. Like if you think about the qualities that would drastically change your life, notice what comes up for you. Maybe it's love, maybe it's joy, maybe it's connection, but what quality would drastically change your life?

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Another question, and this is very similar to the one that I asked before about what do you want to experience more of, but how would you like this year to feel? Like really fast forward to the end of 2020 and if you could put one word on it, what would you want that word to be?

Another question to brainstorm is what do you want to become more of this year? You may at this point start to see very common themes, very common words. But again, I want to give you many questions to think about, to help you hone in on what your word of the year is going to be.

So what do you want to become more of this year? Maybe you want to become more confident, more loving, more joyful, more determined, more consistent, more persistent, right? So just ask yourself, what do you want to become more of this year?

Another great way to think about your word of the year is to think about the goals that you have for yourself this year. So maybe you have a goal of growing your business. Maybe you have a goal of hitting six figures. Maybe you have a goal of finding a new job. Maybe you have a goal of going back to school or maybe getting into the best shape ever, right?

So think about what your goals are for 2020 and then ask yourself, who do I need to be in order to reach those goals? So again, take the time to brainstorm all of these questions and just write down whatever comes up for you. Don't judge it. Don't get into the how am I going to make this happen? Just brainstorm all of the possibilities. So, that is step one.

Step two is what I call the edit. So imagine that all of these words that you've written down are in your closet and you're only allowed to keep three, which ones do you choose?

So some ways to think about this is when you're going through these words that you've written down during step one, the brainstorm. I want you to notice which ones excite you the most and you'll feel it in your body, right? You'll think, wow, that's exciting to think about becoming that or experiencing that.

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But I also want you to notice which ones scare you the most. And one thing that I've come to understand, and I don't know if you all can relate, but sometimes fear and excitement can feel very similar.

And the reason I want you to think about which ones scare you the most is that oftentimes the very thing that we need to embody more of is the very trait that we have a lot of fear around. Maybe we doubt that we can be that. Maybe we don't have the confidence yet that that is possible for us.

But what I have found is that all of that BS is because of your past, and I've said it many times on this podcast, but to create something you've never had, you're going to have to become someone you've never been. And that's some scary business.

But it's also where the most growth is going to happen. So just notice which of those qualities or words scare you the most.

Also think about which of the three would have the biggest impact on your life. And then finally, which one would grow you the most. And I want you to circle only three of the words out of your brainstorm. Okay, so that was step two, the edit where you choose three words.

Now is when it gets really difficult because step three is choosing the word. This is the most difficult step of the entire process because for many reasons we are hesitant to choose one word. We have the fear of missing out, FOMO, because we think that if we choose one word, what about all these other things that I want to be?

And so what this ends up doing is creating split energy. And what I tell clients when they're so hesitant to choose a direction, no matter what you choose, who you become in that process is going to impact all the areas of your life. But you've got to get all of your energy on board and all of your energy going in one direction.

I talk about this in episode 122 called The Elegance of Restraint. So if you go [Frenchkisslife.com/122](https://frenchkisslife.com/122), you can listen to that episode.

But it is powerful to choose. It is powerful to decide one direction because again, then you can get your thoughts, your feelings, and your actions behind that

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decision. But when you're afraid to choose, often what happens is you end up not choosing anything. Or if you choose 20 different things, then you've created that split energy where it feels like your life is going in 20 different directions. So that's one reason why it's so powerful to choose one word. You really do get the momentum going.

And the other reason is that it helps you to live deeply versus living on the surface. So imagine picking a word, let's just say abundance for your year and that becomes your focus, and that is what you practice embodying on a daily basis. That is what you use to shape your decisions throughout the year.

Imagine how your life would be one year from now versus if you chose five different words. You really do get good at what you practice, and if you choose just to practice one thing, it's just the act of practicing that thing and the commitment to it that is going to, again, spill over into every area of your life.

So I want you to take those three words and ask yourself which of these three words am I committed to embodying this year? And you need to understand there is a big difference between wanting a word and being committed to your word. I talk about this in episode 130 called The Joy of Commitment. So [Frenchkisslife.com/130](https://frenchkisslife.com/130).

But once you choose your word, you have to commit to it. There's a big difference between wanting something and committing to it. Wanting is easy. Commitment is hard. Commitment is no matter what, this is my word for the year and that means no dilly dallying, no doubting your word. No, well maybe, you know, two months and maybe I should change my word this year. No, decide on your word for the year and fully commit to it because that's when you're going to see the most incredible changes in your life.

So I just went through this process myself and I gave myself space. I wanted space for inspiration. I wanted space just to really reflect on my last year. I wanted space to not be in a hurry and my word of the year actually came to me. I did a lot of journaling about what I'm tired of tolerating, what I'm ready to let go of, what I want more of.

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And the first word that came to mind was fun. 2020 is going to be my year of fun because I love to have fun y'all. But this last year with a word like CEO, my focus was very different, but fun just wasn't feeling like it.

And again, I didn't rush the process. I trust that my word is going to come, and it did while I was watching one of my favorite holiday films called *The Last Holiday*. If you have not seen this film, you have to watch it because it's such a beautiful reminder of how precious life is.

So basically, Queen Latifa who plays Georgia Bird is given news that this is going to be her last holiday. She is dying. And it's that sudden moment when she realizes, oh my goodness, I haven't really lived my life. And so she goes on this extravagant holiday and while I was watching the film, I was feeling like I was in her body.

And as she looked around at the lavish hotel and she gave herself permission to wear beautiful clothes and she just really owned herself. All I could feel was amazement and I realized that is my word of the year.

I want to be amazed in 2020. I want to be amazed at what I'm capable of. I want to be amazed by my clients. I want to be amazed by the ordinary daily life that a lot of times we can take for granted. I just want this year to be a year where I am just amazed.

So when that word came to me, and this is a great tip for you as well. I went to the dictionary to look up, what does amazed really, really mean? And the definition is feeling or showing great surprise or wonder.

And then I love to look up the synonyms because sometimes you may find that there is a word that you like, but it's just not really hitting the right chord with you. Maybe look in the thesaurus at what the synonyms are and you will find your word.

So when I looked up the synonyms for amazed, there were words like astonished, awestruck, impressed, moved, blown away, electrified, to blow one's mind. And I was like, yes. Amazed is my word of the year and I am committed to it for 2020.

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So what is your word of the year? I would love for you to share it with me. You can go to Instagram, take a picture, tag me at Tonya Leigh and use the hashtag French Kiss Life, or share it with me on Facebook.

Because in next week's episode, I'm going to be sharing some of the community's words of the year and we're going to take it even deeper. I'm going to be sharing with you the practices that I use to embody my word of the year and to bring that word to life.

So share your word of the year with me and make sure you tune into next week's episode for part two of embodying your word of the year.

It is time for J'adore. This is the part of the show where I get to share something that I love with you. And one of the things that I'm always asking myself is how can I elevate the quality of my everyday life? I think about one of my favorite quotes by Elsie de Wolfe, where she says, "I'm going to make everything around me beautiful. That will be my life."

And every day we have an opportunity to make small changes that elevate the quality of our lives and make our lives more beautiful. And so recently I shared a picture on Instagram, in my Instagram stories of my journal and my pen, and I had so many women asking me, where did you get this pen? Because I could just pick up any old pen from Office Depot, but I love how I feel when I'm writing with this pen, when I look at this pen.

If you imagine just a really beautiful pen, the one I'm holding in my hand right now is rose gold with a big faux diamond on the top. That is the pen that I use. And when I look at it, it just reminds me of luxury and beauty and tending to the details of our everyday lives, which is part of French Kissing Life.

So if you want to see how I make my journaling practice a little more beautiful, head over to [Frenchkisslife.com/pens](https://frenchkisslife.com/pens).

Happy new year, everyone. I am intending for 2020 to be our best year yet. I'll see you in next week's episode.

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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](http://www.FrenchKissLife.com/mindset) – because after all, mindset is the new black.