



EPISODE NO. 380

5 Ways to Delight in Yourself

One of my favorite quotes by Anaïs Nin is this, "My mission, should I choose to accept it, is to find peace with exactly who and what I am. To take pride in my thoughts, my appearance, my talents, my flaws, and to stop the incessant worrying that I can't be loved as I am." To me, this is what it truly means to delight in yourself, and in today's episode, I'm sharing five ways to do just that, so let's dive in.

Welcome to the School of Self-Image, where personal development meets style. Here's your hostess, master life coach, Tonya Leigh.

Hello, my beautiful friends. I have had the most delightful day, so delightful, that I had to record a podcast about it. And I've spent the majority of my day all alone, and I have had a blast. And I've been thinking about the days like today because I have them a lot. I delight every single day, but today has been extremely delightful.

And when I have days like today, I love to spend some time, really dissecting why. In fact, I hosted a call for the School of Self-Image members recently on our Daily Five Journal, and I was sharing with them that a lot of times, we journal on our bad days,

but I love to journal on my great days, because I want to see where my mind space was. I want to see what I was doing so that on those bad days, I can go back and look, and I can see the difference so that I can create more of these delightful days. And so I spent about an hour before I recorded this, really thinking about, "Why has today been so delightful when I'm all alone?" It's like nothing special.

I've been working today, I'm not doing anything grandiose. It's just an ordinary day, but it's felt extraordinary, and so I want to share with you five ways that you can delight in yourself. To delight in something means to take great pleasure in or satisfaction in, and I want to explore how to take great pleasure in and be satisfied with you, because at the end of the day, we are with ourselves every single second of every single day, and I always say that, "This relationship that you have with yourself is the most important one, and yet, how much time do you spend nurturing it? How much time do you spend getting to know yourself, what you love, what you don't love, why you feel the way you do, why you're making the choices that you're making?" A lot of times, we're just living like robots.

We're not even taking time to get to know ourselves, and then we feel so unfulfilled. We feel so out of control. We feel so, just sometimes miserable, and I think it's a symptom of not taking the time to really nurture the relationship that you have with yourself. So often, we put everybody else's needs ahead of our own. We run around, taking care of our families, our jobs, and our homes, and we just expect ourselves to keep going without much thought about what lights us up, and what brings us delight. Well, today, I want to change that and give you five simple and fun ways to start delighting in yourself every single day.

But before we dive into those five ways, I want to talk about the result of doing this. When we learn to delight in ourselves, we stop relying so much on external validation. We stop feeling the need to control everyone and everybody to help us create a feeling for ourselves. We begin to take back control of our inner worlds, where we create our own joy, we create our own delight, and then everybody around us just gets to experience it. I even think about Fonz.



He gets to be the witness to my delight every single day, and sometimes he's like a prop. So for example, the other night we had music playing, and I just got up and started dancing. I was having the time of my life. In fact, I think I've put it in behind the scenes for this month, and I eventually just went and grabbed him, because I wanted him to be a part of my delight. Now, thankfully, he jumped up and decided to go along, but even if he didn't, I don't care.

I don't need him to jump up and dance with me, because I'm delighting in my own company. I'm delighting in my own life, I'm delighting in my own self, and I want that for all of us because it's going to have a positive impact on our families, it's going to have a positive impact in our communities, it's going to have a positive impact in our careers and our businesses because a joyful woman is a magnet for her desires. Energy is always looking for an equal match. Delighting is an energy. It is a vibration that you put out into the world, and so the saying is true, "Like attracts like."

Have you ever noticed on those days where you're feeling down, where you're feeling low energy, where you're feeling sad when you're feeling frustrated? It seems like that's all you can see and experience. You're just attracting more of the same, but as you begin to elevate your energy, you're going to start to attract new things. You're going to feel better, you're going to show up more powerfully, more excited, more passionately, and you will be met at that level, which is why this is so important. I think delighting in ourselves is one of the most important aspects of reaching our goals.

I talk about our future selves a lot, and when I think about my future self, she is delighting in herself and in her life and other people, and so I need to start embodying her now, and yet, so often, we delay it. We're like, "Oh, I'll delight in myself when my business is better. I'll delight myself when my kids are grown. I'll delight myself when I have more money. I'll delight in myself when I lose weight," and so you're keeping yourself out of energetic alignment with the thing that you want.

So let's talk about way number one, to delight in yourself, and that is to treat yourself. Yes, treat yourself. Seriously, when was the last time you did something just for you, just because you wanted to, just because it's something you enjoy? For example, going to get a massage, going to have your favorite meal, buying yourself something special, performing a small act of self-appreciation, or taking care of yourself in a way that helps you feel good physically, mentally, and emotionally. Kristen Butler says, "Self-care is a deliberate choice to gift yourself with people, places, things, events, and opportunities that recharge your personal battery."

Now, I know a lot of you struggle with this because you feel a lot of guilt around it. "Who am I to take care of myself? Everybody else needs me. It's selfish to take care of myself." Let me tell you something. I think it's selfish for you not to, and here's why. When you don't take care of yourself, when you don't treat yourself, you are depleting your battery, and you cannot show up and be the best mother, the best worker, the best sister, the best friend when you are running low on energy. I think one of the best gifts that I can give my family is for me to treat myself and take care of myself. And when I started to think of it in that way, I started to make it a priority. I'm like, "You know what? If I want to be an amazing mother to Sarah, first of all, I need to model to her how I want her to treat herself."

So that's number one because the saying is true, kids don't do what you tell them to do, they do what they see. And so I wanted to be an example to her of like, "This is how you can be as a mother, as a woman," and I never want her to deny her own needs. I never want her to run herself ragged, taking care of everybody else and not herself, so I needed to be the example for her, to be like, "You know what? Mom takes trips. Mom goes on girls' weekends. Mom goes and gets a massage."

"Mom eats well. Mom exercises." Why? Because it allows me to be a better mother for you, and that's the second reason. So number one, they model what you do, and the second reason is that the better you feel, the better you can show up for the people around you.

So way number one, to delight in yourself is to treat yourself well. Way number two, to delight in yourself is to make time for what you love, and that requires that you cultivate a relationship with yourself so that you understand what you love, what lights you up, what you enjoy, what you truly love doing, and that is not going to include scrolling social media for hours. That may seem like something you enjoy in the moment, but a lot of times, the things that we're doing and calling pleasure is just an escape from our lives. We're escaping from our lives because we don't have lives that we truly delight in. It doesn't mean binging on TV, or binging on food.

That is not true pleasure. That is immediate gratification with a long-term cost. I'm talking about what you truly love doing, that when you do, it has a positive impact on your life. What are your hobbies? What brings you joy? Do you love gardening, painting, hiking, and reading novels? Do you have any creative outlets, or any passion projects? What can you do, where you can spend time doing things that make your soul truly happy? For me, I've been going to the gym, and this is part of treating myself well, but I really do enjoy it. I went through a period where I didn't, and so I was just doing it to treat myself well, and now, I've gotten into this habit of it, and I'm like, "Oh my gosh, I actually look forward to this."

It's fun for me now because I work through a lot of the kinks, I know what I'm doing now, I'm getting stronger, and so that feels good. I delight in playing pickleball. I laugh so hard, I've met the most incredible people playing it. It's truly enjoyable for me. And today, I was thinking about why my day has felt so delightful.

I spent about an hour reading this morning. And if you listen to a previous podcast, I talked about the habits that I want to recultivate this year, and one of them is reading, because I truly enjoy it. It is delightful for me. And so this morning, after I got back from the gym, I spent an hour just reading, and it was so delightful. Now, you may not love reading, playing pickleball, or going to the gym.

This is about you figuring out what you enjoy, what you delight in, and making it a priority, even if it's just 15 minutes a day, giving yourself the experience and delighting

in something that truly makes you come alive. Way number three, to delight in yourself is to be your own best friend. This one is huge, and it's a game-changer, you all, because a lot of the reason why some of you are not feeling good about yourself, maybe you're feeling very unfulfilled, you're feeling very frustrated, maybe sad, is because you spend a majority of your time beating yourself up, being your own worst enemy versus your own best friend. Imagine your best friend in the whole world. How do you treat them?

How do they treat you? I imagine you probably can't wait to see them. You have amazing conversations for hours. You make each other laugh hysterically. Why not be that for yourself? There's a great quote by writer, Mindy Hill, where she says, "You are the longest commitment you will ever have in your life. Make the choice to lovingly commit to yourself." Think about that. "Make the choice to lovingly commit to yourself." Being your own best friend is a choice.

It is a decision and a practice, and it all starts with how you speak to yourself. You cannot delight in yourself if you are constantly berating yourself, hating on yourself. That makes you want to escape yourself. Can you imagine showing up to have lunch with your best friend, and she's just constantly telling you what a loser you are, how you're not good enough, how you're such a failure, how you're behind, how you don't have what it takes, how you screw everything up? She's constantly talking about your past failures and mistakes.

I would hope that you would not be friends with this person. I hope that you would leave the table and say, "Never again," and yet, that's what a lot of you do to yourself. I used to do that to myself. No wonder I wanted to eat when I wasn't hungry. No wonder I didn't go after goals. No wonder I tried to escape my life. I was trying to escape myself, but the saying is true, "Wherever you go, there you are." You cannot escape yourself. You can try, and a lot of people do, but at the end of the day, there you still are. So instead of escaping yourself and trying to outrun yourself and think, "Oh, I'll be happy when ..."

"I'll be happy with myself when I'm perfect, when I lose weight, when I get my business going, when I find the love of my life," why not change that now and decide, "You know what? I'm going to learn to be happy with me now," because then, all of those other things that you want, it's going to be so much easier to attract it, because again, like attracts like. You need to be an energy with that thing that you want, and plus, it's just so much fun. Like today, a big part of why I've been so delighted is because of the self-talk in my own head. "How do you treat yourself when you fail? How do you treat yourself when you make a mistake?"

It's easy to like yourself and delight in yourself when you are being "Perfect," but that's not life. That's not who we are. We're very imperfect beings, and if your self-love is dependent on you being perfect, guess what? You've set yourself up for a no-win game. You cannot be perfect enough for that love. It's so crazy how our own love is so conditional, but when you choose to be your best friend ... Think about your best friend, when she comes to you, and she's like, "You know what? I've made a big mistake." Do you spend the next hour beating herself, beating her up, or do you spend the next hour like holding space for her, trying to understand, loving her, giving her words of encouragement? This one thing, if you all would practice it would completely change your life.

What if you just decided you're never going to beat yourself up again? Instead, you're going to be your own best friend, your greatest cheerleader. Then, you're not so afraid of making mistakes because, "You know, I've got me. I've got me. I'm going to pick myself up. I want to encourage myself."

You're going to start to go after things that you maybe you normally wouldn't go after because you're so hard on yourself. You're afraid of making a mistake because you know how hard you are on yourself when you make one, and so you avoid that whole process, but everything you want is going to require that you're willing to mess up, that you're willing to make mistakes, and if you know that you'll be gentle with yourself when that happens, then a lot of this fear is gone. So learning to be your own best friend is the best way to delight in yourself. And that leads me to the next one, way

number four, to delight in yourself is to really appreciate yourself. The definition of appreciation is a feeling or expression of admiration, approval, or gratitude.

Now, I want you to think about, "What is the opposite of appreciation?" It's depreciation, and that means a reduction in the value of an asset. Now, really think about that. A lot of you spend a lot of your time de-appreciating yourself. You spend a lot of time looking at and focusing on what you think you're not doing good enough, on your perceived flaws, on your mistakes, on limiting beliefs that you have about yourself, and as a result, you decrease your own value to yourself. What if, instead of spending all of that time and energy on depreciating yourself, you actively spent time adding to your own value simply by noticing, "What is so valuable about you? What do you love about yourself? What do you appreciate about yourself? What are your wins? What are your successes?"

Imagine how you would feel and how that would just allow you to delight in who you are. Now, I want you all to realize that this is a practice, and it may feel awkward at first, especially if you've spent a lot of time depreciating yourself, constantly focusing on all of the things that you don't like, all the things that you think you're not good at. In fact, oftentimes, when I'm coaching a woman, and she is actively depreciating herself, I will ask her. I'm like, "Tell me three things that you really love and appreciate about yourself," and she will struggle. And it's not because it's not there, she's just not used to looking for it.

But you get good at what you practice, and the more you practice, really appreciating yourself and feeling the delight of that, it will become easier. So I encourage each of you to make a regular practice of noticing three things each day that you appreciate about yourself. Write it down. Look at yourself in the mirror every morning, and tell yourself three things that you really love and appreciate about yourself. And the more you do it, the easier it will become.

Now, the final way to delight in yourself is to spend quality time alone. Do you have any alone time that you just get to spend with yourself, noticing what's going on in your

brain, spending time doing things that you love? I am all for taking yourself out on dates and thinking about the ideal date that your partner or your imagined soulmate that you would love for them to take you on. Maybe for you, it's to go hiking. Maybe it's to go to a fancy restaurant.

Maybe it's to go to an art exhibit. You don't have to wait for someone else to do this for you. You can begin to take yourself out on dates. And during this time, spend time really dreaming. Spend time thinking about what you want for your life. Spend time getting to know yourself, what you love, and what you don't love. Spend time appreciating yourself. And as you do this, you'll notice that your time alone becomes sweeter, it becomes richer, and you will find yourself delighting in it. Now, I know that so many of us have really full lives. We have maybe kids, we have jobs, we have careers, we have family, we may have a lot of obligations, and you may be thinking, "Tonya, I don't have an opportunity to have time alone."

Even if it's just 10 minutes a day, 15 minutes a day, that you carve out for you. This is why I love journaling. It's a time for me to be with myself, to get to know myself, and using that time to cultivate a deeper relationship with myself is so important. So start from where you are, and schedule this time alone. And if you can even, once a month, take yourself out on a date, just you and you to treat yourself well, to really appreciate yourself, to do something you love, these solo dates are a chance for you to do all of the things that I just shared with you.

You are worth that time. You are valuable enough to delight in yourself. And so there you have it, my friends, five fun ways to start delighting in yourself every day, every week, every month. And as you do, you will find that life just becomes more delightful. Have a beautiful week, and I will see you on the next episode. Cheers.

Before you go, let me ask you something, "Are you feeling stuck, like you're running in place but never really getting anywhere?" What I want you to know is that there's nothing wrong with you. You are not broken, but your approach probably is. If you're ready to stop making the same mistakes, engaging in the same behaviors, and discover

the key to unstoppable momentum, join me for my free masterclass, called Powerfully Ever After, where I reveal three hidden shifts that will crack open your potential and unlock your dream life. Stop settling for almost or someday.

This is your chance to create your Powerfully Ever After. You can go to schoolofselfimage.com/after, and join now. It's free, it's fast, and most importantly, it's fun. I'll see you in the class.