



EPISODE 02 // TRANSCRIPT

# WHY WILLPOWER DOESN'T WORK

*(and what does)*

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Willpower. Is it really the magic bullet to success? Or could it be the very thing that's holding you back? Join me as I unpack the mystery of willpower inside this episode of The Self-Creation School podcast.

Welcome to The Self-Creation School podcast, for women who are ready to ditch mediocrity, step up and get more of what they want, and finally say YES! to a life that sets their soul on fire. I'm your host Leanne Leticia, Self-Creation Coach, founder of The Self-Creation School AND Queen of YES!. If you're ready to play life by your own personal rule book, and give yourself permission to say YES! to yourself and your wildest dreams, this podcast is the place for you.

Hello and welcome to the second episode in this special launch series of The Self-Creation School podcast. A warm welcome to you if this is your first time listening in and if you're joining me again, welcome back. This is the space where we dive deep into the journey of becoming a Self-Created Woman. I'm

your host, Leanne Letica, and the founder of The Self-Creation School, a place where I help women step up and create the life they crave, one YES! at a time.

If you know you're meant for more, but you've been feeling stuck, or perhaps a little overwhelmed, or maybe even just plain lost (and listen, no judgement, I've been right there), I want you to know you're in the right place. My mission here in this podcast is to help you tap into your inherent power and your true potential to create a life that you can't wait to wake up to.

So if this resonates with you, be sure to hit the subscribe button so you don't miss a single episode.

In this episode, I'm addressing an obstacle that's held back countless women – the reliance on willpower alone to make transformative life changes. We've all heard that saying, right? Where there's a will, there's a way. But what if I told you that this age-old saying doesn't hold the entire truth.

In this episode today, we'll look at why willpower so often falls short, why it's not the magic key to success we've all been led to believe. And more importantly, I'll share with you a modern day approach that doesn't rely on willpower alone. One that's focused on harnessing the power of your identity to bring about real lasting change.

So if you're ready to stop spinning your wheels and start making progress, sit back, tune in, and let's dive into the truth about why willpower doesn't work.

First up, when I talk about willpower, what exactly am I referring to? Well, at its core, willpower is the ability to resist short term temptations in order to meet long term goals.

It's that inner strength that enables you to stay on the course you've set for yourself, resisting distractions, avoiding procrastination, and powering through when the going gets tough. It's basically your internal discipline machine.

Now the common narrative around willpower suggests that it's the key to success, doesn't it? It's that grit your teeth and get through it mindset that we're often encouraged to adopt. How many times have we been told that if we just toughen up and persevere, we can achieve anything we put our minds to? It's that "just do it" philosophy sold by sports companies, and you know who I mean, and a lot of motivational speakers alike. And look indeed, it is an important component in our toolbox for success and change, but it's not the master key.

Let me tell you a story.

One of my clients, we'll call her Lisa, Lisa was an accomplished professional with a stable job and from the outside looking in, a seemingly perfect life. But Lisa was so incredibly unhappy. She longed for change. She longed to transition into a career that would excite her, make her feel like her life had purpose.

So she decided to simply push herself hard. She planned to spend her weeknights learning new skills and sacrifice her weekends to build her dream career. But despite her best efforts, Lisa kept falling back into her old routines and soon, she found herself falling further and further behind in the courses that she had signed up for that were meant to help her get ahead.

Then after a while she would double down for a week or so until those old habits just crept back in again. And every time she tried to use sheer willpower to make a change in her nightly and her weekend routines, she ended up feeling more frustrated, more exhausted, and further away from her goals. And she told me she felt like she was trying to swim upstream, like constantly battling against the current. And she wondered why what she wanted was just so hard.

And her story is a really common one. And maybe it resonates with you too. Maybe you've tried using willpower alone to make changes in your own life and

found yourself feeling stuck and overwhelmed and unsuccessful. You try a new diet and you cave in four days later. You join the gym and the daily visits soon start thinning out. You schedule time in your calendar to do the thing, only to not show up and do it. A little time goes by and the reasons you wanted that change in the first place fire up in your belly again, so you give it another shot. But that doesn't last long either.

It's a frustrating cycle, isn't it? And the problem in all of these situations is, we rely on willpower to see us through, and willpower lets us down. It runs out, it doesn't always show up when we need it the most.

And listen, here's the thing, research has found that willpower isn't as boundless as we'd like to believe. Think of it like a battery that gets drained over the course of the day with every decision you make, big or small. And this concept is actually known as Decision Fatigue, and it suggests that your willpower diminishes with each choice you make, making it harder to exercise self-control as the day goes on. So, in other words, willpower is a limited resource.

And this was actually beautifully demonstrated by Roy Baumeister, who is a well known psychologist in the field of self-control and willpower.

He conducted a study where participants were put into a room with freshly baked cookies and radishes. Now, one group could only eat the radishes, while the other group was allowed to indulge in the cookies. And I know which group I would have preferred to be in. Now, afterwards, they were given puzzles to solve, and the radish eaters, who had been exercising their willpower, gave up on the puzzles much sooner than the cookie eaters. Their willpower was depleted from resisting the cookies, leaving them with far less willpower to apply to solving the puzzles.

And so the lesson is that constantly relying on willpower can actually be exhausting and counterproductive. Just pushing and pushing against the

natural currents of your desires and inclination is honestly, a recipe for burnout and stress. And when you're stressed and when you're burnt out, you become less creative, less focused, and less able to problem solve. So you become less able to take action towards your goals and the changes that you desire to see for yourself.

So while willpower can be useful in short, specific bursts, it's not a sustainable strategy for long term profound change. It's like running on a treadmill – you might be moving, but you're not really going anywhere.

So that's pretty much all of the shortcomings of willpower in a nutshell. Let's take a look at the alternative. And this brings me to the concept of identity-based habits.

In essence, identity based habits are all about becoming the type of person who can achieve the goals you have set. So instead of relying on willpower, you change your identity, which in turn changes your actions.

For instance, if you want to become more physically fit, let's say, rather than pushing yourself to go to the gym through sheer willpower (and I don't know about you, but that hasn't exactly worked out for me so well in the past), so instead of pushing yourself to go to the gym through sheer willpower, you start to perceive yourself as someone who enjoys and values physical activity, both in and out of the gym.

And this concept is more effective because your identity, how you perceive yourself, strongly influences your beliefs, and your beliefs subsequently strongly influence your actions. If you believe yourself to be a certain type of person, you'll naturally act in ways that align with that perception. On the other hand, if you try and act in a way that clashes with your self-perception, you basically end up feeling like an imposter, and that's where willpower is not really up to the job, and it starts to crumble.

Let me give you another example to demonstrate what I mean.

Imagine you are trying to quit smoking. Now, if you identify as a smoker who is trying to quit, every cigarette not smoked is a test of your willpower. It's a fight against your self-perception. But if you start to see yourself as a non-smoker, the struggle lessens. You're not denying yourself a cigarette, you're simply acting in accordance with your new identity, the identity of someone who doesn't smoke.

I actually have a friend who always thought of herself as a poor public speaker, not just in large scale settings like in her job, but also in intimate group settings amongst friends. She would actually get super nervous, start stumbling over her words, and she really dreaded having to speak. It seemed crazy to me because one-to-one, she was an extremely articulate and intelligent woman.

So we did some work together on this and when she started seeing herself as a confident communicator, she stopped trying to force herself to be good at public speaking and she simply let herself act inline with her new identity. Honestly, the transformation was not just profound but it was also sustainable for her. So, you can change your actions more effectively and sustainably by changing your self-perception, your identity, rather than relying on willpower alone.

So, with that said, how can you transition from relying on willpower to embracing an identity-based approach. Well, here are some practical steps to help you make this shift.

Number one, start by identifying your limiting beliefs. Those stories you tell yourself about yourself that aren't serving you.

Take a listen in on your internal narratives. What beliefs do you hold about yourself that could be limiting your potential? Do you see yourself as someone who's bad at time management or someone who can't stick to a diet?

Remember these are stories that you are choosing to tell yourself and these stories can be changed.

And there's actually a really great tool on my website that helps you do exactly that. So you can access that by taking my FREE QUIZ that helps you identify what's stopping you saying YES! to the life you want – and which is a really great thing to find out by the way – and once you've taken the quiz, I share with you how to shift what's standing in your way. Now, you can use that exact process to help you rewrite any limiting story. I'll place a link to the quiz in the show notes for you, so make sure to check that out after this episode.

So that's step number one, identify your limiting stories and rewrite them.

Number two is to create a new empowering identity.

Once you've identified your limiting beliefs and you've rewritten them to empowering stories, it's time to create your new identity. And here, don't just focus on what you want to do or achieve. You want to take this deeper and consider who you want to BE. If you want to be more active so you can lose weight, don't just tell yourself to exercise more. Start seeing yourself as someone who loves and prioritizes physical activity in your daily life.

Okay, so here's step number three. Take small, consistent actions aligned with your new identity.

Now that you have your new identity in mind, you want to start to act like this version of you. But don't aim for a massive overhaul all at once. Instead, take small, consistent steps that align with your new identity. So for example, if you are a woman who prioritizes physical activity, you might start taking the stairs instead of the lift anytime you get the opportunity. It's these kinds of small actions done consistently over time that can lead to a significant change and truly cement your new identity in place.

Listen, shifting from willpower to an identity-based approach can be truly liberating, it's highly empowering and surprisingly effective. It will help you navigate change much more smoothly and create more sustainable transformation in your life.

But like any journey of self-discovery and growth, it does come with its challenges. You will probably encounter resistance from your old habits and your old beliefs. You might feel discomfort in stepping out of your comfort zone and embracing a new identity. I want you to know these are all normal parts of this process. Remember, growth happens outside of your comfort zone and with each small step that you take, you're moving closer to becoming the woman who naturally does the things you want to do.

By anchoring your habits to your identity, you no longer rely on willpower to motivate you. Instead, you become the type of person you believe that you are and your actions will naturally follow suit.

So with all of that said, that brings me to the end of this episode. If you're curious about going deeper into this concept and you want to learn more about how you can create lasting transformation in your life, I invite you to head over to my website <https://selfcreationschool.com>. You'll find lots of resources to help guide you on your Self-Creation journey right there.

Of course, if you enjoyed this episode, don't forget to subscribe to the podcast to ensure future episodes are cued and ready for listening right inside your library.

To all of my beautiful listeners out there, remember to dream big, step boldly into who you want to BE and create the life you crave. I'll see you in the next episode.

Until then, be the woman who says YES!



Hey, have you joined my FREE mini-workshop the Week of YES!?! This powerful five-day workshop will help you take your foot off the brake and start saying YES! to more of the life you crave. Isn't it time you created a life you're beyond excited to wake up to? It all begins with saying YES!. Head over to <https://selfcreationschool.com/weekofyes> and get started on your YES! story today. I'll see you there.