



EPISODE 08 // TRANSCRIPT

SHATTERING THE SHOULD

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Let me paint a picture for you. Imagine living each day, not by a script that's been handed to you by society, your friends, or even your well-intentioned family members, but by a narrative you've lovingly written for yourself. A narrative that resonates deeply within you, that captures your boldest dreams, explores your untapped potential, and leads you on your own unique path to the love, peace, and happiness you seek.

It sounds liberating, doesn't it? Well, stick around because today I'm sharing how you can break free from the script you should play out and start turning the pages of the one you could.

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 Letica, 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, hello and a warm welcome to everyone listening in today. I'm Leanne Leticia and this is The Self-Creation School podcast where we're all about saying YES! to a life we can't wait to live every single day.

Today I'm talking about shattering the shoulds, breaking free from the confines of who you should be and the life you should live, and allowing yourself to become who you could be, so that you can explore all of the amazing possibilities of the life you could live.

This is a topic I was personally very stuck on, and I'm excited to help you peel back the layers of your shoulds and expose those often- invisible chains that your shoulds place around your thoughts, your actions, and your dreams.

So whether you're sipping on your morning coffee, out for a jog, or just taking a moment for yourself, get ready to challenge the norms, question the "given" you've resigned yourself to today, and rewrite the script of just what your life could be. Because my friend, it's time to cast aside your shoulds and step into your shining light of coulds.

So let's dive in. And I want to begin this conversation by sharing something I've been thinking a whole lot about lately.

Isn't it fascinating how from a young age, we're handed a script? A script filled with shoulds that dictate how we should act, what we should pursue, and even who we should be. Shoulds that come from all around us, our families, our schools, our friends, the media, and society as a whole. And these shoulds whisper constantly in our ears telling us the roles we're expected to play to be accepted, to be successful, to be loved, and to be worthy.

Think about the shoulds in your own life. Perhaps it's the career you were told would be stable and respectable. Or the lifestyle that everyone around you seems to be living and endorsing as the right way to live. Maybe it's the milestones you feel pressured to achieve by a certain age like marriage or having children because, well, isn't that what everyone does?

The truth is, these shoulds are like chains. Chains that keep you from exploring who you truly are and what you genuinely desire. Chains that constrain and shape your self-concept and your actions, and very often lead you down a path that doesn't align with your innermost aspirations and dreams. And the craziest part is, you might not even realize this is happening. You might be living a life that looks great on paper, but feels out of sync, and you just can't put your finger on why.

For me, that's exactly what happened. I actually bucked the shoulds for a lot of my teenage years, but then shelved my dreams in my early 20s because at the time, I was quite honestly making a real mess of things in my life. So, I got back on the bandwagon of shoulds.

For the next 20 years, I ticked all the boxes of shoulds, and created a life that looked pretty impressive to anyone looking from the outside in. Listen, it was an extraordinary life, but it was still the life I told myself that I should live. And turns out, being who I told myself I should be in that life, made me feel pretty ordinary. That outwardly impressive life just didn't feel at all rich to me on the inside. Do you know what I mean?

And for the longest time I couldn't place my finger on why and I told myself I shouldn't look too hard because "I should be grateful for the life I have", "I shouldn't want more", "I should be happy", and "I shouldn't feel the way I do". And my list of shoulds and should nots was a mile long. Maybe you have a similar list.

I've seen this same story time and time again with the incredible women I work with. Brilliant, passionate women who feel trapped in a life of shoulds. Women who have achieved success by society standards and their family standards but sit across from me sharing their sense of unfulfillment. They're longing for something more, something that excites them to wake up each day instead of waking up dreading how they'll make it through the day.

And I've seen it with the women for whom shoulds have acted as barriers, not just to fulfillment, but to success itself. Women whose dreams and ambitions have been stifled regardless of their talent, drive, or passion, because the weight of their shoulds have held them back. Women who've been told they should opt for the safer path. They shouldn't aim too high to avoid disappointment. Or they should prioritize others needs and expectations over their own aspirations.

Listen, these kind of shoulds can be absolutely paralyzing and lead to a life where taking risks, chasing dreams, and stepping outside the comfort zone feels not just daunting, but downright impossible. And for the women who experience this, the shoulds haven't just been a source of dissatisfaction, they've been a significant roadblock to discovering and pursuing their true potential.

So, here's the thing. We're not alone in this struggle with our shoulds. It's a universal struggle, and it affects almost every one of us at some stage, in some way.

But once you recognize your shoulds for what they are, you can begin to challenge them. To question how they dictate your life. To question the path you are following, not by your own choosing, but by the external expectations and self-imposed limitations that are showing up in your life as shoulds. And then to think about, what could you achieve if you weren't bound by these shoulds? What life could you lead if you chose your path based on your desires, your dream, and your own definition of success?

This is what living a life of could means. It's about giving yourself permission to pursue what truly matters to you, to live a life that lights you up from the inside out, and to redefine your SELF and success in a way that resonates with who you truly want to be in this life of yours.

So ask yourself, what should have been guiding your life? And more importantly, are they truly what you want for yourself, or are they simply the expectations of others that you've adopted as your own?

And I want you to consider the cost of conforming to these shoulds, because living a life defined by shoulds doesn't just limit your potential, it can place a pretty heavy toll on your emotional and psychological well-being, and yes sometimes, even your physical health. The cost of conforming to your shoulds can be pretty steep, and it's a price that many of us pay without even realising it until we're a long way down the path.

You see, when we conform to societal scripts, and suppress our true desires and who we authentically are, we create a disconnect within ourselves. It's like wearing a mask every day that hides who we really are. And over time, this misalignment between who we are on the inside, and the role we play on the outside, can lead to deep feelings of dissatisfaction and unfulfillment. It can feel like living in a beautifully decorated house that just doesn't feel like home.

You might experience this like I did, as a constant nagging sense that something is off, without being able to pinpoint exactly what that is. It might show up as envy towards others who seem to be living their best lives, not because you want their life, but because you long for the freedom to live your life freely and authentically as well. And it can lead to things like stress, burnout, anxiety, and even depression, because the effort to maintain this facade drains your mental and emotional energy.

Physically, the stress of living a life that doesn't align with your true SELF can show up in numerous ways – from those sleepless nights spent wrestling with

your regrets and questioning your what ifs, to that constant state of tension and fatigue from carrying the weight of your unmet desires and your unfilled dreams. They get heavier with time, my friend.

And let's talk about the impact on your relationships. How many times have you said yes when you wanted to say no? How often have you hidden your true feelings to keep the peace or to meet someone else's expectations at the expense of your own? And this can lead you to resentment, to a feeling of isolation, and the sense that you're not truly known or seen, or even valued by those around you.

All of these costs add up and the result is a life that feels more like a compromise than a choice. It's a life where the joy of your potential, the deep satisfaction that comes from pursuing your passion, and the richness of living authentically, is sacrificed to conforming to a rulebook that just isn't your own.

But there is a silver lining, because recognizing these costs can be the thing that helps you step towards change. It can be the wakeup call that many of us need to start questioning the shoulds that have dictated our lives. Sometimes we need that moment of realization that the price of our shoulds is just too high and that our happiness, health, and authenticity are worth so much more.

So let's talk about how to start peeling back your layers of shoulds. And it starts with unmasking your SELF. Peeling back those layers of imposed identity, the ones that society, our families, and even we ourselves have draped over the true essence of who we are. Because when you've been living a life built on shoulds, your identity, who you believe your SELF to be, is the culmination of all your shoulds put together.

Unmasking your SELF is about having an open and honest conversation with your SELF, about who you really are, what you really want, and what you really want to believe is possible for you, free from the constraints of shoulds. And journaling is a fantastic tool to use for this. If you've been around me for any

length of time, you'll know I'm a huge advocate for journaling because it's an easily accessible tool that allows you to externalize your thoughts, your feelings, and your desires. To see them laid out before you in black and white. And this act of writing can be incredibly clarifying, because it helps you to sift through the noise of external expectations and your self-imposed limitations and reconnect with your inner voice.

But unmasking yourself does go beyond simply having this conversation. It's also about challenging the limiting beliefs and stories built on your shoulds that have held you back. These are the stories you tell yourself about who you should be, and what you should be capable of, that are often based on outdated or external information. So this might be beliefs like, "I'm not good enough", "I can't change my career at this age", "I should be happy with what I have", "it's not right for me to want that", or "it's possible for others but not for me", and so on, and so on, and so on.

Challenging these beliefs, these stories, requires a willingness to question their validity and to consider alternative story possibilities. It's about pushing the shoulds to one side and asking yourself, is this really true? And what evidence do I have to support this belief? And what evidence do I have to squash this belief? This process can reveal that many of your limiting beliefs are not in fact truths, but simply perceptions shaped by your experiences and the shoulds you've been living by.

And as you peel back these layers and challenge these stories, you'll begin to uncover your authentic SELF, the you that's been waiting beneath all of your shoulds. You'll rediscover passions you've neglected, desires you've suppressed, and strengths you've overlooked. And these revelations are not just freeing, they are also highly empowering. So, unmasking your SELF is a crucial step towards creating a life that's not defined by shoulds, but driven by your core desires and aspirations. A life that you live by your own will. personal rule book.

Now remember that script for your life you lovingly write for yourself? The one that resonates deeply within you, that captures your boldest dreams, explores your untapped potential, and leads you on your own unique path to the love, peace, and happiness you seek.

Well, once you've started the process of unmasking your SELF, it's time to reclaim your narrative and write this script. This is about taking the raw, unfiltered essence of who you are, your unmasked SELF, and consciously choosing the story you want to live by. Importantly, it's about recognizing that you have the power of choice in who you be and how you live your life.

Let me share with you four key things that you can do to help you write a script that is free from shoulds and filled with coulds. And first up, let me bring you right back to tackling those limiting stories head on. Those stories that are built on a shaky foundation of shoulds which have kept you from truly stepping into your own unique life script.

To do this, begin by reflecting on the stories, those beliefs, that have dictated your choices and examined their hold over your life. Which of these stories have served you, and which ones have held you back? Ask yourself, what stories am I ready to release? And what empowering stories am I ready to embrace?

Then visualize yourself living out your life with these new stories. Imagine the sense of freedom, joy, and fulfillment that they bring. And then write this script down in your journal. This part is important because this process isn't simply about daydreaming. It's actually an act of Self-Creation. By writing down the new life you envision for yourself, you're actually laying down the tracks for your journey ahead. So be bold, be specific, and most importantly, be true to your unmasked SELF. This script is your roadmap created by you, for you – and it will guide you towards the life you could live.

And with this new script in hand, let's talk about boundaries. Those essential lines in the sand that protect your time, your energy, and your heart. Setting boundaries is crucial in living a life that is not dictated by shoulds. First and foremost though, realize that this is not about pushing people away or being rigid, demanding or arrogant. Setting boundaries is about honoring your worth and ensuring that you have the space to pursue the life you've envisioned for yourself.

So to do this, identify the areas in your life where boundaries are lacking or maybe they're not being respected. Then take steps to establish these boundaries clearly and communicate them to others, gently but firmly. And know that in doing so, you're not just advocating for your well-being, but also teaching others how to love and respect you in the way you deserve.

The third key thing I want to share is self-care. Self-care is the foundation of a life lived on your own terms, and it is a daily affirmation of your worthiness to be the unmasked version of you. It's the practice of saying, "I matter", through actions that nourish, replenish, and invigorate you. It's about making choices that respect and nurture your well-being on every level – physically, emotionally, and spiritually.

And I want you to understand that this isn't selfish, it's fundamentally necessary. So identify what self-care looks like for the unmasked version of you. Is it a quiet hour with a book? A morning run? Time spent in creative hobbies? Schedule these acts of self-care and make them non-negotiable, because in doing this, you are removing yourself from what you should be doing to shine the light on your new unmasked SELF.

Lastly, learn to listen to your inner voice and intuition. This is perhaps the most empowering step in freeing yourself from a life of shoulds, because to do this will require that you mute all external noise and tune into your own desires and instincts. Check in with yourself regularly and ask yourself things like, what do I need right now? Or what is my gut telling me about this decision? And some

great ways to mute the noise of your shoulds is to practice meditation, take a walk in nature or simply allow yourself space to sit in stillness. Taking time to journal can also be highly beneficial in allowing your inner voice to be heard. Learning to trust yourself will help free you from the restraints of your shoulds.

My friend, reclaiming your narrative and writing the script you could star in, is the ultimate act of personal empowerment. It signifies the departure from living a life dictated by external shoulds, to embracing a life that is a true reflection of your coulds. Importantly, it means you'll no longer be a side character in someone else's plot.

Remember, the script you choose to live by shapes your reality, it influences your decision, and ultimately, it determines the richness of your life experience. So by reclaiming your narrative, you're not just changing the story, you're transforming your entire life experience.

And that's it for today's episode on Shattering Your Shoulds. If you've enjoyed this episode, don't forget to subscribe to the show and leave me a review. I'll see you next Wednesday for another episode of The Self-Creation School Podcast.

Until then, be the woman who says YES!

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