

EPISODE 15 // TRANSCRIPT

# ME, MY SELF & MY STORYTELLER

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Are you your own worst critic? Do you constantly berate yourself and put yourself down? Do you say things to yourself about yourself that you'd never in a million years say to anyone else? Does your storyteller come in unannounced and uninvited to offer their opinion on everything you do? An opinion that usually has a whole story to go with it, like why you shouldn't, can't, or won't do the things you want to do.

Imagine if every time you put yourself down, you could swap that self-criticism for something more uplifting, like exchanging a pair of ill-fitting jeans for the perfect dress. Imagine if instead of having a rack of stories in your closet that don't suit you, that make you feel uncomfortable, unworthy, and that hide the true you, you could have a closet of designer stories to pick and choose from. Stories that highlight your best features, make you feel confident in your own skin, and ready to show up and shine in your world.

Today, we're revamping your mental wardrobe to help you dress your mind for success. So if you're ready to style your mind, then stick around and let's have some fun doing exactly that.

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 there, and thanks for joining me in this episode of The Self-Creation School podcast. This is the space where we talk about how to create a life you're excited to wake up to. A life where you say YES! to yourself and your biggest, boldest dreams.

Today, we're going on a shopping experience like no other, my friend. We are revamping your self-talk wardrobe and curating a beautiful collection of stories that support, empower, and celebrate the true you. We're going to declutter, reorganize, and revamp your mental closet with stories that truly fit who you are and who you aspire to be.

If you've ever found yourself spiraling into a sea of self-doubt and criticism, you're not alone, my friend. We all have a storyteller who lives inside our heads, who loves to narrate our lives in less than flattering ways. And this storyteller can be quite persuasive, telling us tales that make us see ourselves through a critical, often distorted lens. It's like having an internal critic on speed dial, always ready to point out flaws and create self-doubt.

I still remember the days the conversations with my storyteller were downright nasty. I call her Mrs X, by the way. And Mrs. X had an opinion about everything I did, wanted to do, or thought about doing. She had an opinion about how I was

aging, how the clothes I wore made me look frumpy, how my opinion didn't count, how no one cared, how I was a failure, how I was undeserving and unworthy, and how I was not enough and too much, all at the same time. She didn't hold back, and boy, she was harsh.

I lost count, the number of times I gave in to her, agreed with her, and gave up all hope. The number of times my shoulders hung in self-defeat. Because at the end of the day, it was self-defeat. My storyteller, Mrs. X, is of course just a name for my self-talk. Honestly, I would have never spoken to another human being the way I was speaking to myself.

And I know many of you have a storyteller just like Mrs. X. A storyteller who fills you with things like fear, self-doubt, self-judgement, self-loathing, and self-denial.

Here's the thing, your storyteller is not really trying to criticize you or put you down and make you feel bad. In a misguided way, it thinks its job is to protect you. So it chooses old familiar stories from your mental closet that it believes will keep you safe from hurt and disappointment. Stories you've created at some point in your life in response to events that have caused you emotional harm.

The problem is, many of the stories you have hanging in your closet are out of date. They're stories you picked up long ago without much thought, you've never questioned their place in your mental closet since, and they no longer fit who you've become or the woman you aspire to be. There's a pretty good chance they've never been a fit.

And your storyteller has told these stories for so long now that they pretty much run on default. In fact, it has probably been telling you the same old stories for so long, it can tell you the same story in at least a dozen different ways, all of which only serves to convince you that these stories are your

absolute truth. And my friend, these stories you believe to be true about yourself and what's possible in your world are creating your entire reality.

But I want you to understand that your stories are not facts, they are simply the explanation you give to events that have happened in your life. Your stories are what you make things mean. It's how we as humans organize and make sense of our world and the things that happen in our world. And it's why two people can experience the exact same event and have a completely different recollection of what happened.

And when we experience negative or traumatic events in our life in particular, we will often wrap these events in a story that protects us from experiencing future emotional harm. From experiencing the hurt, shame, embarrassment, disappointment, rejection, and so on, that we felt from the meaning we gave to this event when it occurred.

Let me give you an example.

As a child, I was often teased by my peers about my name. Apparently, no one was called Leanne and it was a stupid name. And I was made fun of for my curly red hair, white skin, and freckles. The taunts would start before I had even reached the school gate each morning and continue on into the lunchtime playground. You can probably imagine that it wasn't really cool to be seen hanging out with me because maybe then you would be made fun of as well.

It was one of the earliest times in my life that I remember first thinking that I wasn't good enough. And I remember feeling like a total reject, and the shame and embarrassment that that caused me. How hurt my little heart felt and how heavy my shoulders weighed at the end of each day as I walked home from school.

So I used to find places in the school grounds to hide myself at lunch. I became good at being invisible. I stopped putting my hand up in class to ask questions

or volunteering to lead a group project. I would put myself at the end of the line whenever we queued for a show to leave all the good seats for everyone else so I could hide in the back row. I developed an absolute fear of public speaking because it would draw attention to me. It would put me in the limelight, open to being laughed at and made fun of.

And every time I would have to make a presentation in class, participate in a group project, run a race on sports day, my storyteller would panic and start telling me that I should find a way to get out of doing it, because I would be on display for everyone to see, and the other kids would make fun of me. "Remember Leanne, you're not good enough for them, and we know how awful it feels to be reminded of that, right? So let's not do this, let's stay invisible, let's retreat and hide in the shadows."

There used to be two or three girls that would hang out with me when no one was looking. But the first sideways glance of one of the more popular kids, they would drop me faster than a hot potato. It was an on again, off again acquaintance, because today I really couldn't go so far as to call it a friendship. And every time they discarded me to go and hang with one of the many kids who teased me, guess what that did? It made me feel rejected, which made me feel ashamed and embarrassed. And my storyteller would think, "Oh, I know this one. You're feeling rejected, ashamed and embarrassed because remember, you're not good enough."

So this idea of not being good enough kept being reinforced to me again and again. And I can tell you countless ways this got reinforced to me over the years that followed and how this belief has since manifested in my life and all the ways it has held me back. That fear of not being good enough, of being the reject, and the shame and embarrassment that that would cause me, has cost me many, many years of not showing up for myself in the ways I am truly capable of doing so, and in the ways that would help me realize my dreams. I stayed invisible in my own life for decades.

You probably have a whole collection of stories just like this too, right? I wonder what they have cost you.

And all the opinions and stories that my Mrs. X has shared with me over the years have been designed to stop me from being tempted to step into the limelight. To instead keep myself invisible, so that I wouldn't put myself in harm's way.

This is why whenever I looked in the mirror at my tired, neglected skin, she would remind me how bad I was aging so that I would avoid putting my face out there and risk being rejected. Why I neglected my appearance in the first place, because then it would be easy not to put myself out there.

Why whenever I wanted to do something that would mean speaking to others, like doing a podcast, for example, she would tell me, your opinion doesn't count to stop me taking the risk of exposing myself, and yes, the possibility of rejection. Why she would constantly remind me how I wasn't good enough so that I stayed comfortably in the shadows of my own life for fear of, you guessed it, being rejected, and feeling the hurt, shame and embarrassment that inevitably would follow.

Mrs. X was well meaning. At all costs, she wanted to prevent me from suffering the pain like I had suffered in my early childhood school days. The thing is, the very act of keeping me safe from rejection, ironically made me reject myself again and again throughout my lifetime. The true cost, of allowing her stories of protection to run on default, has been steep.

And the reality is, the story I told myself as a child about not being good enough is not true now and it wasn't true then. It's simply what I decided with my immature and ill-equipped child brain to make the actions of my immature and ill-equipped peers mean. I bet, with almost 100 percent certainty, that those same peers have absolutely no recollection today of teasing me. They

would probably be shocked if I told them. Yet I have held onto this story and wholeheartedly believed it as my truth, for almost my entire life.

But because this story isn't in fact the truth, and I now know I get to decide what I make things mean, I have given my storyteller new stories to tell me about being good enough. Stories that serve me so much better in going the places I want to go. This doesn't mean Mrs X doesn't dig up my old stories from time to time. She does. Particularly when I'm venturing into unknown territory. But these days, I welcome her to share the story she wants to tell me, I let her get it off her chest, I thank her for her concern and I remind her, I gave her a new story to tell.

And you can give your storyteller new stories to tell you too. So, let's talk about how to do exactly that. How to remove the old, ill-fitting stories from your mental closet and fill it with designer stories that help you shine as the star of your own show.

The first step in curating a healthier, more supportive mental closet, is to find your negative self-talk and name the negative emotion it invokes in you. This is like sorting through your closet and pulling out all the outfits that no longer fit or make you feel good. It's about identifying those old, unhelpful narratives that your internal storyteller forces you to hear time and again.

Think of this as like, being your own personal fashion stylist. You need to look at each story and decide if it really belongs in your collection. Does this story make you feel good about yourself, worthy and deserving of your wants and needs and desires? Does it fill you with confidence? Does it hug your strengths in all the right places? Or is it a little stretched and out of proportion? Does it make you feel uncomfortable and filled with self-doubt? Does it highlight all your flaws and make you want to hide?

If a story makes you feel small, inadequate, or anxious in any way, it likely doesn't serve you to allow it to keep taking up space in your mental closet.

And whenever you discover a story that no longer belongs in your collection, I want you to decide which emotional discard pile it belongs in. So to do this, ask yourself, what emotions does this story stir in you?

Does this story invoke a sense of dread, anxiety, or fear about the future or about repeating past mistakes? Does this story make you feel embarrassed about who you are, or your past actions? Does it leave you feeling guilty as if you've done something wrong or let someone down? Does the story bring a feeling of sorrow, loss, or a sense of longing for what might have been? Are there pangs of regret tied to this story, perhaps about missed opportunities or paths not taken? Does it evoke feelings of self-doubt or question your abilities and worth? Does this story make you feel isolated or disconnected from others? Does it bring up feelings of bitterness or anger towards other people or perhaps the circumstances described by the story? Are you left feeling let down, either by yourself or by others when you reflect on this story?

Once you have pinpointed the emotion, spend some time to reflect on what this story and the emotions it invokes in you is stopping you from doing, having, or experiencing in your life. And I want you to consider these three things. Is this story really true? What happened to make you tell yourself this story? And what other explanations might be possible?

Now, you can set some time aside to think about your stories and declutter them in a bulk closet clean out. Or you can also do this story by story as your storyteller brings them to your attention. I personally recommend a blend of both. And if you don't have time to go through this review process in the moment, simply take a note of the story so that you can come back to this process when you do have more time.

For those of you who might already have a nicely curated collection of designer stories in your mental closet, this is a great process to set time aside to go through periodically to ensure the stories you have previously curated



still in fact belong in your collection. And also, to think about if there are any new stories that would be beneficial for you to add to your collection.

Which brings me to the second step in this process, and that is to get clear on what stories are a better fit for you and do deserve to take up space in your mental closet. Because this process isn't just about throwing away your old ill-fitting stories. It's about being mindful of what you allow to hang in your closet in the first place. Every story you have available for your storyteller to tell you should empower you, make you feel confident and ready to take on the world, much like the perfect outfit.

Think of this step like the style brief or vision board you put together for your personal fashion stylist to help her select the new pieces that belong in your designer collection. She has the end story in mind and with that goes to the Self-Talk Boutique to assemble the pieces that will create that story.

So, to get clear on the stories that do deserve to take up space in your collection, start with the end result in mind. Refer back to the things the stories you placed in your emotional discard piles in step one are stopping you from doing, having, and experiencing. The end results you want, but don't yet have.

Then I want you to consider the emotion these stories have been stirring in you that have prevented you from taking action and ask yourself, what emotion would encourage you to take that action? If you want to start your own business and your story has made you feel doubtful about your success, a more empowering emotion might be one of confidence.

Then once you have identified the end result you want, and some better fitting emotions to help you take action towards it, now ask yourself, what story could you tell yourself that will make you feel that way? If the story that caused you to feel doubtful was that "you've never succeeded before, so why will this be any different?", to feel confident, your story might be "my challenges helped me learn and grow, and I can and will be successful".

Just a word of caution here. You want your new story to be believable and invoke the desired emotion you wish to invoke. Going from a story of "I've never been successful" to "I am successful", is probably not going to feel like it fits. And more than likely, it will actually invoke your original emotion of doubt, more than it will your desired emotion of confidence. Going from, "I've never succeeded" to "I haven't succeeded yet and I'm learning how", is more likely to invoke the confidence you need to take action. So try on a few different stories until you find one that feels good and is believable.

And one thing I find helpful here is to imagine going to the Self-Talk Boutique and looking at all the possible stories hanging in the racks. Pull out the ones you feel drawn to that radiate that feeling of confidence, for example, and try them on until you find that one story that invokes that emotion in you.

Remember, these stories don't have to hang around in your mental closet forever. You can change out your stories and go back to the Self-Talk Boutique to upgrade them to higher quality stories anytime you like. In fact, I suggest you do exactly that. As your storyteller becomes comfortable with your new stories, you can start to introduce even better ones.

And what you're doing here in this second part of the process is something I like to call reverse-engineering. You're starting with the end result in mind and working your way back. So you establish what you want to do, have and experience, think about how you need to feel to take action to get that result, and then finally, what story you can tell yourself that will make you feel that way. This is the story you want hanging in your mental closet. And this is how you curate a designer collection. How you create your stories by design.

I recommend repeating this process one at a time for all of the things you want to do, have and experience, using the emotional discard piles you created, and the stories within them, to help you get clear on the new stories and the resulting emotions you want to add to your designer collection.

Now, I want to also share with you three tips to help you look after your new designer collection of stories moving forward and avoid sneaking stories like your old ones back into your mental closet.

My first tip is to start collecting evidence for how your new stories are true, to help reinforce them and get your storyteller comfortable with this new positive self-talk.

Over the years, you have collected a whole lot of evidence for your old stories that reinforced them to you so that they became your truth. So it's important to start building a bank of evidence for how your new stories are true to replace that old pile of evidence you have been holding on to.

You might begin by looking for exceptions to the truth of your old story. For example, I might look for a time my opinion was sought out by a friend and they heeded my advice, a time when I did something that was, in fact, more than enough, or a time when I did something that was a success, no matter how big or small that success was.

Then, as you start to take action with your new story, keep a journal of all the instances in your day where you told yourself this story, and it helped you to feel your desired emotion and take action. For example, with your new story, "my challenges help me learn and grow, and I can and will be successful", if you confidently took action to learn something new that will contribute to your success, note that down. This helps to reinforce that you can take this action and something positive rather than negative came from it.

Collecting evidence to support how your new story is a great fit for you will help you reinforce this story as a staple piece in your mental closet. That story that you can come back to and rely on again and again.

My second tip is to set higher standards for self-talk.

Create boundaries in terms of what you will and will not allow in your mental space and remind your storyteller of these boundaries daily. Set a zero-tolerance policy for self-criticism and any self-talk that makes you feel negatively about yourself or what's possible for you. And only allow self-talk that you would be willing to offer to your best friend.

And my third tip, is to name your storyteller, if you haven't done this already.

Giving your storyteller a name gives it an identity and allows you to treat it as a separate entity to your SELF identity, who you believe yourself to be. It means you can think of your storyteller as one of your employees, for example, and your SELF as the CEO who has ultimate control. And as the CEO, you get to choose how much your storyteller influences who you believe yourself to be, rather than allowing it to dictate who you be.

When your storyteller doesn't play by the rules you set, you can pull it aside and bring it back in line. And seeing your storyteller as a third party, as someone that offers you their opinion that you may or may not accept, really helps to remove the stronghold that your storyteller has over who you be and the action you do and don't take in your life as a result.

When I started taking action on launching this podcast, Mrs. X panicked. And she pulled up all those old stories I had placed in my emotional discard piles to try and convince me to stay quiet in the shadows. Instead of taking Mrs. X's panic on board, I could simply acknowledge that Mrs. X, well, she was having a bad day and offering me an opinion that I didn't have to accept. And I could say to her, listen, thanks for the thoughts and the concern, but remember, we don't do things like that around here anymore. I've got this and it will be okay.

And you can play around here and really have some fun with this. Listen, naming your storyteller may seem a little out there for some of you. But like anything, I encourage you to at least try it out and see how it works for you.

The key thing I want you to take away from everything I've shared with you today is, you can try new things on to see how they fit for size. You don't have to stick with the same old ways you've been doing things, the same old stories, the same old beliefs. You can declutter them, revamp them, and replace them with higher quality, better fitting stories, beliefs, and actions.

Just like a personal stylist wouldn't recommend you hold on to clothes that don't make you feel fabulous, there's no reason to hold on to stories that drag you down. Every time you catch yourself in a spiral of negative self-talk, remember you can reach into your newly curated mental closet and take out one of your fabulous designer stories. And, whenever you need to, visit your Self-Talk Boutique and upgrade those stories for something even more uplifting and flattering.

You have the power to dress your mind in stories of positivity, stories that highlight your best features, make you feel confident in your own skin, and importantly, help you say YES! to showing up and shining in your world.

That's it for today's episode my friend. I hope you've enjoyed my take on self-talk, and I'd love to hear your thoughts so connect with me on my socials and let me know. I'll be back next Wednesday to share more insights and tips on how to say YES! to a life you're excited to wake up to every single day.

Until then, remember, you can 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.