

Lucia Hawley:

You're listening to Episode 137 of the Devoured Podcast. Welcome to Devoured, the podcast for women like you who have tried restrictive diet after diet and are ready for simple solutions and resources to help you lose weight for the last time, from a place of abundance and peace. If you're looking to end the yo-yo of comfort eating and rigid weight loss protocols, and instead step into living your life on your terms while losing weight in the process, you're in the right place.

Lucia Hawley:

Okay, everyone. Welcome to the show. I am over the moon, you are here with me today. And not only me, I have a very special guest with me today. One of my clients, Kayla, from Lean & Liberated, hopped on the show with me, and we had a really, really awesome conversation that I cannot wait for you all to listen to. So a little background on Kayla. Kayla currently works for the Postal Service, the United States Postal Service, so she is an angel. We recorded this a little bit after the holiday season, which was I think just an absolutely impressive season for the USPS and everything that they've been going through over this last year. And Kayla is also heavily involved with the Postal Service's, the Postal Workers Union.

Lucia Hawley:

She lives in West Virginia with her boyfriend and his daughter. And she has so many cool insights that she shares with all of us during this interview. I really want anyone as well who's ever had perhaps some issues with their menstrual cycles, or feelings around again, the scale which was a biggie when I chatted with Carlin, I wanted to point that out in her introduction, because I knew that that would really resonate and be supportive for a lot of people. It's really supportive in this episode as you're listening along, to listen to Kayla's attitude, and to really notice how she was able to show up for herself, and really start to decipher and figure out what she valued in her life. Why that was and which pressures from society she was ready to finally shake off, and to say like, "Yeah. No longer for me. I get to lead my one badass life in exactly the way I want."

Lucia Hawley:

So you ready to dive in and do this? Let's listen to my conversation with Kayla. Kayla, I'm so excited to have you on the show. You are the first Lean & Liberated participant who has been here, so welcome. I'm just over the moon to be talking with you today.

Kayla:

Awesome. I'm so excited and honored to be invited to talk on the show.

Lucia Hawley:

Yay. So I would love, of course people have now heard your introduction, but I'd love to hear a little bit in your own words as much as you or little as you'd like to share about your journey. And of course, we're going to be bringing and for everyone listening, we're going to be bringing this subject back to weight, but I'm pretty sure, and Kayla I feel like you might agree with this, that these conversations are so much more than just the weight. It's just this one little part of the puzzle. So that being said, I'd love for you to share a little bit with us about kind of how you came to Lean & Liberated and what your journey was with body weight. Let's start there. Does that sound okay?

Kayla:

Yeah, that's awesome. So I was in a... Well, actually it's before that. So I have had issues with money for a long time. Just constantly overdrafting my bank account and spending more than a half, or just not putting money in my bank account and then spending it. And so I found a woman by the name of Brianna Firestone, and started working with her. And while I was working with her, her method really struck me as well, was really powerful for weight loss too, and that just kind of stuck in the back of my head. And later, she had a, I believe it was called the Betty Life Membership program, and you were a guest on there.

Kayla:

Once again, that just kind of stuck in my head. And as Bree and I were working through things, she could kind of look at your life as a whole, not just money, and ask what I really wanted to focus on coming up. And I had really wanted to focus on my weight, and I just really liked your whole vibe. So when I knew that you were starting up the Lean & Liberated program in, I believe it was August of the year before last, I was like, "This is what I'm going to do, I think." And it's been awesome.

Lucia Hawley:

I think that is so neat, so I'll definitely link up Bree because you and I are such fans of Bree. I'll link up Bree in the show notes, so anyone else can go hop over and see her work. She and I, we met in the Instagram DMs. And I remember when I first discovered her, I was like, "Bree, you and I are saying the same things. We're just interchanging money and weight, accounts and diets and budgets." So I think that's so amazing that you really came, it sounds like came into your own around your relationship with money. And that sounds like that was something that really shifted, that you put the work into first, and then there was a ripple effect from there.

Kayla:

Yeah, totally. Getting my finances together was really, I think a big catalyst in getting the rest of my life together, instead of just kind of going, "Oh, why don't I know how to do all this? Why am I such a fuck-up?"

Lucia Hawley:

Yeah. Would you say that there was some victim mentality there?

Kayla:

Yeah, probably. Just, yeah. For sure.

Lucia Hawley:

Yeah. So really being able to rewrite your story and saying like, "Okay. Even if I have no idea what I'm doing, I'm going to try."

Kayla:

Yeah.

Lucia Hawley:

So tell me then previously, what had you tried in the past to lose weight or just to shift how your body felt or how you felt in it? What was that experience like for you?

Kayla:

I definitely tried a multitude of different things. The first thing I probably ever tried was my mom went on Atkins when I was in high school. And I thought, "Oh, okay. Cool. I'm going to do that too." But I had absolutely no idea what I was doing, and I actually remember getting, you probably remember the drink called Fruitopia that used to be all the rage, back in the '90s. I remember getting a Fruitopia out of the vending machine and looking at it and going, "Oh, this has a lot of carbs." Oh my God. So that was my first experience where I really remember thinking about what I was consuming.

Kayla:

I don't think I followed any kind of regimented type of diet, probably until college. And I just remember getting some meal replacement bars that I would try to have that instead of lunch. And then I would eat it and I would immediately go to sleep so that my hunger would go away. But I've also followed paleo for probably the most. It's the one I stuck to the longest. I did a Whole30, I joined CrossFit. In college, I just got on the elliptical for an hour constantly. And I mean, it worked, but it never stuck.

Lucia Hawley:

Yeah. So when you say never stuck, which part wouldn't stick for the long-term?

Kayla:

Well, the consistency with working out for sure, and then trying to eat "healthy". Even though I feel like that term as applied to food has gone through so much in the last 15 years. It's just like, "Eat butter. Don't eat butter. Eat eggs. Don't eat eggs. Fat is bad for you. Fat is good for you."

Lucia Hawley:

"Eat carnivore. Eat vegan. Wait. Rinse and repeat, forever and ever." So you really experienced all these different and really have, that's what I'm hearing from you, is this self-awareness of like, "Wait. The food stuff keeps on changing," like the stuff that we "should be doing".

Kayla:

Yeah. And actually, I forgot, I was vegetarian for a year also.

Lucia Hawley:

Yeah. That I think is such a key point, kind of this idea of consistency. I would love for you to share with everyone, once you started in Lean & Liberated, what was that experience like? Because there's some tangible stuff that we do in the program, but also there's not much where I'm like, "Okay, guys. Eat this. Don't eat that." So tell us a little bit about if you remember, because you're part of the OG crew. If you remember when you first started, what was that like to come into this program where things were a little shifted, a little bit different than just a strict diet?

Kayla:

To use the template, it was liberating, honestly. Because I remember telling you when I was thinking about the program that that was one of the things that I was concerned about, because I didn't want it to be dogmatic about what food I was consuming. And you were like, "Oh, it's not a problem at all." Like, cool. So to just have the freedom to eat whatever, and not really be concerned about the calories or the food makeup was liberating. I can eat a Pop-Tart and I don't have to feel guilty about it. Or I can eat

potato chips, and that's fine. I mean, I really like "eating healthier food" anyway, but to be able to, if I spend the day eating a Pop-Tart and noodles, noodles, I might not feel the best, but I don't have to feel guilty about it.

Lucia Hawley:

Yeah. I think that's such a key point right there. Because for a lot of women, we can understand. And for everyone who listens to this, you hear me wax poetic about this left side of the brain, that analytical side, and then the right side, which is that more emotional brain. So how many of us are in that position of being like, "Oh. Well, I actually kind of like how more unprocessed foods make me feel." You were mentioning like paleo and vegetarianism, like the more unprocessed, feels good in my body. So I think so often we can be like, "So then what gives? Why is it that I can't feel that regulation and understanding that if the processed foods makes me feel good, I can trust that?" Just as well as knowing like, "Well, I can eat something that maybe doesn't feel as great in my body, but I can trust that I can enjoy that experience, and then move on."

Kayla:

Yeah. I mean, and that's honestly one of the biggest shifts, is just not having that one additional thing to stress out about.

Lucia Hawley:

Yeah. Was that something that came up for you was noticing like, "Wait a second. The way I'm thinking about this food is what is stressful versus the food itself."?

Kayla:

Yeah, yeah. Because I mean, you're standing at the pantry like, "I really want that." "No, I shouldn't eat it. It is bad for me." "But I really want to eat it." "No, don't do it." "But I want it real bad."

Lucia Hawley:

And that inner monologue is exhausting, right?

Kayla:

Yes, it is. Yes, for sure. To just be able to say, "I'm going to eat it. It's not a big deal. It's not."

Lucia Hawley:

Yeah. And so what happens then when you're starting to uncover, "Okay. Not only are there these internal monologues, but I'm going to try the new potentially scary thing." Like, when we're doing new stuff, I think our brains even if we can see like, "Well, I understand why I'm doing this," until we just let them do it, it can be scary, because they don't have any data or background of like, "Well, what is it like if I just walk up to the pantry and say, "Oh, I want the Pop-Tart. I'm going to have the Pop-Tart." Was it initially liberating or was it like a rusty gearshift? Tell us more about that experience. Did it take some practice?"

Kayla:

Yes. In order to not feel the guilt still kind of in the back of my head, that definitely took getting used to. But it was also kind of this giddy like, "Oh, I can eat this if I want to." And then just having that in the

back of your head like, "But should you really?" So getting used to saying, "Shut up," back there. Took some practice, for sure.

Lucia Hawley:

Yeah. And then tell us too, because you've really have taken the fasting portion of Lean & Liberated, and you've really over time I think what's so cool is that you've really understood how much it can flex with you. So tell us a little bit about your experience with the fasting and what that has looked over time.

Kayla:

So yeah, the fasting, and I mean it was definitely a little scary at first just because another thing with food is hunger is bad, like you shouldn't be hungry. So to know that I was purposely not eating for a period of time was definitely a little anxiety-inducing at first, but I didn't die, I didn't pass out. I didn't get the vapors and have to sit down in the chair for a couple of minutes fanning myself. So just really learning to listen to my body and instead of listening to the litany of thoughts in my head about it, was so helpful.

Lucia Hawley:

What was that difference then? So if you were starting to experience some of that hunger, were there certain thoughts or feelings that came up with hunger? And let me disclaim. People know this, but we're not starving anyone. We're not doing the starvation experience here. But starting to tap into some of that true gut hunger, what was that experience like for you when you were starting that?

Kayla:

That was something that I had truly not experienced for a very long time, the difference between going, "Oh, I could eat," and like, "Oh man, I am hungry," are two completely different beasts, so to speak. And so to know the difference in that now especially is helpful, especially if the fast has gotten... Not all of them are terribly long, but generally when I fast, it's for 16 to maybe 20, 21 hours, depending on how long I sleep. And just to feel the difference and that is pretty cool, and to know that my body's capable of doing that without feeling icky.

Lucia Hawley:

Yeah, so what is can you describe a little bit of what that difference is that you've noticed, between that like true hunger versus like, "Oh, yeah, I can eat something"? If you take a moment, what is that difference feel in your body?

Kayla:

So it's almost more of a more primal feeling honestly when I'm truly like, "Your stomach is hungry and it wants food" and it will... My stomach doesn't growl very often. But I know that when it does start grumbling, that I'm like, "Oh, okay, we could eat something." Yeah.

Lucia Hawley:

Yeah. Was that surprising at all? Because I know, I'll just share that with other women in the program. There's anxiety or fear initially with experiencing that true hunger. Like you mentioned, there's like, "But what if I faint? Or what if I pass out or I don't have an emergency snack?" or any of that. And of course, also disclaimer, everyone's different. Some people have blood sugar dysregulation and the fasting can

be supportive for that. So I think it's just so commendable. And I know again, it's a unique experience for everyone who's coming into the program to really say like, "I'm going to put my detective cap on, and just see what that true hunger is like." And it can be really surprising.

Kayla:

Yeah. Honestly, my favorite part of this is just like, well, we'll see how it goes. When I start a fast I don't go into it like, "Okay. We're going to white knuckle our way through this." I have an emergency ration at work that if I really start to feel icky. I'm not eating out of the vending machine because eating a candy bar when you're in the middle of a fast is not the best feeling in the world. But just knowing, "This is my intention. If shit goes sideways, then it's fine to not follow through with it."

Lucia Hawley:

Yeah. Because what does that reinforce when you get to be present with what your body is telling you?

Kayla:

That I'm the one in charge.

Lucia Hawley:

Who did it feel like was in charge before or kind of historically?

Kayla:

That either my body was in charge or that whoever laid out the diet that I was following was in charge, and my body didn't know what the hell it was talking about.

Lucia Hawley:

Wow. Yeah. So it's almost that separation. Okay. Body has to do the plan, body get whipped into shape from the plan or stick to it, and if it rebels then body is doing something wrong.

Kayla:

Yes.

Lucia Hawley:

Yeah. So what would you say, are there any surprising experiences that you've had? You mentioned walking into the pantry and being like, "Nope. If I want the food now, I eat the food." Have there been other variances now that you're looking back?

Kayla:

Well, so you also have a recommended amount of water to be drinking and I was definitely chronically dehydrated before all this. Because what you recommend we start off with is 32, which was refreshing to me, because the thought at the time of trying to get in like 64 or half my body weight in water was just like, "There's no way. There's no way in hell I can drink that much water." So just starting off with the trying to get 32, it felt like it took a load off my shoulders. Like, "Okay. This is one less thing that I'm "fucking up" that I'm not doing right for my body. And just kind of building from there. I don't know how I stumbled through life before, honestly.

Lucia Hawley:

Yeah. Tell us more about that. What's the difference? Because most people are chronically under-hydrated. So tell us that difference.

Kayla:

Yeah. I mean, I can tell the difference, just like my mouth is dry. I just... And that's something else, I feel I can feel in my body now too, is if I haven't had enough to drink. And I still struggle with it when I'm not at work, because I just, I feel like when I'm home on the weekends, I don't have a routine, which is really something that I need to work on. But so when I'm home on the weekends, I might just drink 32 ounces, but I can just feel it like, "Ugh." My throat's all dry. I don't really don't even know how else to describe it, but it's definitely not the best feeling. And so why it's so hard for me to get up and go to the sink and get a glass of water, during that when I'm making gee, I should drink some more water. I don't know.

Lucia Hawley:

It's one of those age old questions, right? I think it ties back again into that beautiful juxtaposition between that left brain knowledge. How many of us know what we "should be doing" or what some foundational health activities are? We know drinking water is going to feel good, but there's always that work of showing up too. Can I at least be curious? Right? Because it also, and I would love to hear your experiences if you felt this too, and I think based on some of our more recent chats, this might feel like it hits home a little bit. But I think once we have this level of self-awareness, then we can start to try to want to fix things. Like, "Oh, I shouldn't go back to how I was before. I have this knowledge, I should just..." And it can be this like sly shift, and kind of tweak back into some of that dieting thinking. So I think that's so beautiful, what you mentioned with the water to say like, "Oh, my baseline can be [inaudible 00:22:19]."

Kayla:

Yeah. I have definitely beat up on myself for, I mean like you know you should be doing this. It's not hard. Like, why are you not doing this? Why do you suck at life so hard? Mentality. And it is easy to slip into that even with all the work we've done for over a year now. I find myself sliding into the like, "Why won't you just do this thing? Why is this so hard?" And you've really helped to just like, "Well, I mean everyone slips up. It's not a big deal."

Lucia Hawley:

Yeah, verses, right? Because I think this is the conversation that came up around the holidays, too, and just the stress of this second impeachment, and everything, and the white terrorist coup, all of that stuff. It can be so easy to slip into these habits that we almost want to have done and complete and never see little improvements of again. I think that is you're kind of at this even deeper level now. Because we've chatted about you have the self-awareness to say, "Oh, there's this expectation in me that that conversation should never come up again. And so if it's here, what the heck?" And then you could easily slip into that self-judgment. So I see you doing that work of saying, "Oh, I can see that there was some self-judgment. What if I just get to let it be?" And when you have that, what does that shift in terms of that energy in your body?

Kayla:

So when I'm anxious or stressed out, I really feel it like almost above the back of my head, like someone's standing behind me breathing on me. So when I'm not feeling that, I really feel a lot more centered into my chest or my belly. And it's kind of weird to describe, but that's exactly how it feels.

Lucia Hawley:

Yeah. I bet that resonates with a lot of people. When we're talking about feelings, they really are, that can be some of the tough work is to really start to differentiate, "What are my thoughts? And then what am I actually feeling?" So I think you just did a beautiful job of saying like, "Well, my feeling is that it's up above my head." And then the feeling to come back sounds like in your core, and as you're grounding down into your physical body. I think that's very profound.

Kayla:

Yeah. Even at work, if I'm having a stressful time, that's where I feel it, is up there.

Lucia Hawley:

So what is it? Is it just the shift in thoughts? What is it when you start to notice like, "Oh, I'm starting to feel it up, up, up, up, up."? What is that thing that you're able to bring in the moment to start to shift and bring that energy back down into yourself?

Kayla:

Yeah. I think it's the idea of trying to control these things that are just beyond my control. And then just kind of talking myself back down like, "Do what you can, and that's all you can do." And the rest is whatever. And just kind of letting that like, "It's fine. It's fine. It's fine. It's fine."

Lucia Hawley:

There's a lot of that. Being an adult you're like, "Man, there is so much that we feel pressure to be in charge of or in control of," so it really is that radical choice to say, "Oh, there's a lot I'm not in charge of, and that's fine." That's more than fine. That's good.

Kayla:

Yeah. Thank God. Yeah.

Lucia Hawley:

Thank God. Right? Does it take some of the pressure off?

Kayla:

Mm-hmm (affirmative).

Lucia Hawley:

Okay. Yeah. So anything else that you want to share in terms of, was there anything surprising in the program or over your last experience? I know you were one of the first ones to say like, "I'm going to try a 24 hour fast. See how that goes." Anything else that has been surprising?

Kayla:

Yeah. It has been kind of surprising to me how easy it has been to do a 24 hour fast. Now, I did try to and we discussed this in our group call, do a 24 hour fast the week of the Capitol riot, and got to work and was just like, "I am not feeling great." And because I didn't have my emergency rations, I ate a Pop-Tart. So the sugar that that is basically all made of didn't make me feel the best, but it did help alleviate whatever weird funk was going on. So again, just being able to exercise that, "Okay. I'm not feeling good. This is not going to get me through my work shift." And just being able to roll into that. So I'll probably give myself another week or so before I try another 24 hour fast.

Kayla:

But honestly, it has been like this is the longest. We've been doing this or I've been working with you since October of last year, and this is the longest I've stuck with anything. And it has been the easiest of anything I've ever done. Simply, I think because the rules are not hard and fast, they're like guidelines. And if you mess something up, it's okay. You just come back to it the next day. Knowing that it's okay. Like, make a note of how that went and move on.

Lucia Hawley:

Yeah. It's okay and we get to have that clarity with ourselves to say like, "Well, what did happen?" So I can now know and take that information. And instead of feeling like I have to sink into the couch and feel all this despair, I can now simply take that information and run with it, and have it really build into my life instead of taking away from my life.

Kayla:

Yes. And not having the feeling of like, "This is all my fault. I'm such a fuck-up." And really like I said, over a year and I'm still like, some things are just really starting to wheedle their way into my brain. But really thinking about habits as things that at one point served us that just don't serve us now, and remembering that. That's my brain's way of trying to comfort me or keep me safe, and it does not mean that I can't do different things. It's just why sometimes it's difficult to make changes.

Lucia Hawley:

Yes, exactly. We come to our habits really innocently. And even the habits that we might label in the current day as bad, or, "Yeah, why can't I just shake that one?" Like, "Oh, why am I doing that?" If you really think back and do some of that story work and take that time to be with ourselves, more times than not that habit was probably the best way at a certain moment to meet an emotional or a physical need. And so all that's really changed so that now in this present moment. It's like trying to use a drill as a hammer, being like, "Oh, I did that once because there weren't any other tools and it kind of worked, but now I have access to this whole garage full of tools. And I actually can have the hammer if I'd like. And it might feel weird. I may not know how to hold it, I might feel a newbie trying to figure it out, but that doesn't mean anything's gone wrong. This is actually an opportunity.

Lucia Hawley:

So I love the way that you shared that. I think that's a really, really powerful point, that once we can start to feel that and know, "This is okay. The habit that I want to label as bad, it just isn't serving me." And I think there's so much release just like you've said. There's that release where you can say, "Oh, I haven't done anything wrong. It's not about me, it's not personality, it's not who I am, it's just an ingrained habit. And now I can shift it because I'm coming to it with this loving awareness."

Kayla:

For sure. And it's, I don't know, the whole process has been so calming. And even your voice is so calming. Just like, "Ah." It's like a soothing bath.

Lucia Hawley:

Yeah. And we get to give that to ourselves. Right? Do you feel like, has that internal voice changed at all over this process?

Kayla:

I do. And sometimes I'm like, "What would Lucia say?"

Lucia Hawley:

I love it.

Kayla:

Yes. For sure. And I feel being able to relax about all the food stuff and all the habit stuff, and all that, has really helped me be more me in everyday life. I don't feel like I'm constantly, have 40 million thoughts running through my head about everything. Like, "Oh, I'm hungry, I should get a snack." Like, "Oh, no. I shouldn't eat that snack." "Oh, I'm tired. I should have five more cups of coffee." Like all that stuff is just kind of like, "Okay. This is what it is right now. We'll see what tomorrow looks like."

Lucia Hawley:

Yeah. And when you're offering that to yourself, it actually reminds me of what you were sharing earlier, when you were starting with your finances, being able to come into a really solid relationship with finances. Then you were able to offer yourself, "Oh, you know what I'd like to look at next? Is body and food and weight, and all the conversations around that." And now that that's feeling more in lockstep, or a stronger relationship, like you just said, now your brain tends to be free.

Kayla:

Yes. Well, and even then, like I remember when I was talking to you, I think during Bree's, the Betty Membership, the Betty Life Membership, I think it was called. But just because there's so much anti-diet out there too, so I felt bad that I even was considering that I might want to lose weight. And so it's just like, everything comes at you from both sides anywhere, and you just have to figure out what your truth is and go with that. Because people will tell you, whatever it is you want to hear on both sides of everything.

Lucia Hawley:

I'm so glad that you brought that up, because that's definitely been a big reason, and big push to develop this program was to say, "You know what? Of course, losing weight is going to be the wrong message for some people, but that doesn't mean that it's the wrong message for other people. And if what we can do at the end of the day is simply help everyone feel more embodied, then they can take information and do whatever it is they want to do." That's the liberation. Versus reading about, "Oh, I should never ..." If we just replace one should with another should, that's going to be a whole life lived of just kind of chasing after the Joneses.

Kayla:

Yes, yeah. And that's something else of kind of, the ability to kind of sound out my truth like, do I believe this? A little bit, but not all kind of thing, and just kind of center into what are my real thoughts on it, not what somebody else has put in my head?

Lucia Hawley:

Yeah. So with that, it really sounds like it's the thoughts and the feelings that come first. Taking that information, we can have like a piggy bank with all the coins. We shake the piggy bank out, get all the thoughts and feelings out as much as we can. That starts to kind of shake out. And then from there once we are feeling in relationship with our brains, or at least ready, because everything is different and we have many scenarios like you described, the stress in the last few weeks. We don't know what that's like until we're living in that stress. So I would love to hear from you, because if you're comfortable sharing, I know that your menstrual cycles have also shifted, because of this work you've been doing with thoughts and feelings. Will you tell us a little bit about that?

Kayla:

I would love to. Historically, my family, we've always had terrible periods as a whole. And in fact, most of I think my mom still has her uterus, but almost everyone else has had a hysterectomy early in life because of period issues. And that was part of my trying to go vegetarian for a year because, I mean it was just awful. I would have to take time off school or off work almost every time. It was terrible. And so just kind of inching my way into the "healthy food things" and just reading about all the hormones that we pump into animals for their milk or to make chickens bigger and all that kind of stuff. I thought, "Maybe if I cut out this meat, that'll lower my hormone intake and my periods will get better." And I don't recall that they actually did.

Kayla:

Now, when I did a Whole30 and I cut out dairy, that's when I first kind of figured out that I had a sensitivity with dairy. And so my periods improved quite a bit once I finally came to terms with, "Kayla, dairy does not make you feel good, maybe you should stop eating the cheese. Because she isn't so good." But if I eat it now, I make sure I have some lactase hanging out with me, because otherwise I feel like [inaudible 00:36:39]. But really with the... so they got a little bit better, but it hasn't really been until the fasting that I've been able to go through a cycle and not use painkiller. And just not feel...

Kayla:

There were definitely times where my period would come on, and it wouldn't matter how much painkiller I'd take, I just felt like not human. So to be able to experience a whole cycle where I might not be the most comfortable, but I'm not popping ibuprofen way more than you're supposed to, it's just such an amazing feeling. I'm like, "Oh my God, I can't believe other women experience this," because it's just it's absolutely night and day. And even my mood swings aren't as bad.

Lucia Hawley:

Yeah. So that PMS or before the cycle begins, so that has changed as well?

Kayla:

Yeah. And I used to, like my boobs would get super tender the week before. And even now, they still might get a little sore, but it's nowhere near what it used to be. Just wearing a bra would hurt, or just taking my bra off would hurt.

Lucia Hawley:

So if we were to put scale ratings to these, like scale zero to 10 before, of pain, difficulty, icky feelings with period before, what was the number, would you say?

Kayla:

Oh, it was a 10, for sure.

Lucia Hawley:

A 10, for sure. And then now, what would you say the number is?

Kayla:

I would say a two or three, honestly.

Lucia Hawley:

Wow.

Kayla:

Yeah. It's been a massive change.

Lucia Hawley:

That is incredible. And how many months into doing this would you say that that really started to become apparent to you?

Kayla:

It was a while ago, I feel like. Probably I would say four to five months ago. And that's just amazing just considering all the stress that has been this year. Because I can't say that I haven't stress ate sugar or chocolate. And before this, I would notice that if my sugar intake went up before my period, my period was going to be worse. And now it doesn't seem to affect it as much at all.

Lucia Hawley:

Wow.

Kayla:

Yeah.

Lucia Hawley:

I just want everyone, like anyone who's listening, go ahead and click rewind 15 to 30 seconds, because that's really, really life changing right there. I think that really ties us back into that food freedom. Where we understand, well no one's joking that we are humans, we have human physiologies, unprocessed wholesome foods are just going to work in our bodies more because they evolved more. But we're also

in a modern age where we have things like, I'm always going to come back to the Pop-Tarts with you because I love that [inaudible 00:39:36]. We have things like Pop-Tarts or candy or whatever, foods that we can be in relationship with.

Lucia Hawley:

And also what you mentioned is that that relationship can change over the month. So we might have some more cravings for chocolate and more processed chocolate not even that 100% dark. Like milk chocolate might be the thing we want for our cycle and we can be in relationship with that in a way that makes sense for us uniquely. Like you mentioned, dairy is that category for you, that doesn't feel as free, unless there is that additional thought of bringing in the lactose, and getting in some digestive support. I think what you just shared is so cool. And it took, so that was probably maybe six to eight months into your work where it really became, because I remember your comments being like, "Wow. Hey, here's another cycle. Another one has gone by and like, this is cool. Now this month is even different than last month."

Kayla:

Yeah, I mean, thank God. Because if I had to deal with my heavy terrible periods on top of all this craziness, like oh my God. Oh, Jesus.

Lucia Hawley:

It's that gift you gave to yourself by showing up consistently to really tune in to your body and trusting that that could be a process.

Kayla:

Yeah. And honestly, I love that you always turn it back on us. Because you're guiding us, but we're the ones that are making the decisions and putting in the actions. I love that you're always like, "And you did this." You know what? You're right. I did do this. Like, "Oh my God." Yeah. I love it.

Lucia Hawley:

Because you did. Exactly. I think of like when you're bowling, and you have those, what are they called on the sides, the little like bumper rails?

Kayla:

The bumpers. Yeah.

Lucia Hawley:

Yeah. Like let's have some bumpers, just so our thoughts and feelings don't feel so all over the place. But then from there, what is that true liberatory way of living? Is that your life is for you designed by you? So you really get to rock and roll as much as you show up to your thoughts, your feelings, what's going on in your mind and even your spirit. That gets to be for no one else. It's not having to check, it's simply being able to check in and then go from there.

Kayla:

Yes. Mm-hmm (affirmative). And just the ability to stand there and go, "How do I feel about this? What's going on right now?" And going from there.

Lucia Hawley:

Yeah. What is Kayla feeling? What is Kayla thinking? And then, and I'm sure everyone is so curious, tell us about weight as well. So where is weight at? What has that process been like?

Kayla:

And honestly, sometimes I forget that the whole point of this process was to lose weight. I really do. I'm like, "Oh, yeah. That's why I'm doing this. It's not for everything else." So I have lost 30 pounds since I started this last October. And that is, like I had said before, I've had success with weight loss before, but it's always crept back up. So this is definitely amazing for me. I'm at a point where I thought... I just thought my body didn't want to get below a certain point, and now I'm under that. I'm just like, "Ah, this is amazing." Like I'm not broken. I'm not broken after all. Like just that reinforcement. Yes.

Lucia Hawley:

And when you started the program, I remember you saying you wanted to lose, it was about 15-ish pounds, right? Is that kind of the number?

Kayla:

Yeah, it was 15, 20 pounds. Yeah.

Lucia Hawley:

And then I remember you sharing you got to... I didn't even know that you've lost 30 now. I remember you sharing at 25 being like, "This is 10 pounds beyond what my self-concept was before."

Kayla:

Yeah. It is awesome. Over the holidays and stuff, I definitely was not dogmatic about anything as far as eating or my fasting window. And even then, I kind of paid attention to it but I kind of didn't. And so over the holidays put on about five pounds, but that's also the holidays just so happened to line up with my period also. Like, "Well, this is lovely." But I'm through all that, and you're like, "Oh, five pounds. This is awesome. Are you kidding me?"

Lucia Hawley:

And for everyone listening too, and Kayla, I know you and I have chatted about this with the weight, the scale weight that comes up before your cycle too. I always tell everyone, if you gain weight around the holidays or around Thanksgiving and Thanksgiving weekend, I know that's a biggie for a lot of people. It's like, for the most part, it's because we're eating more carbs, we're drinking less water. We're probably pooping less, we're probably peeing less and we're probably not moving as much. So to be able to come to that five pound increase without the, "Oh my God dread, Oh my God New Year's resolution, I got an X, Y and Z." That is absolutely life changing and life giving. That's really what I'm hearing from you too, it's you're able to show up and be like, "Great. I had a blast." The holiday is like cool, maybe the period like ouch. But even that, it's better than they used to be.

Kayla:

Yeah, yeah. I mean, even then I think I might have taken one or two ibuprofen on my worst day. And so even that, if you had told me 10 years ago, I would have been like, "No. You have no idea."

Lucia Hawley:

Yeah. So what would you tell the women listening to the show about Lean & Liberated? Are there any takeaways you really want someone to know or hear after listening to your story and your experiences?

Kayla:

I mean, it's totally worth it. And if it's something that you're considering, it will probably absolutely change your life. The whole program, just the way it's set up is so calming and reflective. And if you put in the work, just Holy shit, it's so eye opening. And I've always, beyond the last few years, I've always resisted coaching. I've always been a person that has been like, "No. I can do this by myself. I don't need to spend X amount of money on this. That's ridiculous." But it is so worth the investment for yourself.

Kayla:

Because I was also the kind of person that, "I'm not spending this on that," but then I'd go, obviously my financial issues, I'd like to spend all sorts of money on shit that I didn't need, instead of... Because the sticker shock got me like I don't want to spend that upfront. But you spend it anyway. You totally spend it anyway in time and effort, so just bite the bullet. It's so amazing once you do it.

Lucia Hawley:

I love hearing you say that too, because you have been such a coachable client. And as a coach, that is just so fun when someone really can... Even if you're like, "Well, I don't know. I don't know what this class is going to be like," we don't know what's going to happen a year from now. But for you to really say, "I'm going to let myself be coachable and trust this process," I think that's where that synergy is so powerful. And you're also right too, I've been really kind of auditing what I'm noticing.

Lucia Hawley:

Just when people are starting new diets, and listen, everyone has a right to do a diet if they want to do it. That's also part of liberation is being like, "You got to do what you want to do." But I think the average woman who is feeling like their body is broken, they're kind of cycling between a handful of diet basically every season or so, the average woman is really spending upwards of a mid four figure investment in food choices and supplements and all the things. So did you have to buy any special foods for Lean & liberated?

Kayla:

No. The only thing that I have bought special for Lean & Liberated is the potassium, and that's \$7 for a bottle that probably lasts me, I would say a good three to six months.

Lucia Hawley:

I love that.

Kayla:

That's the only special investment.

Lucia Hawley:

Yeah, and that's for your electrolytes in your water while you're fasting.

Kayla:

Yep.

Lucia Hawley:

Easy. Wow.

Kayla:

And honestly, even the first time I tried that, I was like, "I don't know about this." But now I'm like, I prefer my water with my electrolytes.

Lucia Hawley:

And you get more bang for your buck with your water. I want to say that to everyone too. Everyone, feel free to add some unflavored electrolytes to your water, because your body is going to know what to do with that. It's going to bring it in instead of it just flushing right through, and then you having to go pee. Because I think that's why a lot of people don't want to drink more water is that they're like, "I don't. No, thank you, mate. My new hobby in quarantine isn't just to go pee more, and go to the bathroom more."

Kayla:

Yeah, for sure.

Lucia Hawley:

Awesome. Well, Kayla, I think you're just an incredible person. And it's so cool, there's some things now that we've chatted that I didn't even know, and I'm just like, just so proud of you that much more. And you're just such a shining example of what is possible when you trust yourself. I know that this is just one step on your journey, and it wasn't the first but it's just been such an honor to see you bloom and blossom, and to really give yourself more life.

Kayla:

Oh, thank you. I mean, you can't see me but I'm grinning like a maniac over here.

Lucia Hawley:

Thank you, and thank you for being brave. And coming on to this show and sharing your story, because I know it's going to resonate with a lot of women.

Kayla:

Awesome. Well, I mean I would just be thrilled to help anybody.

Lucia Hawley:

Did you know you can find more support from me on my website? Go to luciahawley.com to connect.