

You're listening to episode 164 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.

Oh, it just keeps going. Can you all hear that? Let me close the door. This is the beauty and joy of recording in homes that are not yours. There are different sounds that you do not account for. I was just about to record this episode of the Devoured Podcast and I still don't know exactly, I don't think it's a doorbell. Maybe it is. Maybe it's a doorbell. Maybe someone left a package at this house that I'm in. It's very sweet. I think that was a Beatle song. Anyway, welcome to the show. You all, you know what we're talking about today? We're talking about self criticism. And I'm not here to get on a soap box or on a high horse. Once when I was 13, I heard that phrase, like get off your high horse or get on your high horse. And immediately I went to draw a horse that was smoking a blunt, and I thought I was so funny.

But I'm not here to be on a high horse and talk about how coaching helps people stop being self critical. And you have to have less self-criticism in order to have more self-love because that right there, my friends is actually all or nothing thinking, is either or thinking. And quite frankly, I don't know about you, but in the era and the year of 2021, I don't want that. I don't want to plug and play one all or nothing thought pattern for another. I think our lives go by too quickly. Our hearts are too tender to really pretend that that pattern solves much. I think that's a little bit of emotional bypassing, to be honest. And I think we actually need to talk about self-criticism and I was thinking of the subject and then of course, I pulled up social media, like five times between thinking of this object. And then actually, sitting down, took my time to record this podcast episode. And I saw a self-criticism crop up in all these places. More than me just being primed for it I swear.

Now we all might be thinking about self-criticism in one way or another, because as activities are ramping up, I don't want to say like this country, well, this country, literally something they're opening up more than they have before, but I can only kind of speak about the US in general. Because other countries, other things are happening around the pandemic right now. I feel like with a return to a pace of life that is perhaps similar or trying to make up for what some people will describe as lost time, which I don't ascribe to. I think there's a trend that I'm seeing and feeling and also feeling within myself as well. Right. I talk about this stuff because I live it, you all. I see this trend of feeling like returning to normal might also mean including our return to the type of criticism or the type of way of speaking to ourselves that we did prior to the pandemic being a reality.

And there might be a little bit of grieving right now, especially when we're taking time like we are today on this episode to talk about this subject that might not actually serve us. Because how often do we look at things in the past with rose colored glasses, right? You see this a lot with people who are bouncing around in terms of body weight and dieting. How often do you just feel like the deep self-criticism for yourself throughout your life? And then you look back at old photos of yourself and you're like, wow, how could I have been so critical? Right. What was I criticizing that? And when then we find all the reason to criticize ourselves now more than before, even though in that before moment, we were finding all the reasons to criticize ourselves in that moment before criticizing ourselves earlier. You catch my drift?

So with this self criticism, I think part of the root, if you are feeling more self-criticism in this current era, and moment, and season, then you have going through the pandemic. I want you to offer yourself an olive branch. I don't want you to try to turn up the self-love to like tune out any self criticism. That's some of that emotional bypassing. Yes, there are tangible things we can do. When we're not feeling so great in our energy, there are things that will literally turn our energy around. Things like dancing, things

like humming, like singing. Those all stimulate our Vagus nerve, that nerves that run from our cranium, our brain through our neck, down into our trunk. We love music. We love art for a reason. We love smells. Smells are profound, essential oils, right? Favorite nostalgic smells. Cookies baking in the oven. We can't pretend that we're just these brains that happen to exist in our physical bodies. That's so detrimental to how beautiful our bodies work in synchronicity with one another. So I'm saying all this, because I'm trying to set the landscape for this subject. That self criticism is simply a tool that your brain uses and likely self criticism is no longer actually the tool that you need for the job, the job being the pursuit of your goals that feel good enough as you try to get to them. Self-criticism may have served you in the past. And so it might feel like a very familiar tool. It has a worn down handle because you've grabbed it a million times before, but it just feels like it doesn't really do the job you need.

And so what I want to offer to all of you is that self criticism, we don't have to criticize it for the role it can play. And how I teach this in Lean and Liberated a lot. This concept that like you come to your habits, innocently, you come to your coping mechanisms, innocently. You come to the routines and patterns in your life, pretty damn innocently. And this is where thought work, which is a lot of what we talk about here, becomes so incredible. Because we cannot deny the innocence that we had when we say, reach for a bag of chips the first time that we felt an emotion that we didn't understand how to handle. Maybe we were quite young and maybe the bag of chips, because we had the privilege of living in a house where there were chips, maybe that bag of chips was the closest source of comfort that you could offer yourself. Right. It was the closest tool that you could use.

So self criticism might be that layered on tool, where when we're looking back and trying to understand the patterns in our lives, we might decide, man, I can't believe I was such a glutton. Why did I reach for that bag of potato chips? What's wrong? See how self criticism is just trying to make sense in that scenario? Or going back to the example I gave a couple of minutes ago of looking at old photos of ourselves and wondering, man, why did I hate myself so much in that photo? What was I thinking? While we're hating ourselves in the present moment, right, doing that comparison. Self-criticism is just trying to make sense. Probably have a deeper emotion that doesn't feel as streamlined or as logical to experience. Maybe like grief, maybe like sadness, maybe like loneliness.

So what would happen in your life this week, if you were to allow yourself to understand the concept of self-criticism as not something you have to have less of in order to be more evolved or more yourself. Boring. Yuck. But what if self-criticism, when you recognize that you are engaging in self-criticism, you're being critical of yourself. The words you're saying, as you're walking past the mirror, the thoughts going through your head when a photo of you comes up, or when you pull up your phone to do a Instagram story, or whatever it is. When you're comparing yourself as you're scrolling social media. When you're looking back at your day and you didn't read the book, or you didn't wake up earlier, or you did this and you didn't do that. What about in all those moments, instead of saying, why am I so self critical? I shouldn't be. See that sneaky should right there? What about instead we try something different this week.

What about if we get to honor every time we notice we're offering ourselves self-criticism. And first and foremost, what if we get to be so happy that we became aware of it in the moment or that when we're thinking about our day, we noticed, oh yeah. When I walked past a mirror, I was self critical. Okay. How cool that I noticed that. Isn't it interesting that I noticed that. What if there's absolutely nothing wrong with self-criticism, aside from the fact that most of the time, none of us really need it to get where we want to go. I just envisioned this big release that we can have when we finally say, oh, that self-criticism that I was just dipping into daily, hourly, weekly, monthly, yearly. In situations of stress, or during feelings of inadequacy, what if that was just my brain trying to give me a thought pattern, a way of thinking, a way of trying to look at my world that was trying to make sense of it?

So what if self-criticism is actually kind of neutral? Now I know. That might feel really weird when I say that. The whole point of this conversation this episode, isn't for you to be like, I'm going to become very neutral. No, we've got to experience our feelings just like we've got to experience our thoughts. And the more we experience our thoughts, the more we experience our feelings, the more we're going to be able to actually experience self-criticism. And understand once we do experience it, that most of the time, it's just trying to provide us an insight that is a little bit lacking and that's okay.

That's okay. That's just our brains trying to love us. And it might seem like the last thing that our brains are trying to love us by offering us criticism on ourselves. But you all have to remember, we have our left side of the brain, the analytical and logical, and I really believe, and I feel like I see this in our culture so much that we try to make sense of things. We try to analyze things and out logic ourselves very naturally. That's a human tendency. I think it's really rewarded in our society. So what if we were to just say, of course self-criticism is going to be a go-to because it's just kind of what's rewarded right now is to like, just figure things out. That's just our culture right now.

And at the same time, when we allow ourselves to dip into that energy of allowance and openness around all of that, we can then open the playing field for the right side of our brain, that emotional and creative side of our brain. To also like have its muscle be flexed if we would so like. Instead of rigidly holding on to that criticism and analysis and trying to out logic it, we can release that grip and say, well, what is my emotional brain think about it? See how it doesn't feel safe to do that. Emotional thinking of it, initially.

The surface level is to say like, just get rid of the self-criticism. Do the things where you're not even critical of yourself anymore. That's very surface like. That's just, doesn't really actually answer the quote unquote problem of self-criticism because it's actually making self-criticism into a problem. And it isn't. It really isn't. Self-criticism as a tool. It might not be the best tool for the job, but can we hate someone if they innocently pick up a certain tool and try to use it? What if we congratulate them for having the wherewithal to grab a tool and to always try to be grabbing a tool? Like how cool is that?

So the more we allow ourselves to simply understand and look at, oh, I'm maybe going throughout my day and my life from this analytical logical place. Ah, maybe we can sink into the emotional and the creative side of saying, isn't that so fascinating? What do I think about that? And not only what do I think about it, what do I feel about it? How would I like to feel about it? Where is that bridge and how do I know that I can be on that bridge as long as I desire? I don't have to like hop and skip over the bridge to get to a different feeling. There's no bypassing here.

What if the more I allow myself to be self-critical truly radically, the more I actually liberate myself because the more I see that there's nothing to fear in self-criticism. There's not much to fear when we allow ourselves to actually be critical because spoiler, you all, when you are actually self critical, you actually let yourself feel it, the criticism crumbles away because we see how absurd it is. Because then we can really see how much it was a tool that really made no sense for the job.

So I invite you all to try that this week, just to notice. You're not collecting time to self-criticism to get a gold star or have the biggest basket of self-criticism thoughts, more thoughts than other people. When you have self-criticism this week in the little thought or the biggest thought, what if your only job is to notice it? And that's it. You don't notice it to become Yoda. You don't notice it to become more enlightened than someone else. You don't notice it for an agenda. You simply notice it for what it is. You love it for what it is. You love it for the intention behind it. Not the surface level intention, not the destructive words, but for the reasons behind the words, if you were to dig, right and ask, why. Why am I saying this to myself as I walked past myself in the mirror?

I want you all to give that a go this week and just notice what comes up. No agenda, no emotionally bypassing self-criticism this week. No trying to turn the self criticism into self love. No tuning out the self criticism by turning up more self-love on that surface level. I hope you all understand what I'm saying that, that's all on the surface. When you dig deep into just experiencing yourself, I think you'll find it to be very fascinating.

And here's what I want to offer all of you too, you can do this work. I think our culture makes it out to be that this work is exhausting, and draining, and you have to have the perfect circumstances for it to happen. And it's like one and done. And it's like getting to that goal weight. Ignore all the other numbers, except that one goal weight you want to get to. Once you get to it, then you're good. But if we do it in that way, we're missing out on the beauty of every other scale number. And we're missing out on the beauty of being in the journey and allowing that to actually be the destination. So your feelings are here. They're for you by you. Your self-criticism is here, for you by you. Yes. You can unpack it and start to recognize the stories that it has come from, that have woven it into existence. Yes. Those stories were likely handed to you by culture at large, the patriarchy, people that you grew up with, mean stories.

But by unpacking, your nervous system is really going to thank you. And when our nervous systems feel safe, beautiful things can happen. So I hope you all will give that a go this week. Thank you so much for being here and I'll see you all on the next episode. Did you know, you can find more support for me on my website, go to Lucia Hawley, L-U-C-I-A-H-A-W-L-E-Y.com to connect.