

Lucia Hawley:

Welcome to Devoured, the podcast for women ready to release the title of dieter for good. I'm your host Lucia Hawley, and I'm a certified nutritional therapy practitioner with my master's in social work, clinical mental health. I've lost 80 pounds, and I'm on a mission to get you into the life of your dreams without being the woman who is consumed by diet after diet trying to get there. If you're wanting more in your life and are tired of wondering when or how to make that happen, then this is a podcast for you. You'll learn how to make the radical changes you only dreamed of, 100% possible for you today. I'm so happy you're here. The information provided within this podcast is intended as general education only and is not to be considered a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Sarah, thank you so much for joining me on Devour today. It's such a treat and such an honor. I'll say I haven't had a guest on since the beginning of quarantine. So it's super exciting. It feels like a new leaf in the fall.

Sarah Berneche:

Yeah, it's so great to be here. Thanks for having me.

Lucia Hawley:

Yeah. I would love it if you're open too for listeners to learn a little bit more about you. You're based in Toronto, clearly with health and wellness like we live in a... and with the fear, we live in a very virtual world. But tell us a little bit about your story, how you came to... And I know we'll dive into this throughout the interview, but not only your view, intuitive eating, anti-diet approach, but maybe starting with your personal journey or how you came to nutrition in the first place.

Sarah Berneche:

I got into nutrition for a bunch of different reasons. And two main ones were that, one, I'd always loved food and writing, and that was something inherent to me. That was something I had carried or that I've carried since I went to school. It wasn't so much university, I've loved writing and I've also just really fallen in love with food writing. At the same time, I have this really long history with disorder eating. It started back when I was 14 years old. That up until that point, I had a pretty normal relationship with food, I would say, and I ate everything. I had a decent relationship with my body. Even if I felt uncomfortable with it, there wasn't anything I really thought I could do.

Sarah Berneche:

And it wasn't until I hit around 13, 14 years old, sitting around the table at my aunt's house and watching her talk about a certain point system and hearing that around to all of her friends and to other family members, and I started to make this connection between food and our bodies. From there, went on that particular diet and cycled through other diets as well and did happen to lose some weight. At the time, I was heavier because I was an adolescent. I was going through puberty. My hormones were, of course, all over the place and got really hooked on that because finally I was getting attention. I was getting attention from the opposite sex. I started to feel like things were coming together.

Sarah Berneche:

And so that continued for several years until I moved to Toronto about 11 years ago and it just exacerbated from there. And what was initially all about dieting and losing weight just became, in many ways, a full-blown eating disorder. I got into nutrition partly because I had this inherent love of food and upgrading. And then secondly, because I had this really disorder view of food and really imagined that if

I went to nutrition school, I would know everything about food and I would learn the "secret," that I would have it all figured out and finally be okay with food and be okay with my body. And of course, that's not really what happened.

Lucia Hawley:

I love hearing that. I don't love that that was part of the journey, the stress and [crosstalk 00:04:20]. But I love what you just mentioned about feeling like this is something I notice in my clients a lot and just community at large, there's always something more to be learning about nutrition, first off. There's something more granular or something where we're trying to "hack our bodies" or change for some reason. And I think that's really interesting that it was like the trying to almost out-logic this experience, if I were to guess, with probably more of an emotional experience around food and nutrition.

Sarah Berneche:

Oh, for sure. In so many ways, and I speak about this all the time, food and our bodies, this is just coded language about speaking about other things, that we're speaking about food and the body, we're not necessarily speaking about food in the body. We are on one level and then we're not. And so the work is always about acknowledging that there is a relationship with food and body that's asking to be mended and also there are other relationships underneath and other stuff going on that's asking to be attended to.

Lucia Hawley:

Yeah. It's like the very the surface level.

Sarah Berneche:

Mm-hmm (affirmative). It really is.

Lucia Hawley:

Yeah. So in your work with clients, what do you notice when people are coming to you, or even just again like online communities because there's so much conversation around food and nutrition at this point, and again, a double-edged sword there. What do you find in terms of... because I'm always curious in terms of people's openness or ability to receive that idea that it might be deeper than the food itself.

Sarah Berneche:

Yeah. What I have found is... It's really fascinating to me. I think there are certainly some folks who are very open to that and are welcoming of it. And for them, it's like a light bulb moment of realizing, "Oh, this is a lot deeper." And at least for me, that was life-changing. It was transformative to recognize that it was bigger than me. I guess in some ways it made it easier to recover because I knew that my concerns around body and my concerns around food were actually about other things too. And so as I started to work on those concerns, some of the other stuff started to come together as well. And so there is that part of it.

Sarah Berneche:

And then of course there's the other part of it where... This work requires a certain level of readiness. There needs to be a certain level of readiness when it comes to embracing an anti-diet approach and

intuitive eating approach that privileges and prioritizes peace with food over weight loss, or a set of goals. That's very challenging to do in this culture. I will always say that it is very hard work. It's not easy. At the same time, when we're talking about our values and what it is that we really want out of life, I do think there's a great appeal to intuitive eating or to creating peace with food and peace with body because we do want to live. There's a part of, I think, all of us that does want to live a full life that does want to look back and think, "You know what? I had this great life and I seized every opportunity and I have no regrets or I have a few regrets." Right?

Lucia Hawley:

Yeah.

Sarah Berneche:

I think there is that too. But for sure, someone does have to be ready to go there and that sometimes takes time.

Lucia Hawley:

Yeah. And it's really like hearing you say that too. It's like switching the scope instead of this hyper... I can use the word squirrely. I feel just like there's a squirreliness of before the summer around our bodies and what they look like and all that stuff. I think there's another squirreliness before the fall, with the transition to school and just the change of season. That's what I've been noticing recently. So I think that's so beautiful what you said about how if we are ready or we're feeling like we're near perhaps to that step on our own journeys, that we can step back and look at the scope of our lives and really say, "Man, what is it that I value, or where would I like to place my attention?"

Sarah Berneche:

Exactly, that we have is greater, broader lens to say like, "Okay, when all of this is over," or even now like, "What is it that I really want. What is it that would really set my heart on fire? And can I start to move in that direction?" That's a really powerful question.

Lucia Hawley:

Yeah. And it's very revolutionary, too. Because like you said, in our culture, the focus, like the normal, kind of normative diet culture focus is anything but that.

Sarah Berneche:

Totally. The focus truly is in one way or another on our desirability over our desires. And so we look to external strategies like dieting, like exercise, and anything that falls under those umbrellas to feel better and to feel worthwhile. And this work is truly about like, "Okay, what is it that I want? What are my desires? What are my wants and needs?" And we start to put that forward. That is revolutionary.

Lucia Hawley:

What is your approach like to help women or your clients, the people that you work with? What is that approach if someone is feeling like okay, they know that they're ready, they're sick of the diets, they're sick of that yo-yo cycle, but like no that word, but they're maybe feeling out to see with even the concept of maybe having core values or what that work... how it could possibly tie into like cookies or kale, how do you start to bring that process? How do you start to tie that in as that foundational work?

Sarah Berneche:

Yeah. I think it depends on the person. Truly, each person who comes to me is quite different and so where we began will really vary. Where the values work comes in for me is that when we start to talk about... Depending on where that person's coming in from, when we start to talk about pleasurable eating or what some people call gentle nutrition, for me and my practice, that's where it comes in. That might be a little late. Other people might find that late. For some people, they bring it in right away. And there've been times certainly where I have done that.

Sarah Berneche:

But I find as people go through this natural organic process of, "I'm making peace with food, I'm starting to legalize everything, I'm allowing myself to complete the diet cycle and allow myself to have whatever it is I want to eat," we're rejecting the diet mentality, we're making peace with food, we're starting to honor hunger as we move through that and then get into the emotions, which comes up naturally as you're starting to let go of the hold that food has and honor restriction, the emotions come up. And then we get to a point where maybe they're starting to be some consideration for what is it that I want to be eating? How do I want to feel? And some of these broader questions, and for me, that's when the values work starts to come in because then we can say like, "What exactly are my core values? And how do I have a relationship with food that is a match for some of these values? How do I have a relationship with food that is kind, that is compassionate, that is caring?"

Sarah Berneche:

Now that said, sometimes I bring in earlier to talk about body image work of thinking about the body or body image as truly a relationship. And if you think about some of the best relationships in your life, what are some of the qualities, the characteristics of those relationships? And can we bring some of those over? And that's where the values work is really important because diet culture teaches us or basically gives us that value system, which privileges the aesthetics. It's all about appearance and eating in a certain way or moving in a certain way.

Sarah Berneche:

And we're starting to move over to your own internal value system, which is like, "What are my actual values? What are the things I actually care about?" What are the things I would care about if I were on a desert island?" And so we can start to bring some of that work into the body image work, where we start to say, "Instead of working out for a set of goal, maybe it's I'm moving my body too because I want to feel energized and that's helpful for me," something like that. So it varies. Those are the two core ways that I tend to bring it in.

Lucia Hawley:

Yeah. I loved when I was reading through your book, which we'll bring up in just a minute here. I wrote down a few different key phrases that I was just like, "Yeah, it was like, mic drop, like underline, circle, highlight, all of that." And one that I really loved and I think it was in a section around exercise or moving our bodies a little more specifically was this concept of care over control. Is that something that you can speak to a little bit more?

Sarah Berneche:

Yeah, yeah. I also want to clarify this is not specific to me that there's a few of us in the intuitive eating world that speak about self-care over self-control. So it certainly didn't originate with me, but I'm happy to share that and pass that on. But this idea of care over control is really this. So diet culture is all about control. I'm going to control what I put on my plate, what I'm eating, how much I'm exercising, it's pretty rigid. I think that makes it really difficult to practice self-care when we're talking about basic needs, basic self-care because it's very confusing. Like do I take care of myself and get the rest that I need if I haven't had a good night's sleep, or do I go to the gym, which is what I feel like I should be doing and then we get into the sheds? Am I eating the salad because I really want it, or am I doing it because I should be doing it because I'm told salads are going to help me with this aesthetic goal that I have?

Sarah Berneche:

And so it becomes like self-care and self-control, or self-care and dieting are really not in alignment because self-care is inherent, it's individual, versus self-control is about something else. I'm controlling myself for this external goal, this external value system. So they're at odds. What's different about intuitive eating is we're really talking about not what's right or wrong, what's good or bad, we're talking about what is it that you want? What are your actual wants and needs and how do we create practices that support those wants and needs?

Sarah Berneche:

And so self-care, coming from a place of care, over control is what it feels good to move my body in whatever way that I want. And maybe that looks like restorative yoga, maybe it looks like training for a 5K, I don't know, or what it feels good right now is what I need right now to rest and to take it easy because my body has been under so much stress and I just need to help regulate my nervous system, is maybe that what I need, is what I need to go and have ice cream with my friends, or is what I need right now to maybe have my chicken, my rice, my salad, or whatever that situation happens to be, and to be feeding myself enough. Maybe that's what that looks like. And so really at the core of it, we're offering people choice.

Lucia Hawley:

Oh, yes. These are mic drop right there. I think that's just so powerful too because, yeah, the control... I feel like I'm such a visual person. So when I hear the term control, I just think of like the white knuckling through the diets, or trying to be really aligned with something. I talk about this with clients a lot that can look "really good on paper." They can make... again, lots of air quotes. They can make sense because they're easy to write down. There's a yes list and a no list. I think for the logical part of our brains, initially, that's clarifying and it feels comforting to a certain extent, but the longevity is just so like you've been saying, it's so inherently disappointing because it's not from the inside out. It's from the outside in.

Lucia Hawley:

And there's no way that anyone like... Yeah, we're humans. So there's going to be some foundational information there. Sure. But there's no way for anyone else diet like kind of macro lens or even the micro lens, there's no way for other people to know what we intrinsically need. I'll add one more thing in because it just get me so fired up with this. I think it's so cool because like you said, what your intrinsic need might be one day is to go be social and enjoy foods that, again, for a strict diet like ice cream, whatever, would maybe be a "bad food." Who cares if it makes sense for you and it helps build your own internal resiliency? What could be better? It just is such a freeing way to be thinking about the integration of different foods in our lives.

Sarah Berneche:

100%. The thing is too... I completely understand the compulsion to diet, the attachment to dieting because it does help to organize somethings. There is something reassuring. There's something calming about a system like that of like, "I do this and I'm going to be okay." Of course, the flip side of that is it doesn't really deliver on its promises and we don't end up really feeling okay. We go to diets as a way of trusting ourselves more around food and around our bodies. And the irony of that is they disconnect us further from trust and that ability to trust and to be with our bodies. And so that thing that we think is going to solve everything actually tends to complicate it a lot more, and it also tends to privilege the physical health over all other forms.

Sarah Berneche:

And so what if you did really want to honor your mental health one day and where's the space for that because sometimes we are going to make decisions that honor our mental health, our spiritual health, our emotional health over our physical health? And sometimes it's going to happen. That's okay and that's a choice that we get to make. That's the thing that dieting really disconnects us from is that ability to make all of these choices and to live with flexibility, that health ought to be flexible, that it's not rigid, that as the World Health Organization has said is a resource for everyday life. It's a resource, it's not the object of living. And so it's something that's meant to help us. That doesn't mean it's a rule.

Lucia Hawley:

Yes. Well, and as you were saying that last bit too, something that I noticed being on social media in whichever app or platform that might be, I think there's also a really interesting... And I might not word this correctly, but hopefully this makes sense. I think it can be really interesting. I wrote a post long ago on Instagram... Excuse me. I was thinking about it, how with the influence, whether there's a strict influencer or not, with the influence of people whose jobs are very much like 24/7 centered around food and nutrition, whether that's being an influencer or being some sort of a guru, some status level of someone who has this typically like a static view that then their food and nutrition, they're going to be giving advice or whatever, I think it's so interesting that it's such a rigid pedestal that I think in our culture with the advent of social media we can now be putting certain people on where they might be being... It's like athletes.

Lucia Hawley:

"Oh, I wish I could look at athletics. I wish I could just live that life." We have to understand that, just like you said, food, emotional health, physical health, mental health, spiritual health, these are to support us through our own individual days. And so while some... I'm totally butchering this point, but like, well, there can be some people who've made their jobs to look a certain way. It's such a granular focus of their lives versus our own lives, which of course it can sound so simple to say it. Of course, our own lives are our own. And so I think it comes right back to what we can value. Do we want to be having that hyper-focus, or can we feel like we're more relaxed around the subject so our brains can go do the things that might light us up versus feeling like we have to follow in someone else's steps?

Sarah Berneche:

Exactly. Exactly that the goal doesn't have to be... I really think that it's like this two point situation where aesthetics are held up above everything else, like being thin or being thin and beautiful is seen as the most important pursuit, especially for women and femmes. And secondly, the tools that we're given for coping with discomfort. The main tools really are food and our bodies. It's just recognizing that that

is there and naming it for what it is, I think is a big part of the work, and then starting to realize what is it? And again, going back to the values. What is it that I want and what is it that I value? And is this something I value? Is thinness and beauty my top value, or maybe it's something else? When we start to clarify in that way, it's like you don't actually have to continue to pursue this absolutely impossible ideal. You have a choice. You can opt out and you can pursue whatever it is that you want to pursue, you get to choose that. I think that's the power of values too.

Lucia Hawley:

Yeah. And then you get to enjoy it without having to explain it or judge it or nitpick it further.

Sarah Berneche:

That's right.

Lucia Hawley:

Can you then tell us a little bit about... because I know in your book... Okay, so it's called Enjoy It All. I should just say the title of your book already. You have this lovely book about improving your health and happiness with intuitive eating called Enjoy It All. And it's amazing. It'll be linked up in the show notes as usual.

Sarah Berneche:

Thank you.

Lucia Hawley:

But tell us because, in the book, you have this really beautiful section about the stress of weight stigma. I think the psychological stress is something that diets just don't hit on. So can you tell us a little bit more about this emotional stress that's occurring?

Sarah Berneche:

Yeah. Yes, I named it Enjoy It All because I wanted to be very clear. That's the title that came up. But yeah, there is this really pronounced emotional stress to dieting. In that, one, it's tough to separate the physical from the emotional. But for one thing, when you're dieting, your body is in a state of chronic stress. You're not feeding your body enough, which can then exacerbate anxiety, you start to feel like if I don't have enough food available to me, I'm going to be under stress. And it's also really stressful to be constantly on a diet and monitoring it that way and being hyper-vigilant.

Sarah Berneche:

And so the repercussions of that are manyfold, of course, because if I'm always having to be super on call about food all the time, I can't actually relax. I can't be present. I can't be with the people that I'm around that if I'm out for dinner, my focus is primarily on whatever the food is, as opposed to being out with people and enjoying my time, or if I am at a party and there's food available, maybe I'm constantly drawn to that rather than being with my company. And so it really becomes all encompassing in that way. And so within our friendships, within our relationships, those tend to take a hit. So that's one repercussion of dieting, for sure.

Lucia Hawley:

Yeah. It's that hyper-focus. Do you notice in this year, especially like talk about stress, 2020, hey, have you noticed anything in particular in terms of like that intersection of what's coming up for women or just almost anyone around their relationship with food as many of us are sticking to being inside and just having this major disruption in our schedules from previous years, anything in particular in 2020 that you've noticed as like a theme?

Sarah Berneche:

Yeah, for sure. I've definitely seen this happen this year, where it almost happens like clockwork from my purview that as soon as we start to feel some level of stress come up, we go immediately to our bodies. And so, for example, if someone has recently gone through a breakup and then there's a diet for that, will go right to the dieting. If we're starting to feel inundated with grief, then we're taken back into diet culture again. If there's something uncomfortable going on at work and we tend to resort to dieting, we're taught pretty much from the very beginning that by changing our bodies, we can change our lives. Even though that doesn't feel logical to us, even though it doesn't necessarily feel like a true match, there is a sense of if I can get this one thing "under control," then everything else will come together.

Sarah Berneche:

I've seen this happen particularly in the pandemic, where as soon as it came out, as soon as the World Health Organization announced it, there was this draw towards workouts, there was a draw towards like "healthy eating," whatever that is, a draw towards dieting like, "I'm going to come out of this pandemic and be fitter than ever," so to speak. And that's really fascinating to me because I didn't hear anyone say, "I'm going to get really into meditation," although maybe there were people who did that. I wasn't hearing like, "I'm going to commit myself to my spirituality, or I'm going to get the best sleep of my life." When we're talking about health habits and behaviors, the ones that people really focused on were the ones tied to image.

Sarah Berneche:

And so there is this constant draw that by controlling my body, I can control my life. I've definitely seen that happen where the more and more stress we're under, we start to take it out in our bodies because we're taught from a very young age to suppress uncomfortable sensations, or maybe it wasn't safe to have uncomfortable feelings. And so we went to food probably either through eating our restriction to help us to feel better. And there's that connection that gets built in between the emotions and the body and food. And that if I don't feel good, if I feel sad, angry, fearful, I'm going to take it out on food and basically take that out of my body as opposed to asking what those emotions need from me to feel better.

Lucia Hawley:

Yes. And what you mentioned in there as well about like maybe it wasn't safe to have emotions, especially for some of us growing up, I love that concept because I think, of course, there can be so many layers of self-blame, self-hatred, the guilt, the shame, the judgment around, "Well, why do I comfort eat, or why do I feel like I have the thing, whatever iteration it is around food that I 'can't figure out.'" I think it's so beautiful to reframe that like, man, as little kids, whether it's trauma with a big T or trauma with a little T, I think so many of us come to utilizing different tools, whether the tool was food or comfort eating or something... Again, different iteration of that like insert the phrase that makes the most sense for the person.

Lucia Hawley:

But we come to these actions or even habits so innocently, like how beautiful that if there was some kid, and this was my experience, who felt unable to have an emotional support in the certain way that would have been beautiful at that time, how cool that there was a resource? And if it happened to be food, okay. If that was one of the most adaptive choice was like okay, I think that's just such a great way to reframe that. Again, our culture of dieting is like, "Nope, you were bad. It was wrong."

Sarah Berneche:

Yeah, yeah, yeah, 100%. I've seen this happen too, that it's so transformative when we can praise it, acknowledge it for the amazing tool that it is that thankfully food is there. Because if food is not there, what will be there? I think it's really important to name it that way too. I love the way that you articulated it because for so many people, what I've seen happen is the sense of, "Well, I shouldn't be taking my feelings out on food. And if I'm doing this, like this food that I'm eating is bad, 'and then therefore I'm bad.'"

Sarah Berneche:

That's the association that gets made at a really young age, that if I'm eating this bad thing, "I must also be bad." And how powerful and transformative is it to say actually that food was this amazing resource for you. It helps you to get through whatever it was you were getting through. When you say that to someone, when you make it known that food is not bad, that finding comfort in food makes so much sense, that that is our natural birthright, then they begin to think like, "Actually, if that food's not bad, then I'm not bad either." And the shame goes away.

Lucia Hawley:

Yeah. It just dissolves it. It's like here's the opportunity for that shame instead of just being in a shame spiral and having it reinforce itself. It's like it opens the door and says, "You can leave now if you would like to. There is the door, shame."

Sarah Berneche:

There's a door. Yeah, exactly, exactly.

Lucia Hawley:

Okay, we've gotten to this point and I realized I've chatted about intuitive eating on this podcast before, but I would love to hear in your own words, what is the definition of intuitive eating?

Sarah Berneche:

My definition is the definition that Evelyn Tribole also uses in the Intuitive Eating book, which is intuitive eating is a dynamic interplay of instinct emotion and thought. So that is the top-level version of how I would describe emotional eating. Essentially, it's helping people to connect with the wisdom of their body and make decisions based on what they want to eat versus external value systems. So it's not about... because this is... A lot of people come to the work with this question around, well, is dieting the right thing, or is intuitive eating the right thing? Is intuitive eating the right thing, or is dieting the right thing? And being really confused about this "right way." I think that comes from diet culture, this assumption that this is the right way to do this, or this is the one way.

Sarah Berneche:

And intuitive eating, I actually don't think of as being the opposite of dieting. I think really what it's about is it's a complete different way of relating to food into your body, where instead of this one right way, there's many different ways. And the work is about opening that up so that it's not is this right or wrong, it's what is it that you want? What is the choice that you want to make in this moment? And what does intuitive eating really look like for you when you start to connect with your body? So that's my long-winded answer for how I view intuitive eating.

Lucia Hawley:

I love that because it's a paradigm shift. I think that's so smart that it's defined in that way and I appreciate you expanding on it because I can notice we're so primed by diet culture, that we can say like, "Ooh, I'd like to have more freedom," around food, in this instance. "I have more freedom, but where's the hack, like where is actual structure because I don't want too much freedom?" I think freedom can feel like freedom or a free fall. We can make that very binary, all or nothing. And so this paradigm shift with intuitive eating is such a beautiful... It's just a shift. It's not making anything bad. It's just helping us to understand like let's look at what is. And once we have that understanding, how would we like to go about it? As you outlined in the book, those different steps that can help us be in that direction.

Sarah Berneche:

Yeah, yeah. I think that really we are always looking to this external place to let us know like, "Am I okay? Is this thing okay? Is this the right thing to do?" I take an attachment lens to all of that. And so some of the work that I do is really exploring some of the beliefs, the narratives that are coming up to help people to feel like they can trust themselves a bit more. So I think there's a two-part piece to that, which is like helping someone to understand how they came to this place of, I don't trust myself around food. I don't trust myself, since they always go together, towards I can trust myself around food and each bite of food reestablishes that trust, that of course you're not going to trust yourself around food if you've always gone to this external source to help you to get there when you've always gone to dieting to let you know whether this is right or wrong, or if you've gone to the scale to know like am I okay or not?

Sarah Berneche:

If we've always used these strategies, of course, it's going to feel really strange not using them and coming over towards ourselves and figuring out like, "What is it that I think and what is it that I feel?" And also knowing the more that you do it, like any relationship that we're building back up, it's going to get easier with time. You're just going to start to build it and it's going to feel natural at some point. But the same way, like when you start driving a car, it takes so much energy and require so much of you to really to be on the road.

Sarah Berneche:

It's a totally new experience that over time that gets easier and maybe you're driving along and you're sipping a coffee or something and it feels a little bit easier to do that. It's the same thing. So of course, you don't trust yourself around food. And of course, it's going to feel like free falling. And then together, the work is how do we help to create a safe container for you? And how do we help you to feel like you can do this and what are the steps to make that happen? And yeah, I do outline that in the book as well in a really short way, but that's there.

Lucia Hawley:

Yeah. I love that analogy of learning how to drive a car because I just remember the first time I drove on a freeway when I was 16, I was like, "Humans should not be doing this. I am in charge of this metal box. It's moving real quickly with all these other metal boxes. OMG, how do we do this?"

Sarah Berneche:

Yeah. I felt the same. I was so exhausted. So that's the analogy I always go back to when people come to me and they're like, "I'm so tired of thinking about food and stuff all the time," and I'm like, "Okay, I hear you and it won't be like this forever."

Lucia Hawley:

Yeah, yeah. We just got to lay the path brick by brick or build that bridge brick by brick and trust-

Sarah Berneche:

Exactly.

Lucia Hawley:

... as we do it, it will build upon itself. So I have a few questions that I ask everyone who comes on the show. I would like to know what is your idea of health?

Sarah Berneche:

Yeah, that's a great question. I think of health... And I speak about this a little bit in the book. But I think of it really simply as what is pleasurable. And maybe that's not quite apt, but I just think of what do I need to feel good and what feels good? What's a match for that? And so I keep it really simple. I don't think health is a binary, the way that we often believe that it is. I'm not even really sure if it's a spectrum exactly. It's something that is really... It's really active. It's not a fixed state, that we are not either healthy or unhealthy, that maybe at various points during the day I feel really well and other points I don't feel quite as well and it's always moving. And so this idea that some foods are healthy or some foods are inherently unhealthy is not accurate either.

Sarah Berneche:

And so I just try to keep that in mind that health is about like I do certain practices, I have certain practices to feel good, to feel the way that I want to feel, and I can also deviate from that if I want some things that maybe doesn't align with that feeling but does honor some other need that I have. And so when it comes down to it, I think of health as choice to some extent. And also, understanding that there's privilege in that too, that I'm able to make these decisions because of the privileges that I have, I'm able to ask myself these questions like, "What feels good to me and what would I like to have because I'm in a position where I have choice?" So there's that too.

Lucia Hawley:

Yeah. It's like really honoring all those different levels of what can be occurring in that present moment.

Sarah Berneche:

That's right.

Lucia Hawley:

Okay. So then my next question, what is your idea of happiness?

Sarah Berneche:

My idea of happiness. What always comes to mind when I think of that is just being surrounded by loved ones at our dinner table and having a really great meal together with music playing in the background and maybe having some beverages or whatever, and just being there together and supporting one another. To me, there is nothing better than being around people I care about and celebrating with food.

Lucia Hawley:

Yes. Oh my gosh, birds of a feather. That sounds so amazing, especially in the context of 2020. That's beautiful. So then my last question, what is your favorite word?

Sarah Berneche:

Ooh, my favorite word that I can list on the podcast, just kidding.

Lucia Hawley:

Hey, we have an exclusive rating. You go for it.

Sarah Berneche:

My favorite word is... Well, I guess one of my favorite words is inordinate just because it's cool. I don't know that I have a favorite word.

Lucia Hawley:

Yeah, maybe there's a collection.

Sarah Berneche:

Except they're all my children. Yeah, except they're my children I'm being asked to pick favorite. But I'm a previous English major. So, for me, it's like I love all the words. But let's just use inordinate today.

Lucia Hawley:

I love that. Yes, all words are sacred. One is not better than the other. Oh my gosh, inordinate, beautiful. Okay, that is so cool. Okay. So tell us then where can we find you online? Where can we find your book, Enjoy It All? Fill us in. Of course, I'll have links in the show notes that are clickable, but loop us in.

Sarah Berneche:

Yeah. So you can find me online at my website, sarahberneche.com, as well as on Instagram, I'm over there @sarahbnutrition. And then you can find my book wherever books are sold, including Walmart Target, Amazon, and to go through in Canada. And it's also at Barnes & Noble, as well as all of your independent booksellers. So wherever you buy books, you can probably get it there.

Lucia Hawley:

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Amazing. It is such a fantastic read. And I just have to say it is so clear. You're such a word lover and an incredible writer because it's so concisely written.

Sarah Berneche:

Thank you.

Lucia Hawley:

I have to say I really appreciate that because this subject can be so emotionally loaded. It's what our whole conversation has been like. This stuff is emotional, and we can't pretend it isn't. So how do we create that dialogue and create that safe container? Seriously, for everyone who's listening, go grab this book because it's really life changing. Okay, everyone. That's all for this week. Thank you for listening to this full podcast episode. If you want more of this information every day instead of just one podcast episode each week, consider coming over to Instagram to hang out with me. I'm [luciahawley_](#) over there, that's L-U-C-I-A-H-A-W-L-E-Y_.

Lucia Hawley:

One more thing before the episode ends, please consider leaving a review of Devoured on iTunes so we can keep spreading the word and together we can offer this free education, empowerment, and liberatory nutrition principles that will change more lives. If you're someone who likes to empower other people, then please consider sharing this podcast with friends and family. By leaving your review, it makes a world of difference.