

You're listening to episode 129 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. Okay. Welcome to the show, my friends. Do you like the new intro? I meant to ask last time and I didn't. I realized just a couple of weeks ago I needed a shorter one. If I was skipping through my intro then come on, let's be real, you all were skipping through the intro and same with the outro.

The outro actually didn't really reflect the break from Instagram that I've been taking and loving might I add. Nor was I really integrating the main message of what I do on this show, which is to coach weight loss with kindness, and to help you keep that weight off for life, [inaudible 00:01:03]. So I reflected on the new intro and outro and listen, here's the thing. Life is always about integration, my friends. So everything is always in process. So I was super excited to record those and get those going. And that's a nice update because now that I'm doing these double episodes every week, I sat down to record this one. I was like, "Didn't I just do this? I don't have much going on right now." Having any sort of an update this week, it's the same as episode before. So today, we're talking about one of the tools that I walk my clients through as they proceed through their weight loss, which is making the plan.

Making their plan, making a plan, but making a plan. But before I do that, I want to ask a favor of all of you. You know the last couple of episodes I've been asking each and every one of you, if you wouldn't mind taking just two minutes out of your day and going to the Apple Podcast app, scrolling to the Devoured podcast page, show page, and then scrolling all the way to the bottom and taking just, like I said, 90 seconds, two minutes to write a review and leave a rating. It's a super quick process. And it offers a lot of social proof, which I tend not to ask for and so, this is something I'm challenging myself on in 2021 is to step into more ease of just saying, "As much as I would love for the world to not need social proof, this is not how things work." And social proof is really, really helpful, especially with this book proposal that I've been writing as I'm tying up the loose ends with that.

And as I'll be sending that to agents and publishing houses, having a solid base that I can show them, which is why I'm mentioning social proof, would be really helpful as I'm pitching my concept for the book. So, if you do leave a review, your review will have the opportunity for a shout out on a future podcast. I'd love to hear your thoughts and yeah, I figured I need to be saying this because I don't know if you know just how impactful your words truly are. They make a big difference. Okay, so let's go ahead and let's talk about plans, making a plan. So when I say making a plan, what I mean is every woman that I work with gets a journal, it's a Lean and Liberated journal because they're with me in that program and the journal has two parts to it. It has a daily page, which they fill out daily, every single day of the week and then it has a week in review page.

So every seven days there's an opportunity to reflect back on the last seven days and what you've noticed. So, with this journal, it is a really integral part of the process. And when it comes to weight loss without restrictive diets, why a journal is so important is that we can make a plan from a place that is drastically and wildly different than the types of plans that we have probably made while we were on diets. So I'm going to explain that more fully in a minute, but let me first start with this, okay? When we're talking about plans, most of us choose our foods from reactionary space. Now, ideally, especially around weight loss, when we're creating changes in our lives, we want to choose our foods from a reflective reasonable space where we feel safe with our choices. So when we choose from reaction, instead of reflection, we are not in charge of whether or not the choice is for our most essential safety or if it's from our perceived safety in the short-term.

So to say that another way, when we make choices from a place of stress in the moment, what our bodies want is to get us out of that stress. They aren't as worried about the longterm effects of that choice, just as long as the longterm effect isn't as dangerous or perceived as such as the other potential choice, your body will find the option that makes it feel safer 100% of the time. But here's the thing. We live in worlds with so much more chronic stress than we used to from an evolutionary standpoint. So when we chronically feel an issue with something, maybe it's the three o'clock hangry's, maybe it's blood sugar dipping, but we don't know that that's what that is. Maybe we feel like we have to have chocolate or another cup of coffee to get through the day. Maybe we feel like our appetite is all of a sudden totally completely different in the evening than it is during the morning or during other times of the day.

When we chronically feel like there's an issue with something like any one of the things that I just described as examples could be issues, I find that the best way to "handle" that issue is to first off, understand our stress response. Really marvel at it, take stock, notice it, describe it. What is our stress in the moment sending us to do? When we bring that awareness, then we can start to have some play as to whether or not we're ready to make a plan not to confront that stress and rip it in half and get rid of it, but to acknowledge it and to be with ourselves anyway. So I'm going to use an example here that I hope makes sense to you because I likened this process to adopted puppies. And I think I can make this correlation because I have one, even though she's eight or so now, my dog, Hazel. It's not our job as the person who just adopted a puppy who has a history of potential chronic stress that we don't know anything about.

It's not our job to overwhelm that puppy into submission or berate that dog to do what we want. It also isn't our job to be mad, upset, angry, or shaming when that puppy has reactions that might surprise us when it's confronted with something that it perceives as stressful. What is our job is to really become aware in the moment why the dog has in this example, speaking from experience here, leash reactivity. We can marvel at that leash reactivity safely, okay? No dogs are hurt in the making of this example. We can marvel at it, we can understand it. And it's not the time for anyone's feelings in that moment except the puppy's. And as the adult human in this situation, your only job is to observe and hold space for that reaction that they're having. And then once you do that, once you've seen it, you've understood it, you've been able to be in the space with that puppy having a reaction without you having to be reactionary towards it, then you can make a plan.

This is now where we split and are so different than other methods for weight loss. Because usually those plans, like a diet plan, the food print out, the good and bad food list, the amounts of foods to be eaten and not to be eaten and whatever. Usually those plans are seeded not from a place of compassion and curiosity and working with our lives, which includes working with stress, but instead those plans are often trying to overpower and almost win over the stress. But when that happens, inevitably bad feelings arise from that cycle that we've never known or have been trained or taught how to manage and deal with. And so, we have feelings about an experience that we now have to be managing on top of an experience that is already provoking feelings. Are you getting the relationship with that example of the puppy? It's like us having reactions to the puppy being in reaction and now having a whole lot of reactions that we have to be managing.

Aren't we amazing? Our brains. So I've given you enough background now. The plan that I use with clients is in the journal, like I mentioned, and it's broken down into a few key parts. So I'm going to describe them, and then hold on to the example that I just gave you with a puppy because it'll keep making more sense as I describe the journal, okay? So the journal is broken down into, and you can write this stuff down and use it if you want, this is helpful. This is what we do day in, day out. The journal is broken down into, on the daily pages, it's the date and the day of the week. There's a section in the

journal for 60 seconds of free journaling, which is another fancy way to say a brain dump, which I find incredibly helpful. There's a section to imagine the future and to really put yourself in there from a place of your senses, what are you seeing? What are you feeling? What are you hearing? What are you noticing?

There's also a space for gratitude/appreciation. And then there's our plan for tomorrow or today if you're journaling earlier in the day, my clients can do either. So this is the plan, okay? We get all that juicy stuff out. We clear our heads. The plan includes a space for their fasting window, which could literally be as short or as long as how they sleep, by the way. A space for their meals, where they're writing out and planning ahead of time what foods are choosing to eat. A space to rate how they perceive that plan that they just wrote out about their meals and fasting times. And they have to rate it on a scale of 1 to 10. Once they rate it, they have another section where they can go back to the plan and remake it or make amends to it. If once they rated it, that plan was a 7 or lower on a scale of 1 to 10.

So then they remake the plan or amend it as needed and then, here's the thing. Their job is to stick to their plan and notice all the thoughts that come up for them as they stick with it that next day, or during the day. So here's what happens as we do this first. When we stick to a plan, we see what our current relationship with ourselves is. We have to make the foundational effort to understand, WTF is my relationship with myself. And we see this in a variety of ways. Like, did we plan an awesome day with food for ourselves? Do we feel like we have that ability to? Are you feeling nervous about that? Do we feel out to sea? Did we plan tiny morsels and insufficient food? Why is all of that? How does it feel to stick with the plan? And conversely, if we don't stick with the plan, then again, we have so much space to now start to see why that is.

Did we create a plan, but then rebel against it? Did the plan look safe logically, but it didn't feel safe so you didn't stick with it? Why is that? Do we not use a journal at all? Which also happens. And did we rebel against using it entirely? This is completely normal. Any of those different scenarios. Cycling through those different scenarios, but all of the above is not to control situations when we feel uncomfortable emotions. All of this is to create a loving plan and loving support for ourselves ahead of time, so we can show ourselves, we can take care of ourselves. We can stick to our word, we learn from our experiences. We can experience any emotion and be okay. And that our plans can flex with our true needs, not our brain in reactive stress mode needs. So just like we might make a plan for a dog would that leash reactivity and Hazel, who is my dog, I'm looking at you. If we try to coerce and force that dog into submission, will that last? 100% not.

And at some point the dog will rebel against its actual needs never actually being met by its owner. The dog had leash reactivity because it didn't feel safe and it chose an option like reacting or having big reactions that made it feel safe in the moment. We have to teach using a plan, a way to come back to the stressful moment and neutralize perceived stress from a place of loving because we can, right? For the leash reactivity, our way to feel more safe is probably going to a park and having Hazel, and this is what we do, having Hazel look at other dogs from 50 feet away because that feels safe for her. And over time as she's ready, maybe it's from 40 feet away and then 30 feet away. And then we work up never forcing interactions that are unsafe in her mind, but creating proof and evidence that everything is okay.

And her experience of emotions from far away are also okay. It's just fine if she whimpers or her hackles go up a little bit as she's looking at other dogs. That's all within her wheelhouse and we're simply attending to her needs by showing up to them and making the plan to do so. I say it often, we come to our habits innocently because they served us at one point. They may no longer serve us now, and we can come to our present moment with loving awareness that we're truly ready for a change. And the change can still feel weird and uncomfortable even in the process, which is what happens a lot for

women when they're really deciding, okay, I have X, Y, and Z reasons why I'm desiring a weight loss goal. I'm going to go for it. We can hold space for ourselves in a change and it can still feel weird, but that's okay, nothing's gone wrong there.

Just like planning your meals the day before from a mind that feels safe and that's important. We're not planning our meals ahead because we don't trust ourselves the next day. We're planning our meals ahead of time from a place of loving awareness of being able to meet our actual needs from a brain that feels safe and that is not in reactive mode in the moment because you know how to feed yourself. So, have you ever tried that before? Making a plan from a place of love and awareness following through with it, and then learning from that experience and doing it the next day from a place of love. From a place of safety that all urges, right? The two o'clock chocolate, whatever, feeling like we have to eat this, we have to eat that. Feeling like we can't eat this, we can't eat that. Not eating all day and then binging at night. Feeling like weekdays and weekends are radically different.

From a place of safety that all those urges, all those habits can be allowed and no longer judged. We have to judge the dog that had a whole history before we adopted it? No. What does the judging do? It's trying to create and white knuckle control in a situation where more control is exactly what it doesn't need. You may be amazed what comes up when you make your plan and stick with it during the day. That is the radical loving, and that is the radical self care. That, my friends, is why making a plan is so potent. Sure, it's about the things on the page, but it's about so much more of what the stuff on the page uncovers in your mind. What you think about yourself and your life, what feelings you've been willing to experience, which ones feel safe, which ones haven't felt safe and where you'd like to go from there. So try that out and I'll see y'all next week. Did you know you can find more support from me on my website? Go to Lucia Hawley. L-U-C-I-A-H-A-W-L-E-Y.com to connect.