

You're listening to Episode 146 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.

Okey-dokey, artichokes, welcome to the show. I'm so happy you're here. Anyone else have to go through a phase of uptalk in their life? I sure did.

Here I am, not doing uptalk as much, but it feels a little bit like a rite of passage, just like trying to do a Mario accent on your podcast is also a Rite of passage. You feel me? You feel me with that? I don't know anyone else, but I feel like 2020 maybe put me through the ringer a little bit, with my sense of humor. I think I lost it for a little bit. I think it's coming back.

I think my sense of humor is pretty much the same it was when I was 11 years old. I think it's mostly slapstick. That's mostly what I want in my life, is to be happy, silly, goofy. Talk about the hard stuff, move through the hard things, in order to be happy, silly, funny, goofy. That's pure joy to me.

Plus, living in a cabin, picking wild sage, drying said wild Sage, making sage tinctures, and living life that way. So welcome to today's show. We are talking about the Sabotage Cycle. This is not going to be a long drawn out thing for you to be learning, and writing down, and checking in with yourself about.

This is quick and simple. There are three main bullet points I want to talk about. So the Sabotage Cycle is this way of being that many of us can slip into. The reason I think it's really timely right now is, well, the time of the year, the season, we are starting to be outside a little bit more here in North America. It is lighter out for longer.

We're feeling able to go for more walks. We are, perhaps if you're living somewhere snowy, you've gotten a bit of respite from the ice on the ground. I know here in Portland, we've had really beautiful weather.

We've had crocuses coming up out of the ground, there are daffodils in many front yards, little cherry blossoms on trees when you're walking around. It's just a super special time of the year. So I know that as the coats come off, the big winter boots are now, you have to take a second, if you want to wear them, or if you can go when your sneakers outside.

We're starting to have a different relationship with the weather and with the seasons. Right along with that, many, many people, many, many women, will start to decide that they need more food rules to go hand in hand with the fact that there's a potential for their bodies to be seen more, as those big coats come off, as the big boots come off, as you maybe don't need a hat every single day.

There's so many ways that we can be comfortable. We can become comfortable not being seen. This year, I want for you to know deep in your bones, that you are radically beautiful, and you are radically whole, and you are radically ready and able to be seen to the degree in which you desire to be seen.

Now, this is different than some diet mentality that says, "Oh, your number one job is to be as visible if you want to be," right? How many of us have rebelled against that, saying, "Fuck that, I'm going to go do what I want?" And then we end up actually, ironically, you're not, starting to feed into that messaging that we shouldn't be fully seen, that we aren't going to be fully seen until we're fully ready for it.

I want us to break out of that cycle. With the Sabotage Cycle, how that ties in to this conversation of being more seen, of trusting ourselves to be more seen, of trusting our capacity, our nervous systems, when we feel seen, part of that is trying to recognize, how do I keep myself safe by playing small?

Whether that's choosing to wear a coat, when I don't really need one outside? Whether that isn't going for the next promotion, or making the big career shift? Whether that's hitting Publish or not, on a post on social media that scares the crap out of me? Whether that's having that tough conversation, whether that is saying no, and resting more and doing less?

Wherever we might not feel like we have capacity, but we're curious, logically, we want to go there, we want to go and be the person who's well rested. We want to go there and be the person who feeds yourself nourishing foods, and decides what that nourishment is. We want to be the person who's ready to go kick a soccer ball around, whenever someone calls us and asks.

The only way step into any of those lived experiences is that we create the capacity to feel safe enough in order to do so. And here's the kicker, the soccer kicker, what a total [inaudible 00:05:42].

Here's the thing about that. When we decide to take action, our brains will throw a million reasons about why it isn't safe to take that action. They'll want it to reflect more. They'll want us to ask other people's opinions more. They'll want us to wait until we have a perfect energy.

They'll want us to do anything, and make sure that everything is absolutely perfect, before we do the thing that sounds scary. And what I want to offer to all of you today is that the things that sound scary to your nervous system can be different than the things that look scary on paper. Right?

We see this happen a lot when you share something. Let's say you're talking with a friend or a loved one, or you're journaling to yourself, and you catch yourself either saying out loud, or in the journaling, or just thinking to yourself as you're talking, writing, you start to diminish what you're sharing.

"Well, I actually like to walk outside with a coat more often, I feel more comfortable, and I don't know why that is. I should feel comfortable not wearing a coat, but I just like to, but even though I get really hot, and it's uncomfortable.

"Anyway, this is such a silly problem. I know it's not a big deal, but it gets to start something. I keep noticing every year, when it goes from winter to spring time, and I have to wear a lighter coat, or I don't have to wear this big cap, I feel there's something there. I know it sounds so silly, but it's just like, what's happening?"

Did you hear in that example, how many times I diminish my experience, as an example,

The words that we say, how we share them matter. They really go to such great lengths to show us exactly, even if we don't understand what our capacity is, what we believe our capacity to be, and how we believe we can show up to that capacity. So here's a little bit about the Sabotage Cycle. The Sabotage Cycle can go a little bit as something like this.

First, we declare to ourselves or others, "I'll do something bold," whether that's eating nourishing foods, engaging in functional fitness, reaching out to the health practitioner to get support, whether that is learning, how to eat enough food or eat less food, whether that's ordering in meals for ourselves so that we don't rely on ourselves too much, in certain ways, and feel off-kilter, off-balance, whether that's asking for more or for less at our jobs, whether that's asking other people to step in and help us, whatever it is. We decide you're going to, we decide we're going to do something bold.

Then we might go do the thing, or we start to do the things that are part of it, and we do it for a while, and this is similar to the diet cycle. You decided to do a diet. You do it, because you're gung ho, because you made the declaration, and it goes swimmingly, or pretty well, or maybe uncomfortable, but you power through it for a chunk of time. But then what happens?

This is where the Sabotage Cycle's a little bit different than the dieting cycle. What's different is that we have that first phase, "I'll do something bold, I'll make the declaration, I'll do it. I'll make the change." But then we experience, after a certain amount of time with that change, a shock to our system.

The change felt too big. It was too overwhelming to meal prep. We asked someone to help us, and they didn't get back to us. And we made that about ourselves. We had something happen, that our nervous system didn't anticipate fully, physiologically.

Maybe we did the diet, and we didn't lose five pounds the first week, or we did lose six pounds the first week, and then, no pounds, and we gained a pound the second week. Shock to the nervous system. When we experience this shock to our nervous systems, our nervous systems, because they're here to keep us safe, let me tell you that.

We have our sympathetic stress nervous system. We have the parasympathetic rest and digest system, okay? We were born to live most of our lives defaulting to the parasympathetic rest and digest mode.

But if you take stock of how most people have to live their lives, because of social inequalities, and because of, just the radical inappropriateness that is the modern world, most of us have to live our lives in sympathetic dominance, in stress dominance.

Many of you, and I have felt this, might have varying levels of privilege that could actually afford you to be in the parasympathetic mode, rest and digest mode more, throughout your days. But you might feel an overwhelming sense of guilt, or dis-ease, being the person who has a privilege to be more parasympathetic, more in rest and digest. Okay?

So it's some of those conversations, that four handfuls of us can make the big, bold declaration after a certain while, the thing we're going to do to change, feel like a shock to the system, instead of a fun shock. It's like the unexpected shock. There's no place for that shock to metabolize through our systems.

What was fun and inspiring becomes overwhelming and overburdening. Think about it. If you're going to like do a sprint outside, the sprint, having the adrenaline rush, the cortisol rush of sprinting, of running really quickly for a short period of time, is helpful, is supportive. Our bodies know what to do with that. They can metabolize 30 seconds of adrenaline. That's fine. We have the rest of our days to metabolize that.

But if you're always sprinting, if that's your only exercise, if you're exercising all day like that, we don't have enough capacity to metabolize that much adrenaline push out of our systems, that much cortisol push. We don't have the nutrients or the nourishment to always be shunting all of our energy into that stressful hormonal pathway.

That's what I need when it's a shock to our system. It might not be overt. Sometimes it is. We make a big change. We're like, "Ah, this feels so big in the moment." Sometimes it's covert, and it just builds over time. And then we start to wonder, "Why am I not doing that daily Pilates that I told myself to do? Why am I not? Blah, blah, blah." You get the point.

This is where we come into the third part of the Sabotage Cycle, which is that those first two parts, number one, "I'll do something bold," and number two, "Ah, I feel shock to my system."

Then, bring us into the third, which is, "Those two experiences reaffirm the shaky foundational identity I have about myself. I can do the thing until I break. Why is that? Oh, it's just me. I have so many great ideas in my head, and I start to do them, but then, other people distract me. The world is too stressful, x, Y, and Z.

"Ah, I can't do it. I'm not sure what I'm going to do, and I try to do the right thing, but then I get overwhelmed, and I have to retreat. My body sends me all these weird signals. I don't know what to do. I have to go relax. I can't do it."

The Sabotage Cycle is inherently about what you are doing. Now let that sink in for a moment. The Sabotage Cycle is about what we're doing. But that third part usually comes back to a nuanced who I'm

being. We personalize our actions in that Sabotage Cycle. We make it mean all these things about ourselves and who we are.

In order to heal and resuscitate, and I think of the Sabotage Cycle, it's this shitty little scab that keeps getting broken open. Instead of that, letting it so that it can scab over enough, so that it heals, and we're just done having a sabotage cycle in and of itself, what we need to do is start to recognize that what we do, yeah, it has absolutely nothing to do with who we are.

Our brains will fight tooth and nail, at first, when we have that realization, "Oh my God, I'm not what I'm doing. I'm just me, I'm whole right now, no matter what." When we have those realizations, that is the balm to our nervous systems, that can start to increase and create play and flexibility with our capacities, our capacity to hold space, to say no, our capacity to have a different view of the world than someone close to us, our capacity to feel hungry between lunch and dinner, our capacity to not know what's for lunch tomorrow, but to trust ourselves, to make the best decision then. Our capacity to take Two minutes at the end of the day, to plan our meals for the next day, from a place of love and honor for ourselves.

This is that subtle shift, from the stress of the Sabotage Cycle, of always trying to find the right thing to do, the better thing to be doing, and having it always break down like a junky car, and then think it's about the driver, right? That's really what that Sabotage Cycle is. You're driving a junky car.

When it breaks down, you make it mean everything about you, instead of just having be a junky car. It doesn't matter who the driver is. Of course, it would break down. It's a lot of stuff to be doing for anyone. So what I want you to be thinking about this week is, "Where is it for me, that I'm engaging in a sabotage cycle?"

Maybe it's not about the junky car at all. Maybe I can finally park it, get out of it, the door rusts open as I tried to close it. I just don't even have to fix it. Maybe every Sabotage Cycle I've been in has led me up to this moment now where I can say, "Thank you so much, Sabotage Cycles, for what you've offered me. I'm no longer doing that. Why? Because this is who I am."

Yeah, when we start to change the conversation, this is what I mean, the energy radically shifts. It's almost like that tunnel vision that we have when we're stressed out. When we shift the conversation, our bodies feel that. They respond instantly. We always think that we're doing stuff with our brains first? No, we're doing stuff with our bodies first. We're always taking in our surroundings, our situations.

When we flip the script, and we stop reaffirming these shaky foundations of who we are, by all the things that we're doing or not doing, and all our conversations in our heads about that? That truly is how we dissolve diet culture. That truly is how we dissolve that voice that's telling us something about the spring and summer, and that's coming up real quickly, that we have to be doing something about it.

When we transcend the Sabotage Cycle, we honor it for exactly what it's shown us, and has offered us. And we get to go play, and have more fun, and have our lives be a party. No reason, no ifs, ands, or buts about it. It simply gets to be.

Thank you so much for listening to today's episode. I hope that resonates with you. Reach out if it does, let me know how it's going for you. I'm always available here, Facebook, Instagram. I got you, okay? I'll see you 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, dot com, to connect.