

You are listening to episode 165 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, party people. Welcome to the show. I am going to be answering a question that I received over on Instagram. I posted a box where I asked what could I help you with? And I received this really awesome question that I realized I haven't done a podcast episode on, but the question, which I'll read to all of you in a minute is something that does come up in terms of coaching conversations and coaching sessions that I have individually with clients. It's a very common experience. So let me know if this episode resonates with you, share that with me. I'd love to know.

This is the question really resonates with me, it's something that I've experienced personally and I wouldn't be surprised if many of you either have experienced this or have shades of this question that have cropped up in your life before. So let me first off read the question. The question reads, "One thing I'm curious about is how losing weight can feel vulnerable. I feel more seen when my figure is smaller and that can be overwhelming. So I would love to hear your thoughts on that if you would like."

Well, I would love, I would more than like. Feeling more vulnerable because you feel more seen, more exposed when you lose weight is a common experience. And this conversation that I'm going to have on the podcast is not I never can I really ever say this means this and that means that. We all come to the present moment with our own lived experiences. So for me, what might make me feel vulnerable when it comes to losing weight or having lost a substantial amount of weight, the reasons that that might feel vulnerable to be in that body that has had that weight loss might be different than for someone else. Because of a robustly rich lived experience up until that present moment.

So just know that this conversation it's open-ended, I have some thoughts, but it is not an end-all, be-all. It can't be. Our human lives are too beautiful for anything to really be this is how this goes, that's how that goes. End of story. And that's quite frankly if I'm being honest, that's why I talk about subjects is because when I started in nutrition, wouldn't it be so simple if we were to all learn some basics of nutrition and everything were really easy and it was done and complete? And if you got nutrition coaching, then someone told you to do something and you would do it, and it would integrate well easily and like well into your life. And that was end of the story, but what do we know?

I bet all of you who listen to this show know that there's something more to the subject of nutrition, body image, body shape, body size, fitness, et cetera. There's more than just the tangibles. There are actually all those things that are in intangible, our thoughts, our feelings, our beliefs, our social structure, systemic issues, marketing. All the things that inform one another, community. So let me start from a certain place with this conversation and we'll see where we get to.

So what I'd first like to say is that if you've had the experience of losing weight and then things feel more vulnerable, where I first get my curiosity piqued as a coach like if I were to be thinking about what our conversation could be in like a coaching session, my first question would be getting really curious about if there have been other experiences in someone's life where being seen was made out to be a vulnerable exposing moment. And I'm going to fast forward because there are some people they might say no. But for many of us, there are usually some pretty good reasons why our nervous systems do not feel safe when we feel more exposed.

And listen, when you've lost weight and especially a substantial amount of weight, it is more exposing. We literally feel different in our bodies and that's fine. That can just be a neutral thing, but we need to

make sure that we're making space for the fact that our society does treat us differently when we're in different shaped bodies. That's a huge reason of why I actually coach weight loss is the world treated me very differently when I was 80 pounds heavier and then when I was 80 pounds thinner, and also when I was like different sizes in-between. I was the same person with the same heart, same soul, same brain, same laugh, same sense of humor, but I was treated really differently.

And that intersection right there is so compelling to me personally as a coach. And I'm going to stop talking about myself in a second, but I think I have to use myself as an example, which is why I wanted to this question be on the podcast because it's a common experience. So first off, we can't negate the realities and also there's no real point in us rebelling against the realities that society treats people differently based on how they look. We're not trying to negate those realities here. We're trying to achieve and be in such radical liberation that that is like such an old boring story that we go do the badass awesome things anyway. And we come into our own leadership so much that we actually change the world like really comes back to where we're putting our attention.

If you want to put your attention on the things that are so bad and so hard and kind of fixate on those things, there's a time and a place for that. But also we can use what we're seeing and identifying and go dig deeper, so much more deeply into what it is we value. We can come into so much more leadership if we desire when we really see and are confronted with, "Wow, I value X, Y, and Z and I can feel this friction or this trigger or whatever you want to label it. That is calling me to deepen into my values."

So I don't think that's emotional bypassing. I don't think that's even looking for a silver lining. I think that's really kind of digging into being a human and being in the realities of humanity. So that's a very macro lens. Let me come back to the question though. What does it mean if you're feeling more vulnerable, feeling more seen, more exposed perhaps when you've lost weight? So my question would be, why do you think there is right now that potential for that to be occurring? And if we dig into that and we ask why and we come into our thoughts and our beliefs, like I said earlier, usually there is some sort of reference, experience, maybe a handful of them where perhaps we were young or young-ish where we were in a situation where it felt very not safe being seen.

And I'm not going to add any specifics there because that could be so visible in terms of what might've happened for someone in that situation or multiple situations. And also just know your experience is yours. So if you have a system that's more sensitive if you're a highly sensitive person, if you're more of an empath or an emotional person, you might have experiences that like writing them down on paper maybe weren't super exposing in general. But to you and your heart and your soul, it was way to expose them and it flooded you emotionally. So I just know every single experience you ever had is valid.

Whether it looks like a trauma with a big T or a trauma with a little T, or it was an uncomfortable experience. All of that has to come into play when we're having these conversations simply because our nervous systems are holding on to experiences. So for many of us when we're losing weight and it feels like we're kind of doing this stuff, but then we're not getting the result and we feel like we're holding ourselves back and we don't know why. Or we lost a bunch of weight and then we stopped and we regained the weight and we feel like uncomfortably comfortable at a higher weight. And there's just like the thing, this block, this wall. I don't even love the word block, but there's just this thing around it. I really become curious about why it is more uncomfortable to be seen.

And so the surface level then from that thought and question and place of wondering and curiosity is to be like, "Oh yeah, I just need to start to think the things that help me feel more comfortable." Hold up. If it were that easy to change your nervous system's beliefs, then you probably already would have done it. And it's not hard, but it's just different. This goes back to the conversation between our analytical logical brain. Analytical logical says just think a better thought and things will be better, but we know

that we have this emotional creative brain that means a difference. It has its own logic. It has its own emotional code and we have to honor that too. That gets to be a great thing.

So know that when our nervous system feels safe or unsafe, it's literally trying to protect us. And so if losing weight on paper sounds good because it's going to offer you X, Y, and Z tangibly, physically. You like that. You want that. I'm going to offer you more life experiences for some reasons. Good and fine. But if emotionally from your nervous system, your body is saying, "Yeah right. That was not cool before because losing weight is exposing. I'm literally shedding layers and the last time I did that, even if it wasn't exactly weight, but the last time I shed layers and was exposed or seen, that wasn't cool. I'm not going to do it." We can start to come into this place out of an internal battle, but of an internal different alignment. Not even misalignment because your body isn't going to serve you anything wrong.

It's just serving you what it's serving you. So really starting to sink into and see how we haven't talked about food at all here? Because this stuff isn't about the food. I can lean in liberated. We do talk about food. I actually have modules where I'm teaching people just about some basics of nutrition. Because we can't forget those realities, but as well if we're feeling like there are certain patterns or cycles that we're in, very often that they're coming back into a requirement for more emotional support. And emotional support isn't just bubble bath or taking time to yourself, although, hello, that sounds really nice. It's about the feelings that we're experiencing and the feelings that we might not feel ready or safe to experience.

A lot of women when I'm chatting about like, "Well, how do we add more pleasure into your food experience? How do we add in more peace, more contentment?" It's not just saying I'm going to add the things that are more pleasurable. The first step is often does my body feel safe enough to experience pleasure? And we've got to do the work there to set that really solid foundation. So that then not only can we think of and cognize what pleasure is and what's pleasurable for us, but then we can pursue it without that boomerang effect of saying like, "Whoa, too much pleasure in my nervous system. The last time I experienced pleasure, something felt weird and there was association there that isn't so good and groovy." Same thing applies here.

So my question, I know. I know. A podcast episode. It's like where's the statement? Where is the answer? Hopefully y'all know me by now. My answer is actually a question. If losing weight feels exposing and there is an association with being seen that feels on safe in your body right now, what if the hack isn't to lose the weight and just deal with it and get over it? Just like get yourself in that situation and deal with it. What if the hack actually is allowing yourself to start to come into a loving awareness about why your body is trying to keep you safe? Even though on the surface it might not feel super helpful that your body is kind of keeping you within a certain weight range and it feels at odds with what you actually want from a different weight range.

What if the only job right now is to find so much love and proof about why it was such a wonderful idea that your body had to keep you at this higher weight? What if we really get to love our bodies for trying to keep us so safe? And they're just working in their own emotional logic, emotional code. Think about it. If this is helpful, this helps me. I like to think about this stuff sometimes and I always feel embarrassed saying this, but think about it in how you might be thinking about it a dog. Dogs have a certain amount of logic. They're smart, but also after a certain point dogs also just have their emotional code, their emotional management.

Can we really hate the puppy that is scared of the staircase because it's an adopted puppy and it had some really unpleasant experiences in staircases previously? Can we really be mad at that puppy or try to get it to just get over itself, fear the staircase and get used to the staircases? Because of course now they're fine in your house or whatever the situation is. Do we force that for the puppy? Do we just try to tell it, It's okay. It's fine. Do it anyway"? Well, if the puppy is so flooded and it's so overwhelming, no, we

got to speak puppy logic. The puppy logic is maybe just coming up to the door to the stairwell and just being there for a while, letting its nervous system attenuate to the fact that it's near the staircase.

It's like exposure therapy. A lot of this work is just emotional exposure therapy. And it's understanding and allowing yourself to come into, well, what specifically if I would like? What was the experience or handful of experiences or beliefs that are feeding into this experience I now have about not feeling so safe at this lower weight, about not feeling safe, about having other people potentially? Usually often comes back to other people maybe having the potential to judge us positively or negatively. Because we exist in these worlds where people do comment on other people's bodies. It's awfully hard to exist in a vacuum where that will never happen.

So it's less about controlling others and controlling the situation, which often not allowing ourselves to lose weight if that is something that we do desire partially. Not allowing ourselves to lose that weight can be coming from a place of control of trying to control the situation. Because when we lose weight and we're in the situation of our current culture where people do comment on it, we only have a couple of options. Allow them to make the comments, tell them what those comments mean to you if you have a relationship, move yourself out of the situation where people are making comments, et cetera.

So when we come into this conversation, I know there's no definitive answer that I'm giving here because I can't. It would not be helpful for anyone if I said, "Oh, when that happens, it means this." When we feel uncomfortable being seen being exposed and that feels more vulnerable, the question becomes why. And the question from there is how can we love that? Like why it is how can we love that? And from there, the question is and what would we like to do with that? And let me just add on that usually when we come into this place of love and curiosity around what's happening. Love and curiosity with the puppy, that usually turns the volume down on the rush and the timeframe that we're putting on ourselves.

When you hang out with the puppy near the staircase and not in the staircase, you actually get to be present with the puppy and that experience that the puppy is actually having. When we turn the volume down on that rat race to get to a certain weight for a certain reason that maybe isn't as life-affirming as other reasons, we're turning the volume down on that chase and the hunt. We're moving from that sympathetic stress motivation into being present in our lives and recognizing what is truly serving us, what is truly surrendering our nervous systems.

And I say nervous system, because y'all, as much as we talk about the brain being different than the body, the brain is still in our bodies. It's still functioning within our bodies. It's still functioning within ourselves so we can have this great intellect, but it's housed within this creature that just wants to be safe. So this is going to be a conversation that comes back into safety. I hope that there were some parts of this episode that not only resonated with you, but that you were able to take away and offer to yourself.

If you've been here for a while, I know that you probably hear me offer like pieces of homework. I want this to be more of an intangible conversation today. It's more of like a pondering, again, that curiosity of just being with ourselves, being with the puppy. This week would you like to be with a puppy, not forcing it to do anything, offering it something that is towards what it might be, but not having to be the thing? When we don't rush the puppy and we allow the puppy to just be, then we can truly experience the full experience of being with that puppy in the moment.

Thank you for such a wonderful question. And I really hope that this episode was helpful as just a doorway into these subjects of where we could go, instead of feeling like it has to be this and that. Make this happen, then that will happen if X then Y. Our humanity is so dang rich, but I think the curiosity and coming into curiosity allowing that to be a safe process without an agenda just getting to be, gosh dang

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it. I think that is one of the most loving things that we can offer to ourselves no matter what. So I hope this episode found you all so well. I hope you get to marinate on some of what was offered here.

If it brings up questions for you, if you journal on some of what these subjects are, if this was compelling to you and you want to share it, go ahead. Let me know that you're doing that. Tag me over on Instagram. Let's be in conversation. I'm here. There's no rush to this. When we're building life, well, we're building it for the purpose of life and that's it. It gets to be so simple. So thank you all and I'll see you all on the next episode.

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