

You're listening to episode 181 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.

All right, welcome people. Today, my friend, we are talking about the holidays. We have to talk about the holidays, because a lot of people will make holiday eating and the holiday season into a way bigger deal than it needs to be, and I want to give you this episode now as we are coming into the thick of the holiday season so that you can make some really clear, good choices, and by "Good," I mean in alignment with what you value and what you desire for yourself, ahead of time, so that you can intentionally move through the holidays and not feel like come January 1st, you have to go die-hard on a really intensive diet to make up and amend for the quote-unquote "Sins" that you committed through the holiday season. And I say this with a laugh, but it's honestly so true that I see people really, really frequently just getting into a tizzy around their eating habits, and what they decide that the season that they're in is how it's going to influence those eating habits.

So here's the first thing I want you to know. Eating during the holidays isn't different, your thoughts are, okay? The holiday season, yes, we're going to have some differences in terms of an increase in social engagements, even if you're already a really social person, of course there's going to be some difference there, there's going to be more cultural norms around more processed foods, of course, of course, of course. These are all givens, we don't have to deny that stuff, but that doesn't mean that your eating is inherently different over the holidays, and if you really break down the holidays that you celebrate, it's only a handful of days across a two-ish month period, okay?

So if you start to feel a lot of feelings, this is what I want you to remember, eating during the holidays isn't different, your thoughts are, and your thoughts create your feelings. So it's those thoughts that are creating the feelings that the holidays are so different than any other time of the year, but let's be onto ourselves here, and listen, we've got to love our brains for the thoughts that they serve us, okay? So this is a judgment-free zone. Of course, based on the culture of dieting that many of us have grown up and in across our lifespans, across the decades, of course it's a given that the cultural norms of how we talk about ourselves in different seasons varies with the seasons. We kind of personalize the seasons, or we make it personal. The seasons change, and then therefore, we must be changing with them.

But you actually get to come into a place where you can ask yourself, "Wait. I'm in charge of the things I do. I'm in charge of how I look at things that are conceptual or real, right? I'm in charge of what I think about a salad, and I'm in charge of what I think about the holidays," which are just a... It's conceptual. The holidays aren't tangible, it's made out of tangible dates, but it's conceptual. So your thoughts about the holidays create feelings that make the holiday season feel really different and separate, and maybe you have some both positive feelings about the holidays, but you also might have negative feelings, you might have negative feelings about yourself during the holidays, so we've got to catch those.

It's like we have a big net and we're going fishing, right? It's like we're scared of the sea, but until we start to fish, we're not going to know what's in the sea, so of course the sea's going to seem weird and we're not sure what's in there. We're not going to be sure what's in there until we cast our net and start to fish and start to notice, "Okay, we've got these little fishies, we've got some of those. These ones, I want to keep on the boat, the other ones, I'm going to toss back into the ocean, no big deal."

So when you're thinking about losing weight and the holidays, okay? Let me make it really clear and really simple. Here are your choices during the holidays. You can choose to lose weight, you can choose to maintain weight, and you can choose to gain weight. Now listen, it's been this way every year, and all

that's different now is that you now have the awareness of this. That's it. It's gone from unintentionally, like not understanding that that's been in your purview, that "Oh, I can lose weight, I can maintain weight, or I can gain weight," and now we're shifting from unintentional into intentional, okay?

So because you've garnered this awareness, I want you to make a decision this week, like actually make the decision, right? Be in an integrity of deciding, "I'm going to try this out after I've thought about, do I want to lose, do I want to maintain, or do I want to gain?" So, make a choice. "Which would I like to do? Why is that?" And now here's the key, "How will I know that I'm doing that?" Because sometimes, our really cute little ocean brains will be like, "I'll choose to lose weight over the holidays."

How many of us have the sneaky thoughts, "Oh, I'm totally going to do that," but then we don't ever take the actions that would support that choice, and we don't even allow ourselves to be aware, AKA be intentional, with making the choice to show up to those actions, so then come the end of the holidays, we're like, "Why didn't I do that?" Or like "I did it for two weeks, and then I fell off the rails, I fell off the wagon," right? "Things got murky. I didn't have choices, I just had to go with the flow." All of those thoughts are reinforcing the idea, "I can't make a choice and stick with it through the holidays," and that is the least empowering thought to be practicing, okay?

You get to decide to make your choice, lose weight, maintain weight, or gain weight, from an empowered place. And if you don't know how to feel empowered around this, I want you to take a moment and think about the last time you did feel empowered. It might have been in school, or maybe there was a work promotion, or maybe there was a time you had... Whatever it is, it can be anything, we don't even care about the tangibles, but usually when I say "Think back to this time," then it can spark the opportunity to be like, "Oh yeah, actually that moment, I did allow myself to feel that experience of empowerment."

So take a moment and think about, "When was the last time I felt empowered?" I want you to imagine that that feeling of empowerment is a blanket, the most beautiful blanket, and I want you to decide that you're going to wrap yourself up in that blanket, it's like your cloak, right? It just gets to cover you, and it is a blanket that feels so wonderful, it's your true empowerment. And I want you to notice as you're wearing your blanket, your cloak, as you're wearing that, your shawl, as you're wearing it, notice how does this feeling of empowerment... "Where is it as I'm enveloped in it? Where is it in my body? What does it feel like? Does it move in my body?" Really getting down into that nitty-gritty of "What is empowerment for me as I'm deciding to put on the feeling of empowerment?"

Because your brain... Let me pause right here and add this little note, your brain might say, "I don't know how to feel empowered. Haven't done that before here. Weight loss and empowerment, or weight maintenance, or weight gain, none of those could be empowering because they've never been empowering before." Great, not a problem, brain. You still, I bet, have had at least one time in your life where you have felt empowered, so we're borrowing the blanket of empowerment from that time and we're putting it on, okay?

So how does it feel when you're wearing the blanket of empowerment? What is its texture? Where do you feel it on your body? Right? What color is that blanket, how do you feel, what's your color from the inside out when you're wearing your blanket of empowerment? What does it sound like, what does it feel like? Really take a moment to get to know that blanket of empowerment, and you're going to be able, the more you practice it, you're going to be able to recruit that feeling of empowerment whenever you would like. So you, for sure, can approach your holiday season from a place of empowerment, because guess what? Your brain might be deciding, "I haven't had enough empowerment to be able to do it here in this realm," and you just get to show it, "Well, of course I can put on my blanket of empowerment around food, I've done it before, I've felt it before." Maybe it's been a while, that's not a

problem. Maybe it was just last week, it's super fresh. All of it is available to you, so it's your choice, just like it's always been.

This holiday season, will you lose, will you maintain, or will you gain? How much specifically week to week? You just get to make your choices, "Will I lose, will I maintain, or will I gain?" And then how will you know? This is why I have my clients use a 24-hour plan in Lean and Liberated, and it's also why I suggest and really support them to utilize using the scale once a day and taking the weekly average, because once you have that information, it's not the information that's motivating you, that's how so many people approach tracking, and that's how so many people approach stepping on the scale, is because they want that number to motivate them, right? Now they're going to have a good day if the scale goes down, or like the day goes to shit if it does something that surprises them, which is usually not going down.

No, we reverse-engineer, we put the batteries in the other way, of saying, "I use information to support me, and I'm taking the actions where I can consistently gather that information," right? You get onto a really rocky precipice if you sometimes hop on the scale and then you sometimes don't, and then you leave it alone for months, and then you hop on again, and you don't know what's going on, or if you're not using the scale, then you say, "Well, I'll wear this... I'll do something," right? "I'll do measurements," and then you don't, or "I'll just go by how I feel."

Well, that's such a risky place to try to create change from, because how we feel is based on what we think. If you're just going to take actions based on how you unintentionally think every day, guess what? Lots of research, lots of studies show that our brains are primed to look for the negative, because they're trying to keep us safe 24/7. So oftentimes, those unintentional thoughts that we just want to default to are going to have more of a negative bias, and there's nothing wrong with that, it's just how many of our brains work. It's how we have evolved, because we've had enough ancestors that have kept themselves safe long enough that they can procreate, and then over time, here we are.

It's worked to their advantage, and we're simply in a time and place where for the most part, the things that stress us out aren't actually life or death, but our brains haven't evolved to get to that point of really being able to take a second, unless we so choose to engage our frontal lobes, unless we so choose to give ourselves a second of really saying, "Is this life or death?" My feelings might make it feel like it is, but I can backtrack and choose an intentional thought that is really actually going to serve me in this moment. And my friend, this is all that weight loss is.

If even the concept of the holidays feels really big for you, just take it one day, one meal at a time. You don't have to worry about what you're eating on New Year's, just decide on this early November day, "Okay, what am I eating at my next meal?" And then you stick with it. "Okay, if I want to lose five pounds over the holidays, how will I know that? What am I using my integrity to make choices on now that's going to show me later on and support myself?" Think about any time you're using a journal, aside from like a brain dump, any time you're using a journal and you're accruing information, you get to use that information to support yourself. This is a very common theme I see with a lot of people, is that they start to weaponize information, right? They use a scale number against themselves, they use data trends against themselves.

But what's funny is when you have the thought, even if it's unintentional, it's subconscious, it's less than conscious, you have the thought like, "Oh my God, the scale means I'm a horrible person," right? We personalize something like the scale number, that thought creates a feeling of like, "I'm only going to be good, I'm only going to be able to trust myself and continue on with my plan if this number is going down." And so we set ourselves up for this really rocky precipice of being like, "If it doesn't go down, that must mean I'm not trustworthy, I can't do this," we have all these thoughts that are created from the feeling of that very initial first thought.

That's why in Lean Liberated, we do this thought work, right? We really break it down into super simple steps, because our brains will so frequently over-complicate things and keep us in the ocean of being like, "I don't know what fish are in this ocean," the fish being your thoughts and feelings. "I don't know which little fishies are in here, that's weird, so I'd rather not know," versus like, "Yeah, I have this net, I can start to explore it. I can just take it one fish at a time, no problem."

When you take weight loss one fish, which is like one scale weight, one meal choice, one time to feel your feelings at a time, you slow it down, it's actually going to speed up your progress. Hear that again, when you slow down the expectation on your weight loss, you slow it down, it speeds it up, because you're making choices from an empowered place, because you're liking your life, and you're co-creating that enjoyment and that ability to hold space for any feelings. Really, weight loss... I really see this time and time again, weight loss becomes simple for the people who are open to feel any feeling. Doesn't mean you have to like and love every single feeling. No, good days and bad days, but are you willing to feel the feelings and be in those present moments?

That's how we then turn something that feels really intangible, like the holidays, and making a choice to show up, like "Oh, what? You're saying I can lose weight, I can maintain weight, I can gain weight during the... I can just make that choice? How do I do that?" We then break it down into those super simple steps. "What would I like to do? How will I know that I'm doing that? And why am I making that choice?" The liberation is that it gets to be a choice that's for you, by you. Don't have to worry about what's on anyone else's plate, you don't have to worry about what other people think, you just get to allow them to lead their lives, and you do that by being the leader who just decides to lead her life, okay?

So, eating during the holidays isn't different, your thoughts about it are, right now. And so these thoughts that've felt really just like factual, have been creating feelings that make the holidays feel really different, and so you've got to go to work. This is where weight loss [inaudible 00:17:50] comes from your mind, and it's so cool. You just get to go to work of showing yourself, "Wait, I'm in the driver's seat here. I'm in charge. I can feel safe with being in charge, and because of this, what would I like to do, why, and how will I know I'm doing that?"

So I hope you have a lovely week this week, I cannot wait for you to have the holiday experience while listening to this podcast. You get to decide to have a different holiday season. It can be as simple as that, right? So just let yourself, this week, let yourself have all the unintentional thoughts, and just see them for what they are, that they're a default, habitual thought that has a negative bias, and that's okay. Once you see it for what it is, you can then so quickly access that state of empowerment, and make your choices, create your thoughts from that place of empowerment, remember the empowerment blanket. "Oh." It gets to be that simple, okay?

So glad you're here, I cannot wait to see you on next week's episode. Remember, you can reach out, you can let me know what's up, we can have a conversation if you're looking to join Lean and Liberated, and you want to have support that is personal, and you want to be in the community as well so that you always have, 24/7, you have access to coaching so that you're supported every step of the way in your weight loss, get at me, and we will make it happen. Bye. Did you know you can find more support from me on my website? Go to luciahawley.com, L-U-C-I-A-H-A-W-L-E-Y.com to connect.