

You're listening to Episode 191 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 hope your weeks have been going really, really well. Mine has. We've been getting peaks of blue skies here in Portland. We also, with where I live in Portland, we've been getting a lot of fog, which isn't uncommon, but foggy days where the fog doesn't really lift. And if it does lift it lifts at like 3:00 instead of 8:00 AM. And it's been very dreamy. I still feel like I'm new to Portland, even though come August, I'll have lived here for four years, which it's absolutely mind blowing.

So today on the podcast, what I've had this example in my head for months, if not like half a year, maybe a year, but like a year ago, it was like not well formed, but now it is well formed and it is so simple. So what I'm going to be talking about, and what I really want you to be thinking about this week, is allowing weight loss to be simple.

And you know, if you listen to the show, that the majority of the time weight loss is an emotion thing that needs some support versus solely and only a physical thing. Because when we drill down into the tangibles of weight loss and barring anyone who is taking medications that shift how their bodies work or barring anyone who needs medical attention first to help balance something in their bodies, right? Like a thyroid concern, adrenal concern, a medical condition, a diagnosis, right? Barring a lack of support for all of that. So you've gotten your support for your things, or you don't have those things.

Weight loss really boils down to eating plenty of naturally unprocessed filling foods so that your hunger and your satisfaction are natural and regulated, right? Because it's really easy for our hunger and our satisfaction to feel off kilter when we're consuming more unprocessed foods.

That's the only reason really, really it's the only reason why unprocessed foods are not so useful during a weight loss attempt and weight loss, maintenance, meaning for the most part, most people tend to do pretty well with not emphasizing processed foods and with emphasizing highly unprocessed foods, meaning eating lots of unprocessed, nutrient dense, fiber rich, water rich, fruit carbohydrate rich, fat rich unprocessed foods. Okay?

So we know that when it comes to weight loss, and then the way that we lose weight is that you understand, oh, in general, this is what my appetite feels like. I like to eat until a certain level of satisfaction. And I like to get hungry until a certain level of hunger. And the hunger is the physical hunger, not the brain hunger, and more processed foods, really like to light up our brain hunger areas versus our body hunger areas.

Again, just making the case here for why in general, you'll find that a commonality between any sort of dietary attempt is eat plenty of vegetables, eat a nice amount of protein, and have some carbohydrates. And from there, your body is feeling more regulated, more balanced. And so get a nice amount of physical movement.

In that physical movement there will be some cardiovascular expenditure and exercise and as well there will be some forms of movement that will also challenge your muscles. There you go. You're getting cardio and you're getting strength training. That is the too long don't read with the physical part of weight loss, but how many of us, and how culturally common is it, that we make all that very, very confusing and very, very overwhelming?

We eat the clean foods. We don't eat the clean foods. Some clean foods are okay. Some aren't. We stay so far away and we restrict 24/7, all of these delicious, fun, more inventive, processed foods. And then emotionally, we feel crushed. We feel bankrupt. If something feels like it dips our cup to be too low and we feel like the only thing that comforts us is food. What do we do? We go running towards those foods that are more processed. And we start to reinforce this codependent habit we have with foods. And we also then, because of that codependent relationship, also feel like we don't tend to have a great relationship with ourselves. And we blame ourselves. And we personalize all of these actions that we're taking to make us and ourselves out to be bad things and bad people.

What the heck? Did that feel confusing and overwhelming? Because it felt confusing and overwhelming to me. And I know it feels confusing and overwhelming to a lot of my clients. So today I want to talk about dogs because I think this would be a great visual for anyone who notices that their brain starts to go down that path of making the tangibles of weight loss really complicated. I want you to think about how you would support whether you're... Okay, if you're not a dog person, then it's going to be a cat, right? Either a cat or a dog, but I'm going to talk about it in terms of dogs today.

How would you with your dog or a dog, if someone gave you a dog, you were a foster for a dog, and this dog, the previous owners overfed the dog and the dog was overfed to a certain level that its quality of life was no longer the quality of life that its owners wanted for it. Or that in general, from a scientific standpoint, it would have a comfortable life experience. Okay? So it's not just a couple pounds over weight. It's gotten to a level where that weight is making it challenging. It's making the weight on its joints and its hips more difficult. It's not as inclined to run around. It's feeling very focused on its food on its treats.

Let's say that you were the foster owner for this dog. You have the dog for a couple of months. And so you are in charge of how to help this dog start to lose weight and come back to a body composition that is more supportive for its entire life. And for its desires in its little doggy life.

You as a foster owner, probably wouldn't put that dog on a really intensive crash diet. I'm going to bet, let's say you love this dog. You want it to have a nice experience while it's living with you in his foster home, how would you help that dog lose weight?

Here's what I'm going to bet you would say, "I would reduce its food intake." And by how much? "Oh, I would reduce his food intake, not too much, it wouldn't be too severe, but to a nice amount every day. Might not lose weight as quickly, but that's okay because we want the dog to be comfortable. Its doing something new." So you would reduce its food intake by not too much and not too little. And you would know that it's that not too much, not too little point because you would consistently allow that food intake to be at that place. And then you would start to consistently track that dog's rate of progress.

And of course there will be behavioral components to that progress, which will talk about in a moment. But if you wanted a really tangible data point, you would weigh the dog. And that dog's weight wouldn't be the only way for you to gauge whether it's having success at eating less food. You would also be looking at those behavioral components, is the dog starting to naturally move a bit more during the day? Is the dog playing with his toys more? Is the dog coming over for pets and not just pets for treats? Because probably by feeding that dog more consistently less food, but not too few foods.

You'd also probably start to notice that maybe a behavioral component that the old owners had with the dog, that the dog got treats a lot of the time. And what do we know about doggy treats? Maybe they're less nutritious than the doggy meal food? Maybe they have a different ratio of nutrients than the dog food. Okay, that's fine. But what do we also know about the treat? It's delicious. It's fun. It makes for a special moment with a dog, but perhaps the old owners were giving that dog a lot of treats, human food, or doggy treats so frequently that that treat no longer became a treat. It became a given.

And because that treat was such a given the dog's behaviors changed. The dog became hyper motivated by the treats because they skewed its hunger and satisfaction levels. And the dog became disinterested in other activities because of that hyper pleasure it was deriving from a constant trickle of treats.

So while you have the foster dog, you don't say, "This dog will never have a treat again." Instead you say, "Okay, the dog is going to have these consistent meals and the dog can have consistent treats too, but we're going to down regulate the frequency of the treat, so that the dog can have other life experiences that it can derive pleasure from that isn't solely the treat." What might those be? Oh, going for walks. Oh, learning new tricks. Oh, bonding with its owners or its foster parents. Oh, playing with other dogs, resting, doing nothing. All of those are appropriate for the dog too.

And all of those can come in balance with the dog when the treats aren't taken away for forever. But they're simply regulated. Whether that's a daily treat or even less frequent, maybe every other day, every couple a day treat. Because a dog's body will know what to do with that. It'll allow itself to self-regulate that much further.

Okay. So now this dog is eating consistent meals and it's having a treat that's more aligned with the true term and idea of the word treat, less consistently, but still with some consistency, just not as frequent. And now because of this and the dog, its weight is being tracked. So there's an awareness of how just that alone is influencing the dog's weight. Now, all we have to do from that tangible standpoint is leverage time because in that gentle caloric deficit, that dog, all it needs is time in order for the weight to come off.

What the dog doesn't need are days where the calorie intake is really, really high because it's deciding to eat the treats again. Or the foster parents feel bad because there is a change occurring. Really think about it. If you were fostering a dog and you gave it a gentle caloric deficit versus saying, "Oh, this dog's only getting five pieces of kibble a day until it loses the weight because it's been so bad." The dog wouldn't really have a big problem. It might notice like, "Oh, things they're a little different, but okay. I'm still getting plenty of my food here." Guess what happens from there?

As you're the foster parent, who's taking care of this dog from this really loving, beautiful place, the dog actually gets to increase its feelings of enjoyment in its life. Why? Because as that weight is coming off, it's true that it's going to feel easier for that dog to do things like go on walks, to run up to you and say, "Hi! Hey, play with me!" You might even start to see that that dog grabbed his own toys to play with. It's going to notice because, dogs are very smart that if the only thing in life, isn't just the kibble and the treats, ah, now it has opportunity to get creative.

It's going to engage. It's going to perk up. And as the weight is coming off, it might feel easier and more attainable for that to happen. So instead of running that dog on a track to lose weight really quickly, eating five pieces of kibble every day. Instead as this foster parent, you'd probably say, "Let me make walks enjoyable. It's good for its health." But that's not really the reason we do it. We do it because that makes the life well lived for this dog. I want you to hear that. The dog gets to go on walks, not just for daily exercise. Sure, that can be part of it. But the dog goes on walks because it's part of a life well lived.

What else does a dog get? Oh, as its foster parent, okay, you give it time outside because it's a creature in nature. And that is like, oh, the healing aspect of nature in and of itself, nature is our mom, right? The dog gets to meet other dogs, if that's appropriate for it. The dog gets to hang out with you, maybe with other people, with your family members, it gets to be a part of a community. It doesn't want those treats as much. Sure, they're delicious. It's not going to turn down a treat, but maybe it's so excited to see you that it doesn't care whether there's a treat involved or not, because it feels safe. And it knows it gets to go on daily walks and knows it gets outside. It knows that that isn't just to be a better dog. It's just to allow the dog to be a dog.

And through that process, the dog loses weight. It's not about being skinny to look like a skinny dog. It's about the life that is more lived through the process of self-regulation. In this case guided by a foster dog parent.

So what did you think of that example? Can you use that example anytime this week, your brain wants to get diety and can you set yourself free from the diets? Can you focus on one thing this year of saying, "My only job for myself this year is to be done with dieting. And if I ever get confused, I will take care of myself the way I would take care of a foster dog. It will be from such a loving place that there's no way I can get this wrong."

I really want you to think about that this week, because that is how the diets dissolve, my friends. Diets don't dissolve by just deciding that not doing a diet is just another diet and it's hard and fast rules, but the diet does end through consistent structure. You know, there's a difference between being gentle with yourself and being permissive with yourself or being passive with yourself.

So this week from your place of self compassion, from your well of self love, which is there and it's beautiful and it grows every day. You get to allow yourself the opportunity to say, "Oh, when in doubt, how would I take care of a foster dog? How would I love that dog and allow it to live more of a life, knowing it is so worthy of my love and affection? It is so worthy of compassion for exactly where it is today in this moment."

That's what I want you to be thinking about this week. So I hope you all have a great week. I will see you on next week's episode. Bye.

Did you know you can find more support from me on my website? Go to [luciahawley.com](http://luciahawley.com) to connect.