

You are listening to Episode 200 of the Mindfulness-Based Weight Loss podcast. Welcome to the Mindfulness-Based Weight Loss podcast, the show for women like you, who have tried restrictive, diet after diet, and are ready for simple, thoughtful solutions to help you sustainably 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 mindfully, on your terms, while losing weight in the process, you're in the right place.

Party people. Did you notice anything different around here? I feel like I just painted my house, like I painted my house really quietly. And now I've invited you over for dinner, and I'm just waiting for you to notice what ... and tell me what you think about the new paint color because I love it.

I renamed the podcast, and I have been so excited to share, and it just feels like a really sweet, kind of homecoming. We're always growing and developing, and I loved the name devoured for so long. And then it got to a point where I was like, "I don't love this anymore. I don't dislike it. There's no all-or-nothing, but I think there could be a name that's more aligned with what we do around here," and, hence, the Mindfulness-Based Weight Loss podcast.

If you're one of my Lean and liberated clients, you know that's exactly what we do. Lean and Liberated is a self-awareness program. It's a program that helps you tune into your mindfulness around the foods that you choose, around the habits that you have, past, present, and future. It gets to be so ridiculously simple.

So, for Episode 200, I thought what better way than to recap the process for losing weight with love. And listen, plug-and-play weight loss, with whatever goals you have, how we do one thing is how we do a whole lot of other things, how you eat. And this is a quote from Geneen Roth, "How you eat is how you live." And I so believe that, even on the differences, day to day.

So, I'm excited to jump into today's subject. And I wanted to tell you a six-step process that we do in Lean and Liberated. As you know, I even chatted about this last week with my client, Angela, who was mentioning. She was like, "I really value transparency."

And I was like, "Oh, me too." I love transparency with every post I write, whether it is a tweet that I'm taking a screenshot of and then putting on Instagram or a longer format post on Facebook or a really quick and snappy TikTok video, I'm always trying to be very transparent about how simple it is to lose weight.

And I don't want you to mix up simpleness with easy because those are both different. They do coexist. There can be simple and easy processes, but the way we make something easy is that we practice it simply. That makes a lot of sense. Right? Think about how you learned to brush your teeth or how you learned to do math or how you learned to ride a bike. You likely did not learn to ride a bike the day that you were doing a triathlon. That could be simple, but it's hard.

Really, when you start off learning a new skill and a habit, which is all that weight loss and weight maintenance is, it's just a different skill than the skills you've been practicing before. All that you have to do is on-ramp yourself into awareness of what it is you have been doing.

So, part of that process, I just want to ... I'll read through the six steps, and then I'll get into each one of them individually. Okay?

So, here's the six-step process that my clients use in Lean and Liberated. And it's what we talk about here on the podcast, in all of its different iterations. There's always, gosh, so much to say about each of the six steps.

So, number one, you plan your meals with foods that serve you. Number two, you eat when you're hungry, and you stop when you're satisfied. Number three, you follow through on your plan that you

made in step one. Number four, you evaluate how your plan went. Number five, you feel your feelings. And number six, which is really like a recap. It almost isn't its own step, but we're going to add it in for clarity. You practice and create this, those first five steps, as your habit.

So, let me go through each one individually. Step number one, you plan your meals with foods that serve you. What does it mean to have a food that serves you? Well, what I like to say, and what I like to offer to people, is that any food can serve you. Really, if we make all foods neutral, no matter their vitamin amount, their mineral amount, their protein count, their carb count, the total grams of fat that's in them, all foods are neutral.

And, so, once you become comfortable with that truth, that foods are just foods, right? Foods are objective. What makes them subjective is how we are in relationship to certain foods. So, when you first come into the space of planning your meals with foods that serve you, it's very common that the phrase "Foods that serve me" will bring up a lot of emotions. Those emotions are most often rooted in thoughts and beliefs that you have about yourself. You might have them about your body. You might have them about how you act around foods. You might have them from other people, stories that have been given to you by media, by loved ones, historically, or in the present moment.

It's almost like when you decide to plan your meals, and what we do in Lean and Liberated, is that you plan your meals the night before or the morning of. You just decide, and then you start to practice that.

What you start to find is that the food part is pretty darn simple. We all know some basic truths of food. For the most part, in general, eating a variety of foods from unprocessed to processed is a pretty great way to do things, but the specificity of how to do that becomes highly individual. Now, that's why, and you've heard me talk about core values on the podcast, that's why we utilize and leverage your understanding and rooting into your core values, so that you start to see, "Oh, of course, chocolate cake can serve me. Of course, kale can serve me. In what ways do I value how these foods and any other foods work for me and with me, in conjunction with how it is I enjoy being in my life?"

That alone, that first step right there, is a huge part of the liberation. You're making intentional choices, right? And it's intentional because you're taking the time ahead of eating to just sit and think, "Well, what would I eat on a day that I'm deciding to do intentionally?"

That will always, if nothing else, making an intentional choice for yourself, will always turn the volume down on diet culture, because what is diet culture? Diet culture are the thoughts and opinions of other people. So, utilizing your lived experience by just deciding, "Okay, diet culture says, 'I don't know how to feed myself.' I get to turn that on its head and say, 'What is it that I do know today? I get to eat well today. How do I define well for myself?'" That is the very first process that we root into. Okay?

Number two, you eat when you're hungry, and you stop when you're satisfied. Now, again, this step we'll bring up emotions. Sometimes, people have emotions around feeling hunger. Sometimes, people will have emotions around feeling satisfaction. Sometimes, people have feelings around themselves being in charge of hunger and of their satisfaction.

Well, what do we know about the human body? It is normal to become hungry before your meals. It's physiologically normal, physiologically helpful, to experience feeling hungry. There might be a lot of thoughts and feelings that come up around that but, at the very foundation, that's true. Right? Because hunger is different than starvation.

So, very often, it's really common that we have to unpack a relationship with our own hunger. Are we in relationship with our hunger, first and foremost? What I mean by that is, do you allow yourself to experience hunger? Sometimes, people experience a lot of hunger throughout the day, and then they experience a lot of physiological signals that then guide them to overcompensate and eat quite a large amount of food at the end of the day.

So, some people are very familiar with their hunger. Other people are eating with frequency and might not feel as much hunger, but might be more curious about what it means to feel satisfied because, just like that step, that first step, plan your meals with foods that serve you, your satisfaction is up to you. You define, as you start to explore, "What is it that satisfaction feels like for me?"

Now, one note I want to add in, is that both hunger and satisfaction, they both occur across a spectrum. When we're in tune with foods that serve our bodies, how we want them to be serving us, hunger comes on gradually. Hunger is a question, not a statement. And same with satisfaction, I almost think of one ... either like bell curve or just one numbered spectrum. We have hunger towards the left. I get more hungry, as I go a longer time away from food. And on the other side, as I start to eat food, I gradually experience more satisfaction.

So, the beautiful part is that you are in charge of when you decide to eat, at what level of hunger feels liberating for you to choose to eat. And then, on the flip side, at what level of satisfaction is it liberating for you to have your meals come to an end?

That, right there, in and of itself, is a huge practice because, as you'll find, as many people do, it gets to be, I'll say this word again, simple, but you might notice that there's variation because you are not a robot, my friend.

You might notice, this is a common one for plenty of my clients. A lot of my clients are ... they menstruate. Right? They have a monthly cycle. And, so, many of my clients find, "Oh, the week before my cycle, I notice my hunger and satisfaction change." And what's interesting is, the more they allow it to be okay, that hunger and satisfaction change, usually what they experience is that they feel more hungry, and it takes more food to feel satisfaction than other times of the month, the more they normalize that for themselves, right, that their body's not sending them bad signals, is totally normal. The more they're then able to be in relationship with the feelings that arise, versus trying to use willpower to white-knuckle through eating the same amount of food every single day of the month and on and on and on.

So, you eat when you're hungry, and you stop when you're satisfied. You define your hunger and your satisfaction because you're working with your body.

Number three, you follow through on your plan. This is another really key process that I find for cultivating that mindfulness with your relationship to food. Now, again, when you're following through on your plan, what this actually boils down to, is you being in intention with what you say you're going to do. You use your journal to make your meal the night before or the morning of, and then, because you made a choice and a plan, you then follow through on it.

This is, coupled with the next step of evaluating how your plan went, such a powerful combination that, in essence, completely dissolves any need for dieting, because remember, dieting is taking you outside of your body and its wisdom. Right? For some people, they find a diet plan, and it helps them tune in to their bodies more. Awesome. That might not be as much of a diet for them as it is for someone else.

Very frequently, I also think that a lot of diets for people aren't diets for other people. It's just a eating plan that really worked for someone else. They wanted to shout it from the rooftops. And what happened? Well, they're an individual, just like everyone else, so it doesn't really apply to every single other person.

So, by following through on your plan, in conjunction with the fourth step of evaluating how your plan went, you then get to edit and refine your deep knowing of yourself. Because when you follow through on your best guess, right? Making your plan in your journal is your best guess for the day, like, "Oh, this is what I want to eat. And I know why because I'm being intentional in this moment as I'm planning it out."

When you follow through on that plan, you get to have clear information that you've offered yourself, instead of unclear or kind of muddled information. So, with that clear information, you're then able to leverage it, and you're able to then evaluate because you chose to stay in integrity with your word to yourself. You're able to see with clarity, "Oh. Well. I really wanted a snack yesterday, but I didn't plan one in. So, I went to work, of just allowing myself to have a day where I didn't have a snack because I didn't plan it in, and tomorrow, because I've done this work, I now get to offer myself the chance to have a snack and follow through on that."

And in this daily journal, there's also a weekly Week in Review page. And it's at that week in review that you really get to give yourself time, time to sit back and think, "All right. Now that I have, in clarity, chosen, in this example, to have a snack on days and to have a snack ... and to not have a snack on other days, but I stuck with my plan for those days, now I have even more information," versus "I've got to have a snack. It's not on my plan and having the snack anyway."

Now, listen. This is only an example. It literally doesn't even have to be eat a snack. Again, snacks, just like meals, it's all neutral. Hear me roar with that. The foods themselves, what you choose, it's all neutral. You likely will experience different experiences, reactions, to different foods, to different meal times, to different beverages, right? But the way that you utilize that information gets to be the way that you want to feel at the end of your goal weight.

And this is something I repeat to my clients a lot. I know I repeat it on this podcast a lot, but it's because it's such valuable information. If how you do one thing is how you do pretty much everything, then how you lose weight is how you will maintain that weight loss.

So, it's almost like, I think, very often, when people are dieting, which means that they're doing a kind of a crash, often very low-calorie, without awareness, low-calorie diet, that they have to push through, white-knuckle through, what they're teaching themselves is just push through to get to the other side. But they're never really practicing what's on that other side. And that, in and of itself, reinforces, in essence, like a yo-yo-ing of weight, a yo-yo-ing of experience.

So, to put the batteries in the other way would be to say, "Oh, if I want to be able to eat the foods I love and maintain weight, if I want be able to make choices that build me up, instead of tear me down and maintain my weight, I actually have to practice that part first before the weight loss comes."

And then, as the weight loss comes, and then before the maintenance comes, and then as the maintenance comes, it's a really big reason in why I shifted the name of this podcast, the Mindfulness-Based Weight Loss podcast, because I think it is that mindfulness of what we're doing here.

And sometimes it makes it like a little bit existential, but I think that's a good thing because when something is existential, it slows us down. We stop trying to go hard and fast. And instead, we put ourselves in the driver seat, and we say, "Oh, how do I want this experience to go?" That gets to be your choice.

So, we've gone through four steps so far. You plan your meals with foods that serve you. You eat when you're hungry, and you stop when you're satisfied. You follow through on your plan. And then you evaluate how your plan went and tweak as needed, based on the evidence that you're accruing.

Step five, is that you feel your feelings. And now this step is a very pivotal step because, really, this step could be in every single other step, but I put it at the end because feeling your feelings is likely going to be one of the newer experiences, as you are creating this mindful weight loss experience for yourself, and then, later on, a mindful weight loss maintenance experience.

And, so, what I mean by feeling your feelings is that, as you start to practice awareness of, "Well, what have I been doing?" Right? "How do my days go? What do I think of that? How would I like my days to

be like? How would I like my relationship with food to be? How do I want to feel in my body? How do I feel right now in my body?"

As the questions come up, in those first four steps, the difference between reacting to what you learn. Right? Difference between reacting to your hunger, reacting to your satisfaction, reacting to writing down choices for yourself, reacting to having to make a choice for yourself, the difference between reacting and reflecting is feeling your feelings because, nine out of 10 times, the reason that we default into being reactionary, right, eating when we're not hungry, of choosing a food that sounds good in the moment, even though in the long term, we also know that it actually doesn't feel so good or whatever it might be, all it is a difference of one feeling.

So, to begin to create your practice of what it means for you to embody, "Oh, I'm going to be in my meat suit, as I'm a human. I'm going to sit and feel the feeling all the way through, instead of beginning to feel a feeling, and then diverting my attention to numb myself from the feeling, or to buffer the feeling, or to just distract myself from the feeling to go feel other feelings."

When you start to shift these habits from being reactionary into reflective, over time, you start to model to yourself from the inside out, "Oh, I have the capacity to feel my feelings with loving awareness."

And I want to remind you that feelings, in general, when you're actually experiencing the wave of a feeling, most of us feel it for a couple of seconds, and then we go do something else, whether we know it or not. But the feeling itself, if we were to actually just hold through the entirety of the feeling, the highs of it, the lows of it, whatever we think it might be or know it is, that feeling, for the most part, is just about a two-minute ride, because feelings are simply chemical flushes through our bodies. Our bodies are not going to put that chemical flush through and through and through and through and through and through and through and through and through and through. It's going to stop at some point. It might not feel like it will ever stop, but I would bet that's because you aren't fully feeling the feeling.

And, so, that brings me to the next point, not the next step, but my next point, about feeling your feelings, which is that it is a practice of safety. So, we don't want you to feel your feelings if they feel like they're going to be overwhelming to you. Now, that's a feeling, but hang tight with me.

So, you practice feeling your feelings across the broad spectrum. I think very often when I say, "Okay, feel your feelings," people take that to mean, "Oh my God, I have to feel the shitty ones that I've been defaulting away from." Right? "I have to feel anxious. I have to feel overwhelmed. I have to feel this or that. I have to feel angry. I don't have time for that. I have a day job. I have kids. I have a life." Right? "I can't feel my feelings because I have a life," which is ironic, but that's how our brains work.

So, yes, while you will, at some point, likely find benefit from feeling those feelings that we would generally describe as feeling more negative, even though they also are neutral.

What I want to offer to you today, if this is a subject you're newer to, or if you're not, just as a reminder to you, feeling your feelings includes those feelings that feel a little more negative, to also the grand spectrum of feeling the positive feelings. Very frequently, if someone is afraid of feeling their anxiety, they're afraid of feeling their joy. If someone is overwhelmed by sadness, they're likely overwhelmed by happiness too, because how we do one thing is how we do a whole lot of other things.

Our brain only has a certain amount of processes. I think of a computer, even though I just said we're not robots, but I think of a computer or programming language, right? We have just a couple of if-then statements. "If this happens, then I do that. If I feel a feeling, da, da, da." You catch my drift?

So, you feel your feelings because feelings occur across an entire spectrum. Some might be more practiced. Some might be less practiced, but the only way we start to know more about our feelings,

right? If you fully feel your anxiety, I have a feeling it's not going to feel as overwhelming as it actually feels to half feel anxiety and then to go do something else. Same with the positive feelings.

So, follow through on your plan, you evaluate how your plan went, and then you feel your feelings throughout that process.

Then, the capstone step of this simple six-step process, is that you practice and create this as your habit. This is how you dissolve diets. And dissolving diets is an inside-out, you-first occurrence. It has to start with you before it can reverberate and resonate and truly, authentically, help other people.

So, I want to encourage you, this week, if there's part of this process that you'd like to explore, I welcome you to take everything that I just shared and give it a go. The beautiful part of stepping away from dieting and, really, of course, this podcast is for people who want to lose weight, but the principles, they kind of apply to most things. You could apply this to finances, to careers, to parenting, to ... Oh gosh, just so many different facets of life. Right?

If we have the privilege of being able to have this awareness of, "Oh, I'm in a place of my life where my basic needs are met, now what would I like to do to move to that next place that I'm desiring?" Right? That's where you get to utilize really simple strategies elegantly. And just like riding a bike, you're going to fall down the first few times you do it. And that's why you wear a helmet. Maybe you need some knee pads and elbow pads too. Doesn't mean anything's gone wrong when you fall off the bike, or you kind of get off course on the curb, or you sway, and you feel off balance. That is part of riding a bike. It is part of that experience.

So, with weight loss, feeling your feelings, right? Having a day that feels, let's say, more simple than another day, is part of the process. It literally means that the process is happening. Same with using the scale, of seeing that scale number, having a relationship with it. Same with digging into, "God, what is it that I value with my food? Do I value ease? Do I value convenience? Do I value flavor? Do I value making meals at home? Do I value having meals prepared?"

Values can mean so many different things when it comes to how you're in relationship with your food. And that is the core of weight loss, because then it's just a lever of up and down with the food, but it starts with a relationship.

So, thank you for listening to Episode 200 of the Mindfulness-Based Weight Loss podcast. I'm so happy you are here, and I just cannot wait for the next 200. So, I'll see you next week. Have so much fun. Until then, you get to take this information and do with it what you please. So, I encourage you to do that this week, and I'll see you then. Bye.

Hey, if you loved today's show, I'd love for you to take a minute and give a rating with a review. If you, too, are ready for more women to make life choices from loving mindfulness, that means we need more women listening to this message, so they know it's available to them, and they can do it too.

And if you are ready yourself, come join Lean and Liberated, where we'll work together, and you'll learn how to take this process to the next level in your weight loss goals, life desires, and beyond. Go to [luciahawley.com](http://luciahawley.com). That's L-U-C-I-A H-A-W-L-E-Y.com to connect.