

Done with Dieting Podcast #30: It All Adds Up



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With your Host
Elizabeth Sherman

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You are listening to the Done with Dieting Podcast Episode number 30.

Hi, I'm Elizabeth Sherman, former corporate high tech executive turned life and weight loss coach. But it wasn't that long ago that I was searching for that perfect diet, the one that would finally be the golden ticket to lose the weight that I so desired.

Fast forward past tons of failed diet attempts, exercise fads and painful lessons learned, and although I still have not reached the state of Nirvana, body love, my relationship with food exercise in my body is infinitely better than it was not only when I started this journey, but even as recently as three years ago.

The journey that has allowed me to ditch my scale, stop logging my food and exercise, eat food that I didn't prepare and easily maintain my weight - something that I never thought was possible for me.

I created the Done with Dieting podcast to give you simple, easy to do and sustainable strategies to help you do the same without all of the drama that I went through.

If you're a woman who's looking to create a better relationship with food and her body, get off the diet roller coaster and free up a bunch of headspace spent on calories, how you should look what you should eat and beating yourself up for not doing what you think you should be doing. You are in the right place.

Let's get started.

Hello everyone and welcome to episode 30.

I know, can you believe that I have been doing this for almost six months? It just seems like time has gone by and what's constantly amazing to me is how much I have to talk about every single day, I keep adding things to my Trello board.

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I use this tool called Trello, which keeps track of everything that I've talked about and everything that I want to talk about. And I have so many guests that I want to have on the show, and I have so many things that I need to talk to you about still.

So, I really can't believe just how quickly this time has gone by and how effortless almost this podcast has been, because it has been a lot of work. But it's also been just an amazing experience for me. And I have met so many amazing women from all over the globe who are listening, shout out to all of you!

Today, I'm combining a couple of different episodes. The topic that I want to talk to you about today is one that I've talked about, but never exactly in this way before. And so, I'm actually combining a few different episodes that I've released before. But, putting them together in a way that hopefully lands a bit better for you, especially if you're someone who struggles with all, or nothing thinking, black or white thinking, or needing to do things perfectly.

So, in episode 12 of the done with dieting podcast, I talked about something called B minus habits. And the idea is that we don't have to do things perfectly, that we can lean into healthier habits.

And what is so incredibly funny about this idea is that, when I talk to my clients about this idea of leaning into habits of; being okay with being bad at it; or not being A plus, doing things at a B minus level; my clients get this like almost guttural reaction, like "oh, there's no way that I could possibly do that Elizabeth."

And so, if you've been listening to this podcast, you know that my husband and I are learning Spanish. We've been taking a bit of a break due to sheltering in place and the pandemic. But we've recently started talking about beginning again. And I love using Spanish, my Spanish as an analogy, or as a vehicle to explain health habits. Because what is happening in my brain when it comes to learning Spanish is what happened in my

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brain when I was trying to adopt healthier habits and what I see happen with so many of my clients.

So, it's the same thing, whether we're trying to learn a foreign language; and so, it's the same exact thing; whether we're trying to eat better, or whether we're trying to communicate in a foreign language.

And, what's interesting about watching my own brain when I'm trying to speak Spanish is that I actually find myself resistant to speaking Spanish around folks who are bilingual.

So, if I'm talking to someone or if I'm near someone who speaks Spanish and English better than I speak Spanish. Then, I have a really hard time allowing myself to speak Spanish in front of them because I feel like I can't do it perfectly and I'll make mistakes.

And at this point, I can't really laugh at my own mistakes. It just feels too vulnerable and I'm afraid of their judgment. Even though I know that they're probably in their head just cheering me on, like, "Yey Elizabeth, you just said something," and it actually made sense.

So even though, I know that if I just tried, I would become more proficient and get better at speaking Spanish; then if I don't try, which is what I'm currently doing, which is not trying. And so, it doesn't make any sense when I think about it rationally, that doing something; speaking some of the time is better than not speaking, right? Because then, I'm at least practicing.

Now, when we think about learning Spanish, no one would ever expect that you would be fluent in a short amount of time. We all know that we're going to make mistakes; that we won't know all the words; and that over time we will build up the skill of not only speaking and communicating what we want or need. But then, also being able to listen and understand, which is an entirely other skill.

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So funny when we moved here, they teach you how to say, where's the bathroom, right? (*Donde esta el baño*). But they don't prepare you for when someone says back to you in Spanish; it's down the hall turn right and go up the stairs; so, you have to that stuff out, you have to be able to listen and understand and be able to convert that in another way.

But when it comes to eating differently or exercising, we have this thought that we can't allow ourselves to be a beginner. Even though we've never been where we want to be. It's like, "oh, I can't do things half-assed I need to go all in."

But here's the thing, we need to allow ourselves to be beginners because that's where we are. We need to accept where we are so that we can be better.

Now, I know that your brain is probably coming up with all of these reasons of why Spanish is totally not the same as health. But I'm going to argue that it absolutely is, because it's training your brain to think differently; to be willing to be uncomfortable and be willing to make mistakes.

Because when we're doing something new, it's literally impossible to do things perfectly. And yet somehow, we have this expectation that we need to be perfect. And so, when it comes to speaking Spanish, I can lean into it by speaking Spanglish, right? By interspersing Spanish words and English words.

But when it comes to eating and exercise, we can lean into it by doing what we know; by being better than where we currently are. But for many of us, when we think about leaning into it, we have this idea that, "anything worth doing is worth doing well," right? Which then keeps us from doing it at all because we're not doing it well, it's an old adage.

But when it comes to our health; when it comes to diet and exercise; and becoming healthier and losing weight; our bodies are actually pretty resilient. And we should know that, because there was a time in my life where I lived on eating ramen noodles and burger king.

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So, if I didn't die from that or have any long lasting health effects from it, we know that we can throw pretty much anything added to a point, right? Because eventually our body isn't going to thrive when we're giving it foods that have of little or no nutritional value.

And what's interesting about that is that when I talk to my clients about perfection or all or nothing, they will often tell me, "yeah, I know this doesn't serve me, I know this thinking; this black and white thinking, or this all or nothing thinking doesn't serve me."

But I still need to do it, I feel compelled to be perfect that the idea of doing something at a B minus level doesn't work for me. And I want to call "bullshit" on that because that is just your brain being mean to you. It's the head trash monster, right?

And so, how I pivoted in this idea and what I want to present to you today is talking to them more about the today's topic, which is the idea that something is better than nothing, or it all adds up.

So, what does that mean? I want to take a minute though first and talk about doing quote unquote it perfectly and how that's just our brains playing tricks on us.

So, we have this idea of whatever perfection is and whenever we decide that we need to do it right, or we need to do it good enough, or we need to do it perfectly. And all of those words are in quotation marks, right? So, doing it right, good enough, and perfectly, it's an opportunity for us to reflect on what exactly does that mean?

What does doing it right mean, or what does good enough mean, or what does perfectly mean? And who decided what right is, or enough, or perfect? And I think that what happens is we observe other people in what they're doing. And we're only with other people, like even our partners or our kids we're not with them 100% of the time.

And so, we only have this small viewpoint into what it is that they're doing. But we think that small viewpoint is them 100% of the time. So, we're comparing ourselves to an idea

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of what other people are doing. But, when you think about it, typically we hear about people who exercise for an hour. Who decided that an hour was the appropriate time to work out? Or that we even have to do the same amount every single day.

When I was in the middle of my over-exercising phase, I would plan out that I would go for a run. I'd figure out when I needed to do it and how long I was going to go for. Because I liked running, but I wasn't really accountable to anyone. I would put her around the house and procrastinate because it was just easier to put it off.

And as I did that, I would watch the clock tick by, and I would get more and more anxious because I knew that I wanted to go for a run still. But that I had this hard stop; this time that I needed to be showered & dressed, and either ready to go to work, or an appointment, or whatever.

And I am the same way today, I hate to say it, but I don't love exercising. I do it every day because I've come to peace with it being something that I just do. And I don't really think much about it anymore. But I love exercising does for me. I love the way that I feel afterwards, and I love feeling strong and I love not having as many aches and pains because I have muscles and all of that great stuff.

But, when I'm exercising, I'm constantly looking at how much time I have left on the clock. Or I'm asking myself, should I stop, or can I keep going? And so, anyway, I just wanted to let you know that I still procrastinate exercising, almost every single day.

But back then, when I would want to go for an hour run, I would look at the clock and I'd think to myself, like if I had pattered around too long, I would think, "oh, well I only have half an hour left; I guess I can't go for that run anymore; I guess I can't go for that run that I'd planned today, and now it's just not worth it."

And so then of course the head trash monster enters the scene, reinforcing what a failure I was. And how often do we do things like that? Like we say, "well, in order to do this

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correctly, I need to do it in this specific way. I need to dedicate an entire hour to exercising, not realizing that something is better than nothing, right?

That a half-hour run is better than no hour run. Or that a half hour walk is going to contribute better than nothing.

Now this phenomenon shows up in our eating and exercise habits, almost in opposition in nature. Where we see it with exercise is that we think, "well, if I can't do all of it, I can't do any of it."

But with eating, it shows up in the thought process of; I ate some of it, I may as well go all in and eat all of it, or keep going and eat everything, right?

So, when it comes to eating, we eat one thing that is non-planned, whether it's a cookie or a meal out at a restaurant that wasn't particularly healthy, maybe pizza or a burger and fries, or even tacos.

But we're eating deviates from this is the thought that, well, I've already broken my streak, or broken plan, or protocol, or whatever it is that you want to call it in your head. And so, since there's a theoretical stain on the day, I'm just going to keep going.

Clearly there are a lot of problems with this way of thinking. But oftentimes we take it as a moral failing. And I just want to offer to you today that, it's possible that the reason that you went all in was because it was hormonal.

And so, for many of the clients that come to me, when we've restricted too long, the body and brain are like, "I need food." And so, the body goes on a bender because it doesn't know when it's going to get food again. If you suspect that this is happening for you; stopping dieting and stopping restricting calories is the top priority.

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You need to build trust again with your body. When you go on restrictive diets, your body is going to rebel. And so, once you establish trust again with your body, you can learn how to add periodic treats to your day without going overboard.

But more often than not, what tends to happen is that when we eat a brownie and then the flood gates open, we eat the entire pan because we think that brownies are off limits. And I want to let you know, that eating one brownie is better than eating a whole pan of brownies. And eating two brownies is better than eating a whole pan of brownies.

And so again, the concept of it all adds up is appropriate there as well. We can also see the same concept play out when it comes, not just what we're eating, but how we're eating.

So, for example, if we have this idea that, "well, if I can't eat organic, or if I can't eat the foods that I'm supposed to eat, then why even try?" And so, this is one huge reason why I work with my clients the way that I do and helping them listen to their bodies and coming up with their own food rules.

That if someone else is telling us what we can and cannot eat, we totally have an effete mentality. When we go to a restaurant and there's nothing on the menu that we can eat, right?

We have this idea that we need to execute perfectly; that we can't eat lunch meat, or we can't eat frozen dinners, or even a banana because somewhere we've heard that it's got too much whatever it is. Fill in the blank; nitrates, sodium, sugar, whatever it is that we've heard.

But there's this huge continuum of food; and there are foods that promote better health that make us feel good; and then there are foods that are perfectly fine, but if we eat them in two larger quantities, they don't make us feel good anymore. And we just get to figure out, what that is for us in relation to each of those foods?

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Where with exercise, we think that if I can't do all of it, I can't do any of it. Again, with eating, we think that if I eat any, then I need to eat at all.

And so, I want to borrow a money cliché of "a penny saved is a penny earned." Now, this takes a complete mindset shift from being on the diet or being off the diet to how much I can serve.

Let me put in a note here, that I want to be aware that when presenting this idea of it all adds up, but I'm presenting it from a place of health. And it can quickly move into a place of diet, mentality, and obsession. Which I am also very familiar within my history.

So, we're not talking about the eat less move more mentality that can become a slippery slope of restricting. I'm totally not talking about that.

When it comes to it all adds up, I'm hopefully helping you to create that balance that we all strive for. Being able to have some treats and not letting it slide into a bin. Allowing ourselves to have some physical activity but doing it within the constraints of our schedule and not getting stressed out about doing enough.

Having this perspective of it all adds up or something is better than nothing allows us to become resilient and creative when faced with unexpected circumstances.

So, if something comes up where your commitments are more than expected and you don't have time to do a 30 minute walk. Getting creative, how can I fit this in? If I can't do what I thought I was going to be able to do, maybe getting creative and doing multiple segments of 10 minutes, does the same thing.

Any calories not eaten, when you are full and not hungry are better than any that contribute to increase over fullness. And some activity is always better than no activity.

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There's a lot of gray when it comes to our health and acknowledging where we are; and acknowledging that can be really powerful. And so, the next part to that is then actually celebrating what we did accomplish. And how it's better than what we really wanted to do. Like, if you notice yourself reaching for that third or fourth brownie and stopping yourself, that's a huge accomplishment.

And so, really celebrating that and being like, " ah, I stopped myself from doing something that I knew wasn't going to help me get to my goal; or that I knew wasn't going to help me feel better."

So, acknowledging how we are improving day to day. How we are today and how that's different than what we were able to do yesterday, last week, or last month.

Now, in wrapping up this topic, I want you to put yourself into the mindset of yourself when your successful. And so, how do you expect that you'll be eating when you are successful and asking yourself, is that realistic?

This is why whenever we set goals for ourselves, we want to create a vision that goes along with accomplishing that goal. Like really thinking about, what am I going to do on a consistent basis when I'm successful? What are the habits that I'll do on a daily basis? And then how do I handle special occasions?

We think that we are automatically going to be balanced when we get to our goal. That we're going to be perfect during the week, but then, when we approach holidays and vacations and special events that we won't be too strict and that we'll be able to go with the flow.

But I want to suggest that doing that today, going with the flow, and not being too extreme on either side is what's actually going to get you to your goal.

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And I want to ask you a question, what do you think Elizabeth, after I eat ice cream? How do you think that I think about the act of me eating ice cream and my body? What do you think is going through my head?

And then I'd like you to compare how that's different than; how you think about you eating ice cream; and how you think about your body. And what is really amazing here is that all of that stuff, all of that drama is completely optional. You do not have to have those negative conversations with yourself.

I want to suggest that this is a skill that you build, just like learning Spanish. Learning how to manage your habits is a skill that you can learn and keeping these two phrases in mind. It all adds up and something is better than nothing can help you go far. Because these two phrases help us to build resilience and compassion for ourselves.

That's all I have for you today, have an amazing week everyone and I will talk to you next time.

Bye bye.

Hey there! Thanks for listening!

If you're a woman who is done with dieting, but still wants to lose weight, I want to invite you to join me in the Feel Good Sisterhood.

The Feel Good Sisterhood is a 6 month group coaching program where you'll learn to apply so many of the tools, concepts, and skills that I teach right here on the podcast.

The way the program is structured, you'll learn crucial skills and tools that will help you to be able to pay attention to what your body needs, therefore ending emotional eating, help you gain consistency and discipline with your eating, exercise, or sleep habits.

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As a result, you'll not only end up feeling physically good, but that will also lead to having more confidence, and finally freeing up all of that mental space currently dedicated to your weight, what you're SUPPOSED TO be doing, but not doing it, and then the subsequent negative self-talk that happens afterwards.

To learn more about the Feel Good Sisterhood, go to elizabethsherman.com/groupcoaching. There, you'll be able to send me a message with any questions you have.