

Done with Dieting Podcast #78: Building the Skill of Self-Trust



Full Episode Transcript

With your Host
Elizabeth Sherman

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Have you ever admired someone for being able to eat one cookie and then put the package away? Or someone who you see as disciplined or committed to their exercise program. And you see them and you're like, gosh, how do they do that? I wish I was like that.

What we're talking about today on the done with dieting podcast is building the skill of having self-trust. Self-trust is a skill that you can learn. And today, I'm giving you the exact steps of how to create self-trust in yourself, so that you can become self-accountable.

Tune-in.

You are listening to the done with dieting podcast. The podcast for women in midlife, who are done with dieting, but still want to lose weight and feel good in your clothes.

You know that diets don't work long term. But you feel like there's this secret that everyone else knows that you just haven't figured it out yet.

I am your host, Elizabeth Sherman. And I've helped hundreds of women get off the diet roller coaster, change their relationship with food, exercise, and their bodies.

Through this podcast, my goal is to help you too.

Welcome. Let's get started.

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Hey everyone, welcome to the done with dieting podcast, episode number 78. And before we get started, I just need to tell you that the enrollment for the Feel Good Sisterhood is open right now.

The feel-good sisterhood is my group coaching program, and it is an amazing program. This is the second time that I've done it. And the women who are currently in the program are just making such incredible strides in their goals and they could not be happier.

Some of the things that they've been saying about the program is that it is so incredibly comprehensive that all of the information that they've learned in the program has not just supported what they knew all along. But what I do is I've also helped to debunk some of the myths that so many of us have grown up with that we think that we know about health.

And I really tried to cultivate an experience that I think that they'll concur that is about learning how to trust yourself. And that is the topic for today's podcast, which is how do we trust ourselves?

So, just to back up a little bit, one of the things that women come to me about all the time is that we want to be able to trust ourselves, right? We want to be able to commit to something and then follow through on the commitment. That's what we generally think about when we think about self-trust.

But after so many years of dieting and committing to workout programs or things that we want to do in life, things that we're told that we need to do in life, what happens is so many of us lack self-trust because we haven't been taught how to do it.

When we think about committing to something new, there's something that pops up in the back of our heads that is like, "yeah, but you know, you did these three diets before

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and those didn't work out. So, probably this new thing isn't going to work out either." So, we walk into this commitment having doubt about our ability to follow through on the commitment from the start.

And so, that does not lend itself to self-trust. However, self-trust is a skill. It's a skill that you may not have been taught before, but it's a skill that you can learn. And it's a skill that I teach not only my one-on-one clients. But also, I teach my clients within the Feel Good Sisterhood. And this is really super important because this skill is transferable.

It's not only something that we do with food, and exercise and sleep, and all of those things that are relational to our health. But we also can learn how to build self-trust in the other areas of our life. Because when we're thinking about it, health is not a silo. We think that it is, right?

We think that, oh, the reason that I don't eat healthier foods, or the reason that I don't go for a walk or exercise is because I'm lazy, or because I don't like fruits and vegetables. Or we think that there's some magic pill out there that once we consume this magic pill, that all of those things in our health life will fall into place.

But the truth is the reason that we don't take care of ourselves, the reason that we don't prepare healthy meals, the reason that we don't follow through on the commitment to ourselves to exercise or whatever it is that we said that we were going to do. The reason that we don't do those things is because of the other parts of our life that is interfering with our ability to take care of ourselves.

And so, what happens a lot of times is that people will hire me looking for an accountability coach. Looking for someone to help them with accountability. And that's fine at the beginning, but my goal is always, always, always to help my clients become self-accountable. That way, you will never ever have to go on the diet ever again.

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If you can trust yourself to commit to something and then to follow through on that commitment, you will never need another diet ever again. And so, you may be asking yourself, okay, so how do I know if I lack self-trust or not?

A lack of self-trust shows up in our lives in a couple of different ways. The first way is looking to other people for the answers. And so, this is the typical diet or scenario, right? Where we know all the information. We know how many calories are in peanut butter. We know how many calories are in bread, and avocados and vegetables, and things like that.

We know what we should be doing. And yet, we still look for someone else to tell us the answers. We look for someone else to tell us how many calories should I be eating? What should I be eating for breakfast? What should I be eating for lunch? What should I be eating for dinner? When should I start eating? When should I finish eating?

All of these questions that we have about ourselves, we actually have the answers. If we turn inward, we can find those answers. And so, when we look to other people for the answers, we are denying our own authority in our lives. When we can come to making decisions and deciding what's best for us from a place of, I know what's best for me, right? Then, we no longer have this problem with self-trust.

So, this is just one way that a lack of self-trust shows up. Looking to other people for the answers. And another way that can show up is when we start polling people for the answers. Asking people, what should I do? I have this problem, and I'm not exactly sure what to do. So, having self-doubt around our own decision-making skills.

Another way is looking for others to validate what we've done. I see this so often on the internet when someone will ask a question of "Hey, should I do intermittent fasting, or I want to lose weight, how should I do this?" And people will tell them, this is what I did. You need to do what I did because it worked.

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And so, it's so interesting when we give other people advice of the path that we followed, we're looking for other people to validate that what we did was correct. I bought this product; you should buy it too.

So often, we get upset when someone else asks us for our opinion, and then they don't follow that opinion. And we get upset because we want them to validate us. We want them to tell us that what we've done is correct.

The third way that lack of self-trust shows up is asking for permission. So, I see this a lot when we don't trust our own judgment. It's kind of like, we know what we want to do, right? So, we're asking someone to tell us that what I want to do is going to be okay. Because we're afraid that we're going to get judgment from the other side.

So, what this might look like is being invited to a party and not really wanting to go. And then, asking your friend, is it okay if I blow this party off? And she doesn't have anything invested in it. And so, she's like, yeah, sure do it. We know what we want, but we're asking permission to do the thing that we want to do for fear of not trusting ourselves really.

The fourth way that this shows up is worrying that someone is going to disapprove. And so, this shows up as people pleasing. That when we do what other people want us to do, it's because we're trying to avoid judgment. When we people please, we don't trust that they will be able to handle feeling disappointed or the negative consequence.

And then finally, we see lack of trust in dieting all the time. So, not believing that I can set goals for myself and then following through on those goals without someone else being involved. Not having self-accountability. And that's really the framework that I want to present today's podcast about.

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And again, building self-accountability is one of my major goals that when I work with my clients, I want them to come out of the other side. Because when clients come to me so often, they just don't see that having self-trust is a possibility.

Imagine that if you love brownies and you can't stop yourself from eating brownies. And yet, being in a kitchen alone with a plate of brownies. For some, that might feel like torture. For some, it might feel like, oh, I don't know that I could do that and not eat the whole thing.

But when we have self-trust, we know that we will be able to eat one brownie and not beat ourselves up about it. Or not eat the whole plate or decide that right now, I don't need the brownie. And that's what this is all about is deciding or being able to trust yourself to make the right decision.

In this podcast, I'm actually using a framework from episode number 64, my interview with Xena Jones. And in that podcast, she talked about three steps to self-trust. And so, I'm using her framework and I'm just expanding on it a little bit. I'm going to be referencing a couple other podcasts that I've done because I've covered this material before. But I'm putting it all together in just a different way.

And so, the three different components to self-trust are one commitment to yourself. Number two, taking courageous action or rather following through on the commitment that we've made to ourselves. Making the commitment to ourselves the before action, the during action, which is taking courageous action. And then, number three is after the fact having compassion for ourselves.

So, when thinking about self-trust, what we want to do is we want to start to evaluate. Where is the weakest link for you? So, where does it break down? Which one of those three components is the hardest for you? And so, what we want to do is we want to strengthen that.

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I'm going to go through each different component and point out the problems that we experience when that part's the weakest. And then, also give you some solutions to each of those different parts.

The first part being commitment. So, when we think about commitment, what we're talking about is committing to future action. An example of that might be okay, I want to start exercising. So, what am I going to do in order to plan for that?

Now, the problem that many of us experience is that we think that I'm going to be perfect tomorrow. We put in these really lofty goals of oh, okay, so tomorrow I'm going to start exercising and I'm going to get up at seven o'clock in the morning, and I'm going to go for a 30-minute run, even though we've been couch potatoes for the past six months.

And we really aren't leaning into it. We're over-committing ourselves. We think that the version of ourselves tomorrow is going to be a perfect version of ourselves.

But the other thing that we often run into is the problem that we think that because I was able to do it before five years ago or six months ago that I should be able to do it again now. And I think that we don't have compassion for the fact that things have changed within that period of time.

We're like, oh, well, five years ago I was able to run for 30 minutes and not have a problem with it. Or six months ago I was able to do it, I should be able to do it again now. But our body changes and especially our body changes as we get older. And our schedules change, and we are different people mentally as well. And so, we really need to respect that our environment has changed, who we are as people has changed. And demands on our time have changed as well.

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The third thing is thinking that because a guru or someone else maybe my personal trainer or someone else has told me that I should be able to do it. But you are the only one who knows your individual challenges and knows exactly what will work for you and what won't.

So again, over-committing is generally a problem that I see with many of my clients that we think, we can do these things, that it shouldn't be that hard. And we can usually do it for a week or two, maybe three, but then eventually the wheels start to come off. Life gets in the way, and we aren't compassionate with ourselves about that.

And so, what the solution really is one to reduce friction. And what I mean by reducing friction is setting your future self-up for success. When I think about, okay, I want to start exercising. Really, thinking about who I'm going to be tomorrow. The version I am going to be tomorrow is probably pretty similar to the version I am today. You've heard me talk about this before.

What I want to do is I don't want to make her commit to something that I wouldn't be willing to do today. There's a really good book called the five second rule. And in the five second rule, Mel Robbins, the author talks about when we want to do something that we have to do it within five seconds.

So, if you have the idea, oh, I should start running. Well, do you want to do that today? Do you want to do that right now? And if you don't, chances are the version of yourself tomorrow who you're committing to is probably not going to want to do it either. Your future self is pretty close to who you are today.

Set yourself up for success and don't overcommit, make it easier. So, on a scale from 1 to 10. 10 being, yes, I am 100% on board and I know that I can make this happen. Versus one being, I'm pretty sure that that's not going to happen. Be nice to yourself. If

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you are not an eight or above, chances are you need to ratchet the commitment to yourself back a little bit.

It depends on what goal we're talking about. I'm talking about exercise right now. But it could also be eating vegetables or reducing your alcohol consumption. If you want to stop doing something, it's best if you try not to just say, well, I'm just not going to do that anymore. Because the brain needs to do something in place of that.

So, again, the solution to over-committing yourself is not over-commit yourself. Okay. Be nice to yourself and also be aware that the version of yourself again tomorrow is probably pretty close to who you are today. So that's the first piece.

The second piece is the follow through. Taking courageous action. The problem is that when we set commitments for ourselves, we have this idea that we're going to want to do it. So, when we set up commitments for ourselves, when I set up commitments for myself. What I tend to do is I tend to understand and know that when I'm scheduled to do this thing, I'm not going to want to do it.

And so, I go into it expecting that I'm not going to want to do it. What happens is the follow through, taking courageous action. We see that we're supposed to do this thing and then procrastination sets in. Procrastination sets in potentially, because we feel overwhelmed or the lower part of our brain pipes up or judge and says, yeah, I don't want to do it. I will want to do it later. I just don't want to do it right now.

Your brain is a liar. Your brain is not going to want to do it later. Or your brain might be like, you know what? I can't do that right now. I need to do this other thing. This other thing is way more important, and it may seem very compelling.

This other thing that you need to do may be work related, or it may have something to do with your children, or it may have something to do with some pressing issue. It's

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going to present itself with something very important. And so, being aware that you've committed to yourself. And of course, you don't want to do this thing.

So, telling yourself, I don't have time is a big liar. The other lie that we tell ourselves is I don't feel like it. And so again, the problem with taking courageous action is it's just your lower brain talking to you and saying, yeah, I don't want to do that right now. Resist it.

The solution to this problem of taking courageous action following through on your commitment is a learning how to talk to yourself more than you listen to yourself. So, there's a podcast, podcast number 21 called discomfort now or discomfort later. And in that podcast, I talk about how within every decision that we make, we are either going to experience discomfort now or on the other side of the decision.

And so, when it comes to again, talking about exercise, I've scheduled that I'm supposed to exercise. I'm supposed to go for a walk today at three o'clock. Today at three o'clock, I'm sitting in front of my computer, I'm doing whatever it is. And I'm looking at my watch and my watch is telling me, it's three o'clock. You said, you were going to go exercise, but I'm knee deep in a project.

I'm like, oh, I don't have time. I'm in a really good groove. This thing is way more important. But if we actually follow through on the exercise and our commitment to ourselves. What happens is we either experience the discomfort of going for the exercise and following through on what we said that we were going to do.

Experiencing the pleasure later on of feeling lighter and feeling more energetic and maybe having some brain clarity. Or we can stay seated, continue working, feel the pleasure of what it is that we're doing right now. But then the discomfort on the other side, which may be feeling strung out at the end of the day because we haven't taken enough breaks.

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And so, be aware that the solution is learning how to overcome your own objections. Learning how to understand and listen to the sentences that your lower brain is offering you. And then, coming up with better objections that is going to motivate you or get you to follow through with your commitment to yourself.

So, learning how to follow through on your commitments to yourself is a skill that you can actually learn. And we learn it by doing it. And we learn it by starting small and then growing and graduating to bigger and bigger things. That's why in step number one, when we talk about commitment to ourselves, we want to start small. We want to learn to build the skill of self-trust.

Oftentimes, when I work with my clients and they're starting to build the skill of exercising, I will tell them that what we want to do is we want to schedule you for Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, or whatever days at this time. You are going to put on your exercise clothes, and you are going to walk around the block, for example. If the block is very short. Or it could be just walking to the end of your block, and then back.

What we're trying to do is build the skill of self-trust. Following through on the actions that you've set for yourself. And this is a really important skill because again, the more we can do this, the more we can rely on ourselves and not have to rely on other people to tell us what to do.

So, number three, the third phase of self-trust is the after piece. Now the problem with the after piece, the compassion that we have for ourselves is it's not always going to work out correctly. Things are going to get in our way. And what happens is we will constantly beat ourselves up about it.

We have this commentary in our heads that was like, "see, I told you so, you said you were going to do it. And I knew you, weren't going to and here we are on the other side and you didn't do it." Or you did a piss poor job. So, we beat ourselves up. And what

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happens is when we beat ourselves up, when we judge ourselves for things happening and things getting out of control or us not following through on the commitment to ourselves is judgment blocks any learning.

And so, that's actually a really important piece because when we are beating ourselves up, we're not getting curious with ourselves, we're not asking ourselves, wait, what was the problem? What got in my way?

We may have the thought that well, but it's true. I didn't do it and I do suck because I thought that I was going to be able to do it and I should have been able to do it. But going back to episode number 47, It's just not helpful. Episode number 47 is titled truthful versus helpful. And oftentimes, we will tell ourselves, well, I'm just lazy.

And so, what that does is it reinforces the idea that we are unable to do this thing. And our brains will tell us "Well, but it's true." Look at all of this evidence that we have, that we are lazy. And it may be true, but it's not helpful. It's not helpful because it doesn't get us to a place where we can do this thing.

We really want to minimize the amount of judgment and beating ourselves up that we have on the other side of not following through on the commitment. And so, the solution is actually two-fold.

One is when you do follow through on a commitment, I often suggest to my clients that they do, what's called a body scan. And a body scan is really just noticing how we feel on the other side of following through on that commitment.

So, do we feel proud of ourselves? And if we do, we need to freaking honor that. We need to be proud of ourselves and own that we followed through on a commitment. Your brain is going to be like, "yeah, but." You just walked around the block, it's really not anything to celebrate. But we need to start celebrating small.

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Because when we start celebrating small, it's so much easier then to compel ourselves to go through the discomfort, in order to get to the other side and in order to do what we are proud of ourselves for. So, that's the first piece.

The second piece is really having compassion for things that didn't go as we expected them to. There are always going to be things that are going to get in our way. And so, when we can look at, when we can drop the judgment, and when we can look at the situation from a place of nonjudgmental curiosity. And really ask ourselves; now, what happened there?

And really ask ourselves from a place of wanting to do better next time. Not from a place of beating ourselves up, but really getting curious with ourselves and asking, what can I do better next time? Then, what happens is we can actually learn to start to build self-trust.

So again, I'm going to ask you the question of which of those three phases do you have the hardest problem with? Is it the commitment that you have to yourself? Do you over commit to yourself? Do you have problems with the follow through? And so, these two pieces go together, right?

That if we over commit to ourselves, then of course we're going to have problems with the follow through. And so, being onto ourselves and being able to see where the problem lies is going to be a really amazing skill to start building up.

And then finally, the last piece is afterwards. Not judging yourself and having compassion for when things don't go as planned. The big takeaways from this podcast, I want you to learn how to be kind to yourself. We have learned and all of us have this judge that's inside of ourselves. This judge that insists on beating ourselves up.

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And when we have this judge, what happens is we think that the judges are right. We think that the judge is serving us because without the judge, we think that we're going to believe our excuses and we're just not going to be motivated to do anything. But actually, the opposite is true.

What I'm going to offer is that being kind to yourself really doesn't have a negative aspect. Think about if you were to have a child. Now, some of you listening do have children, some of you don't. But I think that we can all relate to having maybe a five-year-old around our house. What would we expect of the five-year-old?

And actually, treating yourself like this five-year-old. So, are we going to allow the five-year-old to eat sugar all day? No, of course not. We're going to tell the five-year-old, look, you can have the sugar, but you also need to eat some vegetables and some things that are good for you.

We think that being kind to ourselves means that we're going to be able to eat sugar all day and sit on the couch and not do anything. But the opposite is actually true. When we are kind to ourselves, we're actually watching out for the future version of ourselves. When we're kind to ourselves, we have her back.

And what I mean by that is we want to set her up for success. And we want to set her up for success by being able to reduce friction for her. I've talked about my future version of myself before and I love her, I have her back. And I do that by one, not over committing to myself. And then number two, following through on the commitments to myself. One, so that I don't have that judge on the other side of not following through on the commitment.

But then, also if I don't follow through on the commitment, I understand that on the other side, that that negative self-talk is actually not only harmful, it's not helpful, and it's

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optional. It doesn't actually help that negative self-talk on the other side of not following through is only there to beat ourselves up. It really is not there to be helpful at all.

And so, I just shut that stuff down. I don't listen to the negative self-talk. I know it's going to be there, but I don't listen to it, I don't entertain it anymore. So, the answer here is hold yourself accountable, like you would a child. And also, not believing your own excuses, the excuses that we all give ourselves of, I don't have time, or I don't want to, or I will want to do it later, right? Or I don't have a choice.

Just be aware that we all have these objections going on in our brains and it's our responsibility to overcome them and talk to ourselves more than we listen to ourselves. This is how you build the skill of self-trust.

Now, I am going to invite you to work with me. I'm going to invite you to work with me one of two different ways. Either through private coaching or through my group coaching program, the Feel Good Sisterhood, which is enrolling right now.

If you want to work with me one-on-one, you can go to elizabethsherman.com/privatecoaching or you can go to elizabethsherman.com/groupcoaching to learn the ins and outs of the two offers that I have.

They are amazing. And they are designed to help you to become self-accountable so that you never have to go on another diet again. And so, that you don't have to have this negative self-talk in the back of your head.

When we learn to have self-trust, that negative self-talk just melts away into the background. So, learn how to be self-accountable, learn how to be kind to yourself. And I can teach you how to do that. Go to elizabethsherman.com/privatecoaching to learn

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more about my private coaching or go to elizabethsherman.com/groupcoaching if you're interested in the Feel Good Sisterhood.

Again, we are currently enrolling for the program right now. The program start date is going to be August 1st. All right. So, have an amazing week. I will see you all next time. Have a good one. Bye-bye.

Hey, if you enjoy listening to this podcast, you have to come check out the Feel Good Sisterhood. It's my small group coaching program where we take all this material, and we apply it. We figure out what works for us, and we don't ever look at another diet ever again.

Join me over at elizabethsherman.com/groupcoaching. I'd love to have you join me in the Feel Good Sisterhood. See you there.