

You're listening to Episode 139 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.

Party people, I have a very important announcement I must make. And that is, that this week it is forecasted that Portland will be getting five days of snow. Listen, and moving out here, I budgeted for maybe a day or two of snow every winter season. I don't know if I'm emotionally prepared for snow. And I'm also kind of excited. It's that both and kind of living experience that's what's been going down with me, is getting ready for this winter weather. So we will see how the winter goes. A whole five days of winter here in Portland.

I know if you're listening and you're tuning in from snowy places and you're like, "Lucia man, your Minnesota blood got thin." yeah, it got thin. And then I moved. It got thin before I moved. I'll never forget that last winter when I was in Minnesota, I was curled up with so many blankets on me, on my couch. And I was like, "What am I doing here?" I know that there are sayings in cold countries where I want to say, is it Norwegian? Is it Swedish? Somewhere. Finland? Somewhere where there's no bad weather. There's just bad clothing. And I do believe that. And also I believe that if you have the ability to move somewhere where it doesn't dip into the negative temperatures, you could consider that. You could consider that an option.

So welcome to the show. Today I want to share with you a concept that I use with my clients in Lean and Liberated. It's such a simple concept that I realized that it would be a really fun one to share here on the show because it will be simple. And one of the biggest revelations that my clients come to, that I have come to, that we all come to in these journeys of creating relationships with the foods on our plate and our bodies in the mirror and our feet in our shoes and our hearts in our chests, is that what is simple may not be easy, but that does not have to be a bad thing.

And so this is a simple practice and it is one of the practices that I do find can bring with it quite a bit of ease. So this is one of those middle of the road exercises that you can use to start to begin to assess out which foods in this present moment would I like to invite in for myself, without having to overly rely on your left brain, that analytical logical brain, without having to feel like it's a free fall of all the emotions and all the stories, all the way from your childhood, getting dragged out of your subconscious every single time. If you just want a beautiful bridge of really being able to start to tune in, quite frankly, to your intuition. This is a simple practice that you'll find a lot of power with and from, and there's no wrong way to do it.

So the practice is called expansion and contraction, and I'm not sure where it originated from, but I learned about it from a peer of mine, Jessica Flanagan, who has been on the show before. Jessica is an incredible clinical nutritionist. And so this concept of expansion and contraction is one where, here's what you do. The next time you find yourself in the kitchen, at the fridge or in the pantry or your cabinet, and you're thinking about a certain food, or you're looking at a certain food or your pawing through the cabinet, trying to find a certain food that speaks to you, your only job in that moment is to pause and ask yourself, and if you have a food, you can hold it or you can look at it. And if you don't have a food, yet, you can ask yourself, without knowing which food it is. This works in any of those situations. You're going to pause and ask yourself, does this food bring me expansion when I think about it? And if you don't have a food, you can ask yourself, which food would bring me expansion when I think about it?

So let's break down what that expansion is. I encourage you, when you're taking this beat and this moment to think about it, to close your eyes and allow yourself to drop into your body, into your core, maybe your chest between your bellybutton and your brain, to be dropping down into yourself and notice, do I feel a sense of openness? If I'm a visual person, do I have the feeling of visualizing the sky or open air or a field or a big body of water, clouds, sunshine, birds flying in a flock? Whatever comes to you. Do I have that experience of expansion, of rooting into that image and feeling more open myself? Do my shoulders relax? Does my jaw drop out of my soft palate? Do I have a feeling of warmth and sunshine? Those would all be clues of expansion.

Or on the contrary, does this food, or is there a food that I would imagine that brings me a sense of contraction? That sense of contraction would be the opposite of expansion. There might be a narrowing in of what you're visualizing. You might notice that there is, if you're more visual, that there's a darkening or a deepening of colors or scenery that you're visualizing. It might be reflective of more tunnel vision.

That expansion will also feel different in your body. You might feel more of a closed in or hunched over feeling, and your body might follow suit. You might notice that your shoulders are not as open and relaxed as expansion. You might notice that your knees lock, that your chin tucks into your neck a bit. Once you've asked this question to yourself, your only job is to notice, towards which direction of that expansion and contraction spectrum do I move towards? You might find that a food offers you more immediate expansion. It's really simple, it's quick, and it's easy to identify. You might also notice that a different food offers you some contraction.

Now here's where I like to take it one step further. To have complete and full liberation around our food choices, I wanted to feel as comfortable taking the expansion choice as we could take the contraction choice. Because what I find, when people begin to hear this message is that they say, "Okay, so I should only ever eat foods that cause me expansion all the time. That's how I eat intuitively. Then I've solved the puzzle. I've cracked the riddle. I've done it." What that does, it's very subtle, but what it does is that it starts to reinforce some perfectionistic, good student thinking.

So I like us to identify what is expansion for me in this moment? What is contraction? And now that I had this understanding of both of them and that I have allowed myself to feel and experience whichever one might come up naturally for this food or meal or snack or beverage or whatever, in question, I can now understand that that was my only job was to check in. And then from there, once we've done this check-in, that is a powerful place where we can make the radical decision that will serve us best in that moment. That is what bridges the gap from feeling like intuitive eating or eating for our weight loss or eating to never talk about weight again, or eating more protein for muscle gain or whatever the hell it might be. This is where we can stop trying to game with the system. And we can start to understand that our only job is to be in love with ourselves.

It's a very powerful practice because it also reinforces that there's never anything wrong with us. There is no right or wrong, good or bad food to be desiring. There is no right or wrong, good or bad amount, quantity to be asking for. And if we feel like there is, and we notice, oh man, I have a certain story around how I should be acting in this moment. Then we're offering ourselves insight into the beliefs that have been in charge of our life up until this moment. It's a beautiful way without expectation to drop into what am I actually feeling? How does that actually feel? Why am I actually feeling that? And coming into deep trust and love for exactly where we are.

So the next time you're moving towards a food and nutrition choice, I want you to try that out. To come into expansion and contraction, and just notice, what is that experience like? What do I make it out to be? And how would I like to allow all of that information to be okay, to be 100% whole, and to be 100%

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of support for me in exactly where I am in this moment? Take that exercise and run with it this weekend. And I'll see you on the next episode.

Did you know you can find more support from me on my website, go to Lucia Holly, L-U-C-I-A-H-A-W-L-E-Y .com to connect.