

Lucia Hawley:

You are listening to episode 106 of the Devoured podcast.

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Welcome to Devoured, the podcast for women ready to release the title of dieter for good. I'm your host Lucia Hawley, and I'm a certified nutritional therapy practitioner with my master's in social work, clinical mental health. I've lost 80 pounds, and I'm on a mission to get you into the life of your dreams without being the woman who is consumed by diet after diet trying to get there. If you're wanting more in your life and are tired of wondering when or how to make that happen, then this is a podcast for you. You'll learn how to make the radical changes you've only dreamed of 100% possible for you today. I'm so happy you're here. The information provided within this podcast is intended as general education only and is not to be considered a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment.

Lucia Hawley:

All right, my party people, welcome to another episode of the Devoured podcast. It is a Friday when I'm recording, so I'm going to say happy Friday, and you're going to be listening to this on a Thursday. So happy Thursday from a Friday. I am on the cusp of taking a 72-hour social media break, and I am really honoring my needs with that break. I was chatting with a friend who is also in the process of writing a book proposal, we meet every week. It's been incredibly heartening having her as a peer in that process because the process is one big... Oh, like any other process, it is one big jumble. It is one big experience that it is okay to have a lot of feelings and thoughts around. It's also okay to move through that, step by step, word by word, bird by bird, all of those things.

Lucia Hawley:

But it's also helpful to do that in community, which is why I really believe so dearly in the Lean and Liberated community, because truly that's what it is. I was explaining this to someone who just joined Lean and Liberated in the last week, part of what I've done actually because of quarantine and COVID was Lean and Liberated, when I first started it, it was a four-month program, meaning that I had created the content so it could be consumed over four months. There'd be four months of active private coaching, active group coaching, being in the private Facebook community, et cetera. And then, of course, if people wanted to re-up and continue on, right, like life happens, things happen, weight loss isn't just always going to happen in a four-month chunk, what have you, people had the opportunity to re-up if they wanted to just stay in the community, stay active. They could always have, and would always have access to the video modules themselves, but just not the active coaching after that four-month period.

Lucia Hawley:

Anyway, so I was running it like that basically until the world shut down around March. As I sat back and really thought about, "Well, how can I as a coach, as a leader and as a listener, how can I and what will I do to show up more? To show up more for my people and for these lovely women who are now navigating the concepts of weight loss and practicing everything that they're putting into their lives while in a quarantine, while navigating a global pandemic, while having shifting job changes, family changes, duties, just lots of different breaks, breakthroughs, experiences, et cetera. And so what I realized is that I wanted to stop having it be these four month commitments. I myself in March joined a community separately, not Lean and Liberated, I'm always in there, everyone. But I myself joined a community where you purchased it and then you were in the community, and then you were ready to

go. And as much coaching as you needed, or as little coaching as you needed, it was there for you. There's no getting booted out after a certain amount of time, et cetera.

Lucia Hawley:

After joining that, it was just such a wonderful intersection of noticing the community that I was building and their needs and showing up and serving in that way, and also recognizing my own needs, right? As a community member of a different program, what the heck did that feel like? What did it offer to me? And also what did it show me from a place of economy and liberation that I could be trusted to show up for myself? There's no handholding in that community. There's no personal calling out to see how I'm doing. It is on me to show up and make changes and to celebrate myself and to share my wins and to be vulnerable. I loved it, and I still do.

Lucia Hawley:

And so because of that, I ended the four-month commitment. Once you're in Lean and Liberated, you're in there until you're ready to fly. Sometimes that can mean that you sign up, you think you're real gung-ho and shit happens in your life and you need to take a step back, and then we're right there for you when you're ready. Sometimes that means that you show up and you chip away at it consistently, and that's exactly what you needed, and there isn't a lot of emotional turmoil around it and that's exactly what you needed. What that also offers the opportunity for is for you to pay attention to these subjects, to engage to begin some of the weight loss, to fly, to spread your wings. And then maybe six months from now, a year from now, there's something that comes up in your life, you have a different era of your life. There's some big stressor that comes up and you're looking for more community, more support, you can re-engage.

Lucia Hawley:

Just from a business standpoint and from a liberation standpoint, that felt way cooler to me to be able to offer that resource. It's not a total tangent, just to put that in there. But it's something that's so been on my mind, and it's shown up in my own life with that community that I joined in March and then having a peer and a quite small, but actually a community around writing this book proposal. It's just so clear to me, time and time and time again. Grew up as this lonely homeschooled kid who had a really cool, close-knit family, but community has been something that's been a little... It's been a little evasive in my life in some certain ways, which is also why joining a CrossFit gym and multiple CrossFit gyms was such a... It was such a welcomed experience when it came into my life and it was so okay when it left my life too. I want to put that note in there as well. It's all okay. It's all good. It's all fine.

Lucia Hawley:

Even when shit hurts, we don't have to emotionally bypass any of that. But that we can always be taking in lessons and be noticing and learning and metabolizing and growing, if we so choose. How does that tie into the subject for today? Well, a question that's been coming up, and I put in a poll, this is where it ties in. I put in a question box on social media, so before I hop off for 72 hours. Because here's the thing, I think I had a lot in my cup as we came into the pandemic, even as the news of George Floyd and just the bandaid rip and wake-up call for a lot of people around how our country, in particular, is so behind the times, to say the least.

Lucia Hawley:

I think I had a lot in my cup to be offering from. And so I recognized that as a privilege and as a resource in March and April and May, et cetera, and I wanted to use it and utilize it. But that being said, I also knew that at some point I could not pretend that that was a hustle period for me. I could understand and download and digest that it was a period for me to be offering more. But at some point there would come a period that I would need to love myself for, for I would need to be offering less. And so nothing's changing. Actual offerings, nothing's changing there. But my ability to be turned on to news and headlines and recognize the privilege in that, and also hold space for myself in the privilege of that, of saying, "Oh, okay, if I'm feeling hella burnt out, what are the actions that I get to create radical responsibility for that I will change, that I will problem solve for myself? Because there will never be a perfect answer.

Lucia Hawley:

I was just talking with that friend who is also writing her book proposal, and I've been talking about this with Tim, my partner. Energy is such a roller coaster of these days. I'll have one day where things feel pretty damn good and another day where emotionally I'm down in the pits, like deep, deep, dark pits. And then the next day, I take care of myself. I do anything to do to get through that day, I show up to my commitments, and then the next day is okay again. Or maybe even it's a really good day. That's a different balance. That's a different role than it has been for me historically. I think that's just because of the world and our ability to consume information and our want to, our need to connect with others in these heightened times of stress, all of those things.

Lucia Hawley:

As I've been getting ready for a 72-hour social media breaks, I'm just hopping off my phone for the weekend, I'm deleting the apps, which will now have already passed when people listen to this podcast episode. As I'm preparing for that, I queried some people, and I've been querying myself, what would be helpful for people to know? What can I take in and offer? Education, or just space, containers to have processing around? And so one of the subjects that I really want to make space for is understanding of, "Should I be fasting? Should I, as a woman or a woman-identified person, should I with certain anatomy that perhaps menstruates or once menstruated, should I be fasting? Is it safe for me? Is it okay? I'm being told that my body is really fragile. I'm being told that I shouldn't. I'm hearing horror stories about fasting, both intermittent and long duration. I'm completely scared, I'm completely wiggled out, but I feel like I should, because I'm feeling pressure from X, Y, and Z. What do I do? Lucia help me out."

Lucia Hawley:

Hi, if that's you, welcome. What I want to add in and where I want to start is I want anyone who is thinking about the term fasting, I want you to consider fasting in theory for right now. I want you to consider it similar to working out, to moving your body, to exercise, okay? Here's the breakdown of it, just to keep things simple for right now. Fasting is a stressor. Okay, great, hold on to that piece. Working out is a stressor. There's going to be a time and a place for a lot of us where fasting doesn't make sense. There's going to be a time and a place for a lot of us where exercise doesn't make sense. But if you step back and you look at the whole and entirety of what either one of those options could offer to you, I want you to get really curious. If I tell you don't ever exercise again, does your mind pipe up and say, "Well, but what about X, Y, and Z? Couldn't I, wouldn't I..." And your brain starts, probably, I'm making an assumption here, your brain is going to get curious and say, "But what are the possibilities? How can I fit it into my life?"

Lucia Hawley:

Because more likely than not, you have had an experience where you've engaged in plenty of different types of exercise. It has probably flexed itself, in some ways it felt awful. In some ways it probably felt really groovy. If you're anything like me, you've had enough experiences with different types of exercises, different periods of your life to say, point blank, "Exercise is bad." You know that there's a deeper truth there. And so fasting clearly is not exercise, okay? I'm being literal here. But that kind of emotional experience we can have around that subject, I actually think it's like... Oh man, I was talking with a client about this earlier this week. It's like dairy. I've always said this. When I was running these group nutrition challenges, and we'd get to... At that point, we were talking about foods that we weren't eating, or we were eating for three weeks. There was a sugar-free nutrition challenge for those group classes when I would go over the like yay foods, nay foods list.

Lucia Hawley:

We'd get to dairy, and I would just take a deep breath. I'm like, "Okay, dairy is a really big subject. And so there are these foods and that foods. Butter stays on, and yogurt maybe for some people, but milk, we're taking it off and ice cream we're taking it off, X, Y, Z." Oh my gosh, dairy is just a really big category, right? If you say like, "Don't ever have to dairy ever again." But what about butter? But what about ice cream? What about cow's milk? What about goat cheese? What about sheep's yogurt, right? All these different instances, which is beautiful. It's good. It's good when our brain asks us questions like that, that means that we're engaged. It means that we're processing.

Lucia Hawley:

Similar to exercise now and similar to dairy, I want you to think about that with fasting, okay? Because for the majority of us... Listen, most of us fast each night, and for some people they don't, okay? For some people, certain medical conditions, for some people who might be nursing, lactating, postpartum, pregnant, there are categories of people who are not fasting throughout the night. But I would like to say that for most people, we do fast throughout the night. We're sleeping, it's a restorative process. And so most of us are already engaging in fasting every day, we just don't consider it in that way. We don't use that term. And so for a lot of us, I think the term fasting, it can be triggering and there can be a lot of feelings that are associated with it that we don't understand. Similar to how we might have had a really crummy exercise experience, and we feel like exercise is this shameful, exhausting activity that isn't meant for us. We don't fit the mold. It's too aggressive. It's too intense, and it feels bad. Well, great, guess what? That was intense exercise that felt bad. That's what it was.

Lucia Hawley:

Same thing with fasting, we can have fasting that is gentle and supportive. Fasting can also... We can down-regulate how we use it as a tool and we can up-regulate how we use it as a tool. And so within there, what I want to be talking about is the fact that a lot of us are undergoing chronic stress right now because of the pandemic, because of how our lives are changing. I think a lot of us are coming to grips with what the fall is going to look like, what we thought the fall would look like, what we thought the remainder of the year of 2020 would be like for us, right? We're going to need some support around those emotions. If you're eating in Lean and Liberated, come to a private coaching session. That's what those are for, it's not just always cut and dry like, how did the weight loss go? You all know if you're in Lean and Liberated, a lot of the times we're actually talking about the emotions, because we have to.

Lucia Hawley:

But along those same lines, I want you to consider the fasting. If you're curious about it, if you've tried it, if you were leveraging it, and now you feel like your needs have changed, they have. No gaslighting about that, your needs have changed and your needs will change. That's a problem with a lot of diets is that they make it so cut and dry. Just do this, just do that, and things will work out. You've probably had the experience where you did the thing and it felt like it didn't work out, but you felt like you had to be more restrictive about it or be more strict on it, and it still didn't work out. And then you were so stressed out that it felt really, really bad and you dropped it. Okay, cool. That was an experience, and this gets to be a new one.

Lucia Hawley:

With fasting, I just want anyone to consider, for the most part, and you might be excluded if you're in one of those categories I mentioned before, nursing, lactating, et cetera, but for the most part, we're all fasting through the night. For the most part, what might be supportive for you right now is different than what was supportive for you earlier, before March in the United States. You can hold both of those as truths, okay? What I want you to be thinking about if you have come off of the fasting wagon, but you're curious. There's something a little bit more behind it that you're curious about. I want you to think about, "Would I like to gently re-introduce this as a tool, but this time can I consider it like how I might be considering exercise, where exercise is not this all or nothing, no-sum game. Exercise, I can tailor it into my life in a way that is supportive for me."

Lucia Hawley:

I'll use myself as an example here, right? About a month ago, I cut my finger. If you follow me on social media, you know I'm pissed about it because I was just getting back into a routine of holding weights, using dumbbells. I had taken some time off because I did feel quite depleted and working out in the strength training way it didn't make sense for me at that point. But just as I was coming back to more energy levels, I cut my finger and it felt really hard. I could do other exercises, but that delayed the strength training. But you know what I did, because my body was craving, honestly, using exercise and movement as a way to physically metabolize my emotions because things have been feeling really heavy and that's okay. Things have been feeling really, really heavy. So what I did is that I recognized in that moment, trying to feel frustrated, choosing to feel frustrated, like continually more than just feeling it and then figuring out what to do with it. But choosing to be in a state of frustration, a state of confusion and a state of overwhelm was not serving me.

Lucia Hawley:

And so what could I do to get creative in the situation? So I actually came back to a practice that I had had a long time ago... I had had pre-March, I came back to walking. I came back to early morning walks, and I came back to telling myself and letting myself visualize, this an important distinction here, visualizing how supportive it is for me to be outside in the morning, get sunlight on my face, breathe in fresh air, have time away from a screen, feel my heart beating, right, see different trees, see different flowers week to week, notice what's changing in my neighborhood, not in the rest of the world. All of those practices when I started to realize just how beautiful that "exercise" was, right, like walking in the morning, it really shifted my whole perspective. And that's what I hope for anyone who would like to re-incorporate or re-ignite a "fasting practice", probably for most of us were already fasting.

Lucia Hawley:

And so what that fasting practice might look like is gently becoming aware of how we're eating towards the end of the day, or gently becoming aware of how we're eating in the morning. That's one of the easiest ways to be building, is building upon the fasting window and period that we already have, which is when we're asleep. If you fall asleep at 11:00 PM, right, would you like to get curious about what happens at 10:00 PM, 9:00 PM, 8:00 PM, even 7:00 PM, right? Is that where you'd like to be modifying and moderating things, quite frankly? So often I think we make fascinating to be this big all-or-nothing experience, right, like, "I got to do. I got to fast every single day for 18 hours, I got to get to 20 hours. Oh my God, I feel so bad. People fast in the morning, why can't I." Fasting is just a tool for you. I really would encourage anyone who is feeling overwhelmed by how it goes for other people, we're making it too cut and dry if that's where our brains go. That's like saying that we're so pissed that someone else can do pull-ups and we can't, and why can they, and why can't I.

Lucia Hawley:

Is it serving you to be putting any of your attention right there? Probably not. If you want to use them as inspiration, okay, that's one thing. But all it means is that you get to backtrack what they've "accomplished" or that they have a thing that you don't. I just want you to backtrack and think about what actually worked for you in this moment in your life. In Lean and Liberated, we do talk about consistency, right? When I tell someone, "You're working up to a certain passion window," we're having you be consistent with it because we want to... Part of the problem with diets is that they're so strict and so overwhelming that we're consistent and it's a flash in the pan. And then we fall off, whether that's on the weekend, or we start to numb out. And then after two or three weeks of doing the diet strictly, we stop. We just stop. But we numb out and we forget that we stop.

Lucia Hawley:

And then we come back to the diet on Monday, but then it doesn't really work. And then two months have gone by, we look back and think, "Oh my God, I was doing the work, but it didn't work. Why is that?" Well, you probably weren't doing the work, and I say that with a whole lot of love to you. Because that's part of the dieting frustration though, it gets so strict is that we almost disconnect from ourselves. We get through it as a stressor and as a trauma, and then we don't really know if we try to look back what the fuck just happened. So that's where with that gentle progression, yeah, you might challenge yourself just like you could challenge yourself in the gym. Just like you could challenge yourself if you get stuffy after ice cream. Do you want to take a break from it? It's not bad, but maybe with your reality is not exactly what's helpful right now. Same with working out, maybe your reality, you're like, "I don't really want to do that short-term workout today." But you know that nine out of 10 times when you do the workout, you feel better afterwards. So you give yourself a little bit of grace ahead of time to try the hard thing.

Lucia Hawley:

It's the same thing with fasting. If it's feeling very restrictive and overwhelming and stressful, and that there are a lot of shoulds around it, I should feel this way, I should feel that way, I should be able to fast for most of the day, day in, day out, I want you to get really radically honest with yourself, is that exactly what you need? Or would you like to down-regulate it and be a little more gentle? Because here's the thing, if we're leveraging fasting as a healing tool, awesome. There are so many beautiful benefits and yeah, there can be more distinctive benefits for a longer duration, like up to 72-hour fast, which we don't really do too much of in Lean and Liberated, but that's the longest fast that I would coach someone through. You don't do any longer duration than that. Some people try a 24-hour fast. I personally am a fan of up to 48-hour fast. I've done some 72s. I think with where I'm at and for my own

health needs, the only reason I would be opting for a longer duration fast is if I wanted to do a bit of an immune system reboot. But I would also say that in consideration of this pandemic, longer duration fasting isn't really supportive for most of us.

Lucia Hawley:

So listen, if you want to drop in a 24-hour or 48-hour here and there, just know that that's radically different than white knuckling your way through a 20-hour fast every single day. For some people, that's so supportive, it's really easy. It makes navigating their food choices super simple and straightforward. But if for you, for right now through this pandemic, you're like, "You know what? The 10-hour fast, where I stop or 12-hour even, I stop eating at 8:00 PM and then by 8:00 AM I'm having my breakfast. That's a beautiful fast, I don't want anyone to throw the baby out with the bath water because I think sometimes in periods of higher stress, that's what we start to feel is like, "Oh fuck, it's not good enough. Things aren't happening faster, or things aren't happening fast enough. It is my body that's broken."

Lucia Hawley:

We just have to gently leverage time. And we have to do it in such a way where just like exercise, we're opting for a short-term stressor, which is fasting, but we're not opting for a really, really intense, super stressful fasting because that's not what our bodies radically need right now. They might need just a little bit, and that's okay. And so if you're in that spot right now, I just want to hold some space for you, that that's awesome. That's great. Part of life, and part of what you're going to learn is that you do have to re-evaluate your needs because your needs will change over time because you are always changing over time. The diets will say, "It's static. It just is, do this, and you'll get the results." You know from lived experience, from the shadow of those experiences, that it isn't that, right?

Lucia Hawley:

So when I say do things consistently, I mean, give yourself enough time so you can have a good judgment where you've been aware through those experiences so that you know what to do next. And here's the other thing for a lot of people, I will say from my personal experience, I actually play around with fasting. I think socially for a lot of us, fasting through the morning can feel more easeful. Is that a word? That we can feel like we have more ease doing that. But I really want to get curious. I personally, from a physiological standpoint, I actually love eating earlier and ending like... It can be cyclical on how you use these words. I like to break my fast earlier in the day, and I like to begin my next fast earlier in the day, meaning I like to have an earlier dinner. Now, socially, people love to wait for a big dinner and wait for this and wait for that. Awesome. If that's you, go for it.

Lucia Hawley:

But if you're feeling pressure to fast in the mornings, when actually if you were to give yourself a chance and you wanted to incorporate fasting, which again, that's deliberation, do you want to be doing it? If you want to be fascinating, but if you were to actually give yourself enough time, maybe you would find that you like to eat in the mornings and you like your food choices to kind of peter off earlier in the day. That's what gives you more energy, that what fills like it can be really consistent. If that's you, more power to you. Awesome. That's me a lot of the times. Great. Or, and this is where fasting is so beautiful is because it can fit into your life, right? And so some people, especially Lean and Liberated, they're fasting windows are a little bit longer during weekdays and on the weekends are a bit truncated.

Lucia Hawley:

Now, if we start to use fasting as a silver bullet for every other thing going on in our lives, of course, we're going to find a draining and overwhelming. We have to couple that experience with some of the pressure that it can take off of our food choices, but we still need to be aware of our food choices. That's the beautiful, that's why I emphasize it so much in the program is that's what we're delineating and saying, like, "Shoot, if I take the pressure off of myself, if I just offer myself a little more white noise, or like white space, and I just turn off the messaging for like an extra hour or two a day, or I decide to have a day where it's just like the messaging around my food is just offline. I'm just done with it, what do I feel? What do I think?" Because you were feeling and thinking those things before and now there's just room to actually hear them and there's room to actually be with them in a safe container, because you're practicing and using those practices of the journaling, of having the ability to be with a coach, to be in community with other people who are going through similar experiences.

Lucia Hawley:

Because I find that some people, they're like, "Oh, the fasting isn't working for me." Okay, let's talk about that. It might not be working for you in that way, but first question is, have you been consistent? Okay, great. Next question is, how is it feeling? Okay, cool, good data. Third question is, what's going on with the food choices? And so that intersection altogether, right? You have complete authority to eat what you want. But if after a certain point, what you have been choosing feels like there's this headbutt with the choices you've been making and where you say you want to go, that's an intersection where we've tuned out enough of the noise for us to be able to investigate that, right?

Lucia Hawley:

So if you're still feeling like, well on the weekdays, I'm good, but the weekends I'm bad, and I'm just going to relax with five cookies or half a pan of brownies. You have every right to do that. And at what point would you like to address that if you would like to so choose to do that? You know what I mean? It's never cut and dry, and I think that can drive people bunker sometimes. But I think it has to drive us bonkers sometimes because that typically means it's emotional. If we feel like we're just completing these thought loops that never get us anywhere, where it's like, "Oh, it's emotional, I don't like it. Oh, it's emotional, I don't like it. Oh, it's emotional, I don't like it." Of course, it's going to drive us bonkers. And of course, that's going to come up when you start to really dig into this stuff. It has to come up because that's the thing that wasn't working before, right?

Lucia Hawley:

It wasn't just a diet that wasn't working, it was the thoughts that were never held space for. Now we get to say, where did the thoughts come from, right? Because we learned from stories and we learned from other people. Where did the thoughts come from? Have I internalized them? Do I see them for what they are now? Do I feel safe and ready to be with them, move through them, and let them go? That's the work, my friends. That's what I want to leave you with this week, is that yeah, you can leverage fasting in any which way you choose. Same as exercise. It's the same concept, same idea. So if you're feeling stressed right now with a pandemic and you're like, "What I was doing before isn't working now." That's a good thing. I mean, the stress fucking blows, let's be real. It really sucks. But it's a good thing to recognize that your needs will change and do change across your lifespan. That means that you're alive and your heart is beating, and there's blood running through your veins, and your eyes are blinking and your brain is thinking and processing. It's a really beautiful thing that your needs do change. And so I just want you to think, can this be an invitation for me? Because if you'd like for it to be, it will be.

Lucia Hawley:

Okay, everyone, that's all for this week. Thank you for listening to the full podcast episode. If you want more of this information every day instead of just one podcast episode each week, consider coming over to Instagram to hang out with me. I'm [luciahawley\\_](#) over there. That's L-U-C-I-A H-A-W-L-E-Y\_. One more thing before this episode ends, please consider leaving a review of Devoured on iTunes so we can keep spreading the word and together we can offer this free education, empowerment, and liberatory nutrition principles that will change more lives. If you're someone who likes to empower other people, then please consider sharing this podcast with friends and family and by leaving your review. It makes a world of difference.