

11. Establishing Your “Why”



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Dara Tomasson

11. Establishing Your “Why”

Are you convinced that if you lose the weight you wouldn't be able to keep it off anyway? Almost feel like it's impossible to finally lose the weight and keep it off? Well, this episode will tell you why you feel that way. And let me tell you, you are not alone.

I am Dara Tomasson, and this is Weight Loss for Quilters episode 11. Did you know you could lose weight and keep it off for good? After 25 years of hiding behind my quilts, I have finally cracked the code for permanent weight loss and I've lost 50 pounds without exercise or counting calories. I'm Dara Tomasson, professional quilter turned weight and life coach, where I help quilters just like you create a life they love by losing weight and keeping it off for good. Let's jump into today's episode.

So, today's the day you've been waiting for. I'm going to be sharing the four lucky listeners who rated, reviewed, and commented on my podcast, and they are now going to win \$100 gift cards to Lisa Bongean's Primitive Gathering shop.

And so I'm going to announce the winners and I'm going to read some reviews because I am so thrilled that this work that I'm doing is making such a difference in women's lives, and I just want to share those with you.

So the four lucky listeners are, are you ready? Drumroll please. Susan Warner, Sharon Hendrickson, Mary Koffman, and Kathy Erikson. So I will be sending you your \$100 gift card right away. But let's just read some of the reviews.

So this one is from QuiltyPT “I have worked with Dara for over a year now. I have struggled with weight for many years, and knew there was a piece of the puzzle I was missing. I just couldn't put my finger on it - Dara has the missing piece. It is my thinking, and she has given me the tools I need to look at my thinking and challenge me when I am having a thought error. It has been life changing.”

So good. Here's another one. “I just found this podcast after hearing about Dara through The Life Coach School. Her tips and tools are easy to implement right away. The episode on anxiety really grabbed me because I

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have been experiencing anxiety and snacking. I am making changes right now and have stopped snacking. Thanks Dara”.

So good. And since there were four giveaways, I want to read four reviews. “Fantastic product, it’s like having your best friend in your ear. She says everything we need to hear. Great way to equate weight loss and self-loving with quilt. I am looking forward to the next episode.” So happy. Here’s another one by DixyQuilter “I love that you have added a podcast as a way to connect with you and hear your life lessons to learn to love ourselves thin or otherwise. Listening as I am stitching, while taking our son back to college. Enjoyed it.”

And then here we have Farmer’sWife “Thanks to Dara for planning weight loss in a language I understand. I have all the tools I need to be successful already in my toolbox, I just need to gather them, understand them, and use them. I’m excited to start my journey using all of this great information. Thanks Dara.”

So great, so thank you all for your five star reviews. As I’m preparing this episode also I’m getting out all of my fall wear. And I just love everything pumpkin spice and all the baking. And I’m completely obsessed with cardigans.

And one of the things that’s interesting, I have over 30 cardigans. And I used to wear them because I was always afraid of my mid-section and I was wanting to hide it, and cover it, and it was just a camouflage. And now I’ve just decided that I love cardigans and I just wear them, and I just I’m continually adding to my collection. My family laugh at me all the time about it. And if you’re on Instagram I have a really fun reel that is going to share all my cardigans on there. So, check it out.

So what you can expect in this episode. How can you be so accomplished in so many areas of your life, but weight loss is still an enigma? You’re like, “How can I be so successful yet I lose the weight and I put it back on again.” So, you want in on the secret for why you haven’t been able to

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tackle it? I’m going to help you understand this as we learn that establishing your why is so critical.

So, today’s episode we’re going to talk about how we (a) establish our why, (b) establishing our relationship with our past, present and future self. And then (c) I’m going to walk you through three steps on how to work through the process and have success in losing weight and keeping it off. And in fact, this is going to be transferrable to all the goals that you have already created in your life.

Okay, so let’s talk about establishing our why. So, when we decide to change we are going to have a lot of opposition. Your lower brain is going to be screaming and shouting at you saying, “This is ridiculous. Everything was fine before. It wasn’t so bad.” Because when we change something, I like to think about being a factory worker. So can you imagine back in the day when – or even now they still have factory workers making clothing. And you build a habit.

So, let’s say you’re on the zippers and you are on the conveyor belt making zippers. And you do the same thing over, and over, and over again and you make zippers. You can do it in your sleep. It’s just so ingrained you don’t have to think about it. And then one day your boss comes down and she says, “You know, we’ve been doing some studies and we have figured out there’s a better way of putting in zippers. And so, we’re going to teach you a new way to do zippers.” Now what happens?

You’re going to go to do the new zipper but your old habits are going to come back. So that’s just the same with when things don’t go as planned at your house. And you have a whole day ahead of you and something doesn’t happen. And so, you have to rethink your plan.

I actually was coaching a client this morning and she got on the call, it was 2 o’clock and she just said, “I think it all started when I gained a pound this morning.” So, things weren’t going well. She had an appointment then it got cancelled. And then she had to go to her doctor’s but it was farmers market day so it was harder to find a parking spot. And then she was kind of late

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for her appointment and all these things started piling up. And he brain was like, “We should just give up. We should just quit.”

Because now we have just spent all this time planning to do something and now we have to readjust our plan. So instead of saying, “Well, I can change this at this time and change that at that time.” The brain just goes, “You know what, we should just quit. And we should just not bother planning things, it’s not worth it, it’s just taking up too much time, let’s not worry about it.” How many of you can relate to that? Just even in the last day or two, how many of you can relate to that situation? You plan something and things didn’t pan out and so what did you decide to do?

So, the other problem is when we decide to change we’re going to need more energy to unlearn something and then relearn it in a new way. And so that of course is going to take more energy from us. So, there’s going to be, we call them growing pains. So, when we decide that we want to change and we go to our why, the why’s job is to say, “Let’s pause, let’s rethink this, let’s evaluate this and let’s decide if this is what we really want to do.”

So, when we really are focused on our why then it gives us a higher emotion. So, it creates a strong emotion that’s going to help us pay attention to what we’re doing. It’s going to say, “Let’s pause, I’m going to give you some extra strength and so that you can think before you act.” This is what we call in life coaching to learn to think about our thinking.

And when you think about a robot for example, the robot is literally just programmed to do certain things a certain way. It doesn’t think about its thinking. And so, it literally just follows the programming that it was programmed to do. So, when we don’t think about our thinking we actually become like a robot. And we just do things the same way over and over.

This reminds me of that story about the lady who had – she had been making a ham and she would cut the end of the ham off. And for years she did that. And one of her friends one day said, “Why are you cutting off that ham bone?” And she said, “Well, I’m not sure, that’s just what my mother did.” So she went, she called her mother and said, “Hey, what’s the point of

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cutting off the end of the ham bone?” And the mother thought, what do you mean? And she said, “Well, when I was a kid I remember that you would get out the saw and you would cut off the ham bone.”

And the mother had to kind of search back in her memory and realized, sometimes when she bought a ham the ham didn't fit in the pan and so she'd have to go and get the saw. And so, for all these years her daughter would cut off the ham bone when she didn't need to. So, there's a lot of our thinking, our patterns of behavior that do the same thing. We don't think before. And so, we're doing things that aren't necessary. So that's what we're talking about.

So, we want to change all of that. So, when we really focus on the why of what we're doing, that's going to help us have the pause to say, “Do I really want to do this or not?”

So, let's just talk about the why. And one of the things that I love about being a life coach and being certified in The Life Coach School is that I learn from of course the president of The Life Coach School. So, Brooke talked about, “How do we decide on what makes a why good or not?” And Brooke says that, “In order for our why to really work for us it needs to be compelling.” So, it doesn't have to be worthy. It doesn't have to be righteous. You don't have to say, “I'm going to lose weight so that I can serve more people.” It has to be compelling.

So, if wearing a bikini is very compelling for you, or not feeling so insecure at the next new year's eve is really compelling for you, or when you know that your son is getting married and you want to look a certain way for the pictures. If that's really compelling for you then that's a good enough reason. That is a good why. And then the other piece of knowing if it's a good why or not is it needs to generate an emotion from our future self. What am I talking about with future self?

So, let's think about your current self, your past self and your future self. And so, this part is such a fascinating way of thinking about your life. And we talked a little bit about this in the procrastination episode where the

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future self wants the completed quilt. But the current self is the one who has to do all the troubleshooting. So, you kind of have an idea of what I’m talking about with this. And if you haven’t listened to the procrastination episode I encourage you to go back to that. It’s so helpful.

So, in order to take care of our future self we need to go to our past self to see what works well and what doesn’t work well. So, when I was a school teacher I would often hit, and I didn’t realize this at the time, I didn’t realize it was such a sugar crush for myself, especially the – I don’t know any of you out there who are teachers or retired teachers. But there was a lot of snacks in the staffroom. And so about 2 o’clock I usually hit some sort of wall. And it was really challenging for me. So, I knew that about myself. Knowing my past meant around 2:00/2:30 I kind of hit a wall.

And so, my current self who had to do the lesson planning decided wouldn’t it be nice for my future self if I did something very exciting at 2:00 or 2:30 for my students and so I didn’t have to push myself through or really have to struggle through the afternoon. So, what I would do is I would plan really fun things at that time. So now even in my work today I do the same thing. I plan fun activities that I can look forward to, kind of to break up my day. But there’s certain parts of my day that I love and other parts not so much. And so, when I know that I can plan for that.

And it’s the same thing that we do for food. So, are you worried that you will fail or disappoint your future self? And that’s something that so many of my clients and myself included, we really struggle with because we don’t want to fail. We don’t want to disappoint ourselves. We don’t want to feel bad. We don’t want to have that discouragement. We say this a lot, “I don’t want to set myself up for failure.” But the problem is, if you don’t ever set a goal and work towards it, then you have the guarantee that you’re not going to be happy. We call it failing ahead of time.

So, if you never give yourself the opportunity for growth you’re just always going to be the same. And 30 years from now you’re just going to have more wrinkles and grey hair. So, unless you really give yourself the opportunity for growth you will never grow. So, if you are worried that you’re

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going to fail or disappoint her, I recommend you just have a nice discussion. And that’s why we talk about compassion.

I often joke with my clients, imagine compassion is a cream and you buy it by the bulk. And you just put that compassionate cream all of you and just thank you so much for doing the best. You never have bad intentions. You’re always there to take care of me. I just appreciate you so much.

So, let’s just go to the past self, current self and future self. What does it sound like? Does it sound something like this? The past self says, “I knew it, look at all these other times where you’ve failed, you’re awful.” And the current self, she’s saying, “Yeah, I feel really mistreated, you guys always put all these expectations on me. There’s so much pressure.” And then we have the future self who is like, “Yeah, high hopes for a better life. I hope they really snap into it.”

Or do we want to change that relationship we have with our past, present and future self where the past self is we always did the best we could and we always can learn from our past. To the current self, thinking, I am using wisdom from the past that worked well. I know a lot about myself and I am going to always be kind in the process. To our future self who says, “You got this, things will get better, you are amazing, keep going.” So just like I mentioned, we have to rewire our thinking.

And if we don’t ever think about our thinking we literally are just walking around like a robot and we will just automatically go to the same thinking patterns, the same thing. Then we never will have change because we haven’t change anything. And you guys know what I’m going to say. If you always do what you’ve always done you’ll always get what you always got.

So let me talk about the three steps that we’re going to take in order to make sure that we don’t keep repeating the past. So that’s one of the problems. We make a goal to lose weight and we say, “Okay, I’m going to lose weight.” I’m really good at saying, “I want to lose 30 pounds by Christmas, in three months and I’m going to wear a size 10 pants.” So

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that's fine to make that goal but the problem is when we don't do these next three steps we're not giving ourselves the tools to create the result.

So, it's like saying, “Hey, I really want to make that quilt but I'm not going to cut out the fabric and I'm definitely not going to piece it, I'm not going to press it and I'm not going to organize to get a quilter to quilt it for me or learn how to free motion quilt myself.” And then you wonder why the quilt's not done. So, the first thing you need to do is pause and think. So, remember, the why's job is to cause us to pause and think why is this important to me to change.

Now I want you to take out your phone or to take some sticky notes, or I have a pile of cue cards in my desk. And I want you to take five, 10, 15 minutes when you're in a good head space and I want you to write down all the whys of why is this important for you to change. Why do you want this transformation. And write them all down on a piece of paper, on a bunch of pieces of paper. And then I want you to put them all over the place because I want you to think about when we're just going back to being the robot, automatic pilot we call it.

And you see this big pile of fabric on the floor. You have so many unfinished projects. But the problem is your brain gets used to, this is just who you are. You're just a person that kind of has messiness. And then all of a sudden someone comes to your house, or they come into your studio and you'll realize, you'll see it for real and you're like, “That's actually kind of embarrassing.”

So, when we have our why and we have them posted in lots of different places, one of the things that I do sometimes is I will put a reminder on my phone of my why. And I will remind myself of the why this is important to me. And so, then it helps me redirect, this is why we're doing it, this is why I'm willing to feel some discomfort because I'm so committed to getting that goal that I'm just willing to work through this. So that's what I want you to do is to post your whys all over and that way your brain will say, “This is important to me and I'm willing to do this thing.”

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Now, the next concept is called equal airtime. And one of the problems that we have in our brain is we don't give ourselves the opportunity to have equal airtime thinking. So especially when it comes to weight loss we have lots and lots of thoughts of I'm a failure. I'm not good enough. I can't get this right. There's no point in trying. Why do I even bother. This is so ridiculous. I should have figured this out by now. If I haven't figure it out by now I guess it's too late for me.

So, you spend a lot of time with those thoughts and not giving yourself the opportunity to think all of the opposites like losing weight means that I can go for kayaks. Losing weight means I'll have the energy and won't be left behind for Disney.

One of my clients, she started with me in January and she's down 35 pounds. And she's going to Disney in October and she's so excited because she has so much more energy now. And she's going to enjoy that trip so much more because she was willing to put in the work. And to remind herself and envision herself walking around Disney standing in line, being able to be on her feet for that long, having that stamina.

And so, when we can give ourselves a lot of time in our brain of I have done some other things that are pretty amazing too, I can be very successful in whatever I decide to do, you start opening your mind to more of that possibility. It makes it more believable that you can actually achieve that goal.

One of the things that my business coach did was she asked us, instead of focusing on our monetary week by week, she said, “Look at it from the whole year.” And when we expanded it to the whole year we were able to see over 12 months how much more we made. And so, if we didn't make as much as we wanted in one day or in one week, or even we had a low month then we could see the whole picture. And so, we need to give our brain the equal opposite experience of the success, that there's a whole reason why we want to make that goal come true.

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And the third step that we need to do to make our goal a reality is that we need to be inspired by our future reality. So sometimes when I’m feeling down, and I do this with my clients and they’re kind of feeling discouraged, actually one of my clients has popped into my mind.

She was having very consistent three pounds a week weight loss for probably a good solid four or five months. And then she was coming across some obstacles where she wasn’t losing any weight for about two weeks. When I say any, it’s half a pound, it kind of went up and down. And she was feeling a little bit discouraged. And then when we were able to go back and look at how much weight she had already lost in that time she realized how successful she actually was with weight loss. And that she was actually quite amazing.

And it wasn’t a surprise to me that a week later she had, we call it a whoosh, when she lost five pounds in one week because she was able to give her brain that opposite positive thinking. When we can be inspired by a future reality, I’d like you to imagine what is the reason why you want to lose the weight in the first place. So, let’s think about our why. Do we want to go kayaking? Do we want to not be left behind? Do we want to have the stamina? Do we want to feel more comfortable taking trips, family trips and being in our bathing suit?

Do we want to be less preoccupied during the day with all of this negative self-talk about our body? Do we want to have more enjoyment every morning when we get dressed in the morning because we feel more comfortable in our clothes? Do we want to just even feel neutral about the number on the scale? What are all those future reality experiences going to be like when you’ve created your goal? And the more time that you can spend in that future self, the quicker you’re going to actually become that person because you’re going to be solving obstacles for yourself.

And your brain acclimatizes to, yeah, this is the person who I am becoming. It’s not so shocking, it’s not so difficult or unrealistic to expect that you could be a person that goes to dinner and focuses on the relationships and the conversations rather than focusing on how everyone’s going to judge

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you and having all those negative experiences. So, you actually could go out for dinner and really enjoy it.

So, again, the steps are, number one, pause and think. That's the why's job is to help you pause and really think. So, we're going to rewire our brain. Number two, we're going to have equal airtime. So, eat, we're going to spend time in the positive reason of why we want that goal. And the third is we want to be inspired by our future reality. And one of my favorite things to do is to go back in my pictures and look at the things that I did create for myself and get inspired by what I have been able to do.

So, I want you to write down your why as a reminder and the more you do that then you can be at front, so your brain doesn't acclimatize to the version of you that you don't want to stay at. You want to keep building and improving on. Change is actually very simple. And I want you to use curiosity and be present with yourself to plan for your problems. So, one of the issues I see so often with my clients is they'll make a goal, it'll feel amazing, they're like, “I love my reasons, it feels so good.”

And they get really motivated and excited about the reason for doing it. It feels wonderful. It feels so clean. It feels so good. It feels really exciting because they get super motivated by the future results. But when they're in the trenches, when they're having to, like I said, you have to rewire your brain and you have to not do the zipper the way you always did the zipper. It takes you some time to work through those problems. So I always say it's not if you're going to have problems, it's when.

And so, we do this a lot in my group is we write down all of the obstacles that are in our way from accomplishing our goal. And then we work on the strategies of how to overcome those obstacles. I'm going to give you some examples of this.

So, let's say you want to lose weight. And you're thinking about, okay, I really want to lose the weight, I want to feel better about myself. So, I want you to ask yourself why you want to lose the weight. And then say, “How will it make me feel to lose weight?” Because everything we do in life is

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because we want to feel a certain way. So, if you can't answer that, ask the question, “How will it make me feel if I don't lose the weight?” And this is a trick that I learned from Corinne Crabtree who is also a weight loss coach from The Life Coach School.

So, if you can't be very specific I want you to flip the question around. I don't want to feel so sad all the time. So, then that becomes what are the things that I can do to feel happy? So let me walk you through it again. So, I want you to write down why do you want to lose the weight. So that's the first step. And don't judge them. If you want to say, “Because I want to wear a bikini”, there is no judgment here. It's great, who cares? Remember, our worth is already set.

We're literally just going through life right now just to have a more interesting and more fun life, truly. Because whether you're skinny or whatever size you are, it does not matter on your worth. It doesn't make you a more wonderful, valid or amazing person. So, write down your five reasons of why you want to lose the weight. And then I want you to write down, what are the feelings that I will have when I lose the weight. And then if you can't answer that then you ask the question, how will it make me feel if I don't lose the weight?

So, it'll make me sad. It'll make me frustrated. It'll make me feel disappointed. It will make me whatever that is. So, take that emotion, that negative emotion and then turn it around and say, “I don't want to feel so sad all the time.” Which then becomes what are the things that I can do to feel happy? And then if we thought, I don't want to be disappointed. What are the things that I can feel successful? So, we're going to turn that around.

So, going back to the beginning question, so are you convinced that if you decide to lose weight you won't be able to keep it off? And you almost feel like it's impossible? This is what this episode is all about. If you don't have a compelling why, so whatever emotion is the strongest is what you're going to be operating out of. So, we talked about the Buc-ee's Fuels in Houston where I went. So whatever emotion is the strongest that's what's

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going to be the fuel. So, when your why is so strong it will give you the strength to get into action.

And so, I encourage you to establish your why, establish that relationship with your past, present and future self. And then three, follow those three steps to work through this process. So, the first one is to pause and think. The second one is equal airtime. So, spend time in that beautiful future place. And then the third is to be inspired by your future reality.

And as you write down all your whys and you post them everywhere, you put them on your phone and reminders, that's going to help you be in your present self and to have so much kindness and compassion for your past and your future self.

So, for all of you who are listening to this podcast, I love hearing what you take from this podcast. And so, you can always share with me at dara@daratomasson.com. And you can find me on Instagram and you can share it with me there as well.

Alright, so thank you for listening to Weight Loss for Quilters. If you want more info please visit daratomasson.com. See you next week.

If you've been enjoying these tools that I've been sharing in my podcast, I have a surprise for you. I have a 5-day training that tells you all the foods you should eat, why you should eat them, I tell you about the weight loss science, and there are women who have lost 20, 30 pounds just from my free training. And so if you go over to my website, daratomasson.com and sign up for my email list, you will get that training every day for the next 5 days.

And not only do you get the free training, but being on my email list helps you get all of the first dibs on all the exciting things happening in the Love Yourself Thin community. There will be special bonuses that aren't available otherwise. So if you want to learn how to continue getting success, I invite you to hop over to daratomasson.com and register for my email list where you will get that free training. And I can't wait to see how it's going to help you as you continue to learn how to love yourself thin.

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Thanks for listening to *Weight Loss for Quilters*. If you want more info, please visit daratomasson.com. See you next week.