

16. Celebrate Yourself



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Dara Tomasson

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Are you convinced that if you celebrate yourself as you are now you will never change for the better? Well, this episode is totally for you.

I am Dara Tomasson, and this is Weight Loss for Quilters episode 16. 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.

Okay, so today is my birthday. Isn't that exciting? I'm 48 years old. I am so excited to be celebrating my birthday today. And I want to tell you a few things about that. So, I don't know about you but what is your relationship like with your birthday? So maybe has evolved over the years when you were a kid, did you really love your birthday? Tell me about that. I'd love to hear. I have always loved my birthday. I am the third born of six and so my birthday was very exciting because I got attention and it was awesome.

But as I've gotten older, I have changed the way that I celebrate myself. And one of the biggest things that I've done is I make sure that I have my very own best birthday. I plan my own food. I plan the whole day and it's really, really fun. And as I was thinking about this episode and really thinking about celebrating and it took me a while to come together with all the ideas I've been having about my birthday. And just this concept of celebrating yourselves. That has been so much of a shift for my clients in truly learning to celebrate themselves.

So, I want you to think, what's the last time you celebrated anything you did, really truly? And as I've been thinking about this episode and my birthday, there are things that I really want to celebrate about myself. And I want to invite you to do the same thing. And so, at 48, I'm celebrating that I healed my relationship with my mother. I am celebrating that I decided what kind of daughter I want to be. And then I have just been amazing at being that kind of daughter. I am celebrating that I take ownership of all my own thoughts.

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And anything that anyone says to me, I don't react, avoid, resist any of it now. I just totally get to decide how I want to think. Another thing that I'm celebrating now that I'm 48 and this this is my life, I plan and execute my days. I look forward to them. I edit and revise every day, at the end of every day I look at what I did, and I use this form of evaluation that we're going to talk about a little bit later in this episode. And so, every day I just make my life that much better. It's like a curated museum. I really love at 48 that I'm healing my relationship with money.

And what I have been able to do to change that relationship with money, it has been really transformational. Another thing that I want to celebrate now that I'm 48 and I have been able to really embrace my body. And for so many years my body, my weight was such a thorn in my side. It truly was my Achilles heel. And even though I was never really, really overweight there was times where I was 30 pounds, 40 pounds. The most I have ever been is 50 pounds. And that was right before I met my first life coach.

But I can now lose weight so easily. Not only can I lose weight, but I can keep the weight off and I no longer have all the drama about all my thoughts about myself, beating myself up. None of that really ever happens anymore which has given me so much more energy and time to do so many other things.

Another thing that's really been interesting as I celebrate being 48 is that I'm learning a lot from my body. And there's different places in my body that store different kinds of pains and different kinds of troubles. And so being able to learn that I don't have the arthritis problems that I had. I don't have the thyroid issues that I had. And I was diagnosed with thyroid after my fifth baby and had to go a specialist. And I don't have those issues any longer.

And so that's really exciting for me as I think about going into 48 and how much of an inside job I've done in really making my body so much more of a healthy loving relationship. And so much of the past, the last thing I'm going to celebrate is the need for the perfectionism, the procrastinating and the people pleasing. And as I'm thinking about my, I call it the triple P as you know is that when we used to try to make ourselves be liked by other

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people, we were basically just a chameleon. And anywhere we would go we would be someone different.

And I don't do that so much anymore and that's really exciting. So, I just wanted to share those insights of what it has meant for me up until this time of how much I've grown and changed. So, before I get into the bulk of my podcast on how to celebrate yourself. And I'm going to share with you five ways to celebrate yourself exactly as you are. And then after I share those five, I'm going to go through a step by step of how to create permanent change. So, are you ready?

So, before I do that, I wanted to celebrate one of my clients. And it's really fun for me to celebrate them. And in fact, I'm going to celebrate her and then I'm going to use another client to show you how the tools of creating permanent change are so practical. So, you're going to hear about two of my clients. So, the first one I wanted to shout is just that it was her birthday just recently. And I remember coaching her last year, she was one of my one-on-one clients and it was on her birthday.

And we were learning the tools, working through all the struggles and difficulties. She turned 59 last year and has been struggling with her weight ever since she can remember as a little girl. So just recently it was her birthday again and we were in a group call. And I pulled up her records, because I said, "How much weight have you lost?" And so, she's like, "Well, I can't remember how much I weighed on my birthday last year." So, I looked it up and she has lost 40 pounds. So, she's turned 60, she's lost 40 pounds.

And it's been really interesting to watch because her husband lost his job during COVID. He got a new job at that age, it's not always as easy, and then they moved from the house they thought they were going to retire in. And she's had some other health issues that she hadn't expected. And it was so much fun to watch as she is such a good example of what we're going to teach today. So, are you ready?

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Alright, so I want you to think, how often do you celebrate yourself? And one of the problems with people celebrating themselves, just like I asked at the very beginning of the podcast is that they say, “If I celebrate myself now, I’m never going to change. So how can I celebrate myself at 275 pounds when I really should be 150? So, if I give myself permission to feel good about myself then I’m never going to change.” So, this sounds a lot like the old discipline model of pull up your bootstraps, wipe your tears, don’t talk about it.

And so, the problem with that is when you don’t allow yourself to accept you exactly how you are then you’re never going to learn how you got there. So, I’m going to give you the five ways to celebrate yourself exactly as you are. So, the first way is number one, is punishing yourself to change doesn’t work. So, we’re not going to go to that discipline model of pulling up your bootstraps and I don’t want to hear your tears. It doesn’t work because it’s, like I said, it’s not allowing you to go inside of you and see what’s really going on.

I remember being at the grocery store and my son was three years old. And he really wanted a toy. And I just said, “No, honey, you can’t have it.” And he had a full blown temper tantrum. And he has red curly hair, and he was really big for his age. And he was just full of emotion. And he didn’t really even start talking till he was three. And he was having this massive temper tantrum. And I was with my sister, and I looked at my little boy and I thought, he just needs a hug. He just needs a big old hug.

And so, I knelt down, and I just gave him a hug and my sister was like, “No, you’re not supposed to do that.” She hadn’t had kids at the time. “And you’re supposed to give them a hard time and he can’t act that way.” And I said, “No, no, that’s not how I roll.” And that was really transformational. And I think about that for myself, do I want to have myself, being lashing myself, negative self-talk and punishing myself? Or would it be more fun and interesting to be like, “It’s okay Dara, you’re going to be alright?”

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And one of the tools that we use in the Professional Recovery program is how to use self-compassion and how that helps us to create permanent change.

So, number two, your size has nothing to do with your worth. So, I want you to really think about when you go shopping, or when you're looking through your clothes in your closet and you see a size 22, or you see a size 12, why are your thoughts different? Just get really curious about that. In fact, a few days ago I bought a pair of jeans that were size 2, because they were \$4.67. And I thought, normally, ladies, I wear a size 6 but they were kind of stretchy. And I thought, well, who knows? And they fit. I couldn't believe it.

And it's just so much fun for me to say it like that because in the past I used to think when I wear a size 6 then I will be happy, or when I wear a certain size then my life will be all wonderful. And so, the fact that I'm wearing a size 2 and I'm 6 feet tall, I never would have imagined. It was just this really fun benefit. It's because my focus isn't on the size. My focus is on my worth. My worth is already set.

Number three, nothing is wrong with you when you don't have the life you want yet. So, if you're not living in the kind of house that you want, or you don't have the kind of furniture you want, or if your house isn't modeled perfectly yet, or your yard is not wonderfully landscaped. Nothing is wrong with you. And in fact, one of the things that used to keep me up late at night literally because I'd be painting, or scraping, or doing something, was that I didn't feel like I could relax in my own home until it was just so. That is an exhausting way to live.

And I want you to realize the only reason you think that you can't relax in a house like that is because of all the thoughts you have. So sometimes I talk about my wonky kitchen. And I have had some very beautiful kitchens in past houses. And when we moved here, we have a pretty wonky kitchen. It's not super awesome. And it's been really interesting for my brain to realize that I can be relaxed, and I can be at peace in my home even with a wonky kitchen. And that is totally available to all of you.

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Number four, we have two brains, they have two jobs, and those jobs compete with each other. So, our lower brain, it wants us to survive. It wants us to seek pleasure. It wants us to conserve energy. It wants us to not have any pain. But we have a higher brain which is sometimes called the CEO brain and it wants us to have the best life possible. So sometimes there's a bit of a battle. So, when you see that beautiful fabric bundle and you know you already have a lot of fabric in your stash, but you want it so badly, seek pleasure, brain is trying to take over.

Whereas CEO brain's saying, "Hey, you know what? If you really want it in two weeks, then you can get it." So that is how we're going to do that work.

Now number five, we have 95% of our thoughts are unconscious. So, I have read *Breaking the Habit of Being Yourself*, it's such an interesting book, it's by Dr. Joe Dispenza. And he talks a lot about how, there's brain science that shows how 95% of our brains really are unconscious. And when I'm talking about that it's all of the habits and behaviors that we have created. So, there's also a lot of negative and positive identifications and associations that we have. And so, if we don't sit with ourselves and start looking then we aren't able to see.

So, if we have a belief that blonds have more fun, we might spend a little more money at the hairdresser to get more blond. That's a silly example but that's the first one that popped into my mind. So, the problem with that is we aren't fully aware of what's going on in our brain. So sometimes we have had messages from when we were young from our mother that we just assumed was – one of them was, if you didn't have a clean house, you weren't a very good person. There definitely was a moral judgment on a person if they had a messy house.

A messy house cleaner, oh my goodness, she's very slothful. And there was definitely messages as a young girl about people who were overweight. And so, with media, social media, comments that people made in family gatherings or whatever that is, and so there was definitely messages sent out to me as a young girl about people who had more weight on them what that meant.

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So those are five ways that we want you to celebrate yourself exactly as you are. So, number one, punishing yourself to change doesn't work. Your size has nothing to do with your worth. There's nothing wrong with you if you don't have everything you want yet. You have two brains that are just competing with each other. And we have 95% of our thoughts that are unconscious, and we just aren't fully aware of them. So, isn't that fun? You can celebrate yourself exactly as you are.

Now, this is the part where I'm going to tell you how to create permanent change. Are you ready? So, the first thing is we need to accept ourselves exactly how we are. We need to accept how much we weigh. We need to accept how much fabric we have, how much money we have in the bank, what kind of shape our house is in. Whatever our life is like is exactly, it is, we just accept it.

Now, the second step to change is we need to get curious of why our life looks the way it does. Just get really curious.

And then number three, so we need to do a thought dump. So, we've got to unload all the thoughts that are in our brain and see what's coming out. You will be surprised. And so, then you get that thought dump, it's you see everything that's out there. And then you're going to make a decision of what you want to do to change. And when I talk about making a decision, I say to myself, "Do I like my reasons, and do they feel like love?" And so those are the two parameters of making a decision.

And then number two, we start implementing them. And this is when our brain is starting to say, "Well, I don't know. Were you really sold on that idea? I'm not sure if that was such a good idea."

And then you evaluate, number three. So, at the end of evaluating you say, "What went well, what didn't go so well and what am I going to do better next time?" So that's what I do at the end of every day on my calendar because I want to get as good my calendaring as I am with weight loss. And the reason I'm so good with weight loss is because I did this exact

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same process. Make decisions, implement my decision, evaluate my decision.

And then number four, I rinsed and repeat. And now I just have really good systems with food. It's not a problem.

There is a really interesting book by James Clear, it's called Atomic Habits. And in Atomic Habits, and we'll talk about this in a future episode because I'm really excited about it. And as I did my procrastination, I do a procrastination class, it's a four day class and it's so awesome. And so, he has a lot of tips about how do we make things better, how do we create better habits that are going to give us permanent change? But one of the concepts he talked about was making yourself 1% better every day.

And so, what I want to share is an example from one of my clients. And she came to me, she had had a pretty traumatic family situation and really was struggling. And she has lost 80 pounds once, she's lost 50 pounds three times. So, she's really good at losing weight. But where she struggles, and she's not alone is putting the weight back on again. And so, we worked together for a year and she's doing so well, lost 80 pounds, doing so well. And then we took a month off and I called it a sabbatical.

So, she was in the mastermind and so they had different homework assignments and things. And she struggled. She had some challenges. And she started putting weight back on. And so, some of the old stories came back of here we go again, why did you ever think that you could change permanently? And she started back in September working in the program, working with the group calls and with me, and reviewing the skills that she had made. And she realized that it is truly, it's 1%, you just do one thing and then you do another thing.

And she shared a story where she was at the mall, and she could smell the delicious baking. And she literally walked back and forth 10 times. So, she was going to go buy it and then she walked back away from it. And then she walked towards it again. And she just kept going back and forth. And she was making those decisions and it's just one decision. And how she

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described it is before when she didn't have the tools, she was in food jail. So being in food jail meant that she didn't feel she had freedom. She needed to have the food to feel better.

And now she has the tools to have food freedom. And she said, it's always happening when I work on my belief in herself. And that's what we're celebrating. I shared some of the things that I'm celebrating about being 48 and what I've done in the last few years. I have been able to change my relationship with my mother. I have been able to heal my relationship with money. I have been able to really plan and execute amazing days for myself. I've totally transformed my relationship with my body.

I have taken ownership of all my thoughts so I'm no longer going into victim mentality. And it's been really fun to watch as she's done the same thing. And one of the things that I want to leave you with is something to think about. It goes along with the procrastination podcast. And I'm not sure if I mentioned it. But this is something that's really been coming up, especially as I'm celebrating my successes of my clients and of myself. And really what I want to emphasize is that we need to accept ourselves exactly how we are.

Because if we can't truly see ourselves, we're just playing hide and seek. And so, one of the things that this client brought up in our last call was so much of the food and why you get into food jail is because you want instant gratification. Whereas we know that when we have that delayed gratification, that finished quilt, instant gratification is buying the fabric. Delayed gratification is making the project. And if we are always going for instant gratification, we're putting off the discomfort because we're going for it in a moment.

So, we're saying, "No, I'm not going to have discomfort now, I'm going to have it right at this moment." And what that does it keeps us in stuck pain. It's like we just keep repeating it over, and over, and over and nothing ever changes. So that's why it's so important to accept what's going on so that we can have an awareness of oh, this is what I'm doing. And then if you look on the flipside, so the opposite of instant gratification of course is

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delayed gratification. And the opposite of discomfort later is discomfort now.

So, you have to have the discomfort of not eating the brownie even though it smells amazing at the mall or at the Cinnabon's. You have that discomfort of processing that urge and walking away. And what that does, it actually allows you the opportunity to have progression pain. So even though you have pain in the moment, you know you're progressing towards the becoming a person who you want to celebrate. And you can celebrate yourself in the progression pain.

And so, I love this episode because I along with all my clients really struggled with celebrating myself because I wasn't perfect. I didn't quite have it all done yet. And I was worried if I started to celebrate myself when I didn't have it all then I would just be accepting mediocracy. And I wouldn't be having the life I want. But the opposite is totally true.

We need to learn to accept ourselves exactly how we are so then we can meet ourselves where we're at. We can appreciate all the things that we've done that are amazing. And then we can look at what could we do to create more grace, or more understanding in that life.

So, I just want to leave you with one last thought as we celebrate ourselves. So, it's actually a challenge that I gave this particular client I just shared with. And it's something that I've done regularly over the last three years. And so, this is what I want you to do. Are you ready? And what I'd love you to do is I'd love you to do this and then as my birthday present you can message me on Instagram and tell me how it went or email me back if you're on my email list, which you need to be.

So, I want you to just look at your eyes. I want you to, maybe shut the door, it might seem a little strange, but I just want you to look at yourself in your eyes. Look in the mirror and just take some breaths and just focus on looking at yourself exactly how you are, with wrinkles, maybe you're not wearing any makeup, maybe your hair is a little bit frizzy or messy, maybe your shirt isn't your favorite. Just don't look at any of that other stuff. I want

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you just to look in your own eyes and really see. What do you really see? Who really are you?

And I would love to hear what comes up because as I was saying, we have an amazing higher brain. And when you can connect with this beautiful body and that higher brain, magic starts to happen. So, thank you for celebrating with me on my 48th birthday. I love the kind of life that I've created for myself. And I look so forward to creating more and more amazing adventures and helping so many more people finally get out of food jail and all the other jails that we've been putting ourselves in from these thoughts that haven't served us.

So, thank you so much for joining me today, it was so much fun to be with you. So, my challenge to you for today is actually go and look at yourself in the mirror and see really who you are. What happens when you look at yourself in the mirror and I would love to hear it from you. Alright, that's your job, so go do that.

Alright, thanks for listening to *Weight Loss for Quilters*, if you want more information, please visit daratomasson.com. See you next week.

Did you know I have a YouTube channel with all sorts of free motion quilting content? If you want to up your free motion quilting game, I have a 31 day doodle challenge there that goes along with my brand new quilting book, Doodle School. Like I always say, make your food boring and your life more exciting.

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