

41. Hunger Misunderstood is Weight-Loss Kryptonite



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Dara Tomasson

41. Hunger Misunderstood is Weight-Loss Kryptonite

Are you convinced that if your stomach gets too empty you'll be stranded at the side of the road, not able to move? Well, listen in on this episode where you will turn your fear of hunger into a catapult for guaranteeing your weight loss success. In fact, I'm so confident in this topic that when you master hunger you will lose eight pounds in one month.

I am Dara Tomasson, and this is Weight Loss for Quilters episode number 41: Hunger Misunderstood is Weight-Loss Kryptonite.

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 guys, I am super fired up about this topic of hunger because I see so many of newest members coming into Love Yourself Thin and they have been sabotaging their weight loss for far too long. And so, one of the problems is that we have hunger which is in fact a tool that is a built in tool for our bodies and we haven't understood it. So, today I am going to be sharing my podcast with you.

So, if you're listening to this in real time I am going to be taking my Love Yourself Thin women through hunger. We're doing a deep dive in the month of May 2022. So, you've got to come in, you've got to join us every Monday. We're going to take this really deep. It's going to be massive. If you are listening to this on the replay don't you worry. When you join Love Yourself Thin you will get all of the goods. You will get the whole course. You will be able to watch all the replays. It's going to blow your mind.

Alright, so this is what we're going to do in this episode. I'm going to talk to you about why hunger is so misunderstood, why you've been sabotaging yourself. I'm going to talk about how our bodies are wired to be naturally thin. And when we don't understand hunger that really sabotages all of that. I'm going to walk you through the top 10 hunger misconceptions that will

41. Hunger Misunderstood is Weight-Loss Kryptonite

really help you see why weight loss has been such a problem for you even though you've had such amazing efforts. You've tried to hard to lose the weight and you just haven't been able to keep it off.

And then after that I'm going to walk you through the initial stages of how my clients understand hunger and use hunger for themselves to create this permanent weight loss and they're no longer going to be unintentionally inflicting more and more weight on themselves.

Okay, but before we get into the heart of the podcast I just got a letter from one of my clients and it's so sweet. And I just really wanted to share this with you because she had basically given up on weight loss. She had given up on ever finding peace with her body, with her relationships. And this is what she wrote, this is part of it. "I'm really enjoying the lifetime program." So, she's worked with me one-on-one. She's worked with me in groups. And so, she's kind of seen the whole thing.

"I'm really enjoying the lifetime program and I'm so thankful you offered it. It is very helpful and so interesting to me to go through the modules again and think about how my answers have changed from several months ago. I am definitely peeling away layers. I am also able to watch the coaching sessions from a different perspective. I cannot truly express how much the coaching has meant to me. I truly believe it is the missing piece in managing my weight and my health. And as I am seeing it overflow into every other part of my life I am so excited to be helping others."

And so that's one of the things that happens in our program is that women that have gone on before they are there not only for themselves to continue doing the mind work and continuing to improve the relationships with themselves, with their spouses, with their kids, productivity, all of that. But then they get to be inspiration. They get to support obviously other women because they've been there.

That's why this program, the lifetime membership is just so beautiful because there's just this amazing community that's there. They have all been through where you've been. And it is so beautiful. So that's such a

41. Hunger Misunderstood is Weight-Loss Kryptonite

special letter and I just got it in the mail today. And so, I wanted to share that with you.

Alright, so are you ready? This is such a good one just like all my podcasts. I just love them so much. I love thinking about you just walking, or chain piecing, or ironing, or doing the dishes and you're just taking this all in. And you're able to now see why weight loss has been such a problem for you. Now, remember there's only two reasons why we're overweight. One is we eat too often and eat too much, or we have all the sugary stuff. So, over-hunger and over-desire.

And there's two ways of solving that. We have to figure out what we're eating. So that's what I call our protocol, so our eating plan. So that's why hunger, this episode's going to be so helpful because in our brain how often have you had these thoughts? I haven't eaten in five hours. It's time to eat. It's lunchtime. It's dinnertime. It's snack time. It's restaurant time. I think my blood sugar is low. I'm tired. I need a pick-me-up, I need breakfast. I need a protein bar. I need a certain number of calories. I need nutrients. I just worked out, so I need to replenish.

How many of those thoughts have gone through your mind? In fact, one of my clients, we were talking about this. She said once her mother-in-law offered her a bagel and she had half of it and then she was not going to eat the rest. This is years ago. And her mother-in-law said, "Why don't you want the rest of that?" And she said, "Well, I'm just not hungry." She's like, "What does hunger have to do with eating?" So incredible.

It's just so amazing to me to think how unattached we are from our bodies and how difficult that is for us to think we can be that permanent weight loss if we don't even address being in our body and understanding how it's even meant to work. I like to think of it as you get this brand new sewing machine, and you don't read the instruction manual, and you don't really know how it works. And you're like, "Yeah, this sewing machine is terrible. I don't want anything to do with it." But all it takes is just learning how to work with it.

41. Hunger Misunderstood is Weight-Loss Kryptonite

Now, this is the crutch of hunger. Our bodies need hunger. Our bodies use hunger to help us know when we're hungry and stop when we're full. And so, hunger is our way of fueling our body. So, if we're not in our body then we are in trouble. And then the other thing with those examples I just gave of it's lunchtime, it's dinnertime, then what's happening is hunger will start in your brain and then it will go to your stomach. Whereas hunger, true hunger starts in our stomachs and being like, I notice that I'm actually feeling really hungry and then that message travels to our brain.

So, we have been doing top down instead of bottom up. And that's where the problem is. And I was thinking about this, I think that a lot of times people think that their stomachs are like a gas tank in a car. And if it gets too empty they're going to be lying stranded on the side of the road. So first of all, our bodies are wired to be naturally thin. And we are meant to feast and then famine, not feast, feast, feast. So, when we eat we are fueling our body.

And when our stomach is empty and we're starting to say, "Hey, I've got some grumbling in my stomach," which is great because that's when we know. Weight loss is all about our hormones. And so, our growling is working. So, we say, "Okay, yeah, it's time to eat." And then what happens though for our bodies is we have stored energy which is in the form of fat. There's approximately 3,000 calories for one pound of fat. So, I call these pounds of fat, jerrycans, or gas cans. So, you in fact are a walking storage unit for yourself.

And actually, as in light of the recent events of the war in the Ukraine and Russia, one of my clients just brought this up the other day. She said, "I see these people who walk for three days, and they haven't eaten and they're okay." We are so amazing. Our human bodies are so incredible that we are built to store fat on ourselves. And so even when you think about a difference between a man's body and a woman's body.

A woman's body, we store fat in our breasts and then we store fat in our bellies, and in our hips. So, when we have babies, we have to make the baby and feed the baby. So, we are naturally inclined to have more fat on

41. Hunger Misunderstood is Weight-Loss Kryptonite

us because we need more fat to make a baby. I remember when I was making my first baby, my husband kept saying, “But you’re eating for the baby.” And so, our bodies are meant to store that fat. We’ve got our own back.

So, understanding what hunger’s job is, you can start building trust with yourself. And I kind of think about this when you have a baby, I’m talking about all these babies now. But when you have a baby and the baby cries you can start understanding this cry has more of a I’m hungry cry, or I’m uncomfortable cry, or I’m in pain cry. So, when we learn to just be in our body and listen to our bodies like I’m hungry.

And hunger actually comes in waves. So, it comes on to us, kind of like a wave will hit you and it will just kind of ride it out. You’re like, oh boy, here it is, here is that wave. And you allow it to go back. So, it grabs your attention, you allow it to be there and then it dissipates. That’s what true hunger is. And when you know you have all this stored fat on you what can happen next is your body can then go and access that stored fat. It can use up the fat that you have been storing, which is amazing, it’s really, really incredible how that all works.

So, these are the 10 lies, I call them lies but I really think that these are the 10 ways that we can understand why hunger has been so fearful. So, I’m going to go through them. Don’t worry, I have them on the handout and so they’ll all be written down for you. And while I’m reading them I want you to think of what is the emotion associated when I say this.

So, the first one is hunger is scary. So, if you go to empty you will feel out of control and then binge eat. So many people have said that. And in fact, a lot of even doctors will say that. And they’ll say, doctors, healthcare people, diet people, they’ll say, “Yeah, eat six small meals.” Well, the problem is every time you eat you instigate your insulin and then that starts that whole ball rolling again. And so if you think that hunger is scary then how do you feel? You feel out of control. You feel fearful. You feel nervous in your body. You’re like, “I don’t want to get all crazy.”

41. Hunger Misunderstood is Weight-Loss Kryptonite

And remember, we can never do anything without our upper brain's permission. So, we will never be out of control. Alright, so that is that example. So, I'm going to read the other nine and I want you to think, okay, that makes me feel scared, that makes me feel scarce, that makes me feel it's dangerous. That's what I want to direct your brain to doing right now.

So, number two, think that our stomachs are like a tank of gas and if it gets too empty you will be stranded on the side of the road. I'm really emphasizing that because I truly do think that people think that. And it's interesting because even my brain as a mom, I have a 15 year old who is basically, he has no fat on him. He's just muscle. And so, I actually do worry that he will not have enough fat to survive. But I think, no, he is fine, he will be okay.

Number three, we're told that we need to eat regularly and if you are too hungry you will mess up your metabolism and then you will never get it regulated. So many women come to me and say, "I really think I have messed up my metabolism. I really don't think that I can ever have weight loss success." And I want to tell you right now, it's not true.

Alright, number four, our circadian rhythm confirms that for most people, hunger is lowest first thing in the morning even though it's been 14 hours since you last ate even though we are the hungriest at dinner and we have just eaten five hours previously. So now you don't trust yourself to know when you are hungry or not. So, this one I just want to explain that hunger is not a black and white formula of I have to eat every four hours or if I don't eat in four hours I'm going to be so hungry. Because we do have our natural circadian rhythms.

We have the way our body is working. There's a lot of inside stuff that happens with food, and breaking it down, and using minerals and nutrients. So, when we realize that our bodies are not robots, it's not input output we can just be so much more at peace with ourselves.

Number five, hunger is learned and is tied to our senses. So, when you smell a steak you are hungry. You weren't hungry two seconds before you

41. Hunger Misunderstood is Weight-Loss Kryptonite

smelled it. Have you, go outside and it's barbecue season and you're like, "I'm so hungry." So, food related stimuli are innate in almost everyone. So even when you think about Pavlov's dogs, they were stimulated to eat when they saw a man in a white lab coat. There is nothing stimulating about food with a man in a white lab coat other than the fact that they got that association.

And we're going to take a deep dive into our senses within the group. But I just wanted to let you have this awareness.

Number six, I hope I am saying this right, a cephalic phase response. So, our body is triggered, so we have a physical gut response for preparing to eat through, you guys got it, we start to salivate. Our pancreas starts producing fluid. And our insulin starts getting ramped up because it's like, okay, there's an expectation of food delivery.

So, our senses inform our body that we need to be ready to eat. And that's why willpower doesn't help us because if we're looking at the food and we're wanting the food our insulin is already starting to go even if we haven't eaten the food or not. It's so fascinating.

Number seven, visual stimuli like good plating or gorgeous pictures of food, stimulate hunger. The same thing, so when we're watching TV and there's this really beautiful picture of a hamburger and these French fries, we start salivating. Our cephalic, I don't know if I'm saying it right, it gets all stimulated.

Okay, number eight, consistency with food time becomes a habit, not a true intrinsic hunger. So, we've learned through decades of association. As a schoolteacher I saw this over and over, and even as the teachers ourselves. We just got in this habit of, yeah, I can tell, it's almost noon because my stomach is starting to churn, because I've been conditioning my stomach that I have to eat at this time, so interesting.

Number nine, food associations. So, going to the movies, what are we going to do? We've got to eat popcorn, we've got to have pop, or we've got

41. Hunger Misunderstood is Weight-Loss Kryptonite

to have the candy. Eating between soccer games, food at concerts, food while watching TV. That is so much a part of our conditioning.

Number ten, our lower brain, our basic instincts tell us that we should be hungry. So, food equals survival and that is wonderful, but we also have more flour, and sugar, and food than we ever had in the past. We don't need to go and depend on someone hunting the buffalo and we don't have to live off that buffalo for the next two or three months or however long we can stretch it. We have a lot of food security.

So, when I read these 10 and you can look them over again on your handout, what feelings are coming up? Out of control, scared, unempowered, life or death, fearful, mistrust, confusion, danger. These are all the feelings so of course when you feel all of these feelings around hunger it feels very scary. It feels like you never want to go there. And so, it's okay, I just want to normalize that for you, that it totally makes sense that when you think about hunger and you're so afraid, that it's going to feel terrible.

And so, in order to help with hunger work for us, I want you to learn how to just, when we get hungry it's because we're hungry. When we just start to really listen to our bodies, we really start trusting ourselves. So, these are the tips that I'm going to give you as I help you to overcome this. And I'm going to give you three steps on how to do this.

The first step, I want you to create a boundary for yourself that you will only eat when you're sitting at the table. So, this is very commonsense, it goes back to what our grandmas would have told us. And what it's doing is it's creating that we're not mindlessly eating. So, we're not eating and scrolling. We're not eating and watching a movie. Whatever action we're doing is our main focus. So, we are only going to eat at the table. And my recommendation is never to be scrolling or reading while you're eating.

Just allow the food to be your center. If you are eating with your family or with other people, one of my hacks that I do is I will serve myself a quarter of what I would normally eat. So that would cause me to pause, after I

41. Hunger Misunderstood is Weight-Loss Kryptonite

finish eating that whatever I put on the plate and then I say to myself, “Am I going to serve myself more? Am I hungry?” It’s a check-in to my body and I just kind of pay attention, okay, how is it going, body? And then I’m able to from my higher brain make a decision of I’m going to serve myself some more food.

I’ll even put a timer on just very discretely and then kind of take a pause, and say, “Am I really hungry or not?” And another thing to do is just every time you put your fork down, just ask yourself, check-in with your stomach. That’s going to help you get out of that mindless eating. And there’s so many times where you leave the table, and you just can’t believe how full you are. It’s because you really haven’t been eating with that focus in mind. So that’s step number one.

Step number two, get curious. Now, curiosity is one of my favorite emotions for losing weight and keeping it off because intrinsically with curiosity, you are not punching yourself in the face. You are allowing yourself to have that childlike curiosity and allowing you to be objective. It’s allowing you to be playful. It’s allowing you to really see what’s going on. And this is a different place that you’re bringing yourself to because weight loss has been such a punitive, talking to yourself in a negative way manner in the past.

So, I really want you to allow yourself to be curious, figure out why you’re eating more than what your body needs. And I do recommend giving yourself a ground rule of only going to be curious with using compassion as my filter. So, it’s safe for me to ask questions. It’s safe for me to look at why am I this weight? And why do I keep being afraid of hunger? Why am I afraid?

I had a client that just went to Florida. She hadn’t been to the beach in so long. And I said to her, “What is it like to have those waves?” And she says, You know what, they just come, and they just go.” It’s so certain, and sometimes the waves get a little bit stronger and sometimes the waves are a little bit less. But it’s just this constant and that is what hunger is, it’s just like it comes in waves and we always know. And we’re regulating our body and it’s there. It literally is built into our bodies to have us survive.

41. Hunger Misunderstood is Weight-Loss Kryptonite

It is what's kept the humans surviving for all of these years through all the different pandemics, the difficulties, all of that because we've always had this tool of hunger that will inform us that we need to take care of ourselves. We are wired for survival and hunger has been so helpful.

Step number three, commit ahead of time from your higher brain. So, I want you to plan what you will do when you are tempted. So, one of the tools that we use in Love Yourself Thin is we eat when we're hungry and we stop when we're full. And we have this thing called the hunger scale that really dials into our body, how hungry am I? Am I super full? Am I hungry? Whatever that is. And so, I want you to commit ahead of time to I'm going to learn to use hunger as a tool and I'm not going to use it to hinder me any longer.

So, when you plan what you will do when you are tempted to eat when I'm bored, and then you go to the potato chips. You're like, "Wait a minute, I knew this was a habit that isn't serving me. I'm not going to do that anymore." And so, I want you to give yourself some help. So, what are some strategies that you can think of? Do you go and you go make yourself some herbal tea? Or do you go and get some chewing gum? Or do you just allow yourself to feel uncomfortable? Whatever that is.

Another thing that I do recommend is to allow yourself to be busy in a happy way. Make your food less exciting and your life more interesting. And so, letting hunger be just part of your life, you're like, "Yeah, hunger works. Hunger is how my body is wired. This is awesome. I'm going to let myself be hungry. And I'm only going to eat when I'm really hungry. And I'm not going to worry about binge eating or overeating because I know how to listen to myself when I am satisfied. It's the most amazing thing.

So, these are just the first three steps. I'm going to go further into this in the month of May 2022 with our lifetime membership. If you're listening to this afterwards of course you can always come in and you can get all of the replays inside the portal. You do not want to miss this. This is one of the most overlooked tools for weight loss. It is how our body is wired.

41. Hunger Misunderstood is Weight-Loss Kryptonite

So, remember, there are only two reason we are overweight, over-hunger and over-desire. And you can solve for those in what you eat and what you think. Because what's going on in your brain and what are you putting in your mouth. So, when you understand that hunger starts in your stomach and travels to your brain you are now able to solve this for real. So, I want you to know that you aren't broken.

And when you learn this process, when you really slow down and understand hunger, and go through these steps you are no longer going to be sabotaging yourself with weight loss issues. It's so exciting.

I have loved spending this time preparing this podcast for you, and I want you to know that you too can love yourself thin, you can create the body that you've always wanted, and you will never have to worry about putting the weight back on when you understand these tools. I invite you to come and join me in my lifetime membership of Love Yourself Thin. Take care everyone, bye bye.

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