

48. Weight Loss and Travelling



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

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Would you bet a fat quarter bundle that you are going to gain at least five pounds on your next vacation? Well, you are not alone, many women are in the same boat. They believe that weight gain is inevitable on vacations. I created this episode for you to help you to not only not gain weight, but even lose weight on vacations.

I am Dara Tomasson, and this is Weight Loss for Quilters, episode 48, Weight Loss and Travelling.

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.

Did you grow up being told that life was hard and difficult, that you needed to work extremely hard and hope for the best? Or were you told that life is a wonderful adventure? What you heard growing up has influenced the approach you take to life. It will also affect your attitude towards travel and vacation. So, I want you to ask yourself, what has been your favorite vacation. What made it so wonderful? Do you find it easy to switch off your mind and relax or are you constantly checking all of the details and focusing on keeping everyone on track?

Today's episode will be so helpful for you to see where you have been on vacations and travelling, which will explain why you're always gaining weight on trips. I will share my REST strategy, it's an acronym. You will also expect to learn some super practical tips that I do on vacation, and I teach my clients, so they never have the vacation hangover of five to 10 pounds gained.

Alright, so before I go into all the details of this podcast I have got to do a shout out for one of my clients who joined Love Yourself Thin a few weeks before her husband was retiring. They had a lot of trips planned and she was really nervous that she was going to gain weight because that's what

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she always had done in the past during any road trip or vacation. Well, she focused on the modules, printed off the worksheets and committed to herself that she was going to watch any of the replays that she couldn't attend while she was on the road.

And she's actually been able to not only lose consistently, but she feels so empowered. She even bought a travel scale because she loves how much data she collects from the scale every morning. I am so thrilled for her that she has embraced taking full responsibility for her body and her results. So yeah, you want this too. So, let's go.

So, what would you say are your biggest obstacles on vacation for losing weight? I have come up with a few and I would love to hear yours if I've missed some. So, one is peer pressure. Oh, my goodness, just recently I went home visiting my mom and I went to my aunt's house and they constantly, the entire time I was there they were asking me, "What can I feed you? What can I get you? What can I prepare for you?"

It was actually really tempting in some ways just to let them just serve me and bring me food because that just brings them so much happiness. So that is something that happens a lot. So, we have peer pressure and even on vacation you're with other friends or your kids are eating things. And they're like, "Come on mom, just one," or whatever that is. So just peer pressure, be curious about that.

The next one, this is something I see especially what kind of vacation you're on. So, if you're on an all-inclusive or on a cruise, you want to get your money's worth. You really think that gorging yourself, eating all the things, it's like, yeah, I'm really getting my money's worth. So just kind of ask yourself that question. Is it really getting my money's worth by filling myself up and feeling sick? Or is it really getting my money's worth if I'm just eating in a way that's really helpful and feels lovely to my body?

Another one is FOMO, especially when you start travelling to other places that have new different kinds of foods. It's very exciting. This is one of the new terms is fear of missing out. So how often do you have that fear of

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missing out? This can also happen in quilt shops like I've got to go to this quilt shop, they have different fabric than that one. So, this happens in lots of different places. But definitely when I lived in France, oh my goodness, I was on the quest for the best apple pastry that there was. Yeah, I definitely had FOMO on that one.

What about old habits? So, if you have a habit of going on vacation when you were a kid and it was all based around food, and serving food and having all of that, having food as being one of the reasons why. I mean even myself having my own kids, we went on a road trip from Alberta to Ontario. And we drove through Chicago, and we were Googling best restaurants. A lot of the vacation was me taking my kids to cool restaurants.

So, there's nothing wrong with having food as a celebration but if that was the only focus and that's all we talked about then that just is an old habit of just delegating all of our joy to the food that we're eating. And not really giving us the opportunity to just, the reason we're on vacation is to connect with each other, and to explore, and to see how beautiful this world is and all the different options. So, I'm just setting some questions for you.

This part of the podcast is just starting to get your brain really engaged in, I wonder if this is me? Because we've talked about habits, just seem just second nature. You don't even think about it. So that's why I'm asking all these questions for you. What about feeling overwhelmed on vacation and food just feels like the path of least resistance? If you're feeling very overwhelmed, things are really hard and difficult. And when you're having those messages to your brain, your brain's like, we need food.

That overwhelm can lead us to overeating because it just feels like we're unempowered, we don't really know what to do. The other part that could be an obstacle for why you think that weight gain on vacations is just inevitable is that we don't want to take responsibility. We want to just kind of go with the flow. We want to just let, they ordered this and well, I guess I just have to eat it. I don't want to be rude. Creating boundaries for yourself saying, "No, thank you."

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I just had an experience, I was in California a few weeks ago. And I was just going for a walk, and I found a restaurant that had my name on it, it was so fun. It was called Thai Dara. Apparently there's a famous singer from Thailand named Dara. And I went in just to get a menu because I thought that would be so fun. I just showed my kids and there was some ladies at the conference there and they invited me to sit down, and they invited me to eat with them. And it was eight o'clock at night and I wasn't hungry.

So, feeling that pressure of belonging and wanting to be with them, and so I sat with them while they ordered and then after they ordered I said, "It was so nice to spend time with you but I'm actually not hungry and I just need to honor that." And I knew that they would be uncomfortable having me sit there and them eating. So, I just excused myself and I just enjoyed the time that I did have. I thought it was a happy coincidence and it was a fun way to connect.

And then I was able to honor myself and my body, and they were, you know, I didn't create any discomfort for them. That was a really proud moment for me to take total responsibility for myself, my hunger, and my body. And then the other obstacle I find happens a lot for my clients is that we're going to be uncomfortable either way. And so, I talked about this in the episode in my podcast of directed decision. So, if we're going to be uncomfortable either way, why not be uncomfortable while gaining your own trust.

So, of all these obstacles, all these concerns that you've had, these are all keeping you from truly enjoying yourself and the people around you. When you are constantly focusing on all of these challenges then you know what happens? Remember, we talk about the brain juice? So, if your brain is focusing on all of these struggles, and difficulties, and challenges, now that's using up so much of your brain juice.

And now you're not really able to use any of that energy to explore, or to be in awe of your surroundings, or being able to try new things. Or even being able to do some physical activities like biking or surfing which really does

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create your own internal joy. So, when I was on vacation, or it was actually on a work trip, and I went a day early so that I could allow myself to have a little bit of a vacation. They had bikes there.

And when I was in France, I lived in France for 18 months, I was a missionary for my church. And I rode my bike everywhere, myself and my companion. And I learned to love it. I hadn't ridden a bike since my bike was stolen seven years ago, my son left my bike out. Anyways, I went on the bikes. And I loved it. I absolutely loved it. And I just was in awe of that was such a joy for me, so food is always going to be there.

Anyways, we'll talk about that in my REST, but I do get a little distracted because I was just so proud of myself for having the kind of body that could just go and ride a bike. I hadn't ridden a bike in a really long time. But because my body is healthy, because I am at a great weight for myself, it wasn't a stretch for me to say, "Hey, let me ride my bike at this resort a couple of times while I'm here." And I've been thinking about this episode for months now because I really want to serve you in a way that's going to be very practical and doable.

I think that's one of the things that a lot of people take away from my program is that I'm a real person who is raising children. I'm in the mix of it all. My youngest is 10, my oldest is 19. I buy groceries every week. I produce a lot of food at my house. My children, my 15 year old is 6'2 and growing. My 13 year old just surpassed me, he's almost 6'1 now.

And my 10 year old looks like he – he just had a track meet two days ago and it was so funny to watch him in line because he's just so much taller than pretty much everyone there. And of course, he won first in everything he did because his legs are just that much longer. So, they're always eating so much food. My daughter, she's become quite a foody. It's going to be really interesting what happens when she goes to university and has to buy her own food.

So, I'm in the mix of it all. And I don't do all these fancy things. The weight loss doesn't have to be fancy. And so, I've been thinking about this for

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vacations. Even camping vacations, that is what we have done primarily. And even on camping vacations where s'mores and camping food, the boxed cereal, individual boxed cereal, those kinds of things seem to be what was the norm. No, you can still lose all this weight and you can still enjoy all of this life without all the fancy dancy stuff.

And so, what I have created and it's in your handout is this acronym called REST. Because that is the reason you're going on vacation. You want to just kind of rest. And I know that when you embrace the Love Yourself Thin process your life is not as much of a grind as it used to be. You're not doing the willpower. You're not relying on those kinds of things to create your joy. So, your everyday life isn't difficult, and challenging and really hard.

But when you go on vacation you want to rest, you want to just kind of leave some of those everyday things. And you want to just explore and have, and you know, it's the spice of life, there's so much beauty around. And to go and travel, and have these different experiences just really adds a lot of flavor to your life really. And you want to rest. And so, this is it. The first one is taking responsibility for yourself. So, R is responsibility, E is eat, S is self-love and T is trial and error.

And so, we're going to go into each one of those. And so, if you want right now, you can print off the handout and just take notes. There is spaces between each one of the REST acronym and you can take those notes. I always recommend that you listen to the podcast first all the way through. Maybe you're going for a walk. Maybe you're chain piecing. Maybe you're doing some free motion quilting. And then you print off the sheet and then you can listen to it again in more of the student mode, of active thinking mode.

And that really will engage your brain and help you so much in really getting transformation from this podcast. Because I love serving you in this podcast, in connecting with you in this way it really brings me so much joy. Okay, so taking responsibility for yourself is the fourth pillar of the five vital steps for permanent weight loss. And it's a really challenging concept because a lot of weight loss, the reason why we are overweight is because

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we feel shame. So, we don't take responsibility for our emotions. We feel like we're not enough or we're blaming other people.

So, if you're getting stuck in the shame blame cycle, it takes you out of being responsible for your own results. Because if you're constantly saying, "Well, I'm just not smart enough. I'm just not good enough. I just haven't figured it out. I just don't think I'll ever figure it out." That place will never get you to the mindset of I can solve any problem, everything is figure out-able. I just have these basic steps and I can follow them. I can fail and I can evaluate, and I can learn, and I grow. That's the mindset that's going to get you to permanent weight loss.

So, in order to do that, and especially when we're talking about going on vacation these are some suggestions for you to help you have success on vacations. So, research where you're going. So what foods are available? Are you able to cook for yourself at some point? What are some common food practices there? Will there be cooking opportunities for you? Could you buy some of your own food? So those are really good questions to ask.

When I went, because my whole trip to California I was thinking, I was preparing this podcast. So, there wasn't cooking there. I rode my bike actually and I went to Trader Joe's, and I bought salad stuff. And I knew what size of mini fridge I had. I knew how much I could fit in there. And I went to someone that worked at the hotel and said, "Could I have a salad bowl?" And they're like, "Yeah, no problem."

And so, I had a fork and the salad bowl, and a knife and I had my veggies, and I had some salad dressing. And I bought some canned tuna, and I bought some precooked fish. And so, I had everything I needed for salads. It was great. That was awesome. It felt really, really empowering to just be responsible for myself and it felt very fun for me to be able to prepare that food for myself and to feel that level of I'm totally responsible for myself. I also was able to decide ahead of time when I went out for lunch with the ladies, I knew I wanted to have either salads or soups.

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There are certain foods that work really well for me, other foods that don't. If things are really battered, I don't feel really good afterwards. And so, when I'm looking at menus and I'm also willing to use taking responsibility saying, "Hey, I want this salad but don't batter the fish," or whatever it is. Willing to just use your voice. So that's totally taking responsibility. So, taking responsibility for yourself. I have some questions for you. How will you continue to collect data as you monitor yourself?

So, one of the things that I recommend is journaling about your belief that you are 100% responsible for yourself and what you eat. Because some people actually don't believe it's possible. So even taking the example of being at my aunt's house. I could go back to being a seven year old thinking it's rude to say no to my aunt. So, I could fall back into those habits. Or I had a client yesterday who went to a Mother's Day event and her nephew made a cake. And she's like, "When nephews make cakes I have to eat it." That's actually not true.

And so, there is this idea of when you write down the belief, am I 100% responsible for what I eat? If you don't believe that's possible, then write down why. And then use my obstacles and strategies method, which I talk about, to take responsibility. And so that's really cleaning up your belief and that's going to be so, so helpful. And this is the kind of work we do inside our program. So, I'm offering this to you now because I don't want you to be suffering anymore, there is no point.

Alright, so the next part of my acronym of REST on vacation is eating. So, you are the only one who puts food in your mouth. No one forces you. And so just like I said at the beginning of the podcast, we have peer pressure, you have you want to get your money's worth. You have FOMO, you have old habits, you have overwhelm, you have challenges taking responsibility for yourself. And you're going to have discomfort. But in the past you had discomfort by just eating the thing and then feeling bad about yourself.

Where I'm offering you, not eat the thing and then be proud of yourself by being willing to have the urge and not follow the urge. So that's just really important for you to take 100% responsibility for what you eat, why you eat,

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when you eat. And it really is in your power. And if that's something you're struggling with, that's one of the things that we do in Love Yourself Thin every time. But just having that awareness, I just know 100% that's going to help you so much moving forward, just knowing that you actually are the only person that puts your own food in your mouth.

And by looking at those obstacles you can say, "There's that red flag. I'm feeling peer pressure. I don't have to do it."

The next one is self-love. This is where compassion and unconditional love for yourself will be practiced. So, when you adopt this idea that eating is one of the best ways of taking care of your physical body, and your mental health then when you are eating that bag of chips, or you're eating that donut, or you're constantly going to the chocolate chips at night. You can say, "Hey, wait a minute, I see that I'm using this external thing like these chocolate chips or donuts, or whatever as a way to try to escape from myself. Why am I doing that?"

And asking yourself it in a very loving way instead of the punitive way of like, "Oh my goodness, I can't believe we're here again. When are you ever going to learn?" That is going to just get you eating more chocolate chips, eating more potato chips, eating more donuts. When you are punitive and unkind it's like you just cower and you just make yourself smaller. Whereas compassion and unconditional love is just that lovely, it's just so much nicer to be you.

And if you ever want to see a contrast you've got to go and watch the movie, Matilda because there is Miss Trunchbull, who is this awful schoolmaster and then there's Miss Honey who is the most delightful, sweet, and kind teacher. And Miss Trunchbull has the chokey which is this horrible dungeon place. And Miss Honey has these lovely hollyhocks. And she has this lovely way of talking. And you're going to excel in Miss Honey's class. And you're going to shrink and be scared and awful in Miss Trunchbull's.

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But if you are not giving yourself self-love you're always making yourself scared of yourself. And so, you're never going to be able to change the relationship you have with your body. And so that is such an important part.

And then the last part, the T from REST is travel freedom. And the way that you get travel freedom is through trial and error. So, we do a Google search and there's all sorts of quotes out there that say, success rests on the pile of failures. And it's true. We're quilters, not quitters. And so, when you can evaluate even every half an hour and be like, what went well? What didn't go well? What can I do better next time? When you are evaluating, you're in a place of curiosity.

And when you're in a place of curiosity that is a place of neutrality. And when you can be neutral and to say, "Hey, I saw that you just drank two things of pop and ate the brownies at Marlene's house." That's interesting, why did you do that? You see how I'm just going to be really neutral. So, when you learn these steps you literally can go anywhere and accomplish anything on vacation. And the acronym is REST because it is the reason you're on vacation and you need to remind yourself that you are here for rest and that you can be free.

This requires you to be present with yourself. No more turning to blame, blaming others or yourself. It requires you to stop using excuses or procrastinating. It requires you to be with yourself, no more escaping or hiding. The irony of course is that going on vacation is to take a break from your regular life. But as you learn to love yourself no matter what size you are, no matter what's going on, then life won't feel so difficult or challenging. And our vacation just becomes a new opportunity to explore life in a different way.

So, one of the things that I found was a huge obstacle for me to shifting my mindset of being able to not gain weight on vacations. We have some family traditions that came from a good place, but they don't serve me. So, for example, my uncle has a place in Montana. And in Montana they have this amazing ice-cream company, and they have lots of really unique wonderful flavors. And so that was one of our things that we would go to

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the grocery store, and I have five kids and I would let them all pick a different flavor.

And then we would talk about it during the day and who's flavor are we going to have tonight? And this is so fun. And we don't have these kind of flavors. And it's something different. And also, in the States when we travel they have a lot of different fast food chains that we don't have in Canada. So, it's like, we are going to go to Popeye's, or we're going to go to Chick-fil-A, or Dunkin Donuts. And so, what I realized was the reason we made such a big deal of that is because it was special, and it was something we could look forward to and it was something that was unique.

And so really what I wanted was I just wanted to have the feeling of special, and unique, and anticipation, and looking forward to. Because everything we do in life is because we want to feel a certain way. And the funny thing was that the last time we went to Montana I was doing my no sugar and flour for six weeks. We did take the kids to Chick-fil-A, and to Popeye's, and all these different places. And my husband and I were thinking about the ice-cream for them, but I didn't have any of it.

And I actually had more fun on that vacation than I had on any other one because I was so much more present with myself. And even when we went to the donut's place, Krispy Kreme, that's what it was. They were throwing a bunch of the donuts in this container, and I said, "What's wrong with those ones?" And she said, "They're not perfect." And I said, "Well, my kids would eat them, they would love it." And she just gave them to us, and my kids just had so much fun. I didn't have to eat any donut and I had so much fun just watching them eat these warm deformed donuts right off the conveyor belt.

So, I was able to learn that it wasn't actually about me having to eat the donut. It was me having those experiences of connection, and feeling special, and just that ability to be so connected to my kids and not have all the distractions that we normally have of basketball practice, and getting people here and there, and me having different work things, and my

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husband having his responsibilities. We could just relax and be together. So that was such a big awakening for me.

And even on my anniversary I didn't have any pie, or ice-cream, or anything. And I had a wonderful anniversary. So, it's just really shaking up the things that we did in the past and realizing that we actually didn't even need the food to have a wonderful vacation. It wasn't ever really about the food.

And so, one of the things that we have done in our family, and this is actually across the board, so if one of my kids has a really great basketball game and they score really high, and we want to celebrate them we actually just celebrate them. We don't need to go to the Dairy Queen and buy all the special treats. We don't need to go to a restaurant and get all these foods that really make us feel gross afterwards. So, everything we do in life is because we want to feel a certain way. And the feelings come from your thoughts.

So, if you have a thought like, I love being with my family on vacation, that feeling is special, or that feeling is love. You cannot get the feeling from a frosty, or from a blizzard. You can get a dopamine hit from eating that food, your brain will get affected by it. It will have a wiring connection that says, "We have a lot of refined flour and sugar, it's going to our brain. This is giving lots of energy. This seems really urgent. We should do this more." And then we're creating that dependency.

And then we're going to need more and more of it to get more and more of that dopamine hit because just like with drugs, it's like you're wiring yourself in that way. You're creating more of a dependency. When we go to a donut we're not giving ourselves that true connection.

Alright, so here are the practical tips for vacation. Are you ready? Decide what you will and won't eat beforehand so now the line in the sand is drawn and the decision has been made already. So, when your Aunt Marlene is saying, "Hey, Dara, I made these brownies," but I hadn't planned to eat the brownies, I could make the decision of saying, "Oh my goodness, that is so

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sweet of you. I'm going to put that brownie in a container and I'm going to eat it later. That's so sweet." Or I could just say, "That is so sweet of you, no thank you. I'm good."

I have already made that decision so now I don't have the debate or the negotiations in my head. So, one of the things that I love to do is I love to pack food beforehand and have them handy. So, I generally have nuts with me. I will buy string cheese quite often. I always have a variety of herbal teas with me. There's a lot of restaurants and places that will just provide you with hot water. So, I have a travel mug that I really like. I will sometimes bring nut butter. I like a small container with some of my favorite Mary Crackers.

And so, I have this food on hand, sometimes maybe I'll bring even some hummus and some crackers, that I'll just have with me, and they travel really well. I'll have carrots, I'll have celery, those little cucumbers, those are awesome. They're ready to go. I always make sure that I never have a food emergency. And then the other thing to remember too, ladies, is that we have energy stored on our bodies. So, there's 3,000 calories per stored pound of fat. And our body needs approximately 1200 to 1500 calories a day to survive.

So, we could go for quite a while without even eating, as long as we have water we're good. So that's another practical tip actually, use the weight that we have on our bodies. I love to explore grocery stores when I'm travelling, and I enjoy the diversity of the food. I make a commitment to only eat when I'm hungry. I research beforehand about water. Sometimes when you're travelling, water might not be accessible and that actually is a valid fear. So, making a plan beforehand for water is also really going to be helpful and it's going to help you be a lot more relaxed.

We were just in Mexico last summer and we went on a full day adventure. I had four kids at the time and my husband and myself, so water was really important. So, we had to make sure that we had the water packed and ready to go for our full day. But that was part of taking responsibility. And so now we're in good shape. Also having some travel food decided ahead

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of time. So, at your restaurants, I kind of talked about that, being able to decide ahead of time on the menus. And so, you can research those.

So even for me I will have when go to an airport I'm like, okay, if there's a Wendy's I have this, if there is this I have that. At Denver Airport there's a lot of restaurants that I wasn't really familiar with. And I didn't really want to deal with it. So, I just thought, well, I'll just have water. And I had my herbal teas, and I had my nuts, I'll be totally fine. But just knowing about salads and there's lots and lots of options.

Also, if you know you can plan 24 hours in advance any joy eat you want. So, you do have actually tons of freedom and you're using your prefrontal cortex. So, you're good to go. Alright, so those are my practical tips. So, 24 hours plan in advance. Alright, I am super interested to hear your feedback on this podcast. I love hearing everything that you get from the podcast, it just brings me so much joy.

Okay, so that is it for you, you're going to learn how to rest on vacation, isn't that awesome? Love it. Okay, so just in closing, I am offering a master course on how to break up with food so that you can create your own joy. Food has become like a bad boyfriend, you have depended on food for all your joy. And so, you know it's for you if you're going to the ice-cream or you're needing that chocolate to be near you throughout the day to get you by. If you're doing errands and you just find yourself in the Dairy Queen drive-thru getting the little Dilly Bar just to get you going.

It's okay that this is your life and the more you can accept it the more, acceptance is the first step and then we can go. In fact, I have a really amazing quiz that you can take that's going to show you where your weak spots are with when you turn to the food and you're going to be able to get a little bit more of a picture of why you have this dependency on food for your happiness. And I'm going to show you ways of creating that joy for yourself.

It reminds me of when my kids were little and I had, some of them just needed a soother. And if I couldn't find a soother I was panicked. So that is

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kind of what happens with food for you all. If there's not a certain amount of food around it causes you anxiety because you don't really know how to make yourself happy and that's what I'm talking about. So, the answer is simple to creating change and I am going to show you how to do that in the master course which is going to be between June 20th and 24th.

So, we're going to break that vicious cycle of food addiction and learn how to create your own joy independently. And all of the information will be in the show notes. It is of course so much fun having this podcast and helping you ahead of time. You can do this, I promise, have a wonderful day. Bye.

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