

78. WEIGHT LOSS AND TO-DO LISTS



— WITH DARA TOMASSON —

FULL EPISODE TRANSCRIPT

**With Your Host
Dara Tomasson**

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Do you get totally stressed out with all of your to-do lists and feel like if you don't get the thing crossed off, you've had the worst day ever? Well, I'm Dara Tomasson and this is Love Yourself Thin, episode 78, Weight Loss, and To-Do Lists.

Okay. I am a chronic to-do list person. In fact, I am one of those people who has a to-do list and then if I get something done that I hadn't written on my to-do list, but I just ended up doing it because I was distracted or the phone rang and I had to take care of it, I will write down the thing, and then I'll cross it off. So I'm not ashamed to say that. There is some satisfaction that we do definitely get a dopamine hit when we cross that off, but it's only because of the stories that we tell ourselves.

And so this episode I'm going to be talking to you about why to-do lists can be like punching yourself in the face. Why to-do lists can be so stressful. The to-do list also can be wonderful, and they can be efficient and effective. So today we're going to delve into all things to-do lists. I'm going to give you a five step process of how to help you not have the anxiety and the stress and the worry that you are currently having, if you are currently having stress and anxiety.

All right. Are you ready? Before we dive into that part, the main part of the episode, I do wanna shout out one of my clients. She has lost 70 pounds since working with me for the last year and a half. But the thing that's amazing about the 70 pounds gone is that she's just retired and she has all this new freedom. She just moved. And so life was kind of chaotic and it felt really chaotic because she had different people helping her move. She was feeding different people, as thanks for helping them move. She wasn't able to come to the calls as often and she didn't gain weight over this three week time.

And the thing that's so exciting for her is that so much of what used to be a struggle is now just second nature and eating only when she's hungry. Eating until she's full or feels satisfied, like all of that and the kinds of foods that she's eating. She's no longer turning to the food so much for the comfort and she's just seeing how she really has become a different person. And I'm just so thrilled for her because she was convinced that for so much of her life being overweight, it was just part of who she was and that she couldn't change. And I love that she has been able to get to the root of these issues and she has made these incredible new subconscious habits of taking care of herself and not overeating and it's been really fun to watch her. So way to go! And that can be possible for you too when you learn the Love Yourself Thin tools. Just sayin'.

All right, so let's go into this to-do list thing. Now this is the problem. I would say the main problem with to-do lists, because to-do list is neutral. It's just a thing. It could be a piece of paper, it could be on your phone, but it's just a list of things that you would like to do, take care of, accomplish, whatever. So it is just neutral. But when it comes to all

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of our thoughts about it, that's when it can become obsessive, it could become depressing, it could feel overwhelming, it could feel discouraging. It could also feel empowering, and it could also feel organized and it could also feel satisfying. Okay? So it's always your thoughts about it. And one of the things that I have seen affect so many women that I've worked with is that they feel like their worth is tied with how many checks they have beside the to-do list.

Now I was coaching someone recently on the to-do list of how she was using her time and she said that you know, she just felt discouraged that she held these things she should do, and I asked a simple question, I said, what qualifies getting on your to-do list? So what is the criteria for you to decide what, first of all gets on your to-do list? And second of all, how many things do you put on your to-do list? Like, do you allow yourself to have an unlimited number of things to do on a to-do list? So it's just a running tally, or do you keep it to that specific day? Do you do it for like an hour at a time? Like what qualifies? And it's a sneaky thing because even for me running a business and, you know, with running a home, all of that, me being a former school teacher, I mean, to-do lists are great. They keep you organized, they keep you focused. It's awesome. But I found the last week there's been some things that I just, I can't get it done. It goes to the next day and I can't get it done, and then it goes the next day. And so I got really curious of like, what's going on? Like, why are we having this problem? And the issue was I didn't give myself parameters and guidelines of, you have this much time to do something, this is your focus time. And then when it's done, it's done.

So now the problem is if we think our worthiness is tied to our to-do list and then we're not getting things done, then we think we're a failure. We think we're deficient. We think we're less than. And that is not true, because guess what? Yeah, your worthiness is already decided, and if you haven't heard this in a while, I'm just gonna repeat myself because this cannot be repeated enough and enough. So your worth is a non-negotiable. Your worth, worth has already been decided. You already are a hundred percent. You already are amazing. And the way I look at this is I think about a baby, a brand new baby. Oh my goodness, when's the last time you held a brand new baby? Ugh. They're just so sweet and they're so special, and they're so precious and they smell so amazing, and they're just so perfect and they're just incredible. Well, at what point did that baby not become incredible and precious and amazing? Right? Like, think about that. Really think about it. Our worth as a human is already there. It has never been up for grabs. And even if someone breaks the law, even if someone treats someone terribly, they're still worthy. They're still a worthy human being. They're just making bad choices and then they have the consequences.

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So when I talk about your worthiness being tied to the to-do list, I call that cleaning that up. It's actually not true. It's a false thought error. Well, it's a real thought error. It's a falsehood. It's not true. So your value does not have to be earned. Your worth does not. You don't have to deserve things. You don't have to be worthy of things. You already are. Okay?

So then what happens is the to-do list becomes a distraction from what you want. And so our brain is always thinking of the worst case scenario, and so it will alert you so that you can be on guard and not caught unaware. So thank you lower brain. The lower brain says, oh my goodness, you have all these things on your list and there's no way you can get that possibly done. You're gonna die. And you know, we go to the worst case scenario and some people go to like, and then I'm gonna lose my house, and then no one's gonna love me, and then I'm gonna be a bag lady. Right? And then like you catastrophize it all. And so we just have to be aware. Okay, thank you lower brain, I know that your job is to let me know if there's something dangerous, but this is not dangerous. I'm gonna be okay.

And then if you can't calm that voice of warning, you will get into anxiety mode. You will also become overwhelmed. When you are overwhelmed it leads to inaction and to spinning and spinning out. Not being able to move forward. So this is very, very common. Now, an overwhelm is an indulgent emotion, that's why I call it a spinning emotion. There's usually something behind it, like fear or insecurity or like there's lots of different motions behind it. So we, and we don't even have to coach ourself on that yet because this is what I want you to do. Because remember, anxiety is going to your worst case scenario and staying there. So you are thinking everything's gonna be terrible, like everything's awful. And so this is what I want you to do. I want you to use your to do list writing abilities for good.

So number one is to write out a worry list, and then when I say worry list, literally label that list "everything I'm worried about". This is an amazing tool. Before I went to Houston and Wisconsin, I had, the last part of the year I was in Wisconsin for my live retreat in October. And then just two weeks later I went to Houston for a quilt festival. There was a lot to do. And then with my own children and then responsibilities with church and everything. And then also running the business and having everything all set up before I left, because I knew when I was gone that I wasn't able to be in the business. And so making sure that everything was set up and all my staff and all of that. So I do this all the time, everything that I'm worried about, and you can just even take a back of an envelope or something and then just write it all down.

And then number two, beside every worry write down one possible solution for it. Even if the solution seems ridiculous. You're just like, you know what, maybe I could skip the

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dishes, or maybe I could... like that to me, like skip the dishes, that seems ridiculous, but it's like maybe I could whatever it is, right? Even if it seems kind of ridiculous or even if it seems like something like you wouldn't do, you're just spit balling, right? You're just like, Hey, maybe, because remember the brainstorming rule? Like just put it down and then that might bring you to another thought, that could bring you to another thought. Okay?

Number three, schedule when you will work on that solution. So if you're thinking, I'm not sure how I'm gonna resolve that, So I'm gonna resolve it tomorrow at 3. I'm gonna work on that. It was like when my kids were really little and I used to... they would just make such messes and I would freak out about it because I thought, oh, if someone came over and they saw this messy thing, and then I made cleaning the floor such a big deal because you couldn't just clean the floor, you had to like take all the chairs and put them outside or put them on top of the table, and then you had to, you know, make sure everything was put up so I could wash the floor properly. So I just cleaned the floor really well every Monday, and so I just knew that if they spilled, I would, you know, spot clean it but I could just calm my brain and say, don't worry, on Monday you're gonna do a really good job of cleaning this floor and it's gonna be okay. And so if you know like I'm gonna work on this solution at three o'clock on Thursday, then your brain can be, when it starts freaking out, you're like, oh yeah, remember, we're gonna do that on Wednesday at three o'clock, don't worry about it. We got this. Okay?

Number four, get out your calendar on your phone or paper and write down a plan. So just get it out. Just be like, okay, this is what we're gonna do. And like maybe we might change our mind, but at least you know, same things, like I've got a plan, I'm gonna write it down. I got it. It's all written down and now you just need to follow it. It's no big deal. Okay?

And then number five, check in with yourself every hour or so and evaluate how you're doing. So just saying, Hey, am I on track? Today, for example I had my to-do list and things took a little bit longer in the morning of some things that I didn't anticipate. And so when it came to my podcast, I thought, okay, how am I gonna do this? And so I wrote down the times and I gave myself, like, I have a pretty good idea of how long it takes me to do each podcast, especially because in the back of my journal I have podcast ideas, so I will, just like today's podcasts, I wrote that about three weeks ago and I already wrote the five criteria. I had it all done and so I know how long it takes me to record it. I know how long it takes me to do a handout, so then I'm like, oh, I have really good data of knowing how long each one will take. And it turns out I'm actually ahead of schedule, so that's awesome.

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And then I just kind of check in and be like, okay, how am I doing on my schedule? Am I giving myself enough time for the podcast if I'm not giving myself enough time? Because the other thing to remember, remember back in the days when you had exams and the professor or the teacher would say, okay, here's your exam, you have three hours. And so your brain looked at that exam and said, okay, I can allow 45 minutes for this, 25 minutes for this, an hour for this. Like you just delegate it and then you give your brain that time, and then you just go for it. Right? And so when you start learning to do that, like when I was saying about the criteria, like how do you know how many things to put on your to-do list? And then give yourself permission to like research that and to be empowered with that.

Okay? All right. This was an excellent podcast. I'm so excited to hear how you're doing. Now, remember, your worth has nothing to do with how much you get done on your to-do list. Your worth is already set. And set yourself up for success, give yourself criteria for what gets on the list and what doesn't. All right. Take care everyone. I can't wait to see you next episode. And don't forget, we are right now doing the 90 day challenge in Love Yourself Thin. It is never too late for you to join us. I'd love to see you and serve you there. Bye bye.