

Ep #4: Necessary Darkness



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Natalie Brown

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This is *Weight Loss Success* with Natalie Brown, episode four.

Welcome to *Weight Loss Success* with Natalie Brown. If you're a successful woman who is ready to stop struggling with your weight, you're in the right place. You'll learn everything you need to know to lose weight for the last time in bitesize pieces. Here's your host, certified life and weight coach Natalie Brown.

Hey everybody. Can we talk about social media for a second? Do any of you have kind of a love-hate relationship with social media like I do? On the one hand, it connects me with people I don't get to see often. On the other hand, it sometimes just acts as a reflector of my insecurities.

You feel me on this? I mainly use social media in my business, as a place where I can express who I am and what I teach so that people who don't know me can get to know me a little bit. And I'm very discerning about who I follow, who shows up on my feed. I only follow accounts that inspire me or make me laugh, or preferably both.

Unworthy is my favorite for both of those. I also love The Ellen Show, same reason, and I love Matthew Zaremba. He does these black and white illustrations of clever and brilliant wordplay. And he has a hashtag, the war on toxic positivity, that makes me smile. Because I'm kind of in the business of positivity, right?

You'll notice, my Instagram has inspiring quotes. So this is kind of poking fun at me a little bit. But I think that he's really brilliant. And I recently came upon an account that I can't stop binge-reading. Her name is Heidi and I don't want to attempt to even pronounce her last name because I'll butcher it so I'll just spell it for you. Her name is Heidi Priebe.

She just has so many brilliant ideas and insights about our human experience that she expresses with such beautiful language. Every sentence I feel like I want to sit back and think about. So this whole episode today is brought to you in part by a quote I read recently from her.

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She phrased the quote in terms of us loving someone else but I'm going to read it to you and change the words a little to put it in terms of loving ourselves. And I'll put the original quote in the show notes so you can see that too.

“To love ourselves long-term is to attend a thousand funerals of the person we used to be. The person we are too exhausted to be any longer. The person we don't recognize inside ourselves anymore. The person we grew out of. The person we never ended up growing into. We so badly want ourselves to get our spark back when it burns out, to become speedily found when we are lost. But it is not our job to hold ourselves accountable to the person we used to be. It's our job to travel between each version and to honor what emerges along the way. Sometimes it will be an even more luminescent flame. Sometimes it will be a flicker that disappears and temporarily floods the room with a perfect and necessary darkness.”

Oh my gosh, chills, right? So beautiful. And it really - it fits so seamlessly with our discussion about shifting our weight identity and moving to the next version of ourselves, to future you that we talked about in previous episodes. The concept in this quote I want to talk about today that I think we usually avoid talking about is the necessary darkness.

And of course, I want to put it in the context of your weight loss. This is the thing; weight loss is simple. It requires us to learn one skill. The skill of choosing what we want most over what we want in the moment. That is it. Think about the obstacles you face when it comes to losing weight.

Maybe it's overeating at night. Maybe it's not wanting to plan or not wanting to miss out on your favorite foods. Maybe it's not knowing how to relax on the weekend without food. Whatever the obstacle is, think about the moment where you choose to eat or not eat the thing.

If you could choose what you want most, your goal, your health, whatever it is, over what you want in the moment, which is that food, you would not eat the thing. If you did that over and over, you would lose weight. If you kept

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doing it after you lost the weight, you would live at your natural weight for life. Seriously.

But I don't want you to mistake my declaration of weight loss being simple for the idea that it's going to be easy. Those are two different things. I'm not advocating for easy weight loss. And in fact, anyone who tells you that weight loss is easy is lying. Do not listen to them. They just want to sell you something.

We're not going to pretend this is an easy journey. There is misery and some suffering and definitely some struggle involved. We are, as Heidi so beautifully puts it, attending a thousand funerals of the person we used to be as we go through the journey of weight loss. This is not a journey of sunshine and rainbows, my friends.

It's a journey of commitment and determination and deliberate decisions. Right now, in your life, you are on the bank of a river. Where you sit, there's some dead grass and some dirt, and like, one tree providing some meagre shade. On the other side of the river is a field of wild flowers and a big tree with ample shade and a hammock gently swinging under it, just calling your name.

In between you and the promised rest of that hammock is a roaring river. It's full of debris. Trees and rocks and chunks of melted snow are rushing by at high speed. The only way across is through. Your toddler brain or primitive brain that wants to avoid pain and seek pleasure and conserve energy is like, "No way I am crossing that. It means pain and suffering and it will take tons of energy and I'll probably be swept away and die. Terrible idea."

But your adult brain, your higher brain wants to feel the relief and rest of laying in that hammock. And this river of misery in front of you is the only thing keeping you from it. Making any change in our lives requires the crossing of this river. Weight loss is no exception.

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But here's the thing; our toddler brain wants us to think that the misery of the crossing is not worth it, that we should just stay where we are, where it's safe and comfortable. But I want you to ask yourself, and be totally honest and transparent. Is where you currently sit really comfortable?

When you look around at your life, in your current body, where day after day you are choosing to eat instead of change, you are experiencing some discomfort, some misery. You know you aren't taking care of you the way that you want to. You're not taking care of your health. You're not moving forward.

And we as humans crave forward motion. Learning, evolving. Crossing the river of misery is not moving from comfort to discomfort. If you're seeking change, you are not totally comfortable right now anyway. Crossing the river of misery, in this case losing weight, is trading the misery of now for the misery of growth.

One keeps you where you are and one gets you somewhere completely new. There is always struggle involved in us moving from our current identity to our future self. We have to be willing to let go of what we know, to move into the unknown, to believe in something we don't yet have any evidence is even possible.

And our expectation that it shouldn't be a struggle is really what gets us into trouble. Think about the last time you tried to lose weight and eventually quit. My guess is that much of what led to the quitting was the frustration over it being too hard, or taking too long, and therefore not being worth it.

And part of the not even wanting to start something new is for the same reasons. It will be hard, it will take too long, and it won't be worth it. It's like we start across the river and we're surprised that it's cold, despite the ice floating by, and so we turn around. Or we sit on the bank of the river, we just complain that the river even exists in the first place.

It's there, it's cold, it's hard and it sucks. But on the other side is the life of your dreams. It really all comes down to our decision to keep going, despite

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the cold, despite the difficulty. To look at the logs and the ice floating by and the rocks in the river, not as obstacles in our way, but as stepping stones that will get us to our goal on the other side.

We get in and we flail around with all of our thoughts about how it's so hard and it's so cold and it shouldn't be that way. We worry that we'll never make it, that we don't have what it takes to get across. We start getting swept away and maybe even dragged under a little bit, and that is the necessary darkness of the journey. The struggle against the current.

The challenge that shows us ultimately what we're made of, that gives us the choice to give up or keep going. If we accept that we are in the river and it is the way and we stop flailing and we stop fighting, we will be able to see that although we're under water and think all is lost, this impossible river full of obstacles is actually only two feet deep and we can stand right up.

It'll still be hard to get across, it will still take effort and perseverance, but it is totally possible. Necessary darkness is taking that step into the unknown. Necessary darkness is what makes the sunlight on your skin when you come up for air feel so amazing. Your weight loss is going to be your own unique journey, moving from this version of you to the next, over and over again.

A thousand funerals of the person you used to be. Traveling between each version and honoring what emerges. Darkness and light. Reveling in the rest you find, in the hammock on the other side of the river, until you're ready to cross the next one.

What does your river of misery look like? What are the obstacles that are floating by for you? What is your necessary darkness? And what is waiting for you on the other side? Okay my loves, don't forget to head to iTunes to subscribe and rate and review the podcast. I would love your feedback so that I can keep creating episodes that you find helpful and valuable.

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I have some amazing gifts to give away to some of you lucky listeners who leave reviews. \$100 Amazon gift cards and a pair of AirPods Pros. My favorite tiny accessory. My favorite part is that they're noise-cancelling. So I can put them in and I can listen to a soundscape or some classical music and write and work and not be distracted by my puppy barking or my kids playing in the other room.

It feels like I'm in my own little world when I need to be. So head to itbeginswithathought.com/podcastlaunch to get all of the contest details. See you soon.

Thanks for listening to this week's episode of *Weight Loss Success* with Natalie Brown. If you want to learn more about how to lose weight for the last time, come on over to itbeginswithathought.com. We'll see you here next week.