

Ep #139: The Imperfect Path



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Natalie Brown

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This is *Weight Loss Success* with Natalie Brown, episode 139.

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, Master Certified Coach Natalie Brown.

Hey, everybody, I sat down at my computer today to create the podcast episode for this week. And I opened up my notes app where I keep a backlog of ideas for future podcasts and somehow it had reverted to a version of the note from five months ago. So, my recent idea stash was just gone. I updated my phone to iOS 16 this week and apparently this is a thing that happens when you do that, your notes get messed up. Well, I was puzzled and then after a 30/40 minutes of Google searches to try and figure out how to solve it, I was frustrated.

And then after sitting for 20 minutes to try to think about all of the ideas that I had made a note of over the last couple of months, I was deflated. I put the ideas in my notes so that I don't have to try and remember them, and store them in my brain. And once they're in there they are basically gone from my mind until I open up the notes app and I refresh my memory, and I take the idea and I expand it into an episode.

Sitting there and trying to remember all of the little nuggets, and stories, and examples that I pull out of my life, and my day-to-day experiences to making the episodes that I know will help you all and not be able to recall but a mere fraction of them just made me feel sad and regretful. They are just gone. And some of them were so good. And then I noticed my mind throwing up shoulds like I should have taken screenshots of the note so that I would have it somewhere else.

I should have back up my phone before the update so I could retrieve them. I should have kept them in a Google doc instead of the stupid notes app. Of course, none of which I actually thought of thought was necessary before I found out my notes were messed up. So, shoulds, once again

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made up garbage. But isn't this just how it goes sometimes, not how we want it to or expect it to, whether we're talking about our plan for our day, or our plan for our weight loss journey? If my notes app had done what I expected it to do, my day would have gone differently, much smoother.

I wouldn't have had frustration, and sadness, and regret as a part of it and I'd be done with my podcast right now instead of it being dark outside and here I am still working on it. Sometimes I think we imagine or expect to walk a path that is made up of smooth, flat, stable, circular, symmetrical stones with no incline and no obstacles, where the way is clear and it's all laid out for us. Whether we are consciously aware of this expectation or not, it's there. We know that's true based on how we react when things don't go as planned.

My husband and youngest daughter and I went on a ride in the mountains last weekend in our side-by-side. And we wanted to go explore a bit. As fall is in full swing here and the mountains are just full of amazing, gorgeous colors. We were in an area that we were fairly unfamiliar with so we were using a trail app my husband has to navigate to where we wanted to go and make sure we could get back to our camp. We don't have great service there so you have to use this trail map offline. So, there's not a lot of details, basically just kind of showing you the trails and not much else.

So, we had a destination in mind to find a spot that overlooked this valley that we were staying in but we weren't quite sure how to get there exactly. So, we just followed the trail map and went in the general direction that we thought it would take us up to the place we wanted to be. Looking at the map we could tell about how far it was, kind of guess at how long it would take, but until we were driving the actual trails we really had no idea. We were driving on fire roads and trails that are not really maintained super well, not maintained to the level that our paved roads are for sure.

It was all passable but a lot of it was quite rocky and it made for really slow going. The entire trip ended up being three and a half plus hours which was two hours longer than we were really kind of thinking when we set out. But I mean we were definitely in explorer mode versus getting straight there

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mode. So, we took some longer routes, and some paths that ended up being dead-ends in the end. But by the middle of hour three, maybe even approaching hour three, my daughter was more than done.

And so, we ended up talking about how, although we had an idea of how long the roads were and what trails to take and how to get back, what the map did not tell us was how rocky and bumpy the roads were or how steep the hills would be. There was really no way for the app to estimate the time it would take to complete the route we took because it would vary so much depending on the vehicle you were in, and the weather that day, and the time of year, all of that.

We could see the path on the map but we couldn't really predict what was unknown there and how it would impact our experience of it and our ability to navigate it. My daughter's currently studying our state's history as part of her school curriculum and a big part of the recent history of our state was pioneers that came here from across the country. They didn't have maps, or fire roads, or apps, or trails, or rubber tires, or suspension, or gas powered engines.

They were moving cross country in essence making their own trails, hoping they were going the right direction towards somewhere they would be able to eventually make into a home. Their obstacles were much different, more prolific, much more challenging than ours of course. But in both cases we started with an idea of where we wanted to go and the general direction we would head in. And we discovered the rest as we went and figured out how to keep going.

The path you are on will be a little of both, you have a bigger picture, a map zoomed way out giving you an overview of here to there. It looks pretty straightforward from a zoomed out prospective. But not until you're walking that path will you be able to see the details and the nuances that make up the reality of it. So as hour three came and went, my daughter made it known that she was quite miserable and regretted the whole thing even though it was her idea.

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She had to go the bathroom, she was hungry and she was just over being bumped and jostled around. She was pretty adamant that she had enjoyed none of it by the end of it. But as we sort of went back over, retraced that beginning section of the path that we had taken on our way up, we talked about how we felt as we had set out on the same road three hours earlier. We were all, including her, marveling at the brilliant colors of the leaves all around us, at how lovely it was to be in the fresh mountain air.

We were surprised at how bumpy the road was at first, which interestingly, we noticed on the way down that same road did not seem bumpy at all compared to what we had been on higher up the road. I am pretty sure at one point we were rock crawling through boulders of a dried up riverbed, that is the kind of bumpy we experienced later, which made the road in the beginning seem relatively smooth.

We talked about some of the memorable moments, the sweeping vistas of the surrounding mountains as we got to the top. Driving through a section of the forest that was extremely old and clearly had been untouched by forest fires based on the size of some of the pine trees, they were huge. The leaves and all of their colors, laughing as we drove down that giant boulder section, my husband was all for seeing what our vehicle could do.

My daughter and I were pretty convinced that we were definitely not supposed to be driving vehicles down this, and that ours would not survive and that we would end up walking back, but we couldn't help but just laugh at the craziness of it as we were doing it. So, there was beauty and pain just all mixed together. That is how it is on any path we take on this journey of change.

There will be parts of the path where you are surrounded by beauty and filled with gratitude, parts that are so smooth that you just cruise along at top speed with the wind in your hair. Parts that seem smooth compared to the bumpiness of others, sections where you will be navigating boulders so big, you consider turning around and running away somehow and in the middle of them, doubt you'll be able to get through. You will head down a

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path thinking it's the way, find out it's a dead end and you'll have to turn around and head in a different direction.

This is not a predetermined manmade path you are treading with perfect smooth, strategically placed stones. You are largely blazing your own trail, doing what you have never done in a way you've never done it before, heading cross country through the trees over uneven, rough, rocky terrain, across rivers of misery learning as you go.

If you knew this in your bones and instead of expecting that expertly laid path of identical smooth stones, you knew it would be bumpy, and rocky, and long, and tiring, and unexpected. Maybe then unlike the grumpiness of my daughter or the sadness and regret of me this afternoon with my lost notes, your experience would be filled with more commitment, more flexibility, and more peace. Here is to your imperfect path and all the bumps along the way. You've got this. I'll 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.