

**Transcript for The Who's Dat Phat Girl Podcast - With Brooke Hoover**  
**SEASON 2 EPISODE #2- CUT THE CAFF**

Hey y'all, I'm Brooke Hoover. A Louisiana native, actor, writer and comedian. I've lost 100 pounds through diet and exercise or shall I say "lifestyle changes". My twenty year and counting health journey has taught me that just like taking a diet pill for weight loss, body positivity doesn't magically happen overnight. I'm working on re-gaining my self esteem and re-kindling my love affair with Cajun and Southern comfort food in a healthier way all the while juggling eating as clean as I can, re-establishing myself in the entertainment industry which, as we know, is historically fat phobic all the while showing my inner phat girl some love - that's phat with a PH - pretty hot and tempting. Let me tell y'all a tale or two...

I'd like a medium - shit I mean a Grande - can you do decaf iced coffee - oh it has to be a decaf Americano? Ok that's fine so a decaf Americano with a LOT of whatever non-dairy milk you have - okay coconut milk - wait that makes it a latte - okay and yes - no sorry not hot - iced.

A Grande decaf Americano iced and with a LOT of almond milk or coconut milk - whichever one has less sugar - coconut milk? Okay. Coconut milk. And, not much ice please? Thanks.

An iced decaf coconut milk latte lite ice.

Whew.

So, that's my usual go-to Starbucks order.  
Or, should I say it WAS.

As a Cajun kid, it was a prerequisite that I come out of the womb drinking COFFEE MILK. I NEVER drank milk. Didn't like it. But, spike it with a bit of Maw Maw's Community Coffee at 3pm when Maw Maw Leona and Poppee Earl had their coffee break and I was getting my dairy AND my caffeine and I was LIT.

Then, when I was in my teens, my dad said, "I don't know about an allowance but I do know that you have to learn to work for a living, so come work at my office." I LOVED to visit his coffee maker, also always stocked with Community Coffee and add that Community Coffee powdered creamer and Sweet and Low every hour or so. I was bouncing off the WALLS. But, for some reason, I was still able to sleep at night. MAYBE because I was working and yet had no real bills to pay.

THEN, some fancy book store called Barnes and Noble came to Baton Rouge and it was like the circus coming to town - the more educated, permanent circus that was double decker, complete with an escalator AND an area that had a coffee shop boasting that they sold STARBUCKS COFFEE. And, Frappuccino's became my best friend and the best friend of my best friends, too.

and THEN in college, I do not know HOW but I would smoke a cigarette and have a coffee and then go stomp in Suzuki class for an hour and a half OR do African dance and I do not know how I did it.

THEN coffee was my saving grace and my only sense of hope in the morning during my right after college temp days when I'd get dollar coffee at the tin cart on wheels at various places in the city. Always strong and always served by a flirtatious man of Middle Eastern decent.

THEN when I started becoming more of a "health nut", I did a random gluten free, sugar free, vegan cleanse BUT I learned I COULD get a decaf coffee with almond milk from Whole Foods as my "treat" - my only treat even if it tasted kind of yuck. I still feigned for it. And, the whole point of the cleanse was to cleanse yourself of any cravings. BULL SHIT. It just made my addiction for coffee worse.

Because while they say coffee is good for you, I have learned over the years, especially recently that for me, coffee is like the bad boy - the boy you shouldn't date but you keep going back to because it's just so bad that it's so good.

BUT, they do say there are many benefits of coffee...

I quote a dish mosh of a Google search including articles from Healthline and John's Hopkins University

We have heard that research suggests that coffee itself might have beneficial effects on inflammation due to its plant compounds and polyphenol content

It is High in antioxidants and therefore linked to a lower risk of disease

- Boosts energy levels. ...
- May be linked to a lower risk of type 2 diabetes. ...
- Could support brain health. ...
- May promote weight management. ...
- Linked to a lower risk of depression. ...
- Could protect against liver conditions. ...
- Supports heart health YET also in Healthline, they're saying there have been studies saying that coffee made without a paper liner (like a French press - which is what I use) has been linked to higher LDL and total cholesterol whereas the levels did NOT rise when using a paper liner
- Could increase longevity.
- Could reduce the risk of Parkinson's
- And, if you're me, the Cafe du Monde tin coffee cans are GREAT holders of random kitchen trinkets and they're super cute and remind me of home

Furthermore...

According to the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, it's safe for most women to drink three to five cups of coffee a day.

WHAAAAAAT HOW IS THIS POSSIBLE?

I am learning over the past four or five years especially that even ONE cup of caffeinated coffee for me is, to put it simply, THE DEVIL. (Said with the same intention Kathy Bates' character says in "The Waterboy" when talking to her son Bobby Boucher about football. As in "Fooze-ball is da devil!")

At the height of the pandemic, I knew I needed to give up some things and ration. So, I stopped eating red meat completely which wasn't that hard considering my mom and I are pretty much die-hard bean fans as y'all probably know by now. But, I also decided I should wean myself off of coffee, because I thought we should ration like World War II styles and it just felt right.

And, shortly after, I noticed that my overactive bladder situation, which was nearly debilitating got better. Like a LOT better. Coffee is one of the known triggers to make Overactive bladder or OAB as us guhls with OAB like to call it.

But, then I just couldn't seem to shake wanting a coffee once the pandemic situation got a little bit safer - like it was less life and death and more like life without coffee was life and death again, or kind of.

And, you may wonder WHAT is the DEAL with me and Coffee?

Well, for me, it's like my alternative to something sweet. It kind of helps me from craving sugar (or at least so I tell myself) because I'm equally careful about what I put into my coffee - making sure it's dairy free AND sugar free - not an easy feat when you get coffee on the outside - unLESS you go to QuickChek like my boyfriend Harry and I. And, that has become our thing any time we go out in nature or to the beach, we have to stop at QuickChek and they, LOW AND BEHOLD serve DECAF ICED COFFEE AND they have UNSWEETENED ALMOND MILK AND you can CHOOSE how much ice you want in it AND they even have CHEWY ICE. Or, those little small hospital style ice cubes, to the non-ice connoisseur. Whereas Harry would get Hazelnut hot coffee with hazelnut creamer and two sugars (despite me telling him to switch to Stevia, he's since switched to Stevia) but he's still known as Hazelnut Harry, kind of like the long lost character from Candyland.

See, I have convinced myself that with overactive bladder, after much research that it was HOT coffee AND CAFFEINATED coffee that triggered my OAB.

So, QuickChek, NOT Wawa was the only place on the road who has Decaf Iced Coffee. Because my Iced Decaf Latte habit at Starbucks became WAY too expensive. And, I don't think their non-dairy milk was sugar free. And, at home I started making my

own concoction of half decaf espresso, half chicory cold brew which actually does taste good and I make it strong, but it just feels more fun to get coffee OUT. Who's with me on this? Clearly all the MILLIONS of people spending BILLIONS of Dollars at Starbucks are with me. Unless you're at QuickChek or Starbucks it's really hard to quality control (or even find) a good plastic cup of iced decaf coffee with non-dairy milk. Because, not many people are as crazy as me to actually WANT it.

People have made SO much fun of me over the past couple of years with my love of Decaf coffee. They've also made so much fun of me drinking iced coffee in 30 degree weather. But, unless they have a sweet tooth, Polycystic Ovarian Syndrome AND overactive bladder, then I tell them JUDGE NOT LEST THOU BE JUDGED, bitches.

As pandemic rules got less rigid, so did my rules with coffee and when I started working on set again, I realized it was going to be hard to wrestle up an iced decaf coffee. So, I started switching to iced coffee - regular coffee, telling myself it was okay and it was still saving me \$5 a pop at Starbucks.

But, LERD it was NOT saving my anxiety.

So, it's kind of like when the good guhl is dating the bad boy over and over again and she finally realizes she's had enough of the abuse and the sweaty ole Van Halen t-shirts, I recently, as in in the past couple of weeks realized I have had enough of coffee because I realized that my anxiety was TRU DA ROOF (said in a Cajun accent.)

And, if I want to talk a good game about clean eating, then DECAF coffee is actually worse for you than coffee because essentially, I'm just drinking chemicals.

I had COVID for the week of Christmas this past year. FUN. But, actually eye opening. Because if there's one thing that will make me NOT want COFFEE, it's when I am sick. I noticed the week of COVID and the week after, I had NO coffee and honestly, despite a LOT of stuff going on personally, my anxiety was better. I didn't feel racy. I didn't have racing thoughts. I didn't have a racing heart. I didn't feel like my TMJ was churning my teeth and my tongue into a SANKA factory (which side bar I would NEVER do Sanka - I have my standards, y'all.)

But the other day, I recently did an experiment. I was at work on set and I SO badly wanted an iced coffee. I asked for like a SPLASH of iced coffee with oat milk. And, they really didn't understand the concept of coffee milk like my Maw Maw did so it was more like part coffee part oat milk. I drank it down like the fiend I am and I was SICK. Like sick in the head, sick in the stomach and later that night, my anxiety was in full effect. Since then I have had a few cups of Starbucks decaf. And you know what? I am realizing it's over. The relationship is over. It can be like a fling here and there. But, I'm not in it to win it with coffee for the long term anymore. I am setting up my boundaries.

People have suggested Green tea to me to kick the habit. Green tea has less caffeine

and it ALSO has L-theanine, which has a calming effect so green tea is like an upper and a downer in one whereas coffee is just an upper. BUT for me, Green tea makes me racy. I am fine right now just doing different herbal tea concoctions. Because, while I will always love and miss the smell and taste of coffee, the freedom of not having physical and mental symptoms of anxiety is SO much better, y'all.

So, now, when I place my order for my morning drink, it sounds more like...

can I have a hibiscus raspberry tea, double the tea bags?

Or a Bengal spice tea?

or a Pumpkin Spice Rooibos tea?

Or insert any herbal tea here other than chamomile because for some reason that one messes up my allergies? Or when I'm feeling fancy a peppermint tea with a splash of Califia farms milk chocolate non dairy creamer?

While almost all of the world needs coffee to function, while most of us tell ourselves we can't function without coffee, I realized that coffee just isn't for me. Like cigarettes, it's a chemical, an addiction that I just don't need - and until I give it up, then live without it, then put it back in to test the waters in a sort of form of self torture, I don't realize how not good it is for me.

I may encourage all of you friends who feel you're too reliant on coffee or a substance to slowly cut back and take a break and just be mindful and see if what you may be experiencing physically or mentally is directly related to one simple habit that seems so simple but is really complicating and controlling your life.

Thanks so much for listening, y'all. It is my hope to inspire, uplift and entertain you with this Who's Dat Phat Girl podcast. So, if you're HUNGRY for more, you can book me to speak or perform my solo show that inspired this podcast Phat Girl Costumes written by yours truly and directed by my best bud Brian Lady at your virtual or in person event. Please visit [brookehoover.com/fluffybuttproductions](http://brookehoover.com/fluffybuttproductions) or email me at [contactbrookehoover@gmail.com](mailto:contactbrookehoover@gmail.com) for more information. And, let's follow each other on instagram - I'm @Br00keH00ver and those O's are not the letter O but they're ZEROS. Not because I want to be a size 0 but because I guess I'm just so clever with my late 90s Yahoo! self

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