

Transcript for The Who's Dat Phat Girl Podcast - With Brooke Hoover
EPISODE #25- What Came First?

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...

Hey Y'all it's the Who's Dat Phat Girl Podcast Episode 25. Feelin' Alive. Wow.

So, what came first y'all? The Chicken or the Egg? I personally think it was the chicken that came first because someone had to cross the road to go lay those eggs. Heeeey.

Our culture, the American diet culture has made it out, has told us, has fed us with a lot of horse poop that once we lose the weight, then and only then can we allow ourselves to be happy. Because otherwise you can't just be happy and unaccomplished. You can't be happy and overweight. You have to be working to be worthy. You have to be working towards this goal to be worthy. And, therefore that is what should make you happy. (MAKES A FART NOISE)

Major Fart Noise.

So, Y'all, ages ago, almost a decade ago, I go through these back and forths, up and downs of being super spiritual and being self deprecating and not. So, I was in this influx of being super spiritual. I'd just finished some Wayne Dyer books, some Abraham Hicks books, some Louise Hay books and I'm wanting to lose weight. At the time I'm bouncing back and forth, I think I was about 200 pounds. The number's not important.

So, I buy Marianne Williamson's Book "A Course in Weight Loss" AKA 21 Spiritual Lessons for Surrendering Your Weight Forever. Oh la la. It was kind of a riff on her book that she became very well known for called "A Course in Miracles". Well, I didn't get past like lesson 2 because it really started to tick me off. One of the lessons was basically you get a plate and you get a placemat and you find a beautiful plate. So, I found this beautiful plate on the sale rack or the sale shelf at Anthropologie. I actually still have it and I use it as my microwave plate. But, anyways, Marianne Williamson says get a plate, a speciallllll plate and bless it. Get special silverware, a special place mat and bless it and this is what you should be eating with. Eating time should be a blessing time.

Heck, y'all most of the time I was eating on the go because that's just the life of a freelancer, a life of an actor. And granted I wasn't running for the border every time. I wasn't going to Wendy's or sorry Wendy's I wasn't going to Wendy's or Taco Bell or Chipotle or Sonic. I wasn't doing fast food or anything like that. I was just bringing snacks and eating on the go. I didn't have time to like (talks in faux calm voice) sit down. Enjoy my mealllll. Give me a break. But, I understand where Marianne was going. She was basically forcing you and by "forcing you" I mean forcing me to look at the ways that I haven't been investing in myself or investing in my...health or my eating habits or my internal habits and how I've been hurting myself with the food I'm shoving down my face. I didn't really want to go along with that.

Because, #1 at this point in my life, I wasn't gorging - what's the word? Bingeing not gorging. Gorging, is that a word? I wasn't bingeing on a lot of bad food. I wasn't - in college you know eating fast food because I had nothing else. I did do that in college. I wasn't really eating that horribly. I was already eating somewhat well. Because, I was really trying to work on you know losing weight but had a difficult time because I have Poly Cystic Ovarian Syndrome and Hypothyroid so it makes it extra hard, it's a double whammy. But, also Marianne pissed me off. Sorry Marianne because it forced me to examine some emotional stuff that I really didn't want to.

Okay. So even now, even now after having lost 100 pounds from my heaviest weight, I still have to ask myself, "Why am I reaching for that Rx bar? Why am I reaching for that protein shake? Why am I reaching for those nuts? Am I really hungry? Am I upset? Am I pissed off? Am I bored? Am I afraid of getting hangry? So, am I pre-gaming to prevent potential hangriness." That's what I do now. But, back then, Marianne was forcing me to listen to myself and those emotional triggers.

And, I just didn't want to because I felt like she didn't really understand me. Now, Marianne to my knowledge has always been a very slender woman. She has not had any weight issues in the sense of being overweight, very overweight obese like I was and then losing weight. I didn't get far enough along in the book to learn that perhaps she did have eating disorders. You know? So, I'm not dissing Marianne because she got me at some point to the point where I am today.

So, Marianne in that sense was kind of along, there's a diet plan out there, a weight loss, a health plan out there now called Noom and from what little I do know of Noom and it's very similar in the principle that I was just speaking about. What are the triggers? Think about before you're eating, before you're reaching for something, are you really hungry? We touched about that really gently in last week's episode about the cornbread cravings. Was I really craving - was I really hungry? no. I wasn't hungry. Was I really craving cornbread? Yes. But, what I was craving most was an experience and a connection. So, that is what Marianne was going after. At the time, I didn't quite realize that.

She struck a chord with me and ticked me off at the same time because one message when I was reading or trying to get through her book or her spiritual laws I kept

getting from her was that there was something emotionally wrong with me. I was feeling like Marianne was telling me, "There is something emotionally wrong with you that you can not just let go and let the weight come off." Therefore I was overweight. So, it's kind of like a double-edged sword. That's the message I got from her. I'm not saying that's the message she was trying to put out there at all.

So, Marianne's telling me I'm unhappy and she's also telling me that I'm overweight because I'm unhappy. But, it didn't make sense. It's just so confusing. And, again, I will keep harping on this because I don't want Marianne to come after me - no I'm joking - that's not the type of person she is - or at least I hope she isn't. But, that's not what she was trying to do. But, it was very confusing for me at that place in time. And, so I don't know if I would recommend "A Course in Weight Loss" to people who aren't yet flip switching their mind, who aren't yet open to the spiritual side of things because it kind of - obviously my journey eventually has or is or isn't - it's all - different things happening all at the same time in any one given moment- it's not like everything's ever working for me perfectly. But, something did have to click and Marianne helped me along that way. But, it did cause me a lot of emotional anguish, you know? And, I don't think that is what her intent was. So, I think that's what my point is, is that be ready. If you're going to read that book, be ready to shed some stuff and have some demons come up. And, I think that was the point.

So, I had to shed some proverbial weight, if we will, then the physical weight loss would happen. What?!?! Like it just...did not make sense. And, I'm pretty hippie dippie. I'm a little woo woo but all this hippie dippie mumbo jumbo woo woo was too woo woo for me because for weight loss, I want an action plan. I want actionable steps. I want results. I wanted, at the time, a Jillian Michaels-esque instructor barking orders at me. And, actually Jillian Michaels, she might bark orders but she has a great book. She has several books but one of her books my friend Laurie gave me - thanks guhl. I love it. She's actually not as hard-core and mean as she may seem. But, that's what I gathered with Jillian Michaels that I didn't gather from Marianne Williamson. And, I wanted that kind of punishment. The last thing this FAT - at the time F with an an F (hangs on the F sound) Sounds gross right there. Ffffffat. F-A-T. The last thing this FAT girl wanted was to be gentle with herself.

And, that's what Marianne was telling me what to do. How dare you Marianne! God bless you Marianne. I'm dead serious because again it got me to where I am now and when things make you a little angry or I feel like I'm fixing to get a little emotional and cry, that means it's stirring up some good stuff.

So, around that same time is when I met a friend who was also really into Abraham Hicks. And, if you don't know them which I feel like many of the people listening out there are already very familiar with Abraham Hicks but basically it's in the same realm of "The Secret", The Law of Attraction. What you're putting out there is what you attract. Feeeeeel into things. Feel the good feeling first (sings to the tune of the En Vogue song) "And the rest will follow!" Remember that song.

But, Abraham Hicks, their teachings that my friend was telling me, she said, "You should really apply this to your weight loss." My friend was like, "You're being a little too hardcore with yourself." And that's against all the Abraham Hicks stuff. She said, "Why don't you actively, just really actively, stop obsessing over 'I can't eat bad food' and instead when you eat a piece of cake, just let it go and bless it and if you honestly deep down don't feel like you're going to gain weight when you eat the cake, then you won't. If you don't put the negative energy out there, you're not going to gain weight. Or if you keep putting the negative energy out there, and you're eating healthy things even just salad and bird food, you're still going to gain weight because you have the negative energy out there." That's what my friend told me based on what Abraham Hicks was saying. My friend was a size 0. So I'm like, "Like you understand, girl!"

But, she was trying to help. She was trying to help. And, now I get it. Now I get it. At the time I didn't want to see it. You know? Because I felt like no one really understands what I'm going through. There was no one out there talking about exactly what I needed at that time. Hey, maybe that's why I have this podcast because maybe there's somebody out there who resonates not 100% with what I'm saying but with some portion of it in some shape or form (pun intended) be it if it's for weight loss or self esteem or whatever the case may be because I feel like there needs to be a lot people out there who understand everybody and we can compartmentalize when and who we want to listen to to take that lesson for whatever it's worth. You know?

But, see, Marianne Williams teachings Abraham Hicks teachings, what my friend was trying to tell me, they all had The Secret and yes that is a little bit of a pun for those of y'all who know the book The Secret it works! Oprah - I think there's a Maya Rudolph sketch. Anyways, the whole point is, holding on to something so tightly that you give yourself hemorrhoids is just going to create negative, intense, intensely bad energy. it's going to be an adverse effect because I'm - you, me, in this case I'm not allowing myself to just be happy or simply just to be peaceful in that present moment.

You know with weight loss, with a health journey, I feel like we constantly look at the end of the road instead of it day by day, second by second, you know? I was ever obsessed with being in control. I still am. I'm working on it. I'm working on it, y'all. But when the woo woo teachings didn't work for me I just got to a place about really, really wanting to regulate my hormones and to lose weight easily even though I was trying so hard. I just didn't feel right. And it wasn't only about weight loss. It was mainly that I felt like (makes a fart noise with mouth) you know what I mean? And, I said, "I'm just really going to focus on eating foods that make me feel good, regulating my mind, regulating my body." And, it turns out that a lot of the foods that help you lose weight also make you feel good such as a variety of nuts, salmon for example, greens. So, again in that case, what came first, the chicken or the egg? I don't know. But, I started to feel better because I wanted to feel better and I'm eating foods that make me feel better so it's like I'm putting things into my body

that make me feel better and my body is feeling better. You know? A double-edged sword's not a good example for something that's a positive.

But it's a like a double whammy of positivity. Because I was ding, ding, ding. Starting to take care of myself and that was first and foremost. And that y'all I think was the primary teaching of Marianne Williamson and her book "A Course in Weight Loss" that ticked me off so much. I feel like that feeling of taking care of yourself was trying to teach me based on the teachings of Abraham Hicks. It also really forced me to start realigning with my mental health. While I'm realigning with my physical health to feel better, hormones can make ya crazy in the head. So, I had to really start realigning with my mental and spiritual health and stop being so angry at Abraham Hicks and Marianne Williamson and listen to those teachings, practice what I was preaching you know to others. To friends or to my family members and to start meditating, coming back to just the present moment.

But, I wanted it to be on my terms. Not on one of Marianne's 21 principles or her terms. I took what I could and I ran with it on my terms. Again because I'm a control freak. You know, I think what the woo woo people were saying is that you can not heal - in my case, I can not be balancing my hormones and lose weight if I'm constantly self deprecating because self deprecation, self loathing are the opposite of healing. That's the opposite of happy. And, yes as a PHAT with a PH girl, I had a lot of happy moments when I was overweight. I had some great times.

But, I also had this underlying metronome of (talks like a metronome) hate myself because I'm fat. Will get easier when I lose weight.

You know and it was tick tock, tick tocking back and forth. And, you know what y'all? Newsflash : after losing 100 pounds, it still happens. It doesn't magically go away. I might feel good about myself for five seconds and for the next 30 minutes, I mean like now, I beat myself up for feeling like "Oh I didn't eat all of the right foods today. I should have exercised harder. What happens when I hit menopause?" All this negative garbage that I tried so hard to work on and it's not like after you read the 21 lessons from Marianne Williamson or read the book by Jillian Michaels that you're going to be better. That you're going to be happier. It takes every single moment. I think I get super preachy about this probably because it's the one thing I need to preach to myself the most about. You know? I think the thing was is that I felt so misunderstood by doctors, by well meaning friends, by bullies, by mean people my whole life - by people who meant well but didn't know what the heck they were saying cause they were just ignorant. So, that made me unhappy. I allowed that to make me unhappy you know. And, I thought when I lost weight, I'll be free of all that.

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SEE ABOVE FOR MONDAY *****

And, in a sense I am. But, I still do carry some of those demons. So, again, happiness is a choice. Happiness is a choice. How do you realign with it? Sometimes for me it's looking at my dogs and my dogs talk to me. They do. They talk in their voices. One day they'll be on the podcast and I'll interview them. And, that brings me back to happiness or just taking a deep breath. You know? I think y'all - takeaway from this is weight loss does not make you happy?

I love everybodys but sometimes when I post those pictures of Transformation Tuesday and I do that for very good reason. People are like, "Oh you look so much happier." No, no, no friends. It does not make you happier. I'm probably a lot more neurotic now than I've ever been but I'm working on it. I think the goal is, happiness is a choice. So, don't even necessarily worry about happiness. Focus on the choice. Hey, I'm able to choose. It's a personal choice.

No outside choice: losing weight, people's acceptance or the food you ingest in your body - is going to make you - by "you" I mean "me" HAPPY.

For example, I'm an actor. And, I have a lot of actor friends. And, I think a lot of us tend to think, "When I get that part, I will be happy." Let me tell y'all I've booked several co-star which kind of means like six, seven lines or less - sometimes a little bit more - sometimes a little bit less - on certain TV shows. And, I used to think, "When I get that I'm going to go to the next level and I'm going to be happy." BOGUS. Because there's been plenty of times when I've been on set where I carry that self-loathing with me but I plough through anyways. Same thing with a lot of different things in life.

So, y'all whether you're an actor or not, whether you're on a weight loss journey or not, how are you still carrying that little self loathing, little crappy little voice on your shoulder - I think we all do it and if people say they don't then you're lying or if you really, really, really don't - what is your magic potion? What is your secret to becoming happy? Secret is there's no secret to being happy.

So, y'all what really came first? For me - weight loss or happiness. The answer is neither. Because I'm not fully there yet. I may never fully be happy 110% of the time always and that's fine. I may never fully be happy with my weight or my body or my appearance for any one given day or 30-minute stretch. But, I can at least choose peace. And, I can choose to be peaceful with that.

And, at the end of the day, isn't peace the most important? Hello, there's a whole sign devoted to peace. I sometimes get it confused with a Mercedes emblem.

Isn't finding inner peace why the chicken or the egg really crossed the road?

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 or email me at contactbrookehoover@gmail.com for more information. And, let's follow each other on instagram - I'm @Br00keH00ver and those 0'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

And, if you like this podcast, please give me a five star rating and write a review on Apple Podcasts and, please, most importantly, share with your friends, family and other people you may know who are as phat as we are - that's phat with a PH.

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