

Ep #32: The Power of Slow in 3 Easy Steps



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With Your Host

Diana Murphy

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Welcome to *Weight Loss for CEOs*. A podcast that teaches executives and leaders how to deal with the unique challenges of achieving sustainable weight loss while balancing the responsibility of a growing company, family, and their own health. Here's your host, executive coach, Diana Murphy.

Good morning. I hope you're having a fabulous start to your week and I hope the tool that I'm going to share today can just be really helpful. And I really wrote this for a particular time of day that's really challenging for me and for my clients; the afternoons.

So, today I wanted to pull together some concepts that I think can be really, really helpful to you. All of us experience a certain level of stress – some certainly more than others depending on how we're wired and depending on the way you respond to your life. But what I love seeing is how two simple tools, the hunger scale and the thought model, can help you to not only raise your attention around food, but give you a window, or what I call an opportunity to manage your stress.

Yesterday when I was writing this podcast, I was in such a different energy and I'm so glad I waited to record it. I was getting pretty worked up about my clients waiting too long to eat. I was on fire. But then I slept on it and I realized that all of the reasons and benefits of attentively eating and honoring your appetite are, yes, so important, and that afternoon time is when I see clients really put off their hunger or put off eating.

But what I realized is this; I want to give you the same opportunity that I give my clients and having a perspective on stress and how powerful mindful eating can be for all reasons, and that's what I want to show you today. Believe me, you're glad that I've slept on this.

I was getting a little preachy and I don't think it would have been as helpful as the approach that I'm going to share with you today. I slowed down a little bit and realized a way I want to bring this to you, and it's really simple, but it's also more powerful than you can imagine if you just look at the tools, and actually, a very, very small facet of those two tools, the hunger scale and the thought model, that I'm going to share with you today.

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I want this podcast to be a resource for you, to use it today, this week, to practice it, but to also come back to it on a really big tough week or when you're noticing a lot of stress. Note that this is episode 32 and use it when you're having a tough time.

First, we're going to start with paying attention to hunger and then next I'm going to share a very simple way to use one line of the thought model, the feeling line, and I'm going to help you by really drilling down to pay attention to just one small facet of these tools. Again, just the negative side of the hunger scale and the feeling line of the thought model.

The goal here is to give you a practice, to help you to slow down at various times during the day, especially when you eat, the goal being to help you to eat to your appetite to prevent overeating, but also to maintain great energy during the day. If we get too hungry, we can run low on mental and physical energy. And also, on the other side of this, if you overeat, you can make yourself sleepy and sluggish as well.

Then next, we'll move into how during these same attentive eating moments can be turned into an opportunity to identify what's up for you, to help you to identify why you might be feeling stress, especially during the afternoon when a lot of us get overwhelmed and kind of push through. This is to buck that push through so that you can stay really high-energy and also really in a clear mind.

What I see with so many of my clients, and myself for sure, is that most of my eating and emotions are pretty on point, calm, and centered, confident, all those that I want, those really yummy emotions. They help me to work hard. And I want these at hand when I'm working with clients, creating content for you, like this podcast, and any of the things that I'm really doing earlier in the day. But the afternoons can get a little tricky.

This is a time of day when my weight loss and my stress loss clients – yes, stress loss work is becoming my thing as well – those clients are the most challenged with confident food choices and this is a time, the afternoon is a time that can routinely feel a lot of stress. I have the solution for you today

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to unlock these stressful moments for you, really any time of day, and to help you to lean into intuitive eating at whatever level you know is going to be helpful to you.

The problem is this; we have been trained to eat by the clock, to clean our plate, to eat to a diet. All of these ways of deciding when to eat are not taking into account our natural appetite, and I want to say your natural appetite. Each of us has a very individual; appetite. Each of us are wired differently on our fueling rhythm and our days can really vary day to day on how much or how often our body needs fuel.

Next, especially during the afternoons, but of course this can happen any time of day if you're triggered, we are lower on reserves of mental energy during those afternoon times and we can start being in a rush to get everything done that we set out to do for the day. You know, we might have had a full day of meetings. For me, I might have had a full day of coach calls, but I still have 10 things on my to-do list. Does this sound familiar? Or all of the projects that are on your plate right now are taking so much longer than you had planned.

This is where the frustration or self-judgment can come in, and of course, that equals stress. If this is happening for you, this is the solution. First, during the day, check in with yourself and ask, am I hungry? For each one of us, this awareness is different. But check in between appointments, check in at multiple times of the day and ask, am I hungry? Notice how hunger feels for you. Notice when that sensation of light flutter in your stomach or a growl or an emptiness in your system.

Some of my clients really just notice mental fatigue or distraction. Just notice. This is a powerful way to just be in your body instead of in your head. Check in during different moments during the day. Then, when the answer is yes to that question, am I hungry, always honor it. This is key.

Once you know that you're hungry, what I call minus-two hungry, and a quick glass of water doesn't solve it, or you've noticed for a while that

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you're a little distracted by it, honor those sensations and eat, stop, even in the afternoon, when you might be tempted to push through.

This is the time of day when I think we're at the weakest. This is when your energy is suffering and it causes other issues, especially if you're learning how to manage or lose weight. This is how we get into a rhythm of our appetite, by asking often, asking, am I hungry? Or when people are about to eat, am I hungry? This is how we're sure that we're eating what our body truly needs. And it can also be just the calm you need by stopping, just being present around your food, take a slow breath, just for a few minutes, and giving yourself time to eat.

I still use this tool after learning it five years ago. This week, in fact, it is my five-year anniversary of being trained as a weight coach with Brooke Castillo. Wow, that time has flown. But I still use this tool five years in. and dafter using it for so long, it really is natural for me.

But because I am so high-energy, I'm a quick start and I tend to push myself, checking in and using what I'm teaching you today really supports me on so many ways. And this is what it can do for you; it can help you to stop snacking when you're not really hungry. It gives you a mental break when you're trying to rush through your work.

It literally is the reason I've maintained my weight for so long, 12 years now, and I know I can trust my body's signals now, now that I've practiced it, and I don't have to think about when to eat. I can trust that my body is going to let me know when I'm hungry. I might have to check in a little bit if I have a really busy day, but I don't have to think about when to eat. I don't have to worry about it. I just lean into asking if I'm hungry.

Again, the power in this tool is honoring the answer, am I hungry? It is saying no to food when you're not hungry. It's saying yes to food when you are. And for some, this is a great tool to just up-level your attentiveness, but for others, it will take practice.

For my weight loss clients, it's a powerful tool in creating confident decisions around food. When we don't let ourselves get too hungry, it just

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raises our confidence level around food choices. It will take commitment to use this tool and for it to be more natural for you, but I promise, giving yourself the gift of awareness of where you're at during different moments of the day in terms of hunger is powerful. You'll learn your pattern. Many of us have a pretty regular pattern. It can vary day to day, but this will get you in sync.

Now, why would this help you to manage stress? Alright, because stress is caused by our thinking, and when we move our awareness from our busy brain where all those thoughts live to awareness of our physical body, kind of dropping into your physical body, we literally pull out of that conversation in our brain, that busy brain. And for me, it is truly a relief during the day. It's a brain break, you might call it.

I literally use my meals, even my quick lunches or my snacks, to give my brain a break, to not think about anything, but to just stop and enjoy my food. It really provides a powerful reset. And I mean it, even in the small quick meals, just slowing down and using this as a powerful reset can really be an energy boost during the day.

This is all about honoring your hunger and stopping and giving yourself that energy break by giving yourself a meal or snack. And this leads me to my next tool, the thought model and how you can help to manage stress and all that comes at you during the day. There's so many episodes where I've gone very deeply into the model, but today, I'm going to talk about just one line; the feeling line.

And I want to remind you, the thought model can be used in three ways. One, for awareness, which we're going to use it for today. Two, you can help it to turn around your emotional state. And a third purpose is to literally create the results you want in your life by thinking differently and using the model to do so.

Now, we're just going to talk about awareness here, just being aware of that feeling line, the current emotions, just to be helpful in getting centered

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and calm down. Now, stay tuned because I just created a series on those three ways to use the model. I can't wait to bring those to you.

You might find that when you are leaning into this practice of am I hungry and checking in during the day that, those questions, it is difficult to slow down, that you might be feeling a little agitated, that you even forgot to ask the questions, that you don't want to stop or you are just really uncomfortable once you've slowed down.

This is really key. This is why I tandem the thought model with the checking in on hunger. They're very powerful when used together. By using the thought model for awareness, you have another way to get grounded. Your brain is thinking about 2500 to 3000 thoughts an hour. Wow, I never knew those statistics, I've just looked up in Google just now; 2500 to 3000 thoughts per hour. And every thought creates an emotion, especially those that we land on and truly think; those really become beliefs.

And remember, our brain leans to negative in an effort to be our warning system, but many of those thoughts are unnecessary, because seriously, our brain is trying to convince us that, for example, that we will literally die if the important project that we're working on is not 100% perfect. That's really how it feels in our body.

Our mind is a drama kind or queen. It's crazy, but in these moments during the day, it feels very true when we're feeling those triggers of negative emotion, when we're experiencing stress. And we just don't always know why. We just know we feel agitated or uncomfortable. And many times, this is simply why you're overeating or eating too fast. We're just checked out of the body's signals of hunger and we're experiencing that stressful stream of thoughts and we want it to go away.

I don't know about you, I want them to go away. I don't like feeling that discomfort. All of us humans will naturally try to avoid them. And the cruel justice of this is that when you resist feeling the emotions that are created from those negative thoughts, resistance actually multiplies them. It creates more stress and more anxiety for some.

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Resisting emotion actually creates the sensation of it, and that seems cruel, but it's true. Now, what's the solution to this? The solution is learning to allow your emotions. Yes, allow them. Don't indulge in them. If you allow your emotions, you're not sinking into depression because you're really angry. I promise you, allowing them really is powerful. They cannot hurt you. But sometimes it feels like it.

And I want you to just trust me here in trying this because most of us have not been taught how to navigate negative emotion or to manage our thinking. So we don't even realize we have an option to do this. We are very unique creatures, we humans. We can think about what we're thinking. And this is really good news if we use this unique skill properly.

Again, remember, circumstances trigger the thoughts in our life and every thought creates a unique emotion. So if we're thinking 3000 thoughts an hour, we are experiencing a lot of emotions. We perceive negative emotions as bad so we literally tighten up.

Now, I want a new picture for you. Think of emotion as flowing water. It's not very powerful if it flows quietly by like a creek. But if a dam is put in place, it creates a lot of resistance and it creates pressure. This is literally what's going on with your emotions. So the emotion of anger or disappointment, sadness, now that becomes, all bottled up, it becomes anxiety, stress, and overwhelm when we resist letting it just flow by.

Emotions are just a vibration in your body. They cannot hurt you and anger cannot hurt you, discouragement can't hurt you if you allow it to just flow by. So if we learn to slow down a bit, identify how we're feeling during these opportunities, during the day when we're slowing down to check in on our hunger or just drop into our bodies, it's going to give you the power to let emotions be experienced but not built up. And remember, it's natural to resist them, but when we can ask, in these moments, and those moments when I'm asking you to check into your appetite, also check up what you're thinking, what emotions you're experiencing.

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You can reduce the stress that naturally builds up throughout the day. And the question is very simple; what am I feeling right now? Just name three emotions. That's it, just name them. Don't judge them. Don't try to figure out why. Thought work is a beautiful thing, but the way I'm asking you to use this tool here is to just identify your emotions.

It's going to help you understand why you're feeling how you're feeling and if you think of the creek and just let it flow by, wow I'm feeling angry because that just happened, and breathe through it, that is powerful. You know, you and I, and I'm a very positive person, we can be the most positive and enthusiastic people on the planet and be experiencing a lot of negative emotion.

So I challenge you to just name them throughout the day, put them on a sticky, and then just throw it out. Just look at them and then allow them. Of course, I'm feeling a little agitated right now, I'm frustrated that that phone call didn't go as well. And just write down the three emotions, throw the sticky in the basket, and go on with your day.

But how do we do this when we naturally will try to resist? This is going to sound too simple, but breath. Yes, our body has some powerful resources. Ask any yogi or yoga instructor why breathing is everything. Next time you slow down or are trying to slow down during a full workday and check in on whether you're hungry or not, notice the tension, notice the vibration, anything that you want to avoid, or you're just feeling agitated and don't want to slow down, allow a bit of that discomfort and box breathe.

Yes, just think of box breath as three counts on ever side of the box. This is epically simple, but it's epically powerful. I have several of my clients practice this often and it works. And for some reason, that agitation, frustration, really does come – again, I'm harping on the afternoons, but I think this is when we really have to be paying attention.

So, box breathing is breathing in for three counts, one, two, three... holding your breath, one, two, three, exhaling slowly, one, two, three, and hold your

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breath for one, two, three. You can give your bod' and your wonderful mental attitude that 12 seconds maybe three times.

I find, even if I just do it once – right now, I just totally felt my body just drop down in tension. It is a powerful calming tool. Just use it when you're really feeling upset. You don't even need to identify the emotions if you don't have time; use the box breathing.

Why? As I was reminded by a friend today when we were working out, a clear mind is a powerful one. Thanks, Jeremy. And I think one of the reasons that we have such stressful days or afternoons is now we're butting up against a lot of unwanted emotion.

And if life is going to hand us 50% negative and 50% positive, like it does, recognizing it and processing through them can help us maintain a clear head throughout the entire day. Again, it's all about mental energy by fueling steadily and just allowing emotion to help you not build up that frustration during the afternoon.

So I've explained these concepts more in depth, but they're very, very simple. I want you to have these as a frame of reference. I wanted you to understand what I was getting at, but look how simple this is. Three steps, check in and ask am I hungry on a regular basis. Either put a timer on your phone. Note when you want to do this, but often, in between appointments, when you are rushing onto the next thing, just stop, am I hungry? And then honor your hunger.

Or when people are asking you out for lunch, ask, am I hungry? And if you're not, don't go or eat a light salad and join them. But this is a beautiful way that we stay in good energy throughout the day. We don't get sluggish from overeating and we also don't get starved. We don't get too hungry and out of control or we maintain our mental acuity because we're not starving our brain. It's so good.

Now, the next step, again, ask what your top three emotions are. How am I feeling right now? Just write down three. Don't push, like if you can't think of more than two, but do give yourself some time to name three. Ooh, what

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am I feeling? What don't I want to feel that I know is right there? Just note it. And then, use box breathing any time you need it, but this three-step process, if you just did this twice a day, I can't imagine how powerful this would be for you.

Clear your mind and your body of the tension and get on with it. You know, I've learned to do this to help me be as productive at 4pm as I am at 10am. It's really working. And I do think that there is a different mental acuity at 10am for all of us because we do get brain fatigue, decision fatigue in the afternoon. It's just normal. But using this method is a powerful way to stay present, focused and attentive, more steadily, more hours of the day. If you have a lot on your plate, if you work a 10-hour day and that's just your life, this is fuel for you. This will help you.

Try it and let me know what you think. I really want your feedback. If you would love to hear more about how application of these tools is so powerful, how it really works in real life, you've heard my examples, but I want you to hear from two clients.

I shared two client success stories in episode 29 and these are, among what I've shared with you today, are what I shared with them in their journeys. And it really does work. So check out episode 29 for those stories.

If you'd love to start applying this and have someone to guide you through it personally, just go to my website, dianamurphycoaching.com and click the let's chat button at the bottom right corner of the front page. I'd love to meet you.

I have been learning to slow down to create better results, and these three simple steps have been key for me and those people that I work with. I encourage you to give them a try this week. Try them in faith and just let me know. If it doesn't work for you, I might have something, another tool I could share with you.

You're in for a treat next week. I have another interviewing podcast and I've already given you a hint of what's ahead in the next series and I am thrilled

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that I have succeeded in tripling my downloads in April compared to January.

And guess what, my goal for May is to do the same, May and June, to double my podcasts of April. So if you know someone that would love the podcast, don't keep it a secret. Until then, have an amazing week. I love bringing this work to you, but I also love hearing from you. So I hope this helps and have a great day.

Thank you for listening to this episode of *Weight Loss for CEOs*. If you enjoyed this episode and want more, visit dianamurphycoaching.com for Diana's latest free coaching tools to get started losing weight without having to start a diet now.