

#96: Disordered Eating in Runners: Carb-Phobia, Weight and Performance, and Learning to Be Happy Again

Abbie Attwood:

Hey, everyone, welcome back to full plate. I am super excited for you to hear this conversation today. It was just an honor to have this conversation and I was super excited when this person asked if I would want to talk. Or have them on the podcast today is a conversation with a client of mine. So what you need to know is this is not an ordinary client. Okay, this is someone who has become very very well. All of my clients are very special to me but I started working with Alexis, Lex as I call her. three years ago and she was a senior in high school and now she is a junior in college. So now. It's maybe even 4 years of proud , happy inspiration that doesn't begin to describe the way that I feel about her and her. Recovery from her eating Disorder Lex is a collegiate runner now so she is running in college. She was a runner in high school. It was a big part of how she developed an eating disorder and it was all it was 1 piece of the puzzle. We talk a lot about life. Feeling unsafe in our home environment. or with coaches and she goes in. She's really honest about all the different things that made her feel so untethered and in need of control with food.

Everything from food scarcity growing up to body image fears as an athlete pressures from coaches as a runner to just anxiety and rigidity and how that showed up in the development of her eating disorder. We also talk about trauma and treatment. receiving. Kind of partial hospitalization care and then choosing to work outpatient through her eating disorder choosing to go to college in the first place was a big decision during recovery. , finding a safe space to recover in finding safe people. And overcoming fears about food. Specifically we talk about carbs like how do we stop fearing carbs when we're healing from disordered eating so much good stuff in this episode. She's just wonderful and you're going to hear that and she said something at the end of the episode. Just stuck with me which is like she's learning to. She's learned to be happy again is what recovery has really meant to her. This is just a beautiful episode. I am excited for all of you to hear it. I think whether you're a parent of a teen or you are a teen or you are an athlete who has struggled with overexercise or disordered eating. She's wise beyond your years. So don't let the fact that she's in college fool you.

Right? So with that I am going to jump right into this episode and I will see you on the other side. I Hope you enjoy.

00:00.59

Abbie Attwood

Okay, we're going hi Las ah, it's good to see you I'm glad you're here I'm glad we're doing this. How do you feel? Yeah, okay, no, you're amazing. You'll be great.

00:01.10

Alexis Parent

Hi, I have you and it's so good to see you. Good nervous begins sleep.

00:17.63

Abbie Attwood

, you know why I'm going to start my usual question so I got to know what's been on your plate lately and the first part of that question is food. The second part of that question is just life, what is the biggest thing on your plate in life lately.

00:30.19

Alexis Parent

Food wise I'd have to say ice cream is the 1 good thing our college dining hall has is like where you can scoop your own ice cream and they have like so many different flavors and.

00:35.66

Abbie Attwood

Tell me more.

00:48.18

Alexis Parent

They whip out the seasonal flavors. So right now pumpkin and it has cream cheese mixed in and then like Graham cracker things. It's my favorite and it reminds me of my sister every single time I have it.

00:50.39

Abbie Attwood

, oh no way.

00:58.00

Abbie Attwood

Oh ok, ok, ah a way speaking of sister you're a triplet which I think is just a fun fact about you that we need to share. Fun fact.

01:10.14

Alexis Parent

, a puzzle little party Of fact.

01:14.50

Abbie Attwood

Just in case anyone out there can relate to that. wait Why does it remind you of your sister is that like a flavor she loves.

01:18.23

Alexis Parent

She will drive 45 minutes to get her favorite flavor of ice cream and then bring a pint back to her to college you just bought. But

01:29.20

Abbie Attwood

That's my kind of woman. , so it's funny. You mentioned pumpkin spice because I went and got I went and had an ice cream date with my friend yesterday like last evening and one of their seasonal flavors was pumpkin spice and I didn't get it because it didn't have stuff in it like.

01:45.99

Alexis Parent

, oh look.

01:46.90

Abbie Attwood

Like and I was really craving something with like some dough you know, but you mentioned the cream cheese and I'm like and the graham cracker and I'm like oh I could have gotten behind that like had they had they done that I would have been all over it. But I went with a cinnamon churro dough kind of thing. It was really good. Really good.

02:00.91

Alexis Parent

Life sounds good too.

02:04.48

Abbie Attwood

So do you do a cone or do you do a cup. What do they do at the dining hall?

02:07.49

Alexis Parent

I make a cup because I think you can get more ice cream in it and then you can put more toppings on and they won't fall off. That's true.

02:11.30

Abbie Attwood

I Mean that's true, but you can put a cone on top of the cup of ice cream is what I like to do and then you get the crunch and then you but you get the bowl situation. Okay, we're gonna have to come back to this because I feel like.

02:25.93

Alexis Parent

That's also true.

02:30.78

Abbie Attwood

There was a time when ice cream would not have felt okay for you and we're gonna have to come full circle with that. I think about lifewise.

02:38.30

Alexis Parent

All Lifewise well I'm a junior in college right now. So I have to start growing up crazy. But I have to figure out what I'm doing with my life next summer and I need a real adult.

02:41.57

Abbie Attwood

I Know gonna make me cry makes me realize how long I've known you.

02:56.43

Alexis Parent

Job or internships and then I can figure out what I'm doing after college but you're supposed to start applying like in the winter. , so I'm trying to line everything up and see what I actually want to do and then like to find a location where I want to be, yeah.

03:02.57

Abbie Attwood

Like.

03:12.50

Abbie Attwood

Okay, so right now well just so because everyone needs to learn more about you. So what are you majoring in? Okay, so what would be like a dream internship then.

03:14.62

Alexis Parent

It's a lot.

03:20.96

Alexis Parent

Conservation biology. Oh my gosh I will.

03:26.76

Abbie Attwood

I mean who knows Lex maybe the universe will deliver like maybe someone will be listening to this episode and have something for you. You might as well just speak it into the universe. Yeah.

03:33.70

Alexis Parent

, maybe they'll show. Okay, okay, it'd be so fun to like work with wildlife or like an animal rescue or some sort or like a rehabilitation center. .

03:42.19

Abbie Attwood

Ah.

03:49.40

Alexis Parent

Or I really love work or like I love like sustainable businesses and I did like a research project on like chocolate production and like how like smaller companies like alter eco and like endangered species those catered to like the environment and the people and like they aren't like.

03:56.13

Abbie Attwood

Yeah.

04:08.88

Alexis Parent

Profit just profit based so it'd be so fun to work for 1 of those companies.

04:14.22

Abbie Attwood

, okay, you heard it here. So if anyone so we're talking animal rehabilitation or chocolate preferably something that combines both.

04:22.47

Alexis Parent

, oh yeah, yes, please anyone has any ideas.

04:27.91

Abbie Attwood

Dream location because like the last few summers I know you did California for a little bit which you liked and you're from Maine like I am originally so where do you want to be? Do you think oh I love that for you.

04:33.20

Alexis Parent

To be honest with thinking California again. The climate just draws me in. I love it.

04:47.95

Abbie Attwood

Isn't it. Wonderful yeah, that's right all the time. Oh my gosh. Okay so getting things lined up for next summer are you thinking that you'll be away for the whole summer then okay.

04:51.41

Alexis Parent

And he agrees and is sunny all the time.

05:00.69

Alexis Parent

, yeah, probably the three months

05:07.18

Abbie Attwood

What is your sister like? Is it gonna be hard? You're gonna be away from each other for so much.

05:10.75

Alexis Parent

I know it's crazy that I am so I'm turning 21 in January and my siblings and I haven't been together on our birthday for a few years or trying to plan a big thing where we all get together because we're turning 21 it's like a golden birthday.

05:17.97

Abbie Attwood

Ah.

05:23.35

Abbie Attwood

All 3 of you. It really is oh my god okay, you gotta figure this out. You gotta make this happen in January oh my gosh. That's so exciting I can't believe this okay okay so school's going. Well.

05:34.43

Alexis Parent

It's gonna be something I'm making.

05:43.22

Alexis Parent

It adds.

05:43.33

Abbie Attwood

Recovery is going well and we're going to talk more about that. , and I met you. We've been together but we've been together for what 3 years yeah because you were.

05:57.80

Alexis Parent

I think it is 3 years yes

06:02.80

Abbie Attwood

At least yeah because it was the summer before your senior year of high school. Yeah yeah, okay so given that I know a lot about your life in the last three years but I don't know as much about.

06:06.17

Alexis Parent

Yes, so has 3 years

06:20.39

Abbie Attwood

Earlier on aside from of course you and I have talked about things that led up to your eating disorder. But I love to hear a little bit more about even further back now that you've learned more about diet culture and you're further on in recovery and you've gotten a lot of like self-awareness around all of this and. Now that you look back like earlier on in your life. What do you think?? What do you think of the way that you grew up around food and your body and how things were presented to you talked about what were your experiences when you were younger and I Also want to say I imagine having a triplet sister was a strange experience with. Body image too. It's like you're always looking at your own mirror image.

07:05.00

Alexis Parent

Very Jim gosh I don't even know where to start? Well I think growing up food was pretty neutral per se but because . So my mom wasn't working, my dad was working but then they had 3 kids so it was more like I think financially food was just a little bit more scarce. We always had enough but it was like we wouldn't necessarily go out of the way to get something we like. So. Special that we wanted at the store. It was like , our parents bought these things and that's what we had which was fine. , but I think like reflecting back now I have like we've talked about it before but like a food scarcity mindset which where it's like.

07:45.69

Abbie Attwood

You.

07:54.94

Abbie Attwood

Yeah.

07:58.12

Alexis Parent

I get scared when not enough food is around or like I'm scared when there's like not access to food. I think because of that growing up and just like Moneywise yeah, and then also having .

08:08.91

Abbie Attwood

Yeah, for sure.

08:16.30

Alexis Parent

To other siblings later on like money wasn't the most abundant thing. Yeah, yeah, crazy.

08:20.80

Abbie Attwood

Abundant. Yeah, so there's 5 of you in total triplets and then twins oh my I know so I am glad you brought that up the scarcity food scarcity and just a little bit of food insecurity in terms of. Enough but like you and I have talked a lot about like satisfaction and it's hard to get satisfaction when you're kind of just with the bare minimum all the time right? like these are the foods you get and you don't get to go get those quote unquote special things which are often those like fun.

08:56.80

Abbie Attwood

Satisfying foods like Joyful Foods right.

08:58.75

Alexis Parent

Yes, and then also like going out to eat that was like never happened real aid happened like maybe once or twice a year for our birthday and then like five kids is expensive. Yes.

09:09.20

Abbie Attwood

Is yeah and do you remember anyone? Do you remember it as you grew up? Do you think any of your siblings struggled with their relationship with food in a similar way or your parents like what you remember experiencing?

09:27.73

Alexis Parent

, nothing with my siblings per se and like an older age. Maybe my sister but my mom went on a diet. and I remember her relationship with food like not.

09:38.19

Abbie Attwood

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09:45.70

Alexis Parent

Being great like she did the beach body. You know like everything in a little container and like it didn't necessarily reflect on my relationship with food but it made me curious. I Think what that was .

09:58.74

Abbie Attwood

Did she talk about her like do you remember her talking about her body negatively or anything that usually goes hand in hand with that like this desire to change your body or keep your body under control.

10:09.87

Alexis Parent

Yeah, she I don't know if she would like to try to do it around us but she would just be like I have to be careful like what I eat like whatever fits in this container is what I'm going to eat today or like yeah stuff like that.

10:15.50

Abbie Attwood

Totally yeah.

10:26.44

Abbie Attwood

Like that. Yeah.

10:28.43

Alexis Parent

, but like I know whenever we were eating something or we would go out like it wouldn't be there. But yeah.

10:35.64

Abbie Attwood

Yeah, it sounds like she did her best to try to separate it from you like her relationship with food. She tried to keep separate but we all know I mean I've talked about this with countless people on the podcast Unfortunately like even as much as you try to hide it kids notice.

10:41.21

Alexis Parent

Yeah, nothing.

10:54.65

Abbie Attwood

Right? So you noticed? yeah.

10:55.78

Alexis Parent

Yeah, definitely and then I think she was a runner too or is a runner and then me growing up being a runner too I think it made me realize like oh this is what she looks like.

10:59.67

Abbie Attwood

Yeah.

11:10.96

Alexis Parent

What do I look like as a runner and then like my sister as well? She runs so.

11:13.78

Abbie Attwood

Right? right? And that's a big part of your story is the running piece. Huge Huge huge. Okay so how old were you at that point when you remember kind of being aware of the containers in the beach body and getting curious about all that.

11:17.98

Alexis Parent

Yes.

11:31.29

Alexis Parent

Ah, probably like 108 something like.

11:35.21

Abbie Attwood

Yeah, yeah, that makes sense. It's interesting Lex like that's a release that's a common age for us to start to be aware of those things. It's interesting. It's so young, but it's really like that's a really common answer when I asked that question so when did you start running.

11:44.75

Alexis Parent

Yeah.

11:54.70

Abbie Attwood

Tell me about that, like how old were you and did you and your sister start running at the same time. Okay.

11:58.18

Alexis Parent

, we didn't actually ah so I didn't start running until eighth grade. But my sister and I were really really into sports. Our parents stuck us in soccer when we were in kindergarten because. Rowdy. Yeah that's what you do, you stick your kids in soccer and we played all the way up until middle school and then we both did outdoor soccer and then indoor soccer and then.

12:14.93

Abbie Attwood

That's what you do? That's what happened in my family.

12:33.42

Abbie Attwood
Really I didn't know that.

12:33.54

Alexis Parent

I Loved baseball they won Yup they wouldn't let me. Yeah, they wouldn't let me join the baseball team because it was all boys. So I joined the softball team and I hated it. It needed it and my parents wouldn't let me quit because they already paid for it and.

12:39.70

Abbie Attwood

What about softball?

12:51.55

Abbie Attwood

But this sounds dramatic. Oh so this is spring season I Guess yeah yeah, okay.

12:53.23

Alexis Parent

The only yeah it was and my sister got to do track and I didn't get to do track yes and I was so sick of softball I hated it so much so I talked to the track coach and I was like can I please. Run in one of your meets like you can just put my name down and give me a uniform and I'll run and he let me run his name is Joe he shouted to Joe starting my track career. yes, he just let me jump in and then.

13:18.88

Abbie Attwood

Shout out to Joe. It's just letting you jump in.

13:29.23

Abbie Attwood

Okay, and so this is eighth grade or now this is ninth grade. Okay, okay so eighth grade you're doing so you do cross country and track then at that point just track.

13:36.16

Alexis Parent

Eighth grade. Yeah.

13:44.34

Alexis Parent

Just back when I hated crosscountry I thought it was too far. I wanted to race. I was a four hundred meter runner. I hated racing distance.

13:46.56

Abbie Attwood

Really.

13:51.90

Abbie Attwood

Okay.

13:58.61

Abbie Attwood

So what did you do going into ninth grade did you? What were you? What sports were you playing when you went into high school?

13:59.00

Alexis Parent

It would make me cry.

14:07.48

Alexis Parent

Oh my gosh soccer in the fall and then track indoor track in the winter and indoor soccer and then outdoor track in the spring.

14:11.10

Abbie Attwood

Ah.

14:17.62

Abbie Attwood

So did you ever run cross-country during high school?

14:21.13

Alexis Parent

I think for 1 year but it was kind of traumatic. I didn't like it.

14:25.44

Abbie Attwood

Okay, I'm learning things all right? So track you start getting into track all right big conversation that you and I have had over the years is how disordered eating and eating disorders show up in female athletes but specifically runners like.

14:29.91

Alexis Parent

Yes.

14:45.44

Abbie Attwood

Just because that's been your experience Obviously that was a big part of my own experience. and disordered eating and eating disorders. Everyone, any athlete is at a higher risk for getting that we know that from the research. Running has its own specific brand

right? I think there's a lot of pressure on weight and aesthetic and quote unquote leanness about when it comes to like performance and then there's just this whole picture out there of what the runner's body is quote unquote supposed to look like so there's all this way that the way that this shows up I Digress. And want to talk about this so bring us to like high school time you're running track. How does this Stuff. How do you now look back and start to see how this stuff started showing up for you. This idea.

15:35.55

Alexis Parent

I've been really fortunate to have teammates who have had really really good relationships with food and I think that made me feel a lot better. About what I was eating but then also a lot of my teammates have been very very small. They looked like distant runners quote unquote yeah.

16:00.91

Abbie Attwood

Ah.

16:03.73

Abbie Attwood

Air quote. Yeah, don't forget I can see you but no one else can see you just like thrown quotes up. Yeah, unfortunately you have to say a quote which people are so sick of me saying what you got to say.

16:17.10

Alexis Parent

Yeah, Andrew but , and I think that made me feel more self-conscious about my body because I was also. Running well for my team and then I would reflect on my body as like if I look like this I will run better.

16:38.44

Abbie Attwood

So thinking that so what I'm hearing you say is like if I can have a certain body type then it will improve my running performance.

16:51.00

Alexis Parent

Yeah, and then I think also in high school I had a lot of anxiety about running because I was running well and then my coaches wanted me. To keep running well and then that made me very anxious which made food kind of this weird like control thing I think , yeah.

17:17.30

Abbie Attwood

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17:20.57

Abbie Attwood

So Having pressure from your coaches about performance and expectations kind of once you start running well like that then the expectation is like oh she's going to keep running really well and she's going to you know, keep getting better and so how did that you said it. Created this strange relationship with food, a control controlling kind of relationship. Did it feel volatile? Did it feel like that? How did you do? How did you and food become kind of messy?

17:56.56

Alexis Parent

Well I think there's like 2 versions because at first like the first half of high school and like probably part of middle school I was just so anxious all the time because my sister and I were running really well and we.

18:13.92

Alexis Parent

Got put on the varsity high school team so we were going to like the state meets and stuff and we were in middle school and that made me so Anxious. So Just the act of eating became really hard for me to do like leading up to. Like racing and stuff like that just because my stomach felt.

18:31.58

Abbie Attwood

Okay, so digestion it was just hard to eat in general. Yeah, the nerves.

18:35.33

Alexis Parent

Yes, yes, and then I think later on it became something where I was like oh if there's all these different pressures going on in my life and then if I have. I have the opportunity to control this one thing which is food and then maybe it'll make all these other pressures just like alleviate or start to go away or like I'll be able to perform better like and then it'll lead to like all these better things. , and then.

19:13.80

Alexis Parent

So that led to me controlling food.

19:14.50

Abbie Attwood

So not just it wasn't even just about your body. It was gaining a sense of control overall with sports. Were there other things that you feel like were going on at that time that kind of led to this too.

19:32.13

Alexis Parent

Yeah, there is , like some family situations going on where I felt like I didn't have any control over and then there was.

19:46.78

Alexis Parent

A high school coach who verbally didn't treat me and one of my teammates right? and then that didn't make me feel great and I didn't have any control over that because he was an adult.

20:04.30

Abbie Attwood

Yeah, it's no, you're naming something really. I know that everybody can relate to Lex which is that at the time this control over food feels like a way to gain some safety and otherwise.

20:04.63

Alexis Parent

So yeah.

20:21.98

Abbie Attwood

What feels really unsafe like an unsafe home environment, unsafe coaching environment, unsafe your body can feel really unsafe, especially at that age like going through hormonal changes and then it starts to feel like. I'm curious if this resonates with you but like you start to kind of almost get disconnected from your body as an athlete in the sense that it becomes this like tool for performance and value and worth and even I'm wondering for you knowing you like school in the future like college and. Because like you know, maybe getting a scholarship or all of that for running.

20:58.24

Alexis Parent

Yeah, definitely it was just I also felt like I could use it as a way to escape. Yeah.

21:06.80

Abbie Attwood

Yeah, what did that look like at first when you think about like a way to escape and a way to control when you yeah think about like the very early stages of everything because I think it's so it's such a messy process. It's so.

21:16.43

Alexis Parent

Ah, like.

21:23.70

Abbie Attwood

It sneaks up on you right? like it's insidious. It starts often as I just want to eat healthy right? Like that's I always say the phrase that launched a million eating disorders like just so

innocent I just want to eat healthy. Do you remember the very beginnings of it like now looking back. Just.

21:37.64

Alexis Parent

I Do actually.

21:41.80

Abbie Attwood

Think of people listening or like even parents listening who are thinking about like oh God What? what were the signs. What do you wish someone had known or you had known.

21:52.33

Alexis Parent

, so for me. Ah, so I got injured from running. yes I had key issues and I had to take a few months off and instead of running I would bike all the time.

21:55.59

Abbie Attwood

Like right? yeah.

22:06.94

Abbie Attwood

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22:09.10

Alexis Parent

On top of that it was summer, and I didn't particularly want to be home so I would work like 40 hour weeks or over at this farm stand, and I was on my feet all day and then. I would wake up super early at like 4 or 5 just so I could bike before work and I'd get home at like 7 or 8 , but then also start to work at a farm stand if there were all these new vegetables and things around me and.

22:44.45

Alexis Parent

I didn't really love vegetables before but I was like okay, let's start trying all these new things which was great at first like I started to like vegetables but then over the course of three months like I started to dig myself deeper and deeper into this hole when I had no idea.

22:49.60

Abbie Attwood

Mother.

23:04.80

Alexis Parent

, because I'd be working all the time and then like me starting air quotes, starting to eat all these vegetables was just becoming me eating these vegetables or just not enough for.

23:14.75

Abbie Attwood

I'm not much else.

23:18.10

Alexis Parent

Training in the morning and then working on my feet all day and then just coming home. Absolutely exhausted. , yeah, that's how it started.

23:27.80

Abbie Attwood

When you think about that does it feel like so does that go back to the theme of control. Do you think at that point yet or was that yeah, what do you think?

23:38.93

Alexis Parent

Yeah I was so rigid on my schedule like including Rigid I would do the same exact thing every single day I'd wake up at the same exact time I'd bike for the same amount of time I'd go to work for the same exact shift.

23:46.49

Abbie Attwood

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23:56.79

Alexis Parent

You do the same exact thing at work when you come home. Go to bed do that every single day for three months so yes Richard

24:06.73

Abbie Attwood

Yeah, oh I'm so glad you brought this up. Okay, first of all, well you and I've talked about this a lot but we're very similar in how this stuff started and I think rigidity in that sense of like trying to just be really in control of everything right is. Often a way we try to manage anxiety and fear and like and I think that in of itself is such a sign such a red flag that something's going wrong, especially when it starts when that rigidity includes some way of eating or some way of exercising that's all mixed up and all that.

24:39.23

Alexis Parent

Yeah, definitely.

24:41.54

Abbie Attwood

Did anyone say anything at first did anyone notice did you notice like did you have the awareness at that time.

24:49.47

Alexis Parent

I think I noticed that before the behaviors got really bad like my body composition was changing and like at first I felt stronger and like I felt healthier like I thought I was doing all these great things.

25:00.49

Abbie Attwood

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25:06.56

Alexis Parent

And then on top of that people from my family were giving me compliments. I was like this. This must be great like I am doing a good thing. .

25:12.22

Abbie Attwood

There It is yeah the reinforcements tell us more about the compliments So like , complimenting your body complimenting your food choices. What was it?

25:24.71

Alexis Parent

Both actually so well I have brothers and they would always make fun of what I look like or just like a joke. They'd be like oh you're fat or like whatever just being Brothers and I think like.

25:39.67

Abbie Attwood

Yeah. Of course.

25:44.17

Alexis Parent

I'd laugh, but that would get to me. and like once or twice maybe my dad did it or like people at school would comment on my body and like maybe it was joking but it got to me. , so and then when my parents and people in my family would give me these compliments I was like.

25:49.57

Abbie Attwood

Yeah.

26:02.40

Alexis Parent

Like oh like you look great like you look so healthy like you look like you're getting so strong like that made me feel good and then before the summer I barely ate vegetables , hated them and then they'd compliment my food like oh you're eating all these like great things now like.

26:20.59

Abbie Attwood

"You're so healthy." The morality, right? like that virtue associated with it. This is why compliments are so dangerous, right? Like no matter what.

26:21.93

Alexis Parent

You're so healthy like you're trying all these vegetables like look at you. So great.

26:38.39

Abbie Attwood

Commenting on somebody's body. It is never going to be a good thing like no matter what because we never know we never know what's going on with someone when their body changes B if we comment on someone's body we are telling them that we are noticing their body and like.

26:45.95

Alexis Parent

No no.

26:56.91

Abbie Attwood

Watching it right? So then you just know then you just are reminded that you're being objectified all the time and see you could just be complimenting someone who's falling deeper and deeper into an eating disorder and you're just.

27:13.15

Abbie Attwood

Inadvertently, you don't mean to be doing what you're doing but by complimenting their body your end behaviors you're saying keep going keep doing what you're doing.

27:18.11

Alexis Parent

Yeah, adding fuel to the fire.

27:23.40

Abbie Attwood

I Think you had an experience like many do and I did where eventually those compliments fade right? They fade So okay, so.

27:31.34

Alexis Parent

Hey.

27:38.82

Abbie Attwood

We're kind of at this place where you started eating quote unquote "healthier," you are being extremely rigid, people are complimenting you complimenting you're eating complimenting your body people aren't making fun of your body anymore. The absence of those negative comments. .

27:52.29

Alexis Parent

This.

27:58.51

Abbie Attwood

Your performance in running is at this point going. Well.

28:04.83

Alexis Parent

, well I was biking like I wasn't right? Yes, but right before then it was going really really well.

28:05.29

Abbie Attwood

Oh yeah, so you were injured, still okay.

28:13.92

Abbie Attwood

Okay, so did the injury happen while you were so while you had already started engaging in some of this like Rigid yeah.

28:24.49

Alexis Parent

Yeah, the injury happened like that spring winter ish. Yeah, and then I just kept coming.

28:30.25

Abbie Attwood

, and you just kept going. Okay so you named something that I just want to highlight which is like injuries in athletes can be a gateway to disordered eating to try to seek control in those times of like not training right? and. Because you fear your body changing if you're an athlete and your identity has been so wrapped up in your body then you're injured and you can't train and you can't participate and you can't do all these Rigid training programs that you are used to. Can be a huge trigger for disordered eating behaviors or obsessive exercising if like you're obsessively cross training. so I just wanted to highlight that like anyone listening no

matter what age you are I see this happen all the time. Definitely happened to me. So I think that's a really important one. So We've got rigid.

29:09.00

Alexis Parent

Definitely.

29:20.56

Abbie Attwood

Schedule Rigid eating , kind of the injury is happening and then what's what's happened what happens from there.

29:31.18

Alexis Parent

So I think after the summer it went downhill very very fast. So this is when the pandemic happened and school was all over the place. Sometimes we were there, sometimes we weren't that just.

29:40.28

Abbie Attwood

Yeah, yeah.

29:48.70

Alexis Parent

Piled onto my anxiety because you never knew what was going to happen and then gosh I think this cross country season got canceled or socrate season got canceled. I was still working a lot. But. And I was slowly allowed to run. But I just wasn't eating enough at all. from the start of the summer like into the fall it just kept like cutting and then eventually like you started to physically notice. It.

30:24.91

Abbie Attwood

Oh.

30:27.37

Alexis Parent

And eventually my parents realized that like oh like this hasn't been a good thing. .

30:33.73

Abbie Attwood

What they once thought was healthy. They now saw it as dangerous.

30:40.65

Alexis Parent

Yeah, once they physically saw it. , yeah.

30:46.21

Abbie Attwood

Okay I have so many things to say. So I've had 2 folks on the podcast before, Shira Rosenbluth and Sharon Maxwell, 2 friends of mine, who've talked about what it's been like to be in recovery from anorexia in a fat body.

31:04.40

Abbie Attwood

And how when you're in a larger body like that You don't get down to a weight often where people show this kind of concern right? It's not like an after school special emaciated body. So if we don't start to see eating disorders as a collection of like behaviors and mindset.

31:04.70

Alexis Parent

, there is.

31:22.83

Abbie Attwood

Issues right? like mental and emotional issues and we only characterize them based on what somebody looks like then we're never going to catch them early enough even in people who are in small bodies and B we're not going to be diagnosing them properly in people who aren't who don't have thin privilege.

31:37.31

Alexis Parent

Exactly.

31:39.76

Abbie Attwood

Your behaviors and your mindset around food and exercise like it was the same like I mean of course it gets worse over time usually but like it's not like you weren't struggling before your parents and and everyone noticed because your body got small right? Does that make sense?

31:48.90

Alexis Parent

Yeah, yeah, if yeah, if it physically remained in the same body then I probably would have gone on. No one would have noticed and done anything. Yeah.

32:02.29

Abbie Attwood

Right? Exactly a good way of saying it? Yeah like it was had you not gotten down to a weight that was quote unquote concerning for everybody, you still would have been struggling just as much right? Okay so how does it go?

32:14.46

Alexis Parent

Yeah, yeah.

32:21.95

Abbie Attwood

How does the intervention happen?

32:24.61

Alexis Parent

So I think my mom tried to talk to me first. She brought up all the concerning things like how she was worried about all these other things. I told her I was fine.

32:38.83

Alexis Parent

She brought me to our doctor. A little bit later. , which yeah, , it didn't go Well I was so mad I was just so mad I was so defensive.

32:51.63

Abbie Attwood

Didn't go well.

32:58.55

Alexis Parent

I think they tried to get me to see a Dietician or a nutritionist or something , which helped in terms of someone to talk to about it but didn't necessarily stop the behaviors I think.

33:13.39

Abbie Attwood

Did you see someone originally at this point? Okay pandemic. Ah.

33:18.28

Alexis Parent

I think for like a few weeks maybe but it was also a pandemic which made it so hard and then my parents felt like they were on top of me all the time which just made the behaviors so much harder to, combat I think because it felt like there was just someone staring at me all the time and I just felt so uncomfortable. , so I think a month or two later. I wasn't getting any better.

33:39.98

Abbie Attwood

, yeah, yeah.

33:56.21

Alexis Parent

Getting to a really really concerning place and , my parents put me in treatment because it was the pandemic I was in php so partial hospitalization but it was a pandemic Thank God So I. Didn't have to go in to where the location was , it was all virtual. , which also didn't help. So it was.

34:23.31

Abbie Attwood

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34:35.54

Alexis Parent

, so it was virtual. So , all day I would wake up and I would sit in this program and meet with different groups and therapists and then our lead doctor. .

34:53.10

Alexis Parent

Would come in and talk to all of us and I was all virtual and I was all day long and my siblings would get to go to school. and I fought with my parents. They wanted me to just.

34:54.14

Abbie Attwood

This is all virtual so you are sitting like in your bedroom or something all day doing this.

35:12.26

Alexis Parent

Stop school, because mentally I wasn't in a great place. They wanted me to stop school. My teacher said it would be fine if I stop school but this was my senior year and I just didn't stop school. That was such a helpful distraction that just made the whole thing a lot better. But , so I was in this program for I think it was like 8 or 10 n weeks but I wasn't allowed outside. .

35:45.27

Alexis Parent

I was in my room all day. My parents I had no control over anything which is hard because I was very independent and my parents. Yeah , my parents would have to make all my food.

35:50.38

Abbie Attwood

Yeah, you were very much like a parentified child for sure.

36:01.91

Alexis Parent

They would take my vitals even though they weren't qualified to do so and that felt like a huge violation of my privacy. I just felt so uncomfortable all the time I had no privacy in my room. It was just a very uncomfortable situation. It was also very numbers focused.

36:25.17

Abbie Attwood
I know I know it was.

36:36.46
Abbie Attwood
Yeah.

36:38.27
Alexis Parent
, and whatever foods I was okay with eating before that I was terrified of everything when I joined the program I was so so scared of anything that was put in front of me.

36:56.39
Abbie Attwood
Because of the way that it was presented and you're saying like even if you had been okay with it before the program once they started forcing it on you. It became.

36:57.46
Alexis Parent
, yes.

37:04.90
Alexis Parent
Yeah, suddenly I'm terrified of everything , the doctor was very she would use rude comments and like tactics to try and like. Force you into thinking certain ways. She made me feel so bad about myself and like I was, I put myself in this situation. But then it was making me a burden on my entire family like I wasn't worth being there. , she told me that my parents were going to send me away all the time that I was going to die. that I wasn't going to run again and it was just terrifying I was so scared I remember not sleeping . Because I would just be panicking because I'd know I'd have to get up at like 6 or 7 in the morning and restart the entire day doing the same thing.

38:08.36
Abbie Attwood
Yeah.

38:14.77
Alexis Parent
New.

38:14.99
Abbie Attwood
It's awful. Lex you're not alone either like there are a lot of treatment centers that just aren't aren't doing it right? It's not safe. It's wrong to use fear tactics or use scare tactics. There's an episode I'll link in the show notes that I did with , really amazing. , psychologist Dr. Colleen Reichmann and she talk about some of these types of scare tactics and how damaging they

are in treatment. Settings so this obviously is all to say that this did not help and in fact, made things worse. Yeah I met you not long after that right?

39:05.23

Alexis Parent

, , yes thank god I turned 18 so my parents had no control over my medical decisions anymore. , so I signed myself out.

39:09.24

Abbie Attwood

Do you remember?

39:22.52

Alexis Parent

Treatment. , it was very against what everyone said but I think it saved my life. , and then after that I knew I needed help still.

39:30.28

Abbie Attwood

I agree.

39:37.25

Alexis Parent

And I reached out to so many dieticians and therapists and so many of them rejected me and they were like , no, we can't take you on like you're either too much of a risk or like. We just don't have room because it was all the pandemic. So a lot of people were having problems. , and then I think I found you over Instagram actually and I reached out to you and yeah you said yes and we had a little chat and hm.

40:07.81

Abbie Attwood

Yeah, your mom came.

40:12.53

Alexis Parent

And you know he just stuck you stuck? Yeah, then you took a risk and you helped save my life. So.

40:15.20

Abbie Attwood

I Stuck Ah oh gosh.

40:22.94

Abbie Attwood

And never felt like a risk so you told me when we were talking about doing this episode 1 of the things you said that you thought might be important to talk about was in terms of your

own recovery was like what you called. Having a safe space to recover. I'd love you to talk more about that. I'd love you to tell me what that means to you, what it meant then what it means now how it's helped you and like what are all the different spaces that have been safe.

40:42.95

Alexis Parent

Yes.

40:59.32

Abbie Attwood

And this process for you.

41:02.29

Alexis Parent

So I think this is like my senior year of high school so I was at my house. and because of everything that happened there like with treatment and just.

41:16.64

Alexis Parent

Everything I just felt so unsafe I felt so uncomfortable in my own home. , so eating was still really hard. Recovering was still very hard. It got better once I met you but it was still very difficult for me.

41:32.50

Alexis Parent

To eat certain things and just like to have a better mindset because I was so stuck in what had happened? But then I graduated high school.

41:39.62

Abbie Attwood

And at home. Yeah.

41:49.30

Abbie Attwood

Which you're skirting over as if it wasn't this big deal but this was like a huge deliberation on your treatment team like with me and your therapist and doctor and I just want to say for the record very clearly that you were right.

41:49.12

Alexis Parent

And I went to college. .

42:04.20

Abbie Attwood

And you fought for yourself in this situation because there was a lot of fear about sending you to college and thinking like is she going to be okay and you knew in your gut. What did you know like why did you think that that was the right choice?

42:18.79

Alexis Parent

I knew I felt so unsafe in my own home I didn't think I could stay there for another semester watch my siblings go away. 1 of them who's my sister and she was also like my very safe place like she's my favorite person and her yes and her going away and leaving me there still feeling so unsafe but without a lifeline because she was my lifeline when I was in treatment. She was the only one who.

42:37.10

Abbie Attwood

This is your triplet sister. Yeah.

42:52.70

Alexis Parent

Believed me for who I was not that it was just quote unquote my eating disorder voice taking me over. so I fought to go to college because I saw that as an escape and as an opportunity for that to be.

42:57.22

Abbie Attwood

I Want to come back to that in a little bit.

43:12.52

Alexis Parent

A place that I could start over and I didn't have to feel unsafe.

43:16.84

Abbie Attwood

Yeah, and that was key like believing you and trusting you that like it really was the environment that was both very much. 1 of the main driving forces into the eating disorder in the first place then also perpetuated it. This isn't like to cast blame on anybody but to say like for you that environment had given rise to this need for.

43:38.90

Alexis Parent

Me definitely.

43:50.65

Abbie Attwood

Control and safety and all of these things and so to stay there and try to recover in that exact same space. You knew.

43:59.27

Alexis Parent

Yeah I knew it wouldn't have happened or B it would have taken me so long I would have missed out on so much more of my life.

44:09.64

Abbie Attwood

Were you scared now that we're talking now because we would talk constantly at this time and making this decision now like with a lot of clarity like did you have any doubt. Yeah.

44:22.81

Alexis Parent

Oh I did. I was terrified , to be honest I considered it a lot to just not go because I thought I would have a really hard time with change. , yes, so.

44:35.15

Abbie Attwood

You're introverted.

44:38.25

Alexis Parent

And I know college can be so hard just that change from living at home to being so far away and all that so I was terrified but I also knew like yeah, any place but the place I was in was probably going to be better.

44:48.78

Abbie Attwood

It was your chance.

44:56.24

Abbie Attwood

Yeah, So one of my one at that time One of the things you and I talked a lot about was like Okay, what are you going to do when you have full control over because the the thing with disordered eating the way that it can play out in college is that suddenly no one is. Keeping track of you So A lot of people alike develop disordered eating in college when they're away from home and then they're exposed to more diet culture especially like just as you age and you're around different people so we had to talk about like Okay, how are we gonna do this in a way that like you're you're staying accountable.

45:23.55

Alexis Parent

This is.

45:32.20

Abbie Attwood

You know? , so maybe there's somebody listening who's in this stage of recovery who's really actively trying to make peace with food and start to like to eat foods that they used to fear. What are the things that helped you a lot and when you think about it?

45:33.15

Alexis Parent
, in it.

45:50.18

Abbie Attwood

Kind of like when you first got to college and the dining hall and what are some things they yeah what would you say like are some lifelines for you with food that helped.

46:02.68

Alexis Parent

, well going into college I was really scared and I was scared to like the accountability because like I had you but like you were far away. , but I think.

46:17.61

Alexis Parent

Surrounding yourself with people who do have good relationships with food and like you can ask to go to the dining hall with you or like who will just sit with you like when you eat and just like go and try new things like.. It's so fun and I know it can be so scary but it's like yeah, , but also for me not being home gave me the opportunity to try new things but without having a bad experience tied to them.

46:37.85

Abbie Attwood

I Love this.

46:51.62

Alexis Parent

Like to try the same things but without that experience tied to them like you can make it so much fun like go on a little picnic or like anything.

46:51.63

Abbie Attwood

.

47:02.98

Abbie Attwood

Yeah, you have to change the environment often to change the way that your nervous system is responding right? like you can't a lot of times. It's just doing the same thing over and over again if you're in the same environment trying to try the same thing Again. You have to get yourself in a different space. . Yeah I know I remember talking a lot about eating with other people making sure that you have people around you that don't like dieting or having

disordered eating behaviors too right? like that can be a huge detractor and recovery is like if you're surrounded by people who have shitty relationships with food. the thing that you said.

47:35.22

Alexis Parent
Sponsor.

47:39.90

Abbie Attwood
What did you say about trying new foods? gosh where were you saying oh like in different ways. , okay am I remembering correctly that bagels were something that totally traumatized you in treatment.

47:56.14

Alexis Parent
Yes, I could not, I've had so many bad experiences at my house. My family I've had a bagel thrown at me 1 time and I just couldn't.

47:57.10

Abbie Attwood
I Remember yeah.

48:08.55

Abbie Attwood
Ah, yeah, so we waited on that one. So yeah, this is important, like the importance of going at your own pace. Yes, say yeah and like.

48:12.18

Alexis Parent
Once.

48:16.82

Alexis Parent
Yes, and doing it when you feel safe and with people you feel with.

48:25.28

Abbie Attwood
The difference between feeling safe is that you can feel discomfort even while being safe but it's not okay to feel uncomfortable and unsafe right? But if you can cultivate a safe environment then you're better able to tolerate it.

48:34.50

Alexis Parent
Yes.

48:44.67

Alexis Parent

Yes, and then like once you get over that step. You realize oh it's It's not so bad like this is all in my head and then it just gets easier. It gets so much easier.

48:44.87

Abbie Attwood

The discomfort of trying this food.

48:53.60

Abbie Attwood

Yeah, it's the exposure. , let's talk about your number 1 fear food at that time fear food category. What is it? Yeah no, no, no just category.

49:07.29

Alexis Parent

At that time it was Bagels. Cake. Oh oh carbs? yeah.

49:15.24

Abbie Attwood

Carbs? Yeah, ah this was probably like what every time we met. It was a topic of conversation. Let's talk about carbs all right? What do you have to say to that version of you about carbs like what did you do?

49:33.38

Abbie Attwood

What were some things that helped you get over that fear because you are not alone in that fear like that is the number one food group that's demonized these days and folks have a really hard time feeling safe eating carbs again and so you struggled with that for a long time and we took tiny tiny tiny baby steps. Tell me about that. How do you think you developed some tolerance for that discomfort and got over the fear?

50:00.56

Alexis Parent

I think by just starting to incorporate them in , but like with different groups because you would challenge me all the time to do something I was so uncomfortable with and I'd be like okay Abby and then I would do it.

50:17.61

Alexis Parent

And then I would text you and would be like look at this this slice of pizza I one yes pizza and I like love pizza now I love it literally cooked it yeah literally cooked it every single day over the summer

50:21.57

Abbie Attwood

Yeah, they knew it was the pizza I Knew you're going to say pizza I got so many pizza texts.

50:30.60

Abbie Attwood

It's probably your favorite food I think now, right?

50:36.34

Alexis Parent

A week straight? , but I think just trying to do it, just doing it like it's gonna be scary, but just do it. But then afterwards yup afterwards you realize it's like nothing changed like I'm fine. I'm not dying.

50:41.89

Abbie Attwood

Like do it scared. Do it scared.

50:56.59

Alexis Parent

, like my body's the same as it just was 10 minutes ago like you're fine, but it's so.

50:57.97

Abbie Attwood

That's exactly it. Yeah yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, there's ah, there's a lot of there's obviously a fear of waking and recovery right? like because of anti-fatness and diet culture like everyone is scared. Their bodies are changing and so I do think that's a good reminder for everyone. So like these small steps you create safety for yourself every time you take them and you remind yourself like my body is still here I am still here. Everything is still okay, like to your point in the last.

51:28.10

Alexis Parent

The.

51:31.96

Abbie Attwood

Minute that it took me to like eating that bite of food like nothing has changed I'm fine like I'm good right? The sun rises.

51:34.49

Alexis Parent

And then yes and then I think too at a point I realized that all the experiences I was getting were so much more than the fear I was experiencing or. All the panicked thoughts about what that was going to do to me? , like I was starting to have all these wonderful experiences in college. I was meeting all these people I Really really cared about. I was learning how to be happy again and all of that trend. What I thought about food or I wasn't going to let food take all these wonderful things away from me again.

52:20.88

Abbie Attwood

I just wrote that down. I wonder if that's going to be the title of this episode learning to be happy again. That was I literally feel like I have watched you become happy again like over the last three years I have I've watched you like you glow now when I see you.

52:24.75

Alexis Parent

Faint.

52:32.92

Alexis Parent

Mr. Have started. That.

52:40.61

Abbie Attwood

You do you have this energy can you I think this is really awesome. Awesome place to like kind of wrap up which is like what does that mean like when you think about what an eating disorder stole from you. What do you think of it?

52:58.99

Alexis Parent

, gosh it literally left me like a shell. I lost so many of my friends I lost the trust people had in me. I lost running.

53:15.91

Alexis Parent

I Lost my independence , all of that and all because I just wanted to eat healthy quote unquote like control my food like get better at all these things and.

53:33.77

Alexis Parent

Then I realized that was the source of what was making me so unhappy and now it makes me sad to think about because I wasted that time but I also learned so much from it. , and now I

53:51.57

Alexis Parent

Created this wonderful life for myself and I'm so happy and grateful for where I'm at and I've met all these wonderful people who I love and I've just done so many things I wouldn't have been able to do if I was still stuck. , yeah.

54:05.00

Abbie Attwood

Relax I think one of the things you just said is something I resonate with. I mean I resonate with everything you just said. But first of all like I recall feeling I look back and I look at myself

as like a shell of who I was who I am. And I have a lot of grief and regret over lost time, lost relationships, lost life like just life that I missed out on and you mentioned that and in the same breath. You mentioned what it gave you though and I think that's. Such a beautiful thing that if we can take our regrets and recognize that we only have regrets because it means that we changed and we grew up, like if we never examine our life and we never heal then we never regret what we did right? like if. We can't right, like our regrets are like a sign that we healed right? Because you're now this person who can look back and say shit you know, but you can't feel that way when you're in it. So there's this silver lining not not nothing toxically positive about this but more like oh.

55:20.49

Abbie Attwood

There are things that there's meaning that came from this.

55:22.49

Alexis Parent

Yes, definitely and I think also it makes me more grateful for what I have but then it also makes me more conscious when other people are struggling too and then like I think. I'm more aware and then I can see it and I'm like oh like I'm here if you need help yeah.

55:51.90

Abbie Attwood

Ok so what does recovery mean to you then because I think this is really complicated. Some people say they believe in full recovery. Some people don't. I think it really all just comes down to how you define it and the identities that you hold in the world like if you hold marginalized identities. It's harder to achieve some picture perfect version of recovery. But what does it mean to you to feel? Where you are now.

56:28.29

Alexis Parent

I think you've said it before but I think you will always be in recovery, but the thoughts are going to be less loud. And then you can choose how you act on those thoughts. because I definitely think for me sometimes thoughts will come up when I'm having a hard time or like I know when I was injured they came up but I think it's choosing if you act on them or not. That makes it if you're in recovery or not you know.

57:06.40

Abbie Attwood

Choosing Kindness right? like it's choosing to be on your own side almost I think a lot of it is like just I think I think it's It's like this ease and peace and calm and flexibility with food and movement.

57:10.74

Alexis Parent

This is.

57:23.82

Abbie Attwood

And your body right? like it's like a lack of fear around all those things and to your point it doesn't mean that through being recovered or recovering that like there's. Never going to be a thought again like we live in this world. Of course there's going to be a thought that surrounds us all the time right? There's tons of people who have not done work on their relationship with food and body. They're going to say things about diet culture in the media. It's all over until you know whether you're on Tiktok or watching a movie where they're talking about something fat phobic like it's everywhere. So of course like we're emotional people. We're gonna feel things and it's knowing about where your brain tends to go in times of fear and catching that right and being like oh wait a second. No this. Isn't the path for us right? like this doesn't actually solve any of our problems like it's kind of this defunct like default of our brain to maybe go and think about that thing and then it's our job to say and no no, no no that's not that's not what we do.

58:31.99

Alexis Parent

List.

58:34.66

Abbie Attwood

, but it is a process and it takes a long, a really long time for most people you know.

58:42.40

Alexis Parent

Yeah, definitely and I think it's like you have like I've still had people make comments about what I eat and what I look like and then sometimes that'll bring in a thought or tube then I have to sit for a second acknowledge it and realize that.

58:53.44

Abbie Attwood

I love it.

59:00.61

Alexis Parent

Doesn't have any control over what I'm going to do like that. Yeah.

59:05.40

Abbie Attwood

Yeah, what other people do does not impact you in that way like what they eat doesn't have to impact what you eat right? Like how they feel about their body doesn't have to be how you feel about your body and you're still like and so you're a few years into this. . And you're still in process. What are you? What are you thinking? Okay so coming back to the full plate analogy. What's something? What's like 1 what's like the next step. What do you like in all of this?

59:40.11

Abbie Attwood

What do you think? Yeah yeah, is there something that comes to mind? Okay.

59:44.71

Alexis Parent

I like recovery. yes, like food wise, everything's like Greatpe it's so good. , but I think being a collegian athlete and being a runner. .

01:00:02.47

Alexis Parent

And I was injured for a few months and on crutches so not doing any exercise for a while so getting used to the body changes as I grow older and realizing that those are okay that those are supposed to happen. Those do not determine.

01:00:12.77

Abbie Attwood

Are.

01:00:22.29

Alexis Parent

How fast I'm going to be. Those don't determine if people love me or not. That doesn't determine what I like to change my eating like no like your body is going to do what it wants to do. But I think I'm just getting used to that. I'm working on it.

01:00:41.12

Abbie Attwood

Ah, okay, that was everything because yeah bodies are going to change. That's like maybe 1 of the very few guarantees in life that our body is going to change forever and ever over and over again. This is it.

01:00:58.20

Abbie Attwood

And it's such a violent thing if you ask me that we're taught the opposite, like that we're taught that it shouldn't change because then we're stuck in shame and fear when it does inevitably happen because of course it's going to change you know.

01:01:05.55

Alexis Parent

Over.

01:01:13.83

Alexis Parent

Exactly.

01:01:17.30

Abbie Attwood

I Love that getting used to that, like sitting knowing that it is gonna be okay, all right? So last question and then we're gonna go because I'm just you know you know I could talk to you forever.

01:01:18.74

Alexis Parent

, because it's gonna be okay.

01:01:33.32

Alexis Parent

Even.

01:01:35.83

Abbie Attwood

Ok, , a piece of advice if someone is in the messy middle of all of this.

01:01:46.62

Alexis Parent

okay I've 2 I think over the years I've learned how important it is to advocate for yourself. I think you.

01:01:49.10

Abbie Attwood

Okay, 2 pieces of it. I love it.

01:01:59.56

Abbie Attwood

.

01:02:02.58

Alexis Parent

No deep down what's going to be best for you and just trusting where you're going. and then the second one is finding.

01:02:21.94

Alexis Parent

Finding people you love and you trust and that you can talk to and share whatever is going on in your head. I think that makes a big difference when you find people who you feel safe with and you can trust with your thoughts and voice them because then they can help you. Through that process and also like I don't know like you've told me before like do the hard thing like you're gonna be okay, do the hard thing like it's gonna be okay I think that's helped me a lot.

01:02:55.79

Abbie Attwood

Yeah, you're gonna make it through Well you just drop some major pearls of wisdom on me on everyone. How do you feel? Podcast complete.

01:02:58.59

Alexis Parent

Yeah.

01:03:04.96

Alexis Parent

And let's get the screens. So fun. Is it?

01:03:13.77

Abbie Attwood

He did it Oh my God Okay, so the pumpkin ice cream was a success. , we're going to have to. We're going to talk more about pizza another time but I'm glad both of those things are back in your life.

01:03:30.70

Alexis Parent

Oh yes.

01:03:32.60

Abbie Attwood

Favorite pizza. Oh favorite, you got to tell us what's your favorite like perfect perfect pizza when you if you could like tell your favorite pizza restaurant. The exact kind of concoction. What is it?

01:03:45.52

Alexis Parent

Oh my gosh. Okay I have 2 again. I have two. I have no idea what restaurant this was but authentic. Real New York city pizza never hit so hard. 10 p m here track me and my entire life.

01:03:49.34

Abbie Attwood

She's got 2

01:04:02.49

Alexis Parent

And then the second one would have to be just like straight plain cheese pizza but my boyfriend and I were trying to perfect recipes over the summer so that was every day for a week or two. We made the same exact cheese pizza.

01:04:19.59

Abbie Attwood

Just trying to perfect it with the type of cheese like what were you perfecting the crust the cheese.

01:04:22.30

Alexis Parent

Just the same exact just the plain cheese pizza Crust We went through so many different flowers. So many different types of cheeses but we have different types of sauce. Bottom. Oh.

01:04:37.57

Abbie Attwood

What is your cheese concoction then like what's the dream concoction. Oh it's coming. .

01:04:41.70

Alexis Parent

1 in California Montre Jack Mozzarella and like cheddar with parmesan after you bake it what the Montre Jack is like you know.

01:04:54.66

Abbie Attwood

I love Monterey Jack. I grew up loving that I know it's such a mild cheese but it was my favorite growing up. Ah oh yeah, it's great.

01:04:59.40

Alexis Parent

We had no idea it existed but we thought it was a block. We had no old cheese so we chopped it up and put it on the pizza and it made these perfect gooey globs.

01:05:11.60

Abbie Attwood

I Think your boyfriend has helped in this process too. I think that that opened you up a lot to food, to yourself to just yeah, the sharing that you are talking about is like trusting people with your thoughts and knowing that you're worthy of.

01:05:22.80

Alexis Parent

The soap Pipe. Say.

01:05:30.91

Abbie Attwood

All sorts of things. Love and connection and food as connection right? like you guys have had so many fun food experiences together. Yeah, like.

01:05:39.20

Alexis Parent

He Yeah, that's who I was referring to , like with the bagel thing. He doesn't know it I don't think but he's the first person I ever had a bagel with after years and that was that new experience. That's gonna stick in my head forever because it was wonderful.

01:05:48.35

Abbie Attwood

Yeah, yeah.

01:05:56.38

Alexis Parent

Had a thing about cake for a while. He was the first person I've had cake with in years. I'm going to make him listen to this actually.

01:05:57.95

Abbie Attwood

You did? yeah you better tell him this will you tell him this yeah high Tie. He's been a big part of this. I think that's a good thing for everyone to walk away from. Who in your life. Do you want to trust with all the ways that you're feeling about food and your body and not to expect that they're going to get it and understand it but that they are going to listen and be there and hold space for you and compassion and like be your ally.

01:06:26.32

Alexis Parent

No.

01:06:34.95

Abbie Attwood

Like maybe be your food adventurer with you or you know, , which I think is a great reminder but they also have to have a good relationship with food. I feel really fortunate Jeb has a great relationship with food so that's been a really fun part of our relationship too. So finding that your food person.

01:06:49.93

Alexis Parent

You believe but I love you too.

01:06:51.73

Abbie Attwood

Hey you're the best and you know I love you all right? So that's yeah, that's a rap lex.

01:07:01.31

Alexis Parent

That's rap.