

**(TC: 00:00:00)**

**Hazel: Hello and welcome back to another episode of the FoodMedic podcast. I'm your host, Doctor Hazel. At the time this podcast is going out we are halfway through January and so diet culture messages are at an all time high and I know it can be overwhelming. That said, if you're pursuing specific goals around health and fitness it can be hard to navigate that with clear, non judgemental advice. So, I called in Lucy Mountain to add some nuance to the conversation. Lucy Mountain is an influencer, online coach and podcast host. Through her Instagram she breaks down diet culture and dispels myths surrounding food and fitness. Her app Nobs App is the first anti diet fitness app designed to help her community get strong at home or in the gym without counting calories or toxic messaging. I love this episode because I don't think this type of conversation really happens on Instagram and messaging becomes very black and white, diet camp versus non diet camp with little room to expand and discuss. We also cover things like being a person online, or an influencer, feeling disillusioned by social media and embracing your best life as a single person. So, grab your tea, coffee or maybe it's time for wine, wherever you are in the world, and enjoy. (Advert played 01.19-01.52) I would love to just start by asking you to tell us more about you in your own words who you are and what you do.**

**(TC: 00:02:01)**

Lucy Mountain: Yes, I guess I am a social influencer, content creator, whatever you want to call it and basically I use my page to dispel diet culture. That's what I've been doing for about five years now and then off the back of that I have my Nobs App which is an anti-diet fitness app. So, there's no diet culture messaging, and I launched that in April so it's still a fairly new side of things. And, then in addition to that I also have my own podcast with two of my best friends. What else do I do? I feel like those three things summarise me well.

**(TC: 00:02:44)**

**Hazel: I can't believe it's only been April since you launched Nobs App.**

**(TC: 00:02:47)**

Lucy Mountain: I know, it's one of those things where it's like it feels like ages but it also feels like it's flown by. Yes, the thing with an app, it's so different to selling my old plans because with an app it's like you are on everyday because with the old plans you'd create one and sell it. And, with this it's like it's a live, breathing thing that changes and things happen and you have to like, be completely reactive. But, I love it.

**(TC: 00:03:18)**

**Hazel: That's so good, but I can imagine it's stressful and also, side note I love your Close Friends podcast, it's like my favourite thing to listen to when I'm like, 'I need to switch off from work, I'm going for a walk. I just want to have a girls' chat.' And, that's what it is.**

**(TC: 00:03:34)**

Lucy Mountain: Do you know what? Thank you for saying that, because we are literally like we are actually best friends in real life, we're having a chat and then sometimes I finish recording and I'm like, 'Oh God, what are we even saying? Like, who wants to listen to this?' But, yes, thankfully some people do, so we'll keep doing it until people get sick of it.

(TC: 00:03:56)

**Hazel: Yes, no I'm sure they won't get sick of it, I definitely do recommend a listen. I do recommend it to all my mates as well, even, like, my male mates because I feel like the stuff that you talk about is applicable to everyone. And, yes, sometimes you just need that kind of chat in your life. You don't need something that's a really heavy informative podcast. Although I do learn from it. And so the other thing that you mentioned is that you're, like, an influencer. But, you said influencer, content creator and I've heard you refer to yourself as a person online before. And I thought this would be a really interesting chat to have with you because I'm also a person online and I stumble across the word influencer quite a bit. Because it holds, I guess, negative connotations and, you know, like, if you're at a dinner party and you turn around and you're like, 'I'm an influencer,' people automatically assume that that just means that you, kind of, earn money through showing what you're wearing every day or something along those lines. And, as we both know, you can be an influencer in various ways and do various things. I was wondering how you feel about that term and like, you're a business owner, you're an entrepreneur. Like, you didn't mention those things in your bio and I'm like, you own your own app. Do you think that's a thing that we do as women? Do you think it doesn't matter what gender you are?**

(TC: 00:05:22)

Lucy Mountain: Do you know what? Being completely honest, I am at a point where I don't really care whatever anyone wants to label or call me, or if people want to be derogatory towards whatever I choose to label myself as. I'm kind of at the point now where I just don't care. I think I very much used to reject the term 'influencer' because of the reasoning that you just said, because of the connotations of it being you just selling teeth whitening toothpaste every day on your page and whatever.

(TC: 00:05:57)

**Hazel: Which she doesn't do, FYI.**

(TC: 00:06:02)

Lucy Mountain: I mean, Colgate if you want to hit me up I'm down, but yes, so I think I rejected it and I kind of wanted to be like, 'I'm different, I am so different to all of those other influencers, you know.' So, I would reject it and I'd say content creator, person online, all of those things. I think that was about a year or so ago I was just like, I don't care, like if you want to call me an influencer, fine. I'll accept it, because none of it really matters but I will say, calling myself an entrepreneur or you know, CEO, founder, whatever, I still don't lead with that which is something I probably should work on. I was talking to this girl in the gym the other day and she was asking me what I do and I said and then she was like, 'Oh, you're a businesswoman?' And, I was like, yes, I guess so and it felt a bit uncomfortable so I think as women we struggle to give ourselves titles like 'businesswoman' or 'entrepreneur' because it feels icky. Like, we should always be playing ourselves down a little bit to seem softer and more approachable and unpretentious. But, that is only

because of how we've been conditioned to see those things like it's a very masculine to be. So, yes I mean I don't know. Do you call yourself an entrepreneur?

**(TC: 00:07:25)**

**Hazel: Not really for the same reasons in that like I feel like it holds this weight that I don't feel like I deserve or something. But, it's bizarre because that's what I am at the end of the day and similar to you, like when it comes to influencer, I toyed around with like, maybe I'll put a word in front of it. Like, health-influencer, medical-influencer, and then I'm like, this just sounds so dumb. So, yes like it's interesting because it's difficult when you also wear all of these different hats, so people want you to fit under one hat and identify as one thing and I'm like, well I identify as various things. I'm a doctor, I'm an influencer, I'm a nutritionist, I am a woman. So, why can't I be all of these things and also, what if I just don't want to give myself any label? Like, I run the FoodMedic, that's what I do, and I'm a doctor.**

**(TC: 00:08:24)**

Lucy Mountain: Because you're right, even you saying fitness influencer or health-influencer, that brings connotations of someone who is wearing GymShark every day and doing work outs which is obviously one certain kind of fitness influencer. But, that's not you, so every label has those connotations and I think part of it is also you don't want to box yourself in.

**(TC: 00:08:46)**

**Hazel: No, it's also interesting how things evolved, like you and I started influencing, we started online at a very similar time, a long long time ago. Back in the OG days of IG and at the time you were FashionFitnessFoodie. I got that right, right?**

**(TC: 00:09:04)**

Lucy Mountain: Yes.

**(TC: 00:09:05)**

**Hazel: So, tell us about your journey from when you started as FashionFitnessFoodie, and now you've come back to your own name, Lucy Mountain, but you also have Nobs as a separate page which we'll talk more about. Because, like for people who don't know what Nobs is they're probably like, 'What are you talking about? Like, eggplant emoji?'**

**(TC: 00:09:28)**

Lucy Mountain: It was so funny when I meet someone or work with someone who's an accountant and I have to, like, explain the business name and they're like, 'What?' And, I'm like N-O-B-S, there's no K, and they're like-, I had one accountant who would never say it, he would go N-O-B-S, and I'm like you can just say Nobs, and he just never would. Yes, so I started the classic thing of started posting, influencing wasn't really a thing, didn't really know you could ever make money from it or whatever. It was very much just me wanting to share stuff. (TC 00:10:00) I never actually really used my page that much for-, like I did share some personal stuff and there would be pictures of me, but it was never like, 'This is my health journey.' I, kind of, started it like my first ever post was infographics funnily enough. They are so pixelated when I go back because that's how long ago it was, but, yes, I always, kind of, knew that I wanted to make into some sort of like, platform space rather than just me. And then I changed it to my name, I think it was two years

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ago because of Nobs, because Nobs was growing and the FashionFitnessFoodie felt like a brand name and then I had Nobs and it just felt a bit odd. But, also it felt like, you know when you use an old email address, I was literally like my mid twenties and I'm like, 'Yes I'm the FashionFitnessFoodie' and I was start cringing every time I said it. I can't keep saying this, so yes eventually I was like I'm going to be me and I'm glad I did because saying the word 'Foodie' every time I introduced myself started to become very uncomfortable. That's basically the transition.

**(TC: 00:11:21)**

**Hazel: Amazing, and so tell us more about Nobs and how it's different to other fitness apps.**

(TC: 00:11:29)

Lucy Mountain: Well, basically I saw a space, what I was noticing in the industry was the hardcore old school fitness side where it was calorie counting, weight loss and that was very much the norm and the standard. And, then we started to have more dialogue around anti-diet side of fitness, and I realised there was no actual fitness element or like, product within that space. There were loads of diet plans and fitness apps and whatever for people who wanted to exercise for weight loss and calorie tracking or whatever. But, there was no real fitness app for people that wanted to reject diet culture. Because, I feel like there's this assumption of like if you're anti-diet you don't really care about fitness, or if you're anti-diet you just want to focus on joyful movement and it's all intuitive and you just decide what you want to do on the day, and that's not true. So, what I wanted to do was basically bridge the gap of science based training programmes that train the whole body, not just the glutes, and combine that with the anti-diet culture messaging, and put it together. Then, 2018 we started selling workout plans via like, a third party app and this was with my old business partner and romantic partner. We built these programmes and we started selling them and we had no idea how many people would buy it, and on the first day we launched the first Nobs guide we got a thousand sales in that evening. And, we couldn't believe it, we kept refreshing the sales, and we were just like, 'This is something, this could be something.' So, that then evolves and then it got to the point where I'd taken on the business by myself, so I'd separated with my old partner and I took it on myself, and I was at this point where I was like either I leave the business and I just stop doing it because I felt like I didn't have the confidence to do it. I was very much reliant on him to guide and make me feel like I'm doing a good job. And, I decided in that moment, as soon as we ended the partnership, I was going to do the app and then worked for a year and a half.

Eventually, the app was here but it was like, a long journey. It wasn't just a case of, 'I built an app', like I had to save loads of money to be able to fund it. But, it was always in the plan which was special when it actually happened. When you do something or you reach a goal, it's easy to forget that you had originally been really desperate for that goal but felt like it could never happen. And, then it happens and you're like, 'Oh okay, this is cool.'

**(TC: 00:14:16)**

**Hazel: It is possible.**

(TC: 00:14:20)

Lucy Mountain: Yes. (Adverts played 14.19-15.39) So that's, kind of, the evolution of how it happened, but yes, every day, it's just-, the community we have-, and I would say that my favourite thing of the community

is, just, everyone's sense of humour. Like, when I go into our Facebook group I die every day, because they are just so funny and witty, and we all have, like, the same sense of humour, which I think is really special.

(TC: 00:16:02)

**Hazel: Yes. I feel like you can get that from the snippets that you share on your stories. It just seems like a really nice space, and also, like, very empowering as well, the messages that you share on the app and things like that. And I think, for what you're achieving with Nobs can be a really tricky balance, because online there exists people who are pro-diet and anti-diet and it's a super polarising topic and conversation and people, like, need to fit into one camp or the other, and there's no space for nuance or conversation. And I know that there's a lot of people who, kind of, fall into the middle where they don't want to be part of diet culture but they are afraid to reject it because they want to still look after their health and engage in physical activity. But then they don't want to be seen as someone who-, they don't really know how that is possible. And I guess my question to you is, like, 'How can we navigate that, how can we encourage people that, yes it is okay to want to eat fruit and vegetables and move your body and sleep, and still reject diet culture, and not fall for those fads and gimmicks,' and things like that.**

(TC: 00:17:20)

Lucy Mountain: I think about this all the time. I really do think about this a lot because sometimes it can feel like-, like everything has to be opposite sometimes. It feels like if you are not tracking calories, you have to be fiercely anti-everyone doing that, or if you are deciding that you're not going to focus on weight loss as a goal, that you have to be anti weight loss, full stop. And I remember when I first started learning about diet culture one of the main messages was, 'Intentional weight loss is bad.' And that's wrong. And I fundamentally disagree with that now. But at the time I was, like, 'Yes, yes, that's right.' And I was like, 'Hang on a second, who am I to also speak on anyone else's experience? Who am I to say what's right and wrong with what someone else decides to do with their body?' I can decide the message that I want to share, but that should have no judgement against anyone else that has had a totally different life experience to me and wants to lose weight. So, yes, there are loads of things which I now think about often, and realise that it doesn't necessarily fit this rule book. It, kind of, felt like there was this rule book of what the anti-diet was, but then I sat back and I was, like, 'Who wrote this though? Who decided what was right and what was wrong?' It's hard because if I do a post, for example, on my Instagram talking about ways to get in more vegetables, for example, I would say that that would still be jarring to some people because it feels like the sub-text to that is, 'You shouldn't be having cookies, you should be having more vegetables and that's, better, you know, if you don't do that you're bad.'

Because that's the place we are in at with social media, you see one post, one caption, and that has to completely summarise your thoughts and speak to everyone's own individual context. But it's just one post, that could be one post talking about the importance of vegetables in a sea of posts talking about also being flexible, and also not being restrictive, but people see that one post and they take that and internalise that, and that's a huge problem. So, yes, I mean, it's something that I navigate often, but what I would say to anyone who's feeling stuck between wanting to do, you know, health-promoting stuff but feel like they're betraying the anti-diet community is, number one, you are always in control of whatever you decide to do, no judgement. Number two, not everything is diet culture. I feel like now, especially because I'm in this space more than anything, that constantly it's like, 'That's diet culture, this is diet culture.' You know, (TC

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00:20:00) diet culture, and not everything is diet culture. Eating protein is not diet culture, going to the gym four times a week is not diet culture, following a training plan is not diet culture, so I think we need to be careful about how we band around those phrases. But, you know, I always say, like, 'Saying that it's okay to eat cookies doesn't mean that we shouldn't be eating vegetables, and saying that you need to eat vegetables is not saying that you can't have cookies.' Sometimes it's hard to completely relate every single message at one single time. I don't think it's possible.

So, I would say to people, 'Just be careful when people are looking at a single Instagram post or following a certain influencer, that it is just Instagram and it's not intended to offer you bespoke nutrition advice or any kind of advice, really, that speaks directly to you.' Yes, I've just basically gone on about that, I hope that makes sense.

(TC: 00:20:57)

**Hazel: No, yes. I feel like the only way to, kind of, talk about that is really picking it apart like you have. It's very difficult to, kind of, condense the right way to act in those situations or how we can make that space more inclusive, I'm not really sure but I think apps like Nobs obviously do. And also trying to not have so much black and white thinking, which is difficult when you are online, because people engage with your content if they either completely agree with you, or they completely disagree with you. So, they are there in your comments, like, giving you loads of claps or they're in your comments going, like, 'This is BS, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah.' And, so yes, that's what I feel like is missing from Instagram but longer form content, like this, where we can, like, two people that exist on line that have substantial following, no-one really gets this-, the meaty conversation. You know, this is the meaty conversation that people need to be tapping into. And also thinking about themselves, like, think for yourself. What do you want to align with, what do you feel comfortable with, what are your goals? Because they might be completely different to the people that you are following online. You know, what's important for your health, at the end of the day. And I think people just need to take some of that accountability on when they are scrolling through social media. And, speaking of Instagram, you spoke on how you feel slightly, like, disillusioned, maybe not inspired by social media. Are you still feeling that way?**

(TC: 00:22:31)

Lucy Mountain: I felt better sharing it. That was, like, number one, I was, like, 'Oh I just feel like I've got something off my chest.' Because I have been feeling it for months. I think I just-, I feel very uninspired at the moment. I feel like, it's kind of, like I was saying around people just saying, 'Everything's diet culture,' or throwing phrases around and everyone's sticking to this script of rules without free thinking. And I, kind of, got to this point where I'm bored of these phrases being thrown around all the time. The classic one that I always see is, 'It's okay to not be okay,' and that's true. But that's it, there's nothing else. There's no other information on it, there's no other further nuance or whatever, or explanation as to why. It's like, with social media and trends and stuff, these phrases get created and people just say them. But then they say them so often there's no meaning. And then, for me, I sometimes feel like, are we being helpful or are we just making content for the sake of making content? Like, are content creators at a point where they feel the need to post all the time, so they're just putting out something just to post something, rather than actually having substance. And I think I got into a mindset of just becoming very bored. I don't find Instagram that inspiring

any more. I can't remember the last time I was, like, 'Wow, what an amazing, creative post.' When I go on TikTok I do.

**(TC: 00:24:06)**

**Hazel: Really.**

(TC: 00:24:07)

Lucy Mountain: And I think it's very funny. Yes. I do, because for me TikTok is the only social media that I laugh out loud to. When I'm scrolling Instagram I don't laugh really, but when I'm on on TikTok I'm laughing constantly. So, there's that too. But then I think from my side, as, like, a content creator, I think I'm definitely struggling to keep up with the new way that content is being shared, which is reels and video format. And I've always liked to have my own signature style and that's, you know, with my infographics and whatever, and I feel like the trend now is to not have your own signature style, it's more just copying trends and people re-make your videos. And that's, kind of, like an acceptable thing to do, that's the culture we're in now. So, I know what I need to do to get inspired, I just need to follow some different people and I probably just need to read some books and spend less time online. Do you feel the same, because, you know, a lot of people said they had?

**(TC: 00:25:06)**

**Hazel: Yes, I do. There's so many things that you said there that's really interesting to me. First of all, just to go back on what you said with your signature style. I think you have maintained a signature style and branding all throughout the years, even when you were, like, The Fashion Fitness Foodie, with infographics. And when you were on holidays recently I went onto your page. And I was, like, 'Do you know what, it's so nice to see more of Lucy in her page,' because there was a lot of reels which look like you're doing them in real time and you're not really as constricted as your other work, which is beautiful. And so, for me, I'm, like, loving that. But for you as a content creator you're probably, 'Well I'm not working hard to do that, that's me just sharing my life.' And people actually love that. And I think that's almost the hardest things to share online, because you're being vulnerable and you're, like, opening up a little bit of you. And I know for me, I'm super cagey online in that, like, I've built a brand around myself but I don't share very much personal information because it's a protective mechanism, and people can target that. And, yes, I think that what's really difficult as well is, like, people who have been doing this a long time is Instagram has changed so much. I mean, all we used to be able to do in the beginning was post a photo, and we could put borders on our photos, that was, like-,**

(TC: 00:26:35)

Lucy Mountain: Oh my God, there was-, what was that, like, vignette photo? Also what's so funny is, I swear those filters are still there, I think those settings are still there on Instagram.

**(TC: 00:26:44)**

**Hazel: They are, but who uses them? I feel like my Mum maybe uses them. But Instagram is changing all the time. Obviously we've got all these new, like, video formats and things like that, but within the video formats there's also different things. People engage with different things. Even engagement reels has gone down, because so many people are using them and I'm, like, so are we going to scrap reels**

**and do even shorter videos, what are we doing? And, like, why can't we just create what we want to create? And part of me has been, like, I don't really care what the algorithm wants me to do. I'm still posting, like, our educational infographics which bomb in terms of engagement because they don't get the reach that they should get, but then I'm not willing to play the game completely and lose sight of what my brand is about.**

(TC: 00:27:34)

Lucy Mountain: Yes, I fully agree. It's that horrible place of, like-, the thing is, what I also hate is when content creators are, 'The algorithm's rubbish now, it's working against me.' It's, like, 'No, people have just changed the way they consume content.' And when it's your job you, kind of, have to adapt slightly to it. And I am a firm believer, like, if you do make a really good piece of content that's relatable I always think it will do well. And even if that first piece doesn't, if you keep using that as your goal something will happen and you will do well. But, yes, I'm like you, in that sometimes you have a really niche thing that you want to share, and the engagement might be rubbish but ultimately you might have, I don't know, really helped five people that were thinking about signing up to my app, or whatever, and then they do. And then that's, like, 'Oh, great, I've got 5 new people that I can work with.' So, yes, I think it's important to not get hung up on the numbers. But that's also because I have my Nobs and I have the app now, and I'm doing everything-, I love my job, I love every aspect of it. And I love my personal life so much, I can never be that person that's sharing every aspect.

(TC: 00:28:45)

**Hazel: No, no. And I hugely respect that some people build, like, a business out of sharing their personal life. You know, like Zoe Sugg and Alfie Deyes, and now they've got a baby. And they're comfortable doing that, like, I know, I get such anxiety when I share too much. And that's just a personal thing, you know, it's how I'm built. But I also think, regardless of how many people follow you, or whatever, and how long they've been following you, they do see you as, like, this product, and there is never any please or thank you in the DM's, it's just asking things or-, I just feel like that jades me a little bit, because I'm, like, 'I'm working hard over here, and you want to know where I got my top?'**

(TC: 00:29:35)

Lucy Mountain: You're talking about all sorts and then it's, like, 'Sorry, by the way what lipstick shade are you wearing?' And it's like, 'Oh.' (Advert played 29.44-30.13) (TC 00:30:13) Do you every get, like, troll comments, because I can't imagine you get that many?

(TC: 00:30:20)

**Hazel: To be fair I don't really. I do whenever I talk about anything Covid related or vaccine related. I get so many of it that, like, I almost set myself into a spiral on one post. And then I turned off all the comments because I couldn't moderate them. And there was, like, people putting loads of misinformation. And then loads of people got really angry that I did that, even people who were quite level-minded, in that they were, like, 'I just want to read the conversation, I want to make my own informed decision.' And so, in the end, I just let the comments rip wild, and I just ghost-posted and I dropped it and left. And that's what I do now, I ghost post, post it, goodbye. Sometimes I will jump in and comment if people have questions, but, like, you get to a level where you are unable to comment**

on everything or reply to everything. And I know big accounts do, but, like, ultimately it's just me posting on Instagram so I don't have a team of people to respond. And there's half a million people on there, and if I'm talking about, like, Covid, everyone wants to know individual medical advice. Like, 'Hey I lost my smell and taste six months ago, what should I do?' Or, 'My hair's falling out.' And it's just, like, there's so many things that need to be unpacked there, that you need to see your doctor, so I'm, like, 'Go to your GP, go to your GP.' And then people think I'm just being lazy and I'm, like, 'I just don't want to lose my medical licence, hun.'

(TC: 00:31:47)

Lucy Mountain: I can't even imagine how stressful the past year's been, being online as a doctor and having to deal with Covid.

(TC: 00:31:59)

**Hazel: Yes, I think it's interesting how you just, like, learn to not care as much about people who are strangers and tell you what you should do. And it's like, what I find really interesting is when you do question boxes and things, because you are then, like, 'Oh my God, you would really ask a person this question?' And there is so much, which is what I want to speak to you next about, is, like, if you're a single woman online and you're of a certain age, I'm saying of a certain age like we're 60, like I'm a mature woman.**

(TC: 00:32:31)

Lucy Mountain: Lady of an age.

(TC: 00:32:33)

**Hazel: I mean, I'm 30, I don't know how old you are?**

(TC: 00:32:37)

Lucy Mountain: I'm twenty nine.

(TC: 00:32:37)

**Hazel: You're 29, okay, so-,**

(TC: 00:32:39)

Lucy Mountain: Yes, I'm almost 30.

(TC: 00:32:40)

**Hazel: Almost there. But, like, if you're in your late twenties, early thirties and you're a single woman and you're enjoying your life, that is wild to people. They're like, 'Oh my God, you took yourself on holidays? What is happening? Do you not feel weird having dinner by yourself, or by the pool by yourself?' And, like, for me, I don't feel weird at all and I'm, 'Does that make me weird that I don't find that weird?' But it's because we've created this culture where you shouldn't be living your best life unless you have a partner. And until you get that partner work hard, play hard, date, find the person. And so, how have you found, kind of, just rejecting that idea and being, 'I'm going to take myself on a (mw 33.23) holiday,' like you did, and you deserved that, because why should you wait?**

(TC: 00:33:29)

Lucy Mountain: Yes, well this is it. This is my exact mentality. So, when I did book that solo trip a few weeks ago, I was, like, 'There's no one that I would take with me here, and I have some of this money and I'm just going to spend it on myself. So, I'm just going to go all out,' and it was a week of luxury. I loved it, and I'm like you, Hazel, I don't feel awkward being by myself, I just don't. And again, like, I remember when I was away loads of people were like, 'Do you not feel uncomfortable?' And I am, like, 'No part of me feels uncomfortable because when I'm by myself I'm not bored, I'm not thinking, "What are people thinking of me?" because I just don't really care.' I mean, I've had, like, little relationships and I've been seeing someone for a few months, on and off, but I haven't had a long term relationship in over two years now. And I would say, like, half my-, I think that what your friends are doing matters because I think, if you are the only single friend, like, I get DM's from people saying they're the only single friend in their group and they feel like they are not being chosen, or whatever. And I'm, like, people just assume that people in relationships are happy, people just assume if someone has had a child that they're actually really happy with that decision. There are so many people that are making these life choices to have a family, get married, whatever, and are still deeply unhappy. So, we need to remember that, just because everyone else is doing this thing, it doesn't mean that they're happy in their decision.

I don't know, I find it-, I'm a little bit disillusioned with the way that we see marriage and meeting a partner, and having to be with someone. And half my friends are single, but the other half are very much not single. And it's so important that, if you are feeling like-, if you don't have that single group or you don't see any examples of women, older women, women of a certain age, women in their 30's living their best life, you know, when you don't see that it's really hard, you do just think, 'Well, what else is there?' But you have to shake that mindset because there are so many people out there who aren't even thinking about finding a partner, couldn't care less because it's so far down the priority list because they're happy and fulfilled in all other aspects.

(TC: 00:35:55)

**Hazel: That's it.**

(TC: 00:35:56)

Lucy Mountain: Yes, that's it, yes.

(TC: 00:35:58)

**Hazel: That's it. And, like, you know, people who are coming out of relationships, I said, at the start of this question that, whether it was a statement or question I can't even remember but I said, 'I feel super happy about myself,' but that wasn't always the case. I have always been quite an independent person, I was in a long distance relationship, so it was, like, I was independent most of the time, we didn't live together. But once we broke up I felt this huge gap in that, like, I was unable to make myself happy because that person is the source of my happiness, or whatever. And I feel that from a lot of people in that they're, like, now I'm alone I don't know how to be happy. And I think doing things like taking yourself on holidays, feeling the discomfort of being alone, if you find that uncomfortable, because if you can't be comfortable in your own company then you're never going to find happiness with other people. And I just think you have to almost relearn that again, actually, ultimately, what is happiness, what makes you happy, what are the goals in your life, what do you**

**want to do? Like, answer all these questions. And it took me time to get to this place where I'm, like, actually if I can make myself happy I've nailed it. And then anyone else on top of that who brings me additional happiness, perfect.**

(TC: 00:37:19)

Lucy Mountain: This is it. That's literally it. And I don't know about you, but one thing that I hear a lot is women who are, say, 33 and they say, 'If I break up with my partner now,' say their relationship's not good, 'If I break up with my partner now I'm going to have to start again.' And that, for me, just feels quite sad, because it's all rooted in women feeling like their main purpose should be in meeting someone and that person fulfilling them.

(TC: 00:37:48)

**Hazel: Yes. Or there's something wrong with you if you're not with someone. You know, the worst question is when people are, like, 'How are you still single, why are you still single?' I'm, like, 'Out of choice.'**

(TC: 00:38:00)

Lucy Mountain: I hate that. I find that so weird. I had that on Hinge the other day, this guy was, like, 'How are you?' (ph 38.05) and I was, 'What do you mean by that?' Like, 'What, I'm just waiting to be chosen?' It's, like, 'No.' It's almost like you're waiting in line and this man just thinks that women are just being picked, and if you're not picked it means that there's something wrong with you.

(TC: 00:38:21)

**Hazel: There's something wrong with you, yes. There's nothing wrong with you, there's something wrong with everyone else that you've met. No, it's just, like-, yes. No I'm glad we had that conversation because I get it a lot and I never really know how to tackle that on my platform because it's not really about that. But then, again, going back to the initial conversation we had, how do you identify, I'm a woman, I'm a single woman, it's important that we act as role models. I'm saying that and cringing a little bit inside but, yes, so that other women are, like, 'Oh well, there's two successful women who are navigating life by themselves.'**

(TC: 00:39:01)

Lucy Mountain: And this is is, this is seeing those examples, being able to see women actually do it, rather than just looking at your mates who are all engaged, or whatever.

(TC: 00:39:10)

**Hazel: Yes, okay. So, I've got three questions to wrap the podcast. The first one is, what would be your number one takeaway to people who are listening to the podcast?**

(TC: 00:39:20)

Lucy Mountain: I would say that I think we've talked a lot about identity. I would say that it's really important to make sure that you are thinking for yourself and just because you have joined a certain community, that doesn't mean that you now have to follow all the rules. I really encourage people to not just look at labels, or, like, just label themselves constantly. Have a think about what you think because I think there's a lot of people out there who are losing their voice and are scared to have opinions on things. And,

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you know, we need women to be vocal, we need women to be opinionated and share what they think. So, (TC 00:40:00) I would just encourage everyone to just start asking yourself, get into the habit of asking yourself, 'What do I think, and what's my opinion?' And don't be afraid to share it.

**(TC: 00:40:24)**

**Hazel: Yes, and don't be afraid to upset someone if you disagree with what they are saying. Like, I'm saying that for myself as well, because I know I censor myself from things out of fear of upsetting people. So, yes, to that one. The second question is, if you could go back and give your eighteen year old self one piece of advice, what would it be?**

(TC: 00:40:32)

Lucy Mountain: You see, when I saw this I was going to pick, like, a diet culture one. Which is, you know, don't fall into the trap, because that was the age when I started. But I would probably say, 'Don't ever lose your sense of fun and playfulness and sense of humour.' Because I've always been really silly and my Dad is, like, my Dad's ridiculous and I've always had his-

**(TC: 00:40:57)**

**Hazel: Father Mountain.**

(TC: 00:40:58)

Lucy Mountain: Sense of humour. Father Mountain, yes. Official Father Mountain. So, I've always loved that, and that's my favourite quality in all friends and any of my partners, just being, like, ridiculous when we're together. And I think between the ages of twenty one and, maybe, twenty five, twenty six I took myself very seriously in that I was working constantly and I, kind of, missed that sense of play. And I think that's so important to just keep it, and just because you're an adult doesn't mean that you can't have fun. So, I would prioritise fun all the time now, and I very much feel like I've rediscovered that side of me again. So, yes I would say to her to just not let that side go.

**(TC: 00:41:43)**

**Hazel: I love that, that is so good. And also unique. Okay, final question. What is one book that you recommend people read and why?**

(TC: 00:41:52)

Lucy Mountain: Well I have two books which I love and they're two books which I'd happily recommend to anyone. The first one, which really helped me a couple of years ago was, What A Time to Be Alone.

**(TC: 00:42:08)**

**Hazel: I love it.**

(TC: 00:42:09)

Lucy Mountain: Have you read it?

**(TC: 00:42:10)**

**Hazel: Yes, I read it after my break up. And I was, like, 'This is good.'**

(TC: 00:42:13)

Lucy Mountain: Yes, so the Slumflower, she basically wrote this amazing book and it's just perfect if you are, like we were talking about earlier, struggling to spend time alone, or if you've had a break up. Just, I mean, I used to listen to her on audiobook and just, like, play it over and over again, because it was just so powerful to me at that time. So, I really recommend that book. And then my other book, so I do love a self-help book but not a cringy one. And I'm also not massively into philosophy but there is this book called The Four Agreements and it's basically, like, these four principles, that if you follow them they will help you live a happier life. And it's the first book that I've read of that ilk where I was, like, 'Oh, this is so powerful.' And I think about it all the time, and again that's another one which I have on audiobook and I just listen to him and his, like, soothing voice. If I feel misaligned or a bit lost, I just take myself back to that audiobook and I just listen to it again. So, there's two recommendations.

(TC: 00:43:20)

**Hazel: And I guess finally, even though it's three questions, to, kind of, round everything up, where can people find you if they want to find more about what you're doing, access the Nobs app.**

(TC: 00:43:32)

Lucy Mountain: Well, you can find me on Instagram @lucymountain.

(TC: 00:43:35)

**Hazel: Instagram person.**

(TC: 00:43:37)

Lucy Mountain: Instagram person. And then, yes, you can find Nobs at the Nobs app. And then the link in that Instagram bio will take you to download the app. I think that's all my things.

(TC: 00:43:49)

**Hazel: Amazing. Well thank you so much for coming on for the chat today. I found it, like, quite cathartic to have this conversation. Yes, amazing.**

(TC: 00:43:59)

Lucy Mountain: Thank you so much for having me.

(TC: 00:44:00)

**Hazel: Okay. So, I found that a really fun episode. I loved speaking to Lucy and I hope you enjoyed it too. A little reminder that if you are enjoying the show to please consider leaving a five star rating and a review so that we can reach as many people as possible and keep bringing you podcasts. That's all from me, see you again next time.**