



WEIGHT LOSS FOR BUSY PHYSICIANS

— with Katrina Ubell, MD —

Katrina Ubell: You are listening to The Weight Loss For Busy Physicians podcast with Katrina Ubell MD, episode number 113.

Welcome to Weight Loss For Busy Physicians. The podcast where busy doctors, like you get the practical solutions and support you need to permanently lose the weight, so you can feel better and have the life you want. If you're looking to overcome your stress eating and exhaustion and move into freedom around food, you're in the right place.

Hey, my friend. Welcome back to the podcast. How's it going? So excited to have you here today. I have a really, really good episode for you. Really quick before we get going. I wanted to just mention that I am hosting a number of free trainings this week and next week. I've got three of them coming up and I wanted to make sure that you knew about them. I have one tonight. If you're listening to this on Tuesday, March 12, which is the day it's released, then tonight I am going to be discussing some of the newer science based ideas for weight loss.

Some of the things that are newer that you might not know about weight loss that are going to be really important for you to understand as you're working on achieving permanent weight loss yourself. Tomorrow, I'm going to be conducting a free training on willpower and what to do when you have none left and still lose weight.

Then next week, next Tuesday, I'm going to be teaching you about these unspoken secrets to permanent weight loss. Things that people just don't talk about that make all the difference. I'd love to have you join me on one or all of these free trainings.

To join me on these trainings, all you have to do is go to my website, katrinaubellmd.com and click on the free resources tab. You're going to find all the information there. All the trainings are in the evenings, you'll be able to get your login information to join me on there. Again, katrinaubellmb.com click on free resources.

Now, today I brought on just one of my favorite, favorite clients. She's I mean, you're all my favorites. I mean, for real. It's true, but Melissa in particular is just someone who is really extra fun and special because she's such an open book. She just loves to tell everything and bear her soul, and that makes her a really good interview, right? Because we want to know all the details. She lost 57 pounds working with me in one of my Weight Loss For Doctors Only groups, and so I wanted her to share her story and her perspective and going through that process, how she decided that joining the group was for her and how she conducted herself in a way that gave her these amazing results.

Then also she recently had some plastic surgery to just maybe modify things just a little bit and I wanted her to share her story of how she came to the conclusion that doing some plastic surgery was the right thing for her. I think so many of us think about it, contemplate it, and just aren't sure maybe don't know anybody to talk to about it, and I thought this would be very, very useful to some of you.

Now, I'm not someone who's saying you should definitely go do plastic surgery, and I'm not saying you definitely shouldn't, because, of course, I could never possibly know what's the right thing for you. I think it is really

important that you get your head in the right place before you decide to do anything like plastic surgery, and so, Melissa really shares her story and how she went through that process and what she thinks now.

I do just want to give you a little bit of a heads up that, Melissa sometimes likes use a little bit of colorful language. If that's something that might offend you, it's certainly nothing that's very dramatic, but if it might offend you, or you don't want your children to hear it, then just make sure that they're not listening. Maybe put in some earbuds or don't play this in the car when they're with you. Just so you've been warned. Please enjoy this interview with, Melissa Parsons. I know that you're going to grow to love her just as I have. Have a great week and I'll see you soon.

Hey, Melissa, welcome to the podcast.

Melissa Parsons: Hi, Katrina.

Katrina Ubell: I am so excited to have you here. I think you're excited too.

Melissa Parsons: Oh my goodness, yeah nervous cited.

Katrina Ubell: As you know, I'm a very scary person.

Melissa Parsons: Yes, I'm afraid of you.

Katrina Ubell: I'm going to be grilling you.

Melissa Parsons: Very afraid.

Katrina Ubell: We're just going to have a nice conversation about your journey and we're going to talk then about how you've recently just had some skin surgery and that's something everybody wants to know about. We'll get to that, but first I want you to just introduce yourself. Tell us a little bit about yourself and then we'll get into your story with being overweight and the challenges that you had.

Melissa Parsons: Okay, perfect. My name is, Melissa. I am a wife. I'm a mom of two teenage boys, and I am a pediatrician. I've been practicing since 2002 and I live in Ohio.

Katrina Ubell: Awesome, all right.

Melissa Parsons: Actually, I have to give a shout out to my Weight Loss For Doctors Only January 2018 group because they're all very excited that I'm going to be on the podcast.

Katrina Ubell: Hi everybody. We miss you.

Melissa Parsons: Hello ladies, bad asses.

Katrina Ubell: That's right, all right. Tell us your story with weights like, when did this start?

Melissa Parsons: Yeah.

Katrina Ubell: Let's start from the beginning.

Melissa Parsons: I would say I have never been a naturally thin person. I have always been somebody who has struggled with her weight and yo-yoed and all that kind of good stuff. I would say, even as a young kiddo, I mean, I definitely come more from my dad side of the family in terms of body shape and habitus and being short. My BMI has always been perfect if I was like 5'7 instead 5'2, but short of having leg lengthening surgery that wasn't really an option for me.

I have a younger sister who has always been a naturally thin person, so there's always been this, I was the short, smart stubby one, and she was the like tall also smart one and just that type of thing growing up. Then I would say I got pretty thin when I was in just before going to med school after college. Unbeknownst to me, I was taking something I didn't know had amphetamine in it. So I was on a weight loss regimen, and I was like, This is amazing. I'm never hungry and then realized, "Oh, shoot, this is not

healthy for me." I stopped that obviously, as soon as I realized what I was taking.

Then I would say definitely after having the two boys and having c-sections and breastfeeding and all that up until about maybe a year and well, let's say like 15 months ago, I was blaming about 60 pounds on my 13 year old.

Katrina Ubell: It's like, "This is my baby weight. My baby is 13."

Melissa Parsons: Exactly. Most people who know me would never really think that I had that much weight to lose. I carried it all very apple, very much in my breasts and my torso and my belly and my booty. To look at me, I was definitely you could tell I was overweight, but people who know that I've lost 57 pounds are like, "Oh my God, where did you have that to lose from?"

Katrina Ubell: I had something similar. People were shocked. I mean, even when I was pregnant, like it just have such a long torso that people were just like, "How could you have lost 55 pounds? Like literally where did that come from?" I'm like, "Oh, it was there. Trust me."

Melissa Parsons: Yeah. Trust me I have the photos to prove it, or the non photos because I was never in the photos because I didn't want anybody to have any evidence that I was that overweight.

Katrina Ubell: It's like if you don't see yourself in the picture, then maybe it's not as bad as you think it is.

Melissa Parsons: Yeah, and I definitely had that body dysmorphism where I thought I looked at hell of a lot better than I did. Then I would see pictures or God forbid, video of myself may be like, "Oh, who is that?" Then I'm like, "Oh shit, that's me."

Katrina Ubell: Right.

Melissa Parsons: I've done every, I've done Weight Watchers multiple times. I've tried to go it alone, and I would always lose

weight and then very quickly gain it back as soon as I went back to my normal, "way of eating."

Katrina Ubell: As an emotional eater, did you realize that you had that issue?

Melissa Parsons: Yes, I would say so. For me, honestly, what I would say is, I couldn't figure out why I couldn't reach this goal because as a type A goal oriented person who wanted to be a perfectionist, which I now thankfully due to work realize it has no value in my life.

Katrina Ubell: Being a high achiever.

Melissa Parsons: Exactly, yeah. I'm like I'm setting a bar of excellence.

Katrina Ubell: What's wrong with that.

Melissa Parsons: In order to be great, but I just couldn't figure out. I'm like, every other goal in my life, I have set the goal, I have achieved it or exceeded it. wike, Why can I not do this? Like, I just didn't understand it, but I would say, obviously finding your podcast and then listening to Dr. Phones book and reading the obesity code. I'm like, oh, my God. Okay, I had the science wrong first of all, and I felt bad too, because I had been telling parents how to feed their kids wrong, incorrectly and all that kind of good stuff.

Katrina Ubell: Which is super hard because I had a lot of guilt around that too, especially because you're following the AAP's guidelines, which are going hand in hand with what we know now doesn't work, so what do you do?

Melissa Parsons: Yeah. Well, I made my own hand out once I figured it out. It's, Dr. Parson's rules for healthy eating in 2018 and beyond. So I give it to anybody who will listen to me, and who's interested. I don't, give it to people who don't ask, but now it's become quite obvious that I've lost a bunch of weight. It's funny I have this group of parents who are naturally thin, and they're afraid to say anything, because

they don't want me to think that I thought that, they thought that I was fat before.

Then I have the group of moms who have obviously, and dads too, who have struggled with their weight and like, as soon as I walk in the door, they're like, "Girl, what have you been doing?" I tease the thin moms once they finally do ask me or say something. I'm like, "Oh, I'm like you're falling into my stereotype of the naturally thin people."

Then I had this one lovely Indian dad who said, "Dr. Parsons what happened to you? You used to be so chubby and charming?" Oh, my God. I said, I wish your wife was here right now, because she would have a, slapped you upside down. I would have laughed. I said, "But, I hope I'm still charming. I'm just no longer chubby."

Katrina Ubell: Right.

Melissa Parsons: He was so cute, but it's been interesting. I'm sorry. I like went off on a tangent on you.

Katrina Ubell: No, that's completely great. I really do want to address that, because so many people have actually asked me about that, like, "What am I supposed to do?" And not just pediatricians.

Melissa Parsons: Yeah.

Katrina Ubell: Internist or family medicine, or for whatever reason, people are asking them for dietary advice, and they're like, "What should I do?" Of course, I can't know what they should do, but it's really something to think about. Like when I always say like the medical community, getting them to change their opinions on things. it's like turning a cruise ship around. It's not as a speed boat, so in the meantime, while we're waiting, what do we do? Do we just go against what's recommended, do we not? I think that ultimately has to just come down to your comfort level.

I think once you have changed the way you're eating, and you're getting these results, and people are noticing, and asking you how it feels kind of against your own integrity to tell them like, yeah, just drink all that skim milk.

Melissa Parsons: Exactly.

Katrina Ubell: Let's go back though to when you decided you found out about the podcast, what resonated? Where were you in your mind at that point?

Melissa Parsons: It was Christmas 2017 and I had been using, we were home with our families, and I love you families. I know you're going to be listening to this. On Christmas Eve, I realized that I had drank way too much champagne all by myself, eaten way too much food, and then on Christmas Day, my brother-in-law and sister-in-law had all this amazing food and alcohol and all that, and I had actually gotten my niece's a karaoke machine for Christmas and my sister and brother-in-law and my husband and I were up late into the night karaoke singing.

I thought I looked and sounded a hell of a lot better than I did on watching the video evidence the next day, and I had heard about your podcast through Physicians Moms Group, I had seen it just those little things that come in as a whisper and then a little bit of a nudge and then like a blaring you must start listening to this. We were driving back from Cleveland to our hometown on the 27th of December and the boys decided to go with their dad and the dog in their car, so I was by myself, so I started binging and listening to the podcast. Honestly, Katrina I was like how did this woman get into my brain. I mean, just listening to you talk and obviously being pediatricians and we had a lot in common and being moms, and we both have husbands who are physicians, rather. I was like, "Oh my God." It's like you were speaking directly to me.

I just made that decision right then in there that I was going to listen to the podcast and read the obesity code and all that good stuff, and you were offering-

Katrina Ubell: What do you think, just to interrupt you for a second, what do you think was like the missing piece? Like you've been doing all the other stuff, the Weight Watchers and trying to lose all this weight. Was it really just recognizing, wait, there's this other component that I've never address?

Melissa Parsons: Oh, yeah, for sure. Yeah, the mental component, the fact that we eat to celebrate, we eat when we're sad, we eat when we're frustrated, we eat when we're mad at people and it never, ever solves the problem. Then I would say too the early episodes talking about the hunger scale, like I would never ever pay attention to ... Let me go back. I would say I was somebody who was definitely a sugar burner. I was hungry like every three hours. I would eat breakfast before work at like 7:30. By 10:30 I was like, "Oh my God, when is lunch like, I'm never going to make it another hour and a half or two hours until I can get back to the break room." And so I would have a snack and so I was just like ... And I have a T-shirt that says I'm sorry for what I said when I was hungry. My husband would tease me that if we were in a survival situation, I would eat the kids. And it's so true. I was like, "Oh, and you better be careful. You look juicy. You're going down first."

I think it was just I never ever paid attention, and I would just sit there and mindlessly eat and knowing that I had extra meals on my body, and just eat, and eat, and eat, and it tasted so good.

Katrina Ubell: It's just so hard though when you recognize I have all these extra meals in my body, but I feel like total crap right now. Like, the signal my body is giving me is I'm dying and I need food.

Melissa Parsons: If I don't eat soon, I'm going to die or somebody else is going to.

Katrina Ubell: Right, exactly. Something really bad's going to happen, and I'm not sure what. Right, exactly. Okay, so you read the obesity code. You're listening to the podcast and what happened from there?

Melissa Parsons: You were offering the January group.

Katrina Ubell: You signed up really pretty-

Melissa Parsons: Within I would say if I go back through my journals, I would say yeah, within a week of starting to listen to the podcast, I was just like gung ho about it and I listened to your webinar and my head told my husband that I was going to listen to it before and it was late and he had to work the next morning and so I remember getting to the money part of it and I was like, "Oh shit, okay, this is an investment that I'm going to be making in myself, "and that type of thing.

Once I had made that investment in myself, I knew at that point that I was going to be all in and that I was going to do what you told me to do.

Katrina Ubell: You weren't going to like blow it off and just be like, "Uh, I don't really know."

Melissa Parsons: Yeah, and I mean I had to rearrange my schedule at work because at that point we were doing webinars some in the daytime, some in the evening.

Katrina Ubell: Like some of the coaching calls?

Melissa Parsons: Exactly yeah, the coaching calls.

Katrina Ubell: I think that's so great though, that you did that because I will definitely find people who are like, "Oh, I would love to do that but like I've got this going on or that going on." Not recognizing that when you get into a solutions focus place in your brain, you start going well how can I figure out how to get two more of these calls.

Melissa Parsons: Right, exactly.

Katrina Ubell: Like there's got to be some solution that when we think we have zero flexibility. There's always like something in there.

Melissa Parsons: I was on coaching calls from Mexico, I was on coaching calls from Florida because it coincided with a vacation that John and I had planned in February and then Spring Break was in there and then the very last part I was on vacation during the summer. I mean I dedicated myself to it and just decided that I was going to do it.

Katrina Ubell: When I did my coaching group which cost way, way, way, way, way more, I was the same way. I mean I was literally on like a service trip in the Dominican Republic with my son and I found like the one little corner that had WiFi and got on the floor. I think I was like it's going to be only on like 30 minutes or something before it cut out, but it was like a touch point. It was like, no but I'm here, I'm still committed, I'm still doing this. I'm not blowing this off.

Melissa Parsons: Exactly, yeah.

Katrina Ubell: I love that you did that.

Melissa Parsons: I would say, having this is the first time I've ever lost weight and kept it off. So I really know that the mind work and the way that I've been eating and that type of thing, and then obviously still listening to your podcast every Tuesday, and after I got through all of yours, I started listening to, Brooke. Having all of that just there as a reminder constantly that ... And then I've been doing my thought work every day. I'm on I'm on I think day number 68 today, when I complete my thought work of doing it every day, which has been huge for me.

Katrina Ubell: What changes have you have you noticed from doing that, committed to that?

Melissa Parsons: Oh, my goodness, I would say just, it's so much better to get the stuff out of my head and onto paper and that type of thing, if for no other reason, then to not have it jumbling around in my head and that type of thing.

Katrina Ubell: That we think we can just do it in our heads.

Melissa Parsons: Yeah, no.

Katrina Ubell: Like now, I'm pretty aware of what I'm thinking, but it's so much more powerful when you write it out, and you can actually look at it whether you physically hand write it out or you do it on the computer.

Melissa Parsons: Yes, I physically hand write it out, and it's been interesting because I've been going back every once in a while and looking at my thought work from this time last year, and how much it has changed and how much it has stayed the same.

Katrina Ubell: Yeah. What were the other issues? Because so often we really just think like, it was just the food. I just like food too much and I need to stop eating, but there were other things that were going on for you that drove you to overeat, right?

Melissa Parsons: Yeah.

Katrina Ubell: We had to spend a lot of time coaching on that.

Melissa Parsons: Yes.

Katrina Ubell: For you to have success, this level of success that you're having with losing the weight.

Melissa Parsons: Yeah, I would say the biggest one was my need for perfectionism, which again, I said, not useful to me.

Katrina Ubell: Was it hard to give that up though?

Melissa Parsons: Yes.

Katrina Ubell: A lot of us are like, "Oh, but I still am holding out hope that I might do amazingly well."

Melissa Parsons: I would say that definitely it has been passed down to me through the generations and has, my ancestors, whom I love dearly and who I can love and honor without keeping on the perfectionist train, they have been very successful people. I saw that and I was like, "Okay, these people are getting success from having this attitude and that type of thing, and so why can I not also."

I mean, I would say that it has served me well. I mean, obviously I've become a successful person in my life, but just mentally and emotionally getting rid of the need for it and just striving for excellence instead has been huge.

Katrina Ubell: Yeah, well it's stopping thinking that there's some perfection that you are still going to be going after and then you'll be finally good enough. It's just being like, I'm amazing. I am good enough. I've always been good enough, and because I'm good enough, I'm going to go kick some ass and do an excellent level of work.

Melissa Parsons: Yeah.

Katrina Ubell: That's much more likely to actually help you to achieve that than going, like, "Oh, but, I'm still not enough or like, right, some somehow better than I could be doing." It's interesting how you mentioned that, generations of your family had that mindset too because you probably were raised with this just right from beginning.

Melissa Parsons: Right.

Katrina Ubell: Whereas some of us just figure it out on our own or it's just who you are. For you I think it just even deeper in terms of having to do the work to just see every little corner that it was in, in your life and undo that, let it go.

Melissa Parsons: Exactly, yeah, let it go, and just know that sometimes when, for me, at least when the perfection was the goal,

and I knew at the outset that it wasn't achievable. Sometimes it would stop me from even trying something new or, so I would say just being more fearless and being able to step into things that I wouldn't have necessarily tried before has really been helpful.

Katrina Ubell: Yeah, definitely. Then you worked on the perfectionism, what else?

Melissa Parsons: I would say the other thing is that I am a recovering control freak.

Katrina Ubell: Control enthusiast, as we like to call it.

Melissa Parsons: So trying to control my husband, trying to control my children, trying to control my patients, the people that I work with, that type of thing. So really getting rid of that and realizing that I have no control. The only person I have control over is me. That has been really, really huge, I would say.

Katrina Ubell: When we think that we're ... It's such a good idea to control all these other people, what we're doing is a terrible job of controlling ourselves.

Melissa Parsons: Absolutely.

Katrina Ubell: The one person that we can control we're just like not focusing on that at all.

Melissa Parsons: Right.

Katrina Ubell: Yeah. Definitely.

Melissa Parsons: I would say too just realizing for me in terms of my boys that they're going to be great no matter what I do, as long as I am there for them, I give them love. I give them opportunities.

Katrina Ubell: The parts that you can control, but what they do with that it's their life.

Melissa Parsons: Yeah.

Katrina Ubell: I was just coaching clients about that last night, and it's like, everyone's like, I feel like they're like, that sounds great. Like I my heart tells me that's the right thing, but my brain is like, "Hold up here, sister. What? No."

Melissa Parsons: Yeah, realizing that I do not hold the puppet strings has been great.

Katrina Ubell: It's been huge. So, what would you say—now having gone through the program with me—what would you say were like a couple key takeaways that it's like, once I got that it made just a huge shift, a huge difference for me?

Melissa Parsons: I would say definitely the science of insulin and cortisol and all that. Because I was a big heavy like weightlifter and hit workouter and that type of thing prior thinking that I was doing the right thing and now realizing not. I would say that I've switched over to doing mostly yoga and hopefully I think once I get back down to where I want to be healing wise which we'll get to and then weight loss wise I definitely will go back to toning my muscles with weightlifting because I realized that it's probably good for me in terms of my bone health and my cardiovascular health and all that good stuff.

Katrina Ubell: Which is totally different than doing it because of trying to lose weight or trying to manage the overeating that you're doing.

Melissa Parsons: Exactly, yeah trying to make up for the ice cream that I ate the night before, never done that. That I would say and then definitely just the daily thought work in getting my thoughts out onto paper and then I would say just the sticking with it in terms of listening to the podcasts and keeping on.

Katrina Ubell: Just watching all the like, looking at all the coaching, asking for coaching. You are someone who asked for coaching all of the time.

Melissa Parsons: Yeah, I was not shy.

Katrina Ubell: Ask for coaching on live calls, like you just kept showing up for yourself is one thing that I noticed.

Melissa Parsons: Absolutely, yeah.

Katrina Ubell: Noo, not to say that is exactly how it has to be, there's people who have great results who are just listening to things and reading things, and not necessarily asking for coaching as much. Everybody's needs are different, but that's one thing that I noticed was you were like, even when it was hard, and even when you weren't getting it and you were struggling. You're like, I'm still here. I'm still showing up. I'm still here. Maybe that's like the good part of that perfectionism where it's like, 'No, but I won't quit. Like, I'm here. I'm still going to do this.'

Melissa Parsons: Yes.

Katrina Ubell: And that's what's required. Like, where you mess up, and you make mistakes, and you don't get it, and you feel like you probably should get it but you don't yet and you're still there. You're still showing up and asking for clarification.

Melissa Parsons: Yeah, I think you said something to me about this is like learning to walk when you're a baby. You crawl, and then you cruise, and then you toddle, and then you run. If at any one stage you were like, 'I'm good.'

Katrina Ubell: It's like you don't have a baby who tries to take the first steps and falls you're like, well they're done guess they are never going to walk. It's like, "Uh, no."

We have different beliefs about it. We have these beliefs like because I've "failed before," which is just code for I quit trying to equate, you know, in the past, like I'm not going to be able to do it now. Sometimes we get into a thing too where we're like, "Well let me just like fail ahead of time so I can get the failing that feel so bad over with, so maybe I'll just quit now so I can just because I believe

it's going to be coming," versus just going like, "I understand brain that you keep thinking that based on past results, this is what's going to happen, but it's also possible that I could create something new and the only way I'll know that is by not quitting."

Melissa Parsons: Right, exactly. Yeah, the amount of times I've said to my brain, "Oh, that's cute brain."

Katrina Ubell: Yes. Right.

Melissa Parsons: I see where you're going with that, nice try, but not today.

Katrina Ubell: Not today. Let's talk about your surgery then. So you had gotten to a point where you were like, okay, I am ready for a little tune up. I would say that, a lot of people don't do this.

Melissa Parsons: Yeah.

Katrina Ubell: You decided you wanted to and so I that was the main reasons I wanted to have you on was to talk about that because people are so interested in it. They're worried what if I have all this excess skin, and what am I going to do and all that. I would just love for you to talk about what your thoughts were going into it all and what your experience has been like.

Melissa Parsons: What I would say is, I was very happy after I had gotten rid of 57 pounds and I say, gotten rid of instead of loss because loss implies that I'm looking for it.

Katrina Ubell: You released them into the universe.

Melissa Parsons: Exactly. I was very happy with how I looked in my clothing and that type of thing, but I was not happy with how I looked in bathing suits and naked certainly. I was like I have put in all this work and I have honored my body by treating it well, and doing my yoga, and feeding it fuel, and letting it get off all these excess meals. I was like, I want to enjoy how I look in my own skin. I had to do a lot

of thought work around loving myself, but also wanting to better myself.

Katrina Ubell: Not doing it out of sense of like, 'Uh, I'm disgusting. I'm going to get the surgery then I can finally feel good about myself.'

Melissa Parsons: Exactly, and I reached out to you for coaching about this, so thank you.

Katrina Ubell: You're welcome.

Melissa Parsons: What I would say is I did a lot of thought downloads, and a lot of mind searching and mind bending and that type of thing to try to come to the conclusion that I could still do this and still love myself 100%.

I did that before I even went to see my plastic surgeon for a consult, and she's amazing. Her name is, Roxanne Grawe and she and her staff are wonderful and make you feel like you're amazing no matter what. She gave me options, and what I decided to do was get a full abdominoplasty because I had definitely a small diastasis rectus, and I had a shelf where my c-section scar was tied down to my abdominal wall, and then I had all this extra loose skin above.

Katrina Ubell: Especially because you carried your weight so centrally that you did have more of that abdominal skin.

Melissa Parsons: Exactly, and then my breasts I have always had huge breasts since fourth grade. Thank you, Robert Thurman Clan. Those are my ancestors on my dad's side. I have always had larger breasts and that type of thing, and then after breastfeeding the boys and after gaining and losing weight so many times I could put them into a bra and make them look great in a sweater, but as soon as the bra came off, I was like, "Oh my lord. Okay, this is what we have."

Katrina Ubell: Empty tube socks.

Melissa Parsons: Yes. I liken them to being, my friend gave me this visual of it looking like the carwash like green flaps the kind of flap down when you are at the car wash, but thank you for that visual.

Yes, Dr. Grawe suggested that I get a reduction and a lift and then a small implant in order to make my breasts look how they did when I had them in the bra.

Katrina Ubell: Yeah.

Melissa Parsons: We did that a couple weeks ago now and she has a recovery house where you can go and stay for as many days as you want to after your operation, and I did that it was amazing. I would suggest that anybody who was considered-

Katrina Ubell: I didn't even know they have something like that. That's super cool.

Melissa Parsons: It was amazing. Yes, there were wonderful women there who took care of me, Sandra and Dawn were my angels. I would say, my hubby definitely could have taken care of me after surgery and he would have happily done that for me, but I didn't want him to have to. So I decided to stay there for five days afterward, which was the best decision I think I have made in the past couple of weeks just because I don't do very well with the anesthesia. I tend to get very nauseated and that type of thing.

I would say and I told you this already, but the first 24 hours after the surgery I was like, "Oh my God, what have I done? I feel terrible." It wasn't pain. It was just nausea and anytime I had to get up to use the restroom or whatever, Sandra was there and she helped me and talked me through just not getting sick and Zofran helped me as well and obviously my pain medication helped me too.

After that, I would say there hasn't been pain. It's been more just feeling tight the first five days afterward I would

say it was hard for me to stand fully upright. I could, but it was uncomfortable just because everything was stretched and everything felt tight but I would definitely do it over and over again for the results that I've gotten so far. I'm still quite swollen because it was just two weeks ago and that type of thing but I would say that I would do it again and again from what I've seen so far.

Katrina Ubell: Awesome, I just think that's great. It's never something that I you know, encourage people to do or discourage people to do. I think it's so individual for each person, but I just think that if you're doing it for the right reasons then can't go wrong and that's what I think happened here.

Melissa Parsons: Well, and I would say to the other thing that I did a lot of thought work about beforehand was I made the decision that no matter what happened, I was going to love my results. I just made that decision from the outset. Dr. Grawe said she tries to get everybody very symmetrical and that type of thing, and she's, of course, said perfection is not attainable for me or any other plastic surgeon. She's like, I get as close as I possibly can, and I do everything that I possibly can to try to make it so that everything looks perfect but I told her, "Well guess what, excellence is the goal, not perfection."

Katrina Ubell: When you tell yourself I'm going to love it. Then you're looking at the parts you love and so going, "Oh, but there's this tiny packer here, and there's this, this, this thing there." It's like you get to decide what lens you want to look through depending on what your opinion is of what happened. Which is so great and so empowering, right?

Melissa Parsons: Right.

Katrina Ubell: It's like you can no matter what, you can have a great experience of this.

Melissa Parsons: Absolutely. I agree 100%.

Katrina Ubell: Yeah. Which is wonderful, yeah. Well, thank you for sharing that with everybody because I think people are always wondering, and just want to ask, but don't know what to say, or don't know someone, or they're not open about it, or whatever, so I really appreciate coming out and talking about it.

Melissa Parsons: Well, I have no problem sharing, because I would say that just I have learned so much and I have grown so much from other people sharing their experiences on the podcast, or-

Katrina Ubell: In the coaching group. I mean, just learning from all the other women was so helpful.

Melissa Parsons: Absolutely. Yeah, so I am willing and if I'm able to talk about stuff, I'm happy to do it and I just want to help as many people as I possibly can.

Katrina Ubell: Awesome. So, as parting words, what would you say to somebody who's considering joining one of the groups and just like I don't know, is it really worth it? How's it really different? Like, what would your response be to someone with those thoughts?

Melissa Parsons: I would say that for me personally, compared to what I got out of it, it was a very small investment to make in myself. I would say that you definitely will get out of it, what you put into it as with anything in life and that type of thing. I would say, obviously you want to make the decision beforehand that you're all in. For me, that was definitely something that helped me to show up and to make time for it and all that kind of good stuff, but I would say if you're at all on the fence, go for it. Make the investment in yourself. My only thing is, I'm 45, I wish that you had been in existence when I was 35. I mean, I know that you weren't

Katrina Ubell: It's all working out perfectly. You maybe weren't ready at 35, right?

Melissa Parsons: Exactly.

Katrina Ubell: Maybe at 35 it would not have landed.

Melissa Parsons: Exactly, it's true. I wouldn't have been ready for it, and everything happens exactly as it should. Because that's how it happened.

Katrina Ubell: Right, and now you're at a place in your life. You're not chasing around little kids where you can focus on this and things like that. Then there are people who are chasing around little kids, and they're like, this is exactly what I need, because they are 35. They're like, "Yeah, wuhuu."

Melissa Parsons: Yeah.

Katrina Ubell: "I hit the jackpot."

Melissa Parsons: Exactly.

Katrina Ubell: This is great. Well, Melissa, thank you so much for coming on sharing your whole experience. I appreciate it so much. I know so many of my listeners will appreciate everything you said as well.

Melissa Parsons: Yeah, no problem. I love you, and I am happy to do it.

Katrina Ubell: I love you too. All right, thank you.

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