



WEIGHT LOSS FOR BUSY PHYSICIANS

— with Katrina Ubell, MD —

Welcome to the Weight Loss for Busy Physicians podcast. I'm your host, master Certified life and weight loss Coach Katrina Ubell, M.D. This is the podcast where busy doctors like you come to learn how to lose weight for the last time by harnessing the power of your mind. If you're looking to overcome your stress, eating and exhaustion and move into freedom around food, you're in the right place. Hey there, my friend. Welcome to the podcast. So glad you're here today.

Thank you for joining me. You may or may not know. If you don't know, I'm going to tell you I live in the great state of Wisconsin. It is chilly here, but I have to tell you, I can tell that spring is coming not because of the temperature outside, but just the way it feels. My husband is actually saying he wondered if just as humans, we have this, you know, just like our brains or eyeballs are somehow designed to be able to tell where the sun is in the sky. Because I kept saying, I'm like, you can just tell like, spring is coming. It's somehow like when you're outside, it's like the sky looks different. Like somehow I don't know how to describe it, but it doesn't seem like January. It's just, Oh, it's so great. And it's fun to see the little bunnies hopping around. Of course they're tormenting my little doggy Augie.

Yes, His name is Oggy. Oggy, the doggy. You know, he's a little terrier, so squirrels should really be his main nemesis. But for this dog, it is bunnies. Man alive. This dog, he really wants one. I think he just wants to play with it. To be honest, I think his prey drive is that strong. But he's just like, Look at you. I don't want to run after you. So anyway, it's something that's making me very happy. I've gotten into this habit lately that I'm loving, which is to get up earlier. I have not historically been much of an early bird at all.

I mean, like much of an early bird. That's kind of funny. Like. No, like not at all. Like zero. Like negative early bird. Definitely a more of a stay up late at night kind of a person. But I have learned a lot more. I just keep learning more and more about sleep and sleep quality and things are, you know, my life is full right now. I'll just say that I don't even want to use the busy word, but my life is full right now. And so I'm really trying to make the most of my sleep so that the sleep is very effective and really helps me to get through my day more. And so one thing that I've actually known about for years, I read a book about it I don't even know, probably like pre-COVID, I think even, which of course, I'm just thinking of it right now and don't remember the name of it at all.

So I can't tell you what it is. I'm sorry. Obviously didn't have that much of an effect on me at the time, but but it was all about like circadian rhythms and how important light is. And so getting up in the morning and getting the morning sun in your eyes is, you know, really, really good. And then if you can, in the late afternoon or early evening, getting the light like at the natural light, when the sun is, you know, closer to the horizon, it just helps to signal to the brain what's going on, you know? So like you get that morning light, it wakes you up, your brain's like, okay, time to get up. And then the flip side of that as well. So I've been getting up. I mean, to go outside and just like stand there and stare at the horizon when it's, you know, freezing cold outside. No. So I've gotten my dog up and we go out and have I mean, I always say it's a compliment to call it a walk because it's a lot of standing around while he sniffs everything. But it's just it's it's kind of grown on me, like, I like to get out there when it's still really quiet.

There's maybe a couple other people out there walking their dogs, but it's just kind of like a quiet, peaceful time in the morning that I'm really, really enjoying and kind of just sets me up for the day to be good. Like, I've already done something for myself. I've already gotten some fresh air. I've already, you know, like, quote unquote moved my body. Like, do I take steps? Yes, I do. Kind of depends. I do like one loop. And that's like our standard for sure. We do that. And if he's doing well and have the time, then I'll do like an additional loop that's like a little bit bigger. And if we do that, I think it's I think it's like a mile and a half total if we do that one.

Yeah, I think so. And otherwise the small loops like 0.7 miles or something like that. So it's nothing like crazy at all, but it's still just nice to get out there and move around and,

and just, you know, get some fresh air. So anyway, that's that's where spring is coming for me, where I'm just like, it's so nice. Like pretty soon I'm not going to have to bundle up like crazy to get out of here and walk my dog. Although I will say, you know, my middle son was born on the longest day of the year in June.

And I remember him being, you know, a couple of weeks old, getting up with him and realizing like, oh my gosh, the birds start chirping at 345 in the morning, like where we are in the time zone and everything. And like, you know, just guess like how far north we are. It gets light really early here in the summer and I do not plan on getting up that early to see the sunrise. That will not be happening anyway. Just a little invitation. Maybe it's something that, you know, that you like to do as well or something you've never really tried. What's really cool for me, I always would kind of like either get a second wind or just not really be able to fall asleep at a time that would allow me to wake up having gotten good sleep and feel like I'm ready to get up in the morning to go do something like this. But what I'm finding is that the more consistently I do it, the more ready my brain is to go to sleep at a good time and then I can actually get up. It's like amazing what happens when we work with our bodies and understand our physiology. So good. I also want to say as I'm recording this, it's International Women's Day, So happy International Women's Day.

Even if you're not a woman, which there's a few people who listen, who are not women so glad that you're here, too. But I think the majority people who listen are women. So happy. International Women's Day. I celebrate you here today. And I think our topic today, this podcast, will hopefully give you something to think about and make things a little bit easier and lighter for you, because I think it's an issue that a lot of people really struggle with. So I want to talk about the time it takes to create peace and freedom around food.

So whatever that looks like for you, whether that's losing some weight or considerable amount of weight, some people are like, you know, maybe it's not so much weight that I need to lose, but it's my relationship with food and just the way that I approach it all that I need to focus on. It's really easy for us to think like I do not have time, right? Like you're already feeling behind a lot of the time, just in your day to day life, feeling pressed for time, feeling like there aren't enough hours in the day. If you are someone

who's already feeling like you're kind of like, you know, letting yourself or others down on a regular basis anyway because of a lack of presence or just not having the time.

It can understandably be just like I mean, literally, like I do not know when I would do this work. So like, as much as I would love to do it, I just I do not know how to fit it in. And that's really what I want to address because I think that the way we think about it makes us believe that it's a lot more time consuming and difficult than it actually is. And what I want to propose for you today is that you're already spending more time on food and your weight and all of that. Then you need to spend when you're creating peace and freedom around food. So by doing this work, you're actually cutting down on the time spent on this. Okay? And your brain might be like record scratch. What?

Let me explain. So a big issue here is that we are just used to and conditioned to believe that weight loss or, you know, working on a relationship with food takes a lot of time and energy. We expect it to be this way because of our experiences. So I know for myself, I mean, God, I've tried like everything under the sun, right? So much time researching, planning, counting, mean standing in the grocery store. And God, back in the days when I first started doing Weight Watchers, we had a little cardboard slider to figure out the points.

Then later, of course, it was on an app and stuff. But you know, just so much time calculating, researching, planning, the whole thing, it's just so much. So when we have had that experience in the past, then we expect that this time will be no different. And we just think that's what's required because that's what's always been required. And so then we unintentionally, totally, subconsciously, like not in our conscious awareness, but subconsciously we recreate that experience because we think that that's what's required, right? If that's what's required, then we need to have enough things to do. Like then we just believe we know, like I'm just going to need a lot of time.

There's going to be a lot of actions that I need to take. And so I'm going to need to know that I have capacity in my life. I have space in my life to actually take this on. So we think that it's like straight up true or that it's factual, right? Like, it's just like this is not up for discussion. It's just true that working on our food, working on relationship with food, you know, losing weight, it just requires a lot of planning, right? Like, you know, you

might have had experience with all kinds of different hacks and advice on spending your Sunday prepping for all the things for later this week.

And, you know, all these things like lots and lots and lots of of planning, complicated planning, finding ingredients for food that you would normally do. Like it's just it's so much. Right? Or it could be that you have had success in losing weight in the past, just not long term permanent success. But what you follow like the plan that you followed that did give you some success. S required you to do it with an unsustainable amount of time, right? Like you could get the results, but the amount of time and energy required to keep doing it so that you could keep the results was unsustainable for you. Right?

So then it's really easy to tell ourselves, well, if my life were different, then I would be able to create this peace and freedom around food, but already know what it takes. I already know what to do. I don't have time. I don't have energy. I'm not at a place in my life or in a season in my life where that's something that I can take on. And that may be true, but it presupposes that the way you did it before or what was required of you time wise and energetically, is going to continue to always be what's required to get those results ongoing. And I want to take this moment to let you know that it just that's just not true. Isn't that so amazing?

Not true. It's actually much easier and less time consuming to lose weight, keep it off permanently. Like to do all this work when you know how to listen to your body. It's so much easier and less time consuming to keep the weight off, you know? So we lose the weight and then we are maintaining and it's something that we've actually solved for it's like a permanent result. It's so much easier to do what you need to do when you have peace and freedom around food, when you are listening to your body and following its signals. What we have gotten so confused about is in thinking that all the like little action things, all the planning, all the documenting, all the calculating, that that is what is required. And it's actually the opposite.

That's what's required when you have peace and freedom around food. Let me explain how I describe that or how I define it. Peace and freedom around food to me is being able to be around all foods, any foods, all foods, but especially in particularly the ones that have historically been more like trigger type foods or foods that are irresistible to you, ones that, you know, you feel like they're talking to you from the pantry, Come and

get me, you know, or from like the lunchroom or whatever. Like, oh my gosh, like, I can't remember. I mean, so many times. And when I was in practice, you know, I had brought my lunch and then I found out that a drug rep was coming and bringing whatever thing for lunch.

And when I found out what it was, I mean, it was literally like there was zero contemplation on should I maybe not eat that and instead eat what I had planned? I'm like, Oh, I'm so smart. I'll just eat that for lunch tomorrow. Can't wait to have whatever this thing is that they brought in. It's so funny. So to me, peace and freedom around food is when you're like, all of those foods can just be laid out in front of you and it just doesn't really matter that much. It doesn't mean that when you eat the foods that they don't taste good to you. It doesn't mean that you don't derive some pleasure from it. It doesn't mean that you don't enjoy that time. You do.

But it is in an appropriate amount, in an amount and in a way that feels very rational and grounded and in control. It doesn't feel like you're possessed or somehow just completely have, you know, disembodied yourself and are just off doing whatever. It just feels like it's just not that important. You can just as easily eat the food and enjoy it as you cannot eat the food and be equally fine and not having an emotional response to that. You're not feeling restricted or deprived or sad or bummed out or, you know, telling yourself stories about how it's such a bummer and it's so unfair that other people can eat that and you can't.

Or even telling yourself that you can't or shouldn't eat things like none of that even factors into it. It's all about connection to your body, meeting your body's needs and having an appropriate relationship with food and an appropriate amount of desire for food. So when you have created peace and freedom around food for yourself, the amount of time required to spend on and around food is like extremely minimal. Like I remember this is actually a thought I borrowed from someone who I've kind of fallen out of touch with. But we were friends many years ago, but still after I had found coaching because now, you know, I guess I'm one of the OGs.

I've been at this a while, so I remember her saying to me, It literally doesn't matter to me where we go to eat or where we order food from because I know I can always take good care of myself. Like whatever it is, I can find something that works for me. And there

was just not one ounce of drama or stress around it, right? Because even when we're not trying to be, quote unquote good or follow any kind of plan or something, there's still that chatter in our brains about like, well, what am I going to have? I mean, should I really have that thing? I mean, what I really want is the cheeseburger. But I mean, I probably shouldn't really have that, but I don't really want that salad either.

I mean, should I just have the burger? I mean, literally the amount of time, it's incredible. So I remember her saying that and thinking, Oh, I wonder how I could create that because that sounds amazing. Now I can say that today as of recording this, I've been experiencing that for a long time. It just doesn't really matter to me where I go and eat. Whatever it is, I'll find something that tastes good to me. I'll eat it, I'll enjoy it, and then I'm going to move on so you can see how that doesn't take a lot of time. You're not like, Wow, what do they have here? What do they have there? All this planning, right? You know, in creating this.

Yeah, it can be helpful to think ahead a little bit, but even that is not like all of the difficult, you know, actions that require so much of you. And I don't want to take away from some of them. If there are things that you love to do that totally work for you that you're happy to do for the rest of your life, I'm not negating those things. Like if you love to do you know, all your cooking on Sunday or make all of your lunches once a week so they're all ready to go or, you know, whatever, you know, kind of hack or tactic really works for you. Filling your freezer with frozen stuff.

Like I have literally no problem with that whatsoever. If that works for you. Amazing. What I personally found for myself is that those types of things would be helpful when I could do them, but I couldn't do them consistently. Right? That was all fine and good when I had a completely open weekend and other time to rest and I wasn't on call and my kids didn't have anything else to do and you know what I mean? Like, then all it took was for me to be on call for the weekend. Then I didn't do that. Then the whole next week was messed up and then it all devolved and fell apart.

So in my mind, then we have. Then that doesn't work, right? Then we have to find something else. I love to realize that there are so many different ways to create peace and freedom around food. All you have to do is find one. Like if there's infinite ways to create peace and freedom around food, then all you have to do for yourself is to create

one way that works for you. That's consistent. It feels easy. It takes up extremely little time in your life and energy because that's how it's going to be sustainable. That's how it's going to be permanent. So you can do all of those things if they help you, but you definitely don't have to. So if you have a belief that those types of things are required, particularly those things that take a lot of your time and energy, right? Like, remember, I don't want to stand in the kitchen all day Sunday preparing for the whole week like I'm exhausted.

This is what I'm supposed to be resting, You know, like it's totally okay, because guess what? You don't have to. You don't need to find new recipes. You don't need to research and buy new appliances or kitchen equipment of any kind. You don't need to even learn to cook or force yourself to like it. There are a lot of people who are like, Look, I can do it. I don't like it. Great, no problem. Then we find a way that doesn't involve you doing that. That's still also extremely easy and doesn't take up a lot of your time. So one way I like to think about this is think of your future self. Think about you who's living at a weight she's happy with that feels good in her body.

Like you know it's you in the future who has what you want right? So not struggling with food, feeling peace and freedom around food, feeling good in her body, feeling energetic, being able to do all the things that she wants to do. Clothes fit her the way that you want clothes to fit. So just think about her and ask yourself, Just really just spend a little time and let the answer come to you. How much time is she spending on food? Right? Like, is she spending hours every week planning, prepping, calculating, counting, you know, putting things together in her head around these things? Or is it just something that flows and is easy and natural? Does she just work with her body and it's innate signals? Does she allow herself to sometimes need a little more food one day because she's hungrier and a little less than next day because she's not as hungry versus saying, hey, there's a certain amount of calories they need every day.

There's certain number of macros that I'm supposed to be having every day. Like, is she? Actually connected to what her body needs and is offering it that. Because that actually really doesn't take very long at all. It's actually so, so quick and easy. It's so awesome. So whatever you're envisioning, whatever it looks like for that future self, whatever her relationship is with food, with her body, with, you know, what it's like for her out in the world, nourishing her body, you know, a few times a day. That's what

you're working to create. Now often we're like, I'm going to do all of these really hard things that take up a lot of time. Or maybe they're not like actually hard, but they're just like annoying or something we don't want to do. And then we use them as a means to an end behavior to get the weight off. Then we have no interest in doing it again. I mean, this was me with Weight Watchers 50 million times.

Felt like. Right. No interest in counting points long term and having then done no work on how to maintain that without the points. So then what do we do? We end up gaining it back again. Or, you know, however you work to lose that weight. So what we have to think about is how do we make it easy now? How do we make it the least time consuming now? And this is not hard. Like you find simple things to make or to acquire. If you're not cooking your own food that tastes good to you and you eat those things, you can still have variety in there, but you don't need gobs and gobs and gobs of variety.

Like that's how we make it more time consuming and more challenging for ourselves. More difficult. We can have an appropriate amount of variety and taste the things that we eat that taste good, right? Like those are the things we taste. They taste good, we get pleasure out of it, and then we move on. We get so confused when we think it requires more than that. Okay, so what you're working to create now is what you're envisioning it will look like in the future. I know this sounds ridiculous, but I really feel like deep down subconsciously for me, myself and I know I'm not the only one, I really felt like, let me just get this weight off. I'll, you know, do this means to an end behavior.

I mean, there were so many of them. But just saying Weight Watchers, since I did that the most you'll count points. I'll do the whole thing. And then like I'll figure it out then. Or I really do think that I thought or hoped, wished, prayed that I'd just be a different person or that it wouldn't be a problem anymore. Just like the issue would just go away. And even when I did it again and again and again, I think I still had that hope. And right like we see that it doesn't make any sense. I mean, now I have so much perspective on it, like. Right. Yeah. Okay.

But once we have that perspective, we have that awareness that's now an invitation to do it, a different way to do it in a way that doesn't take a whole lot of time. That probably takes a lot less time than what you're even spending right now. That is how we make

this permanent and easy. Okay. So I just want to point out that this topic, this issue is another great example of how we think we need to focus on is actions. Like what are the things that I can do to make it more time efficient? How can I cut down on the time that I'm spending like lots of actions is what we're looking for. But what we really need to work on is our thoughts. This is a thought issue.

This is not an action issue because the actions are actually less. Once we do the thought work, the actions become so much simpler and easier when we work on our thoughts. And this is exactly what coaching helps you with. So if you're still going, how does coaching help with weight loss? This is the type of stuff we're talking about recognizing that we have certain beliefs that actually hold us back and keep us stuck. We think they're true and they can be true if we decide we want to believe them, but we don't like the result that we get. So the way that we change that is by actually questioning our beliefs and deciding if we want to believe something different that can give us a result that we want more, that we like better, that serves us more. That is how coaching helps.

All right. Well, I'm excited for you to question your beliefs on how much time it takes to create peace and freedom around food. It's less than you think, I promise you. So much less than you think. Have a great rest of your week. Thank you so much. Happy International Women's Day. I celebrate you and all other women internationally, but seriously mean that. And thank you so much for being here and listening and I will talk to you next time. Take care. Bye bye. Ready to start making progress on your weight loss goals. For lots of free help, go to katrinaubellmd.com and click on Free resources.