



# 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. Well, hello there, my friend. Welcome to today's podcast. As I'm talking, I'm like, Oh, I'm a little sultry today in my voice. Oh man, I'm one of those people that I just talk a little bit extra than normal and I start to feel it in my voice.

And of course, you can imagine that being a pediatrician talking all day long over screaming babies, tantruming toddlers, you know, all of that could sometimes be really, really challenging. I actually had a period of time, I guess maybe a couple of years after I had my first child, where I was losing my voice for an entire week, like every eight weeks. It was brutal. And you'd think that people would be like, okay, well, you know, you just take care of your voice. They're like, No, I still have all my questions. I'm going to make you try to whisper, you know, like, squeak out whatever I need you to say, you know, to answer my questions and stuff. It was really tough.

I ended up actually seeing a laryngologist and got a strob and went to speech therapy even to learn how to use my voice better. I think maybe I needed to up my dose of acid reflux medications for a while. Anyway, the point is this is kind of par for the course for me. Maybe you don't even hear it that much. I feel it. There's like this kind of like, increased resistance when I speak that I feel. So I actually have a long day of talking ahead of me. This is the first thing I'm doing today. So you're getting the best of me. And I'm glad. I'm glad for that for sure. My voice is a little bit off kilter because I just got back

yesterday from spending some time with some new coaches that we've hired into our program who are super, super awesome.

I've spent a ton of time with them over the last several weeks, training them, onboarding them, and we had a really great time bringing them together and doing some even greater sort of development and preparation. And some of them actually started coaching today for the first time and I'm very, very excited for them. That's super, super great. It's just it's so fun to really, you know, spend time with people, develop them and have them be an extension of my vision, essentially, right? Like I'm only one person. I can only do so much.

But through them, they're able to really help to change women physicians lives, which is what we do every day in this company, which is so awesome. And of course on this podcast as well. So anyway, that's why my voice is a little bit funky because I was doing a lot of talking and laughing and we just had a great time together and really meaningful time as well. So today. So this is interesting. You know, I'm sure you can imagine that I do prepare before I record these podcasts. It's not like I just like hit record and just like, what am I going to talk about today?

And so I was doing some prep for this and I then looked at the spreadsheet that I used to keep track of episodes and just like we use kind of internally for tracking and making sure everything happens the way it should. And I realized the date that this episode is being released. And so the date, if you're listening to this on Real Time, the day it's released is April fourth. And April 4th is actually the anniversary of the baby that I had that died of her birth slash death. So I was like, oh, and so it's been 13 years this year, which is crazy. Cannot believe it's been 13 years. But guess it makes sense because I had two more kids after her and they're nine and 11.

So yeah, that's how it goes. But anyway, I think life has just been quite busy for me over the last several months and definitely in this month it's March as I'm as I'm recording this and I just think I hadn't even gotten to the place in my mind of like, Oh, April is coming. Like, you know, that just even thinking about the fact that the anniversary is coming, that it's her birthday that's coming. And what I found personally is that every year is different. Like every year is like kind of hits me differently. And what I find is

really interesting is that as I'm even talking about it, like I feel it in my throat a little bit, I've got a little, little tightness there.

So I'm not sure how this is going to go. I'm like, Wow. It kind of surprised me because I had the whole concept for this episode worked out in my head, and then I saw the date and actually the concept, the topic today I think is actually I was going to talk about it and I will talk about it through the framework of weight loss and creating peace and freedom around food. But it actually totally applies to going through grief as well, and I think a lot of other challenges in life. So there we go. I guess it was like one of those like thanks universe kinds of things because I think this is just the perfect, perfect day for this episode to be releasing.

And so, yeah, I mean, I've obviously done a lot of processing and healing since the time that my daughter passed. I think it was episode 12 where I actually talk more about kind of the situation and what happened because don't blame me if you're like, Oh my God, I have to know what happened. Then I'm like, same way, so I'm not going to go. Through it all again for you here. But episode 12 of this podcast, I tell more of the details about what happened there. So in case you're curious, if you're not, that's totally cool too. So just to kind of lay that out there, I'm like, Oh, maybe I'll get a little I might get a little emotional on this podcast.

I didn't expect that. But here we go. So what I really wanted to talk about today is the concept of spiraling. You know, it's something that we use. It's like a term we use colloquially just as a common word. And when I use it, I mean sort of like circling the drain, like I'm spiraling, like it's maybe the intensity and speed of my emotions is like ramping up and my brain feels like it's like pinball machine. So everything is going crazy and it feels like it's like a ramp up. Like it's getting more and more intense, right? When you think about like a spiral going, it's just like, Oh my gosh.

Like it's just, you know, whipping around maybe faster and faster. So it's typically a term that we use with a negative connotation, but through several paths. I have also come to become aware of a different sort of metaphor where we can use a spiral as a way to explain what's really a normal part of being a human, a normal thing that we should expect a normal process that happens to us in our lives as adults and honestly as kids do, but I think mostly as adults, or maybe we're more aware of it as adults, but when it

happens, we think that something is going wrong, like we think that something is off, that we've failed in some way, that we're doing something wrong, that you know it's not going to happen for us or whatever that is.

And I really wish that I could give a citation to whoever first came up with this. But I have to say that I've heard kind of different variations of it. I like read about it. I heard someone talking about it and nobody knew where they had heard about it. So I'm going to put my own spin on it today, and we're just going to be grateful for the anonymous person who maybe first, you know, put this together because I don't know who it is since this is a, you know, an auditory experience for you and not a visual experience.

I'm going to use words to explain something that I'm going to need to just use your imagination a little bit so that you can kind of understand what I'm talking about. So think about like either like a spring or, you know, something that is like a coil, basically. Okay, so think about a coil and think about it laying on its side so that the open ends are to the left and the right. And they're kind of basically laying on a timeline, you know what I mean? Like, like time is passing and that spring is there. And then think about that spring, the right side of it being tipped up a little bit.

Okay. So the x axis of this is time and the y axis is your progress in your life, your personal growth, your development, kind of how close you are to reaching your goals? Like the higher you go on the Y axis, the closer you are to to getting to where you want to be, you know, whether that's like something like self-actualization or whatever it is, that's where we're going in the Y direction. So we've got this spring that's on an angle. And so what we think is going to happen is that, you know, over the course of time it should be just like a linear progression that, you know, when we start at the left lower part of this graph, you know, we haven't made as much progress with our goals.

We haven't developed as much, we haven't self-actualized as much like whatever it is, we're coming in more as beginners or new to the process. And then as time progresses, as we move along the x axis, we think that it should just be like a linear progression up. So we go up that y axis just, you know, in a nice linear progression that, you know, as time passes, we grow more and more. We just progress and progress and we succeed and succeed. And that would be super fun if that's how it worked. But if you've had any experience in your life, then you know that that is not at all how it works.

It's much more like a spring. Okay? And what I mean by that is you're moving across time and as the coil moves up, you are progressing along the y axis, right? You are growing, you are developing, you are seeing successes, you are winning, you are succeeding. But then inevitably, at some point, the coil moves back down again. Right? Coil shifts down. And this is when we start to think something's going wrong with weight loss. This is when we're like, shoot. And we start thinking this isn't going to work. Maybe we gain some weight back.

Maybe the brain chatter around food is back when we had a lot of peace there for a while. Maybe, you know, we have some sort of life event or, you know, physical issue that we have going on. And what was working is no longer really possible for us or it's no longer sustainable for us. And so when we go. Down on the spring. You know, we're moving downward. Time is still passing, but it's like almost like our development, our progress towards our goals goes down, right? We retreat, we go backwards. You know, when people talk about it's like, you know, one step forward, two steps back, that's like what it feels like. It's like these are the two steps back. We're moving forward. We're sliding backward.

And during this time, it is the hardest because it keeps happening to say we get through that time. Then finally, eventually you get back to the coil moving up again and you're like, Oh my gosh, this is so cool. Now what is cool to note, I do just want to note that because the spring is moving up, you know, like to the top right corner, when you hit the bottom of that coil of that first loop, you are not going back to zero on the y axis. You are finishing a little higher up than when you first started, right? So there's still was progress. It's not like to say that it's almost like it's like nothing happened.

Like you learn nothing. You didn't grow at all. Of course you learned. Of course you grew. Hopefully you learned a lot. Hopefully that spring is steep, you know, like the angle that it moves up. But sometimes it's not. Sometimes it's a little flatter angle and we're like, Well, I learned some things, but I've definitely had a backslide. But then eventually, right, the coil moves up again and that's when we start applying, integrating those things that we learned, trying maybe something different that will work better for us and we start seeing results again. And that's a really fun time, right? When we start

moving up that y axis and it's so great, but eventually always we will hit a peak and we will move back down that coil again.

Now, you know, the inner diameter of that coil also varies, right? Sometimes we're really like, you know, moving up and down a lot. Sometimes it's it's a slower progress. Like we have long periods of moving up and growing and long periods of feeling like we move down, right? So that's how we often will experience it. But when you think about it in this way, it's very, very normal. Then when things have been going well for a while for you to hit some roadblocks, for things to feel more challenging, for you to feel like, you know what? I feel like some things that were working for me are not working for me anymore.

Or I just stopped doing the things that were actually really supportive for me. This is something I hear from my clients a lot. They're like, Things were going great and then they're not so much anymore. Well, what has changed? Well, I'm just not doing the things anymore that were really supportive to me. And this is not a judgment. This is normal. I've done it, too. Everyone does it. This is totally normal. So as soon as we recognize what's going on, that's when we have the opportunity to actually make the coil move back up again. Okay. So it doesn't have to be that.

Well, now I'm stuck in this many months downward part of the spiral of the coil, you know, Got to wait till this part ends. No, we start to realize, you know what? I can actually control this. I actually have more control over this than I think. So now go back to your coil on your graph right now. Think of the coil as though it were a bit of a like a cone shape where the widest part is and the bottom left and then it still is coiling, but the inner diameter is getting narrower and narrower. Okay. So it's more like a cone as you move up into the right because that is what I think happens when we implement coaching into this process.

Okay. Like I mentioned, right? Sometimes the coil is very big, sometimes the coil is smaller and the amount of time we spend in the downslide is longer. What I think happens is that with coaching and with dedicating time and effort into helping ourselves to be who we want to be so we can live the life we want to live in our lives, What we're actually doing is we're narrowing that diameter of the coil. And what I mean by that, like as we go along with time, what I mean by that is that the downward times are faster, they're quicker. We pick up on what's going on faster, we're more nimble, we apply it

more quickly. We're like more nimble on our feet. We're like, Oh, okay. Oh, look, so much more aware.

Look at that thing that happened. I'm not going to let this take me all the way down to, you know, almost back to where I was before on the y axis. I'm not going to make this mean that this is impossible for me. And, you know, I can't have what I want. I'm going to learn from this and quickly pivot so that I can get into that upward part of the coil again so that I'm moving up that y axis. Now you'll notice that the y axis is shorter too. But why is that? Because we're not white knuckling so much.

We're not like, Oh my gosh, I have to do this. I have to have success all the time. In some ways, we even welcome or relish the times when we fail or discover something that needs more work. I mean, that's happened to me many times where I'm like, okay, look. Get that now. Guess I know what my next work is. Whereas before, you know, many years ago, when I was first introduced to coaching, it would have been a much bigger deal. I would have spent a lot more time, you know, stewing in it, feeling terrible and all of those things instead of getting the help that I need, reaching out, getting coaching, being more curious about myself, being more introspective and understanding myself better.

And so then, right, I'm able to move myself up faster, find an area where there still is more work to do. And then I recognize that, get myself back going and the spiral tightens and like and it moves up the y axis even faster. So it becomes a bit of a cornucopia. Okay. Do you know what I'm talking about? The North America. A cornucopia is the thing that we have in Thanksgiving. It's like a kind of like a cone shape that has like the narrow part curves up. So that is what we're creating with coaching. So what I want to do here is I want to normalize for you what you are experiencing now and what you probably have been experiencing for a long time.

But I also want to let you know that there is a way to leverage what's normal and expected so that you benefit so that you're able to move up that y axis faster. That means that you're able to achieve the goals that you want faster. You're able to create peace and freedom around food faster. You're able to create better relationships, enjoy your work more, whatever it may be that you're working on. It's the same thing. So I did want to say, like going back to the grief thing that I talked about earlier, that coil, right.

Grief is actually so similar where you're doing fine for a while. Things are good. And then, you know, it just kind of just there's a downturn and you never really know when it's going to hit, meaning like you just feel a little bit more, you know, just emotional about it. It may be it hurts in your heart or in some other part of your body more. You know, think what I'm feeling right now is a bit of like, oh my gosh, I could have a 13 year old daughter right now. Like mean. I also believe that her life was complete and so that was never in the cards for her. And I feel a lot of peace when I think that.

But I think it's there's no way to not kind of spend a little time just even contemplating like, oh, my gosh, that would be really different. Life would be really different. And just even wondering, like, I wonder what she would have been like and not in a way to torture myself or anything like that. But it feels to me more like honoring her and honoring her memory and keeping her memory alive. But when I do that, I feel a little choked up. I feel a little like, Huh? Yeah, that was a hard time. And I think, you know, to a certain extent there's just some, you know, memories of how hard a time that really was just also seasons changing.

I know for some parts of the world it's, you know, not spring or it's already been spring for a while, but where I live in Wisconsin, for it to really start feeling springy in the beginning of April is like such a special treat. And that's how it was that year, the year she died in 2010. It was like an early spring, and that felt even harder for me because I normally would have been like relishing that weather and so excited about it and so happy to have a baby that I could, you know, take out and walk because it wasn't so freezing cold. And instead I was sitting with like this bright, cheery weather with this, you know, absolute hole in my heart.

And yeah, it was a really, really tough time. Really, really tough time. And, you know, don't talk about this too often because I don't know that it's like always super relevant, but I feel called to do it today because I do think that a lot of people are going through grief of various sorts alone or, you know, don't feel like they have language to express what they're feeling or don't want to burden other people. I don't think it's a burden. I think that the more we talk about what's really true for us, the better it is for everybody. But also, I'm you know, I'm recognizing who my audience is.



And I think if you're listening, you're somebody who's going to be a little bit more open to this than maybe other people in your life who are just like, Oh my God, why are you still on that? Like, have you not gotten over it yet? Like, what the heck? You know? So obviously it's important to be thoughtful about, you know, just like reading the room, Is this the right person sometimes, you know, a coach or a therapist or whoever is a great person because they're never going to be like, Really? You're on this again. Like, when are you going to get over this? Or whatever it is? Honestly, some people, you know, they'll say things like that, sadly.

So anyway, I just wanted to point out, you know, if you're going through grief and you're expecting it to be a linear progression, a linear experience, also not a linear progression. And and if we're going to really extrapolate this concept even farther, I mean, I think this is what relationships are like. This is what our relationship with our work is like, right? We've got the good times, we've got the hard times. It goes up and it goes down. It goes up and it goes down. As long as we feel like overall in general, we're moving forward, then we're doing it right. You are doing it right. Okay. So that's what I have for you today. In this case, spiraling is okay. It's normal. It's expected. Nothing's going wrong.

If this is what it feels like for you, just know that there is help. There are ways to kind of propel that coil upward, but I don't know of a way to straighten it out so that it's a line. I think you might have to be a robot or a computer or something like that. That's just not the way a human experience is, you know, it's not how life is. So with that, I'm going to say goodbye. Thank you for your attention. Hopefully this is something that you can, you know, marinate on this week. You know, just really think about how this concept might apply to you, how it might be actually helpful for you, particularly when you're going through a harder time or when things aren't going your way or you keep feeling like you're hitting roadblocks, recognizing, Oh, you know what, this is just a downward turn in the coil.

It's totally okay. If you want, you can make it fun. It's a slinky. You can tip the slinky a little, right? Those are those are more flexible so that, like, even when you're in the up coil, you're moving, you know, higher, faster or whatever, But whatever kind of, you know, visual works for you, just reminding yourself like, you know, when things are going great, that's awesome and let's enjoy that. And when it's not going our way, that's

okay. It doesn't mean it's never going to go our way again. It means that we have things to learn. We have opportunities to grow and figure things out. And when we start applying that growth, when we start applying that development, that's when the coil has the upturn again and we start moving forward upward in this case.

Well, I thank you for your attention. Thank you for joining me today. Always appreciate you being here and I hope you have a great rest of your week. I'll 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](http://katrinaubellmd.com) and click on Free resources.