



# 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 episode. I'm so glad you're here. Thanks for joining me. I wonder if you're feeling similarly to me. I mean, you know, obviously everybody's not like me, but if you have children at home right now, I wonder if you're feeling kind of the busyness of springtime picking up as I'm recording this.

It's a Friday. Of course, you're getting this on a probably on a different day of the week. But I'm just thinking ahead to like, what do we have this weekend? And what we have is, you know, two of my kids needing to be at a track meet before 8 a.m. tomorrow morning. It's like, uh, you know, I think that I always grew up thinking that parents would be so excited to go spend their entire day at their children's sporting events. And now as a parent, I'm like, oh, my gosh. I mean, if I'm just being 100% honest, which, you know, we can talk like that, I do not particularly enjoy going to, you know, a swim meet and sitting there.

I mean, I usually bring noise canceling headphones and a book and try to hide in a corner. I mean, it's so loud, so much input. It's just it's a lot, but it's, you know, it's a good thing for for kids. And I actually personally have found a different periods of time in my life that running and exercise and just like being outside in nature and things like that have really, really helped me with sort of mental health and stress reduction and just feeling okay. Running for sure helped me so much through my first two years of medical

school, and that only kind of happened because I decided to run a marathon for charity during my first year of medical school.

Don't even ask. It's a long story. But I did it. And so it was about halfway through that first year of med school that I started running more. And I was so glad to have it because it really, really did help me. It was like a thing just for me. And what I found was so challenging. One thing that I found so challenging about medical school was that all my friends were med students and we all were doing the same thing all the time. So it felt like there was no kind of separation from that, where in college I had a lot of friends who were, you know, had different majors and had a different day, and we just had different things to talk about.

And so being able to be outside and run, it really, really, really was very helpful for me. So I really do think that being able to promote types of activities like that in our kids, like don't care at all about winning anything or, you know, how fast you are or anything like that, but just learning to love being in your body, moving your body the way human bodies were meant to move, just enjoying kind of what it feels like to be alive in your body, I think is just a real gift that hopefully they can enjoy the rest of their lives. So that's kind of our goal with track is just like, can we just enjoy ourselves and have some fun running? And they so far have really been enjoying it.

So I'm excited to help promote that. But, you know, sometimes especially I think when we have busy lives during the week, I think it's normal to kind of be like, okay, how am I going to get my own needs met this weekend as well? I say this because I do think that for parents who maybe have a different setup where maybe they aren't working outside the home, that it's possible that the alone time that they get the rejuvenating time, the resting time might factor into their weekdays, You know, they have time to be able to recover so that they can power through on the weekends and do all those things and, you know, after school and at night.

And, you know, a lot of us don't have that. Also will say that I was just reading an article in I don't remember which newspaper it was. I was just reading an article a couple of days ago about how a lot of people find that when their children leave, you know, like their children are done living at home, they actually work more like they will think, you know, I'll have all this time to myself. But they're so unfamiliar with having time to

themselves that they actually end up working more. And then they look around, They're like, Why is my life so crazy? And so it's interesting, right, how we will kind of fill that time because it's what's familiar anyway.

That's just something I wanted to share. That's kind of where we're at here in my own home. I have my high schooler away at the State Student Congress Championship. It's just it's a busy time. We're heading into to lots of different things and all good stuff. But still, you know, it's important that we are being careful with our energy levels and taking care of ourselves so that we can keep it up. I know that when I'm not doing that, if I'm really getting low on sleep, just not doing the things that help me to feel good, it's noticeable. It's noticeable in my mood, in my enjoyment of life, in my interactions with others, particularly my family members.

It really does make a difference. And so just wanted to bring that up for you. I think it actually ties a little bit or maybe a lot into the podcast topic for today, which is about how coaching increases well-being. Now there are a lot of articles and published journal articles more and more seemingly all the time that are showing the effectiveness of coaching. Like this is a real modality. This is not like a made up thing. All it takes is a quick Google search. You'll find lots of things for coaching in general, but also specifically for coaching in physicians and how it helps with burnout prevention and things like that.

So we know that coaching is a good, useful modality, but actually just recently heard about this one Journal article and the Journal of Psychology that I'll link in the show notes page for this episode that I think is actually something that's really an interesting thing to to understand. And basically the article was looking at insight and self-reflection and rumination as predictors of well-being. So they did a whole bunch of different psychological studies. I will link the article if you want to read through everything, you are welcome to do that. I kind of geek out on this stuff to a certain extent. When they start really digging into all the details, I'm like, okay, let's sum this up here. Big picture kind of a thing.

But really what they were looking at is, you know, what types of activities actually promote well-being and which do not, and understanding like self consciousness, like the difference between self consciousness and self-reflection and self awareness. It's

actually really kind of I mean, I find this stuff to be pretty fascinating because they really are different and some help to promote well-being and others really take away. Right? So just let's back out for one second. Why do we even care about this? Well, when our well-being is better, when we feel. More.

Well, everything is better in our lives, right? And when that is the case, we have much less of a need to ask food and maybe alcohol to try to improve our well-being, like when we are struggling, when we're having a hard time, when our day to day life is difficult and we don't know of another way to improve our well-being, how to feel more well, how to feel more satisfied and fulfilled in our lives. We will commonly turn to other things to try to help with that. Right? If you're listening to this podcast, you're somebody who probably turns to food and like I said, possibly alcohol as well. So if we can find other ways of improving our well-being, it makes sense that we would have less of a need to over utilize food and alcohol. So not to say that, you know, we can't ever enjoy things that we eat or drink.

It's not to say that. It's just recognizing that, first of all, trying to improve our well-being with food and alcohol actually doesn't improve our well-being. You know, we know this maybe in the moment it kind of numbs us out a little bit. Maybe it takes the edge off the negativity, but it doesn't actually make us feel more well in the long term, we know that for sure, but we don't know what else to do. And so it's an interesting question, like what specifically helps us to feel more, well, what specifically improves our well-being? And that's what this article was looking at. And what they found is that improving our insight and improving our self-reflection were positive predictors for well-being. And rumination is a negative predictor.

And I think that we all kind of understand that. I debated whether I should explain to you what rumination is, and then I realized, no, I'm pretty sure everyone listening to this knows what rumination is. It's really interesting. They found that rumination seems to perpetuate a depressed mood and that it likely plays a role in sustaining anxiety disorders and depression. So I know that when I'm ruminating, it really doesn't feel good at all. It is keeping us stuck typically in the past, you know, but interesting that they believe it plays a role in sustaining more mental health, you know, more significant mental health issues because as we know. Right, every human experiences anxiety, every human experiences, depressed mood or depression symptoms or feelings.

But, you know, when it kind of crosses over a line, then as described by the DSM, then it's considered more of a disorder. So found that to be quite fascinating. So what's really cool about this, though, is that what they found with insight and self-reflection, I mean, that is literally what we do in coaching. And I think a lot of people still are very confused like, but what actually is coaching? And I will say it is kind of confusing. And you know why? Because people coach in different ways. So I'm just going to speak to the way that I coach and the way that my team of coaches who I've personally trained, how they coach. So I'm just going to speak for myself.

I know there are other ways of doing this that maybe aren't as related to this. So, you know, but so what was really interesting about this article like, so they said it was a positive predictor for well-being, having, you know, more insight and self-reflection, but like, how do they measure that? So they measured both subjective well-being. So just people being able to just tell them how they felt, you know, just what they had experienced. But they also measured their well-being with a scale called the psychological well-being scale. This is something you can Google online and find it. But what this psychological well-being scale does is it measures six aspects of well-being and happiness.

They're actually referred to as eudaimonic or maybe it's pronounced eudaimonic. I don't really know. It's a Greek word. I'll tell you what it means in a minute. But eudaimonic well-being. So eudaimonia, it's a Greek word and it's often translated into happiness or welfare. So this is something that the classical Greek philosophers wrote a lot about. So we're talking Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Epicurus, even the Stoics. They they all spend a lot of time thinking about this. And it even then goes into moral philosophy and there is a whole rabbit hole that you can go down if you want to do that.

But basically there were six elements to eudaimonic well-being, and that's what this scale measures. So what those six aspects of well-being and happiness are are autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life and self acceptance. So here's what I want to just share with you, because I read this and I was like, Oh my God, this is like literally what we do every day in coaching. And so just follow me on this. Like when we do not feel that we have autonomy, which so many doctors feel that they don't, right? They feel like their

autonomy has been taken away from them. By administration, by legal laws and rules, and just the powers that be. Powers outside of themselves. Right. They feel like they've lost that autonomy. And so when you don't have that autonomy or you believe you don't.

Then you have less happiness, less well-being. And we see that so often in physicians when it comes to their work, right? So autonomy, environmental mastery is the next one. So many of us think that we're just sort of subject to the environment around us that we don't have control over that, that the environment, you know, physically, even, you know, who we surround ourselves with, just the way it is around us, basically, that we don't have control over that. So being able to master that produces more well-being and happiness, personal growth, you know, I mean, I think it makes so much sense. Like we just are driven as humans to improve.

If we were not, we would not have all the advances that we have. I mean, just think back, even like just 50 years ago. Next week is my birthday. Turning 47. And I'm just thinking back to like some things that, you know, how it used to be in the late 70s and early 80s and how much has changed. It's incredible. It's incredible. And my parents are in their 80s and just thinking to myself like and how much change they have seen in their lives, like, why do we have any of that? The only reason we have any of it is because of humans drive for personal growth. So when we aren't able to grow as humans, we feel less happy and less well-being. Right? So positive relations with others. Oh, my gosh, makes so much sense.

I cannot even tell you. We coach probably coach on relationships more than than any other topic. You would think we'd be like digging into the details of food all the time. We are not because that is simple and it does not require that much of your effort or energy. That's the easy part. What we got to then do is figure out those relationships when we are not experiencing positive relationships with others, whether that's at work or in our personal lives, it detracts from our well-being and our happiness.

Next is purpose in life. This is something that I think is very, very important. I think that where I start to see this being an issue is when people really are burnt out and start feeling like, what is the point why I'm even doing this? You know, I think that that's where I see that in physicians who are not burned out. I think there's less of this because I think that for a lot of doctors going into medicine at least had some element of

purpose driving that decision. And so finding some personal value out of the work that you do, I think is in feeling really connected to that, I think is something that comes more naturally to doctors, but not necessarily I mean, especially if you decided to become a doctor because your family expected it of you or basically made you do it. That definitely happens, too.

There's definitely, you know, times when that's an issue. And of course, right when we're not feeling like we're fulfilling our purpose or we're disconnected from that purpose would make sense that that would negatively influence our happiness and well-being. And then the final part is the self acceptance part, right? Which is basically what it all ends up coming down to, which is that we need to work on loving ourselves, accepting ourselves as we are. And I know that sounds so unfamiliar or uncomfortable for a lot of people. I remember hearing those words and being like, Yes, logically I understand what you're saying, and that does make sense.

I would like to experience some self acceptance, but I literally do not know how and if that's how you feel when you hear that, I want you to know that you're not alone. That is a really, really common common experience, particularly for people who are higher on the achievement scale, right? Who are higher achievers, who really expect excellence from themselves. It's just something that's so unfamiliar. We do not know how to create that. Well, the good news that I have for you is that you can be taught. I was taught something. I teach others all the time. My team teaches others all the time. It's something that we have to learn and practice. It's a skill that we just have not been taught. And so again, right when you are rejecting yourself, when you don't have a lot of self acceptance, it would make sense that your happiness and well-being would take a hit, right? So those are the six measures autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relations with others, purpose in life and self acceptance.

So these are like six aspects of well-being and happiness and a way to measure whether these other activities are actually moving the needle with well-being and happiness. And so, you know, insight and self-reflection are what drives that. And, you know, I've talked on this podcast. So much about building awareness, understanding yourself and not with judgment, not with criticism, but to just understand yourself better. Why are we here? What has created this problem? Not because we're bad humans and we shouldn't be struggling with this, but because the facts are that we are struggling.

And something has led us here because we know that our results are always created by the way that we think and feel. So that's not a bad thing. No judgment, no criticism. It's just the way things work. It's just how life is. So when we can build insight into that, build awareness, understand ourselves better, understand others better, just, you know, be able to look at a situation around us and not just see it as the total just face value, but be able to spend some time thinking about some other elements of things. Get curious about different parts of it that insight is what helps us to create those six aspects of well-being, right? Like just when we're able to understand that, okay, I just had this argument with this person, so hold on.

What was going on for me? What did they say? And then what did I make that mean? That, you know, drove me to take the action of lashing out at them back, like reacting in that way. What was that all about? And that's what I just described. There is part of self-reflection, right? It's insight and self-reflection that are positive predictors for well-being and happiness. So we have to be able to reflect back on ourselves, not in a self-conscious way, not in a critical way, but in a way where we can understand ourselves better so that we can make conscious choices to do better in the future.

And when we have more insight and more self-reflection, as the study has shown, we get to feel happier, we get to feel more well-being. And I see this literally every day, literally every day in my coaching practice where the people that I work with, the physicians that I work with, are truly having these results and noticing them and seeing them play out in their lives and seeing how much so many things have improved in their lives because they have been practicing and applying these tools of insight and self-reflection. So this is how coaching helps things to be better, right? Insight and self-reflection on why are we eating this food? Why are we not doing the things that we know we should be doing? Typically, when we ask that question, we're so mean to ourselves about it.

Instead of genuinely wondering no for real, why am I not willing to do these things that I, quote unquote should do? There's a good reason you have a good reason why you're not doing it. So let's figure out what that is. Maybe there's a different thing that you, quote unquote, should do or plays into what you think you should be doing that you are willing to do so that you do start getting those results. But when we just are beating ourselves up and we lack that insight and self-reflection, we are literally just stuck in a

hamster wheel. We're not making any progress. And I think that is what so many people who struggle with food and weight find themselves with where they just are.

Like, I'm putting forth so much time, effort, energy, and I feel like I'm going nowhere. Well, totally understandable. But the good news is, is there's a way off of that, a way to move forward, a way to no longer need food and possibly alcohol to feel better and to understand yourself so that you are growing, which helps you to feel happier and more well in your life. Which mean what else could we ask for? Sounds amazing to me. So next week, actually in a couple of days from when this episode goes out live, we are going to be enrolling our next weight loss for doctors only coaching group.

So if you're like, Yeah, this makes a lot of sense and I think I'd like to explore what that would look like. Then I want to first invite you to come to the free training that we have coming up later this week. We have actually a couple of different days and times. It's going to be this Thursday and Friday, and I think it's April 6th and April 7th. And the way to register for that pick, the time that's going to work for you and day is to go to [katrina.com/different](http://katrina.com/different) So that's how you're going to pick that up get yourself there if you listen to this after that and you're just interested in getting more information about the program, possibly talking to a member of my coach team to get more information or get your questions answered, just go [katrinaubellmd.com/info](http://katrinaubellmd.com/info).

You can get more information about our program and figuring out if it's maybe the next best step for you so that you can actually create what you want. I mean, why do we eat? Because we want to feel better. I mean, plain and simple, it tastes good. Well, what's good about a tasting Good? It helps us to feel better. We just want to feel better. And that's one way. That overall takes away from our well-being. What if we could increase our well-being in a way that was more sustainable? That's what we help you to do with coaching, and then you just don't need the food anymore.

And guess what? When you don't need the food anymore and you don't need the alcohol anymore, your body goes to a natural weight for you, right? It doesn't always have to be about, you know, slogging away and being so uncomfortable and so restricted and so deprived to get the pounds off. Right. We can be open to it being kind of a nice side effect that we got that we enjoy because we did this other work. And also, if you just want to get to work losing weight, we can help you with that too. All right.

Have a great, great, great rest of your week. Thank you for joining me. I would wish you a happy weekend if it was you know, if I knew it was the weekend for you, but it's a weekend for me, so I'm wishing myself a happy weekend and you a great rest of your week. I will talk to you next time. Hopefully, you'll be able to come to the free training that we have. How weight loss is different for doctors and what to do about it. It's going to be later this week, like I said, go to [KatrinaBell.com/different](http://KatrinaBell.com/different) thank you so much have a great rest of your day talk to you soon. 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.