



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 that you're here today. I have a fun guest today. You know, as you probably have been able to tell, I haven't been doing a ton of guest lately. I do have some people that I am excited to share with you and today is one of those days. So today I want to share my conversation with Natalie Bacon.

She is a really cool, cool person. She'll tell you how we met in the episode and I've known her now for actually we were saying like something like five years or something like that. She is really an amazing person who first became a lawyer, then became a certified financial planner, and then kind of realized, you know what, I'm kind of struggling in life and became a coach. And through coaching, becoming a coach and actually being coached, she was able to really kind of shift down a bit from the hyper achieving, you know, type A really pushing, pushing, pushing herself all the time, kind of energy into to an energy where she's still accomplishing she's still true to herself and her ambition, but is doing it in a way that makes time for her personal life, makes time for her family and makes time for herself.

So that's something that's really much more sustainable for her and not so sprinting and crashing and repeating that cycle again and again. I know that so many people listening to this today are going to really resonate with her story. And I love just the idea of kind of downshifting. What would that look like? What would downshifting look like for you?

What would the benefits be? Not to say that you have to do it, but it can be an interesting thing to play around with and to just think about what would it be like to try to maybe take it to a lower gear to carry the metaphor forward?

And I think that often when we think about like slowing down or doing less, you know, we just feel so bad right about ourselves. We feel just like it's not good, like our worth is so tied to what we accomplish. And so Natalie and I talk about ways to do a lot and have time for yourself and still have that self worth that we've overly attached to our accomplishment. So I'm very excited for you to listen to this conversation with me and Natalie Bacon. And at the end of the episode, she'll tell you more about where you can check her out if you're interested in finding more about what she does. All right. Please enjoy my conversation with Natalie Bacon. Natalie, I'm so glad to have you here on the podcast. Welcome.

Thank you so much for having me. Honored to be here.

So I would love for you to just start us off by just introducing yourself a little bit, helping us to know who you are, a little bit more about your journey. Give us some intel on you.

Yes. So my name is Natalie Bacon. I currently am living in Charleston, South Carolina, by way of Chicago. And as a born and raised Midwesterner, we may be heading back there. That's where my heart is always. I was an attorney practice for just about five years and then got my CFP to become a certified financial planner and did some wealth management and then started coaching. And now I'm a professionally trained, certified life coach, which you already know because you were a part of that journey and that story. Katrina was my teacher at coach training at the Life Coach School some three, four, almost five years ago.

That's a while ago, isn't it? Yeah.

It's the last in-person training before they kind of did it again here and there. So. So I've always been a big fan of yours. And. And from there, I have just coached a lot of women, a lot of professional women, a lot of moms as well. I coach them. All of the stuff that you talk about really, except mine, is geared a little bit just more towards a broader audience of women in general.

So you definitely have a background in your family with some, you know, people in the medical field. Right. I mean, I'm so curious about just sort of like your upbringing. I feel like when I saw that the people in your family, like there's just like an intensity there, I think. And I'd love to hear more about what that experience was like and even just expectations of you growing up.

Oh, it's such a good question. So yeah, my brother is only 15 months younger than me and he is an oculofacial plastic surgeon and I was a trained and am a trained lawyer. I don't practice anymore, but we were just taught that education is pretty much the most important thing. I mean, my parents didn't say education is the most important thing, but it was very clear that go to college was just given and it wasn't really like, Where are you going to college? It was, where are you going after college?

It was sort of the expectation. My dad was a dentist. My maternal grandfather was a dentist. And so lots of people in professional capacities in my family. And it was I would say the culture in my home was really academic focused. My brother is just incredibly smart, naturally, and it was easy for him to do all that. And I worked a lot harder, but still was able to be pretty successful in that way. And, you know, there wasn't any time where I thought, Oh my gosh, I have to do this. I sort of just taught that this is what you do. And so I wanted to do that.

Yeah, it's like a self-motivation, right?

Yes. So that was really the culture in our home. And it wasn't until I was working as an attorney and I left out the part where I had, I think, \$206,000 of student loan debt when I first graduated law school. And that was my first introduction to money, more or less on a very deep level. And I went all in and that's how I got my CFP and learned a lot about money and paid off all my debt and started an online business. And that process, I just grew through so much and learned so much about myself. And over time, you know, as we all do into adulthood, learn like what's out there, besides the specific career path that people ahead of us are helping us sort of follow, which of course isn't a bad thing. I just found personally that it felt very kind of if you think of a spectrum like too far on the spectrum for me, once I got into, I don't know, like late 20s, around 30 years old, like I'm

so far into the rigidity, the type A the get more done, the work, work, work like it was too far for me.

And it's not that I wanted to go all the way to the other extreme and like not have any goals and not work and not do any of these things again but thought you know, this is just the beginning of my life. Pretty much. I would like there to be a little bit of a middle ground. And that's really where I started doing more work on myself and just opening up my mind to the possibility that it's not just one option, that I have to work 50, 60, 70, 80 hours a week, that other people make great livings feel fulfilled and have, for lack of a better word, some sort of balance, whether that's internal or external, that I was sort of itching and kind of wanting to experience myself.

And I think that what you brought up is so common, right? I totally identify with what you're saying, like the go, go, go the like, basically like the hustle and grind culture, you know, like just putting everything you have, type A like and putting it all in and then kind of getting to that place of like for what, you know, like when you're trying to get degrees. And, you know, those initial jobs and stuff, it can feel more like, oh, I can see in front of me like the goal, like where I'm trying to get to. And it seems really measurable. And then you get to a point where you're like, Well, so now I'm doing it. And like, I'm kind of exhausted now and like, is this really it? Is this what I've created? And I think it's really common to feel like the only other option is, like you were saying, like the bull on other side of the pendulum swing. So opposite that we don't identify with at all. We're like, I don't see any gray zone in between. I don't see any other option. And that all or nothing thinking can keep us really stuck.

But then when we keep on exerting ourselves really in to that extreme, first of all, it becomes normalized. We don't even realize it is an extreme, you know, because also often we're surrounded like all our friends are like us, you know? So we're like, I think this is just how life is. But then we get burned out at a certain point. Like you can only keep yourself doing that for so long. And if it's not even like emotional burnout could be that you start having, you know, some physical symptoms or, you know, your body starts to let you know you can't do this anymore. And it can really be a difficult challenge to figure out like, who am I if I'm not the total overachiever? I remember when I first met you, I'm like, Dang, she is a baller. Like, she's like a lawyer and a financial planner and like, doing all this amazing stuff. I'm like, Wow, Like, this is so incredible. So you get a

lot of positive feedback from people, but then inside you're like, Yeah, but there's a reason I'm here. My coach training.

Oh, interesting. You say that because I distinctly remember you asking me. Don't know. We were in class, so there had to be some more context. But you asked me like, what feeling comes up for you when I suggest that you could, like, work less and basically chill out And the feeling my response was terror. And I got teary eyed like, that's how far on the extreme that I was. I really thought that my primitive brain was going to the complete opposite end. Like, if I work less, I'm going to be, you know, homeless, sick, like everything's going to just fall apart, right?

It was very much that all or nothing thinking. And it was really just because of the way that I had, you know, wired my brain and my experiences and how my upbringing and how that was the path. And I wasn't practicing any sort of future focused thinking about like, what could it look like in between? And that was something that I had to learn and I really learned it slowly. A little bit of the thought work, of course, and then also with some actions like let's stop working at this time and just see that everything doesn't, you know, blow up and it's okay testing that out.

Beliefs are not going to come and arrest me because that didn't didn't work enough today.

That's right. And just seeing all that at the time I was doing my business already, like, oh, the business can still run even if I'm not thinking about it at all. And that for me was a huge internal shift. And looking back, I can see how I would reinforce that identity by calling myself, Oh, I'm just like this. I'm just really type-A. This is just who I am. And I would say it as if it was a fact. And now kind of being on the other side of that, I see how much that just kept me stuck in that identity. Like, I really did not know that it was possible to to feel as grounded as I feel now, or just have a sense of calm that is pretty accessible to me in a way that wasn't before.

Like I was always in my head and always go, go, go thinking that it was just me or my life or my circumstances. And now looking back, seeing, oh wow, a lot of that was me just reinforcing that identity of like, No, this is just who I am, this is how it has to be. And I think that sort of limited me. And now I can see that in a way that I live a much more, I

like to say internally balanced. I don't my goal is not external balance. I don't need five hours of work, five hours of family time. You know, it's not necessarily about the hour allocation as much as it is about how I feel internally about kind of the overall way my life is going in each area of it, whether that's work, family and any other hobbies and just life in general.

Yeah, I mean, I remember when I met you when we you had the I think it was about a week together. We were together. I remember there was this kind of like intensity about you that is not there anymore. It was like this, almost like this urge that would feel like of you. I'm like, I have to go, go, go, go, go. Like, that's fast as possible. But the other thing I recall, I believe at the time, like you were single and you wanted to be dating, like you really wanted to find a partner, have a family. And you were like, trying to figure out, like, where am I going to fit that into my life? Nailed it.

That's exactly right. This is something that I want and I don't know, like I don't think it's possible to have both. And I think that what I love is that we're having this conversation so many years later where you actually have created that for yourself, where you have beautiful new baby. Well, he's not even so new anymore, right? And you're pregnant again, right? Like you're expecting another way? Yeah, over half way. Right. So, yeah.

So it's like, you know, you're married and, like, you just. You finally have this life that you want, and you're working, and you. Found this balance. So I just think that like a lot of people will talk about like this is how you do it. But like sometimes I'm like, do they How much did they really struggle, though? Did they really understand how hard it is for some of us, you know, to like, really slow ourselves down? And what I loved and I'd love for you to speak to this is rather than talking about slowing down, because some of us are like, I don't want to slow down. You talk about downshifting, and I love that term as a way of describing it, right? Like, if you think about it, it's like you're just you're still going forward. You're still, you know, accomplishing, but maybe just in a different gear so that there's room for other things in your life. So what did that process look like? Like you said, it was kind of slow, but like there were some actions too. I'd love to know more about what that was like for you. Yeah.

So again, for myself as well as a lot of my clients are professionals, lawyers, doctors, pharmacists, all of that. And for the clients who are attracted to my work, a lot of them

are on similar journeys. And again, I like to think of it as a spectrum because one of their concerns will be, Well, I don't want to lose this part of me. I like that I accomplish things. I like that I, you know, provide for our family and have this career. And so the fear is that if I, I call it downshift, if I create more space in groundedness and feel a little bit more calm in my life, that that will take away from the part of me that is so successful.

And what I like to remind them is that in myself is maybe, but probably not. And also, you could always go back, right? Like to calm the fear down like it never actually happens. There's still that part of you that is accessible. So I still love setting goals. I still love that I am ambitious, I still love building my business and creating and all of those serving my clients, all those things. So that part of me is still there. I just think of that spectrum and it's a lot more internally balanced, and when I have any fears that come up, same with my clients, it's just reminding ourselves that I could always go back.

Like there's no again, like police coming to say, you have to work this amount or not that amount. So for me personally, it was just reminding that primitive fear based part of my brain that I could go back to the way things were. And we saw that that wasn't working exactly how I wanted. As you mentioned, I wanted to partner. I wanted to get married. I wanted to have a family. And for me, that meant at least having some space for that. And I gave myself permission to slowly create that. And so I wasn't in a rush. I had a coach at the time as well who helped me through that process and helped me see that again, slowing down or you want to say downshifting or just creating some space intentionally for at the time it was dates, you know, myself, even just dating myself insofar as I'm taking time to care about me without thinking about what's next either on the to do list or or in front of me in terms of accomplishment. And part of that too, is like, I love to be future focused and set goals and think about what's next. And that's really fun for me. But again, take it to the extreme resulted in sort of missing the present and missing the opportunities just to feel a little bit of joy here and there right in your everyday life.

And I remember doing I call it like ten minutes of silence, just you could call it meditation. But for me, that word is so loaded, like don't know how to meditate that just to calm my nervous system down. And it's very uncomfortable because for someone who, like I was in that go, go, go energy to just sit still and not touch your phone, to not

do anything is uncomfortable. And so knowing that I just allowed my body to slow down, calm down and get a little bit more regulated. And I would do that every day. And I really started to enjoy it and look forward to it in a way that I didn't expect. And that's sort of just one small action that allowed me to get just more grounded. I really felt like I was always sort of in my head and thinking about the next thing and. Now I do still identify as type A, but I don't identify so far on that on that spectrum. And I have lots of space. Now, of course I fill it with things that I want to fill it with, but the difference is in really feeling aligned with my life and where it's going. Like I like this. I have my family life. Like you said, I'm pregnant with my second child. I have my business.

And and overall, I'm content with sort of how I've I've been able to balance things in a way that I genuinely just didn't think was possible. And I just want to point out that I didn't think it was possible as a lawyer. I didn't think it was possible as a certified financial planner, and I didn't think it was possible as an entrepreneur and a coach. And I think that that is worth mentioning because so often we think it's not possible given our circumstances. So, for example, if you're a physician, you might think, well, that's just not possible in the hospital I work at or as a physician.

And I think just allowing yourself the mental space to question that and just say, well, what if it was? Doesn't mean you have to take any action or make any changes, but just allowing yourself that imagination to think about that in a way that you haven't before, I think opens up possibilities. At least I know for myself it did, and I think for clients it does as well to see that it doesn't have to be the way that it is right now or the way that it's been in the past, that there are really limitless possibilities for how you might want to have your life look, whether that's doing more or doing less and and where you want your life to go.

Yeah, I love to think about it. Like all my clients, current and former, will be like, Oh yeah, she always says this, but I have often said I'd like to think of it as there's an infinite number of possibilities, right? Because often we're like, Well, I mean, maybe there's one way, but it's going to be like a needle in a haystack. It's going to be so hard or whatever. I'm like, okay, but what if there were infinite possibilities where you got what you wanted? And then all we have to do is find one that works for you. I love that. It's like, Oh, okay. Right. I love that. Expanding things a lot. Like, you know, because it's just as true as or not true as thinking that there's no possibilities. Right. But like, you're

definitely not going to think of ideas if you think that it can't there aren't it's not possible that there are no ideas that will work, right? So you have to be able to open your mind to that and think.

Usually it happens in ways that we don't. Even have the idea of. But we have to have an idea to at least take steps forward. It's just that there are pivots along the way. Like I couldn't have predicted, I'm going to marry this guy or have these kids or even have kids at all. And I just knew that I had this desire to downshift a little bit to create more space for feeling calm and joy and the feelings that I wanted to feel and not be so high strung. And that desire was enough for me to just kind of give myself permission to think, okay, maybe this is possible. Train is telling me it's possible, so I'll go off of her.

And it's honestly the transformation that I'm most proud of and kind of circling back to what you said, people ask about your accomplishments. They ask about work. And even the way that we talk about our family members or our kids or it's it's a lot of it is accomplishment based, right? My neighbor was just telling me her son got chosen and selected for this gifted program and that is amazing. We want to celebrate that. And also the internal shifts that we make are something to be proud of as well and kind of giving yourself permission to see that as something that is. Worthy of your own pride. Like, I'm so proud of this transformation that I've made, and yet most people don't know about it or ask about it.

And you probably wouldn't talk about it, right? Like I was thinking. Like you were never like someone asks, Oh, how are things going? You'd never be like, Well, you know, my child just did this really thoughtful thing for this other kid the other day. Like, you wouldn't talk about that, right? Like, or it would be, you know, just kind of be like, socially awkward or something to bring that up. But it really is true, though, because you have to be able to give yourself that validation because you're not going to get it outside. If anything, people, you know, whoever you're surrounding yourself with, they might be kind of judgmental of that and just be like, Well, that's weird. Why are you not going after that promotion or, you know, whatever that big rant or something like.

Had another neighbor. It was a newer neighbor and I had just met her and I sort of was talking about my career path and she's like, Oh, lawyer to coach. Your parents must be real proud. I was so taken aback because like you said, you sort of surround yourself

with people who who you're similar to. And I said, Yeah, they are. But it's just another example of that where socially we want that validation and knowing that you can give it to yourself and just asking yourself, Is this what's best for me? Is this good for my soul? Is this good for my life and for my family? Those questions are the most important questions. Not, you know, is my neighbor going to.

Yeah. Be impressed with my credentials. Right, right, right. So I have a question and I'm just very, very curious. So I think that especially for people who are, you know, like us, who let's just say, I think it is easy to fall back into these habits of overachieving and stuff and like, go, go, go, go. In our personal lives once we, you know, find a partner, but also specifically once we have children. Right?

Because the whole mothering thing, you know, parenting in general, but mothering specifically can really be what is the word to describe it. It's a lot. Let's just say, you know, it can be very easy to go all in on overachieving now as a mom or as a partner or things like that. Did you notice any of that starting to like flare back up again, so to speak, Or like, have you had to kind of be aware of like, okay, I'm going to want to be like this kind of a mom, but that's not what's best for me or my family. And dialing that back or How have you approached that?

Yeah, so because I was already practicing these tools and sort of had that bigger shift, three kids right around when I started to have kids, I really didn't go all the way back, quote unquote, to the extreme of the rigidity and the go, go, go and the the high strung that I once was. I, like you said, just became a lot more aware of the possibility that that could happen and just manage my mind and coach myself a lot. So I know that if I overplan which is personal, right? Overplanning for me, if I don't have enough white space on my calendar, then my mind goes into that hyperactive type-A got to get it all done.

And of course, are there times when that happens periodically? Sure. Things get messed up, someone gets sick, you got to move things around. Life happens. But overall, I really am aware and cognizant of, if you want to call it boundaries, but just how I want to plan my days and manage my mind around that in a way that has really allowed me to stay out of either end of the spectrum, so to speak, in a way that I maybe wouldn't have thought was possible again before. Because I think just the logistics of of

family life and parenthood and in any life, right, you can be in that responsibility, energy all the time. Right? So much so that you can kind of forget or do it too much, that the whole point is to enjoy your life, right? Like there's no like.

Okay, enjoy those relationships.

Right? Yeah. We're not like clocking out of the responsibility ever. And so just being aware that that energy is something I naturally gravitate towards. Like you said, I always wanted to be a mom. I am the oldest of three. And so for me, that responsibility, energy is something that I naturally just can go into pretty easily as part of who I am. And that again, I like, but I really try hard to be aware of it and notice, okay, having my nervous system activated so much or being in that responsibility, energy so much isn't good for me. It's not even good for my health, let alone just for my life and my family and who I want to be.

So making sure that I'm having those time boundaries and saying no to things like I used to do a lot more in terms of travel and just realizing that, you know, every no is a yes and a yes is. A no to something else and for me, kind of my peace. Internal peace is, I think, something that I've learned to value a lot more than getting it done and just noticing the tendency for my worth to want to come from the to do list, which of course it never does. So trying not to outrun that and instead realizing that I could just leave everything undone and still love myself and still be okay. It's hard to do.

Which kind of is like, right? Like you just like 80% of everyone listening just went like.

It's so true. Like walking into like a messy room or a messy kitchen. I just again, it's not that I leave, you know, my house is pretty tidy, but I like to just play around with what's happening in my mind because I know that's the root cause of it. And I know that unchecked what's going to happen is I'm going to continue to do everything on a to do list indefinitely. Like the to do list does not end. It's never going to end.

Yeah, yeah, yeah.

And I remind myself that that's also not a bad thing. Like we want full lives. We want to be invited to things and we want, you know, families. If you want that and activities or

travel or whatever, we want those things. And yet how can we make sure that we're not prioritizing all of those to dos and activities and plans over ourselves? Really? Because I think that when I make sure to not do that, when I'm really taking care of myself, call it self care, I show up so much better in my life.

Yes, yes, yes, yes. It sounds to me kind of like like what you're trying to do or suggesting is kind of living between like a three and a seven, you know, in intensity in life. Right? Rather than going from the 0 to 10. Right. Where it's like, you know, so all or nothing, these huge swings of extremes, like trying to just bring it in so that it just takes an edge off that intensity. You're still totally doing amazing things. You're still totally experiencing the ups and downs of life. But just like bringing it in that feels more sustainable because I really do think that like and you see this all the time, whether it's a woman who is, you know, like has a career or profession and has children at home or is, you know, her career is taking care of her children at home, it really can be the priority of the family at the woman's own expense or the mother's own expense.

Right. And it's like, you know, it's okay. I'll sacrifice myself all for all of you. And then what's left, right like? And that's what so many, you know, people that we coach with. Right. Like the marriage relationship is in a shambles. Maybe their physical health or, you know, their emotional health isn't good. Like they're they're really like, how did I get here? And what I love is you're talking to people, you know, throughout the whole I mean, at any age really, or any stage of life, but is specifically to moms like I know that when my kids were little, your message would have been extremely helpful for me because it's just so easy to it was like, Oh, now I'm going to be amazing and awesome at this too. Except there's like the measuring stick is a lot harder to figure out.

I'm a human being and it sounds so obvious to all of us. And yet sometimes we try to take action and take care of other people, our lives, our careers, whatever it is, as if we are robots and we just plug in like a new battery pack and we don't need food, we don't need water. We don't. You know how often you always hear the typical professional, Like you're you're holding your bladder, You're not going to the bathroom because. Right. You don't want to take that time for your body. And so just reminding myself I'm a human being who has lots of needs and I am responsible for taking care of those needs. And it doesn't have to take a lot of time, but just little things like having my water

bottle and taking bathroom breaks and just the self validation for me. I'm a big words person.

It's just my preference. And so the more I validate myself like, Hey, I'm doing a good job, or Hey, I made a mistake, but that doesn't affect or impact my worth. The more I give myself that validation, the less needing of it I am externally so the less I try to make my worth performative, the less I try to look for ways to do more, quote unquote good and then get that validation externally. It's yeah, maybe I did a good job on that. Maybe I didn't do a good job on that other thing. And that's okay. You know, that's part of it. I want to be growing and I still want to be accomplishing and doing things, but also not at my own humanness. Not at my own expense.

Yes, 100%. Well, Nellie, this has been such a great conversation. I know that so many people have gotten a lot out of it. And if they want more, I'd love for you to let the audience know where they can find you and what you're offering these days.

Yeah, so you probably like podcasts. If you're listening to this. I have a podcast called The Design Your Dream Life podcast with Natalie Bacon and everything else you can just find over at Nataliebacon.com.

All right. And bacon like the food. That's right.

That's right. So I always say we're like Kevin. Right? Take your pick. Well, Natalie, thank you so much for coming on and sharing about this. I think it's something that well, I think more people need to talk about it. And I'm glad that you are. And it's just been really fun to see you grow and develop over these years and just so happy for you. It's amazing. So thank you so much.

Thank you so much for having me. It's been a wonderful.

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