



WEIGHT LOSS FOR BUSY PHYSICIANS

— with Katrina Ubell, MD —

[00:00:08] 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. Hello, my friend. So glad you're joining me today. Thank you for being here. I have a topic that I'm really excited to talk about because I think people bring this up all the time.

In fact, I know they do because people who struggle with this come to work with me. And so so I want to talk about this some more because I think that there's kind of a surface level [00:01:00] understanding to this topic. And then there's like a deeper understanding that's often overlooked or not understood. And I want to talk to you more about that today. So I'm sure you saw the title of this episode, It's How to Feel in Control around Food. And that's what so many of us want. I mean, literally, people come into my program, they tell me I am afraid of losing control with my weight. I'm afraid of losing control with food or with my eating or I feel out of control with my weight or with food. Right? If food is around, I can't control myself.

[00:01:31] I'm just going to be eating everything. And often they desperately want to get their eating under control or their weight under control. And there can be lots of reasons for why they want to do that. And so certainly this is no judgment on that. When we feel out of control, we know we don't like that. I mean, just think about Covid times 2020 was the year of learning to to be out of control and stay there and learn to maybe expand our capacity to be with that. But what I want [00:02:00] to talk to you today is that feeling of

being in control around food and how we can create that and then some more behind that, as well as an invitation to come and join me to learn about a way where you can feel more in control more easily.

So I'll be telling you about that in just a moment. So the first thing when I think about these things, I'm like, Well, let's just back up here for a second. So what do we actually have control over? And I think the bigger question is actually what don't we have control over? Because we often think that we have a lot more control over things and situations than we actually do. And that belief that we have control over them is something that creates a lot of issues for us. It's something that I and the coaches on my team coach on a lot.

[00:02:50] It's a huge thing that we coach on when it comes to parenting and it kind of makes sense when there's a brand new baby. You do have, you know, full control, basically. I mean, not completely full control. You can't [00:03:00] make them poop. You can't make them eat, you know, you can't make them sleep. There's things like that you can't make them do. But in general, you do have a lot of control over their day to day life and different exposures and things like that. And then you just basically go on a journey of progressively losing that control. It's just less and less and less. And for those of us who really do enjoy control, that can be a really, really difficult thing to work through.

So what don't we have control over? Well, straight up, we do not have control over other people, and that is adults and children. That includes everybody. We do not actually have control over them. Sometimes we delude ourselves into thinking we do have control over them because we do certain things in an effort to get somebody to do something and then they do it. And then we go, Oh, look at me. I'm so good. I'm so good at controlling them. But that is not how it actually works. And then we find that out when we try to get someone to do something [00:04:00] or not do something, and then they do the opposite and we're like, Wait a minute, this isn't how it's supposed to be.

[00:04:07] And then we really struggle. So really what it comes down to is it's just kind of nice for us if people will do what we want them to do or vice versa, but we don't actually have control over that. We don't have control over situations at work, right? We don't have control over patients, vital signs or something like that. You know, like who's going to go into cardiac arrest on your shift? Like we don't have control over those situations

at work. We don't have control over decisions that are made and things like that, you know, administrative decisions and then widening out even more.

We don't have control, at least, you know, as individuals, super meaningful control over geopolitics, national politics, like, you know, climate change. Sure, there's definitely things that each one of us can do. We really can take our own [00:05:00] responsibility to participate in the ways that we can and are able to. I mean, like voting is a great thing. And, you know, making decisions that support our environment are great things. But like the bigger picture types of things, like can I control, you know, the smoke spewing out of factories in other countries? No, I cannot do that. Right. So I don't have control over that. We don't have control over natural disasters or the weather.

[00:05:24] Right. We don't have control over things like that. So it's a lot of things actually that we don't have control over. It's actually most things that we don't have control over. But we don't like to think about this because those. Of us who like control, want to think that we are in control of the time. Actually, it's not even so much that we want to think that we're in control. It's that we want to feel that we are in control. So we have thoughts that we are in control and that will make us feel that feeling of in control, that I'm in charge, I've got this.

Things will go the way I want them to, and [00:06:00] that's really what we want. It's the feeling. It's not so much the thought, but of course the feeling comes from the thought. Now what do we actually have control over? Well, we really only have control over ourselves. And so that means we have control over our thoughts, our feelings and our actions. Now, this may sound or seem like it's minimal, like it's not very much like it's maybe even not enough. But I want to offer to you that this is everything. This is actually super, super huge and it's way more powerful than most of us can even realize. What many of us do is we spend a lot of our time trying to control things that we don't have control over, mostly other people and situations.

[00:06:45] And so we work really, really hard and we do not get the result that we want, at least maybe not fully. And that's not something that we like so much, right? So it can feel very effortful, like very difficult. Over the course of doing [00:07:00] that, we are not actually spending a lot of time or maybe even any time really actually controlling ourselves. And that's the only person we can control. So what we do in coaching, so

much of it is learning to control or rather than using control. I like to use the word manage. We learn to manage our thoughts and our feelings, which of course result in our actions as well.

That's exactly what we do. We understand what we're thinking and feeling and the actions that we're taking and the results that those create. Then from there we can decide, do we still like those results? Do we still like taking those actions or do we want something different? And then we can decide and we can choose something else if that's what is in our best interest or what we choose to do. Now, it sounds like when we're just talking about it like this, it sounds like, Oh yeah, you just didn't think differently. But it can be a real challenge, particularly in certain situations, and that's why coaching can be so helpful.

[00:07:54] So when we're thinking about it in this case, right, like we're afraid of losing control, control, we feel out [00:08:00] of control around food. Mostly what we do is we just feel more concern, maybe some fear, maybe some panic. Maybe we get hard on ourselves, speak to ourselves harshly, beat ourselves up thinking that that's somehow going to help us to do better, which will prove to us that we are in control. But that's not actually how it works. Then the more kind of heat that we're receiving from ourselves. Often the worst we feel and the more out of control we feel.

Also, when we're feeling like there's this onslaught of negative thinking and emotion coming toward us, we often want to escape that. We want to feel better. So what do we do? We eat because we don't have other resources to help us to feel better. Right. So then the cycle continues. You can see that, right? Then you eat, you feel out of control with your eating, you beat yourself up. You feel terrible about it. Then to get out of feeling terrible, you decide to or, you [00:09:00] know, it just happens that you end up eating and then the cycle continues, right? And then you go again and again and again, which does not feel good. So instead of thinking about it like, you know, I'm afraid of losing control, I need to control myself. I think there's more that we can do because for sure there are thoughts that we can think that keep us more on track, right? We can, you know, create beliefs and identities around ourselves.

[00:09:25] I'm someone who does what they say they're going to do. I create a plan and I follow it. We can generate the feeling of being in control so that we feel more of that

when that's what we want, we can absolutely do that, and there's totally things that we can do that help us then to take the actions that we want to be taking and not take the actions that we don't want to be taking. So by no means am I minimizing that that is a big step for sure, and it's a huge entry point into this work. But I want to take it a little bit deeper today and talk about why we even need control, right. [00:10:00]

When we talk about control and wanting control and fear of losing control, like why do we even need control? Like is control required? As you could tell, I spent a lot of time thinking about these things like, why do we think we need control? Is that even true? And how do we know? When I think about needing control or controlling myself or controlling my food or controlling my weight, that feels. Like gripping to me. It feels very challenging, very hard. Like it's going to require a lot of effort and energy.

[00:10:37] It doesn't feel fun. It's not something that I'm particularly looking forward to. It's honestly pretty unpleasant. Like when I think about it, it's not something that I'm really excited to do or wanting to engage in, and I wonder if you feel the same way. So we think that we need this control. We want this control. [00:11:00] If we don't have the control, then bad things happen. Yet we aren't actually, when it comes down to it, interested in that kind of experience because it doesn't really feel the way we want to feel.

So we have to really step back and think to ourselves, Can we have the weight we want, the relationship with food that we want, the relationship with ourselves that we want without it feeling controlled or controlling like that really is off putting to me to think about that. Just speaking for myself here, I'm wondering if you feel the same way, right? Like, do I have to feel controlled or controlling or having control even be a part of this, to have the relationship with myself, with my body, with my weight, with food that I want to have. And so I want to offer to you that my answer to that is no, I don't think so. When I think about like, if [00:12:00] I don't want to feel controlled, then how do I want to feel? I think that's a great next question, and I invite you to ask yourself the same thing.

[00:12:08] Like the way I want to feel is free. I want to feel peace. I want to feel ease. I want to feel like it's running in the background. And it doesn't require a lot of me, right? Not a lot of my energy or effort or attention. Like it's just kind of happening easily and it's just not even really a thing so much that doesn't feel like control to me. But it's what I

want and it's what I've created for myself and what I help my clients to create all the time. When you think about control, control is usually only needed when there's some sort of conflict, right?

Like, if you think about it, like part of you wants to eat the cookie and then the controlling part of you is like, No, we're not going to eat the cookie. And so we wonder like, [00:13:00] you know, I just need more control. But there's that part of us. It's usually a kind of younger, a more primitive part of us that's like, I want the cookie. Like, don't try to talk me out of it. I want it right? And there's the conflict. So it's easy for us to think, Well, then I just need the controlling side to win out. It needs to be stronger. It needs to overpower the desire part, the part that wants the food, that part that wants the food just needs to shut it and be quiet.

[00:13:26] And, you know, it doesn't get to have a say. And that's how I'm going to have to I'm going to have to create a scenario like this in order to have the result that I want. And I want to offer to you that that conflict is actually not required. Right? If there is no conflict, then there's actually nothing to control and then control is not actually required or maybe it's required a lot less. So [00:14:00] if we remove the conflict, then what happens? Then we have peace and ease and freedom. And it's a lot easier, a lot less energy.

It's not taking up a huge part of our life or a huge part of our brain space. Does that sound more attractive to you? Because it sure sounds a lot more attractive to me. And so I can understand that if somebody is feeling really out of control, the first thing they're going to want to do is to create some control. And that makes a lot of sense. I mean, that's one of the first steps that we do in my weight loss for doctors only program is is creating a bit of structure. It's not something that's super rigid. It's actually individualized for each person. It's something where you have a lot of choice so that we can hopefully prevent some of the rebellion that comes when we feel like we're being told what we have to do or something is too restrictive.

[00:14:53] But creating some structure really can help us to more easily feel that [00:15:00] control that we're desiring. And once we can show ourselves, actually I can do this, I am able to follow through and do what I want to do and we start getting some

of those results that we want. Then we can start digging into this second part, which is how can I do this without maybe needing so much of that gripping control? All right, think about controlling something or someone. I'm like using my hands. I'm using a lot of muscle strength to move them or direct them the way I want them to go.

And that's exhausting. You know, it's something that we talk about with willpower. Like willpower is great. It really can help us in a lot of scenarios, but it can only take you so far. And that's actually what I want to invite you to as this podcast episode comes out tomorrow and two days from, well, three days from now. So on the 21st of June 2023 and the 23rd of June 2023, I'm going to be offering a live [00:16:00] free webinar and it's called How to Shift from Willpower to Want Power, Want Want Power, where we aren't needing to use willpower so much, where we are shifting more into that peace, into that freedom, into that ease and how to do that.

[00:16:15] So I want to invite you to come and join me either live or if you can't come to those two live presentations I'm offering some watch parties as well, where you're going to be able to watch the replay with some other doctors and be involved in the chat there. And then members of my team will be there answering questions and we're even going to have some prizes at the watch party. So if you stick around to the end, we're going to offer you some awesome prizes. Just, you know, because I understand that not everybody can make every single every single time and day. But if you come to the live ones, I'll answer your questions if you have any.

So the way to register for that is just to go to Katrina, md.com/want power, want power. So if we're talking about removing that conflict, [00:17:00] if conflict is what's requiring us to use control and we are no longer wanting to have that control, then it makes sense that if we remove the conflict, then control is no longer needed or much less needed. So how do we actually remove the conflict? That is the power of coaching. We work on our minds. We understand what the actual conflict is. I would say that the vast majority of my physician clients, when they first come to work for me, are not aware of what that conflict is.

[00:17:31] And I don't blame them. I mean, why should they be aware of that? This is what we specialize in. This is what we do so well in our coaching program. But in understanding what that conflict is about and understanding that there's a reason why

you eat food even when it's not exactly what you want to be doing or you wish you were doing something else. There's a reason we do everything. There's a purpose to everything that we do. And so if we want to do something different, we need to [00:18:00] understand what that purpose is. We need to figure out essentially kind of like what is the itch that that food is scratching so that we can figure out a different way of solving.

For that, we can resource you up in a way so that you have other resources you can use, and food no longer is necessary, so food is no longer necessary. Do you really need control? No, because it's easy. It's peaceful. It's very freeing. Your relationship with food. Food gets to be food. Food gets to taste good, you know, nourish your body, you know, occasional pleasure, extra pleasure from that, you know, in addition to the natural pleasure that you get from eating like that's its job and it gets to just have that job. Only we're not asking it to also take on the the job of managing our emotional lives.

[00:18:48] And that is how we start to create that permanent result of actually losing weight and keeping it off of creating what I call peace and freedom around food, being able [00:19:00] to be around your favorites and you're happy to eat them and you're happy to not eat them. It just doesn't matter that much to you anymore. It's not this big, important thing. Food has an appropriate amount of importance in terms of your perspective toward it, in terms of the way you think about it and the way your brain focuses on it. And so that. That is really how we feel in control because we know we don't even need control.

I never think to myself, I need to control my food or I need to feel more in control around food because I've moved past that point and I'm now in this different place and I want to invite you to come along that same journey. Right. We can create some control and then when you're ready, we can figure out how you just won't even need control anymore. And that feels super, super awesome. So one more time, if you would like to come and join me, which I'm sure you would, it's going to be a really great presentation. I'm excited about it. How to shift from Willpower to Want [00:20:00] Power. Then please come and join me. We're going to be talking about what willpower really is and how we unintentionally waste it.

[00:20:07] We're going to talk about how we can conserve our willpower so we have more of it around when we need it and how we can replenish it in the moment when we feel like we don't have any more willpower. And we're going to talk about how to rely less on willpower and instead use want power. So of course I'll explain to you what want power is. And it's a really, really great tool and message and something that I'm guessing you're not super fluent in.

So make sure to register whether you're coming live with me or you want to come to one of the watch parties, which will be super fun. Just go to katrinaubellmd.com/wantpower. And with that I'll say goodbye. Thank you so much for your time and attention. I hope this has made an impact in your life, giving you something different to think about. A different way of focusing on this, something [00:21:00] that helps you to see it doesn't have to require more energy. Actually, we can make it so that it requires less of you and you get the results you want. So good. Can't wait to teach you how. All right. Have a great rest of your week and I'll talk to you next time. 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.