



# WEIGHT LOSS FOR BUSY PHYSICIANS

— with Katrina Ubell, MD —

Katrina Ubell: Hey my friend, how are you? Guess what today is? Today is solar eclipse day. It just happened less than an hour ago where we are. Of course the day you're listening to this is not solar eclipse day but it happened. We are not in that zone of totality, but we're still in the area. I actually couldn't even go outside and look at it because it was totally overcast, but the reason I'm excited is because NASA had a live feed and you could just watch it eclipsing across the country and it was so fun. It really was super neat. My brother lives in Portland, Oregon, so they drove a little bit south to see it, and he sent me a text, like a picture of his kids and the sky was like, not a cloud in the sky, totally beautiful, and he said it was just the most amazing experience and I'm just so excited for them. I'm so excited for their boys, because they were totally into it. What an amazing, amazing experience.

There's going to be another one in like six or seven years and I thought, "Okay, we dropped the ball on this one but I think we maybe need to try to make that one happen." It was really just a cool experience. You know what was even cooler on the NASA feed is they had in all these different locations, these female - these women NASA scientists and even some female astronauts, which I thought was so cool. I just was like yeah, "Yeah, come on, girl power. Get out there ladies," it's so neat. They were just so emotional, seeing them so excited was part of what was so cool. Just being all jazzed for them because it's just such an amazing experience for them. So if you saw the eclipse, congratulations, that's awesome. If you were in the hospital or working or whatever, you can watch the replay. That's kind of what I thought, I was like, "Meh, we'll just watch it on the internet. That'll be cool. This will be fine."

So I am having an unusual week because I am actually home alone for an entire week. Saturday to Sunday, you guys. What is this? I don't think this has ever happened. My husband's family has a cabin in Canada that his grandfather built over 50 years ago, so we usually go up there. It's on this beautiful lake. We usually go up there for a week every summer, but this year I decided to stay home for a couple of reasons. I'm currently enrolling my next doctors only group coaching experience, and so I have a whole bunch of phone calls to make to select the exact right people for the group, and we don't really have reliable Wi-Fi up in Canada. Even the phone can be sometimes a little funky.

There was no way I wanted to go up there and then sit in the cabin in the entire time working so I said, "You know, husband," his name's Matt, "Why don't you just take the kids up there on your own, I'll stay home. I'll get a whole bunch of work done, and I'll feel super accomplished, and you guys will have a great time. We'll meet up on the other end of the week." So that's what we're doing, so that is a very different experience. I've already gotten a ton done, I have been decluttering some things. I don't have massive decluttering to do, but just tidying. More tidying than decluttering.

Going through things, the kitchen has never been more pristine, there's not toys everywhere. It's so fun. It's awfully quiet though, sometimes I'm like, "Wow, it is so quiet in here." Good and bad, sometimes I'm like, "Hm, okay it's pretty quiet."

Anyway, today I'm going to talk to you about how to get out of a funk, and I'm not talking about the kind of mid-life funk that Susie and I discussed in episode 24. I'm talking more about the kind of funk that you just sort of wake in from time to time. You know the kind where right when you wake up, you're kind of annoyed, maybe you're extra tired, maybe the pager woke you up an hour before you needed to get up and you couldn't get back to sleep, maybe you're hormonally at a point where your mood is a little bit more sensitive, or a lot more sensitive. I know for me, if my kids wake me up with them arguing or fighting first thing in the morning, that does not set my thinking off to a good start. For sure.

Maybe you just woke up on the wrong side of the bed, that happens, right? Sometimes we have no idea why we're in that funk. All we know is we're in one. Our mood is not good, and it's just not a pleasant experience of our lives. Then there's other times where we get into a funk, so we didn't start off in one, but we get into one. Maybe it's because we don't feel good physically, so our thinking goes into the garbage then too. It could be as simple as rough traffic on the way into or back home from work. Or our teenager, or our threenager ... have you heard that nickname for three year olds? Threenagers? Our teenager or our threenager is having a day themselves, and that throws off your mood. It could be a patient who really challenged you at their appointment. Or maybe they insulted you to your face.

Or, this is the classic: you thought your kids, or your spouse, or your nanny, or your mom, or someone else was going to ... you name it, pick up the house, put the toys away, start dinner, clean up after dinner, take out the trash, bring in the recycle bins, put the laundry away, or whatever it is, and they didn't do it. For many of us our thinking goes directly south when this happens, and we're just in a funk. We just feel annoyed, or defeated, or hopeless, or helpless, or irritated, or we just feel totally sorry for ourselves.

I'm sure you can think of your own examples of when you end up in that kind of a mental funk and it just doesn't feel good, right? We want to feel better but sometimes it's just really hard to dig ourselves out of that hole. So today, I'm going to give you two simple things to do to get yourself out of this funk when you're in it.

Before I do that, I want to point out that the cause of the funk is always our thinking. Okay? Always. I'll notice this in myself. I'll be completely aware of what my thoughts are that are making me feel the way I do. Making me feel bad. I can totally see that I'm creating this situation for myself and that's what's called, being an emotional adult, right? That's taking responsibility for all of our own emotions. If you want to learn more about emotional responsibility, check out episode 27 of this podcast.

Even so, even when we're fully aware and taking full responsibility for how we feel, sometimes we still struggle to find a different way of thinking about it so that we can feel differently. That's what I'm going to offer to you today, a way to start turning it around for yourself. So sometimes you can turn it around like a speedboat; you work through the two steps and before you know it you're feeling so much better. Other times it's more like turning around a cruise ship. It's turning, it just takes sometimes time and some effort. Be patient with yourself and keep reminding yourself of your new thoughts.

The first thing to do when you find yourself in a funk like this, is to take a moment and find gratitude. What exactly is gratitude? Harvard Medical School defines gratitude as: a thankful appreciation for what an individual receives whether tangible or intangible. With gratitude people acknowledge the goodness in their lives as a result, gratitude also helps people connect to something larger than themselves as individuals; whether to other people, nature, or a higher power.

There's really no way that you can feel a negative emotion at the same time you're feeling grateful. But it can be hard to figure out something to be grateful for when you're in that funky mood. My suggestion is to take it back to the bare-bones basics. I'm grateful for my lungs that keep breathing for me. I am grateful for my heart that pumps blood through my body all day and all night. I am grateful I woke up alive this morning. I am grateful I live in a house or apartment, and not in my car or under a bridge. I am grateful I have clean drinking water every time I turn on the faucet. I am grateful that when I need food I can go to one of a huge number of places and give them some money, and they let me take home whatever I want.

If you have a faith or religion, you might choose to be grateful for something within that framework, but you get the idea here. You focus on really dialing it back to some things we tend to take for granted. I suggest just choosing two or three things to focus on being grateful for. Make sure though that you're truly generating that emotion of gratitude with how you're thinking about it. If you just go through the motions half rolling your eyes like, "Yeah, sure I'm grateful I have clean drinking water," of course you're not creating the true emotion of gratitude for yourself.

Ralph Waldo Emerson is quoted as saying, "Cultivate the habit of being grateful for every good thing that comes to you, and to give thanks continuously. And because all things have contributed to your advancement, you should include all things in your gratitude." This is such a great quote, notice he says, "all things have contributed to your advancement," not, all good things have contributed to your advancement. Not all successful things, all things. This is a mindset shift for a lot of people. I would say probably most people.

The idea that everything and I mean everything that happens in your life is for you. No matter what it is, whether it's a magnificent success, or a raging failure, it contributes to your advancement. Most people don't think this way. It can be hard when something is really going wrong, to figure out how it's happening for you. But once you can see how it is happening for you, you can decide to be grateful for the advancement that it provides for you in your life.

Here's some examples. How can my kids bickering be happening for me? I can decide that experiencing them bickering helps me to know that I still have more work to do in teaching them how to coexist peacefully. This advances me as a parent.

How can really bad traffic be happening for me? I can decide that it's the perfect way for me to get in the personal development work that I want to do, by giving me some extra minutes in the car to listen to podcasts and to think about how I'm going to apply what I'm learning to my life. This advances me toward my goals.

How can having a teenager with a really rotten attitude be happening for me? I can decide that it's a great opportunity for me to work on creating love in my heart, for someone who's not being very easy to love. This advances me as an evolved human being, and increases the amount of love in the world.

So you chose a couple or three things to intentionally feel grateful for, and if you're able to, I'd encourage you to write them down. Just scribble them down really quickly. Write what they are and why you're grateful for them. Thoughts are much more powerful when you hand write them and are then able to read them back to yourself. Many of you will find that you feel more authentically grateful if you take the couple minutes to write them down and then read them back to yourself. This exercise takes you from your negative emotion that you are feeling and puts you into gratitude, which feels so much better.

Then the second and final step is to do something nice for someone else. It can seriously be an extremely small and quick thing. It doesn't have to take a lot of time or cost a bunch of money, if you don't want it to. I'm going to give you some ideas.

It can be a quick text to someone you love telling them you love them, or telling them you want to see them soon, or just telling them you're thinking about them and you're hoping they're having a great day. You can pay for someone behind you in line for coffee. You can hold the door for someone. You can say good morning to someone with a genuine smile on your face and look them in the eye while doing it. You can pick up something, someone dropped near you and give it back to them. Take a moment to lend a hand to someone who's struggling with something. Take a moment to help someone who's lost in the hospital, find their way. Take two or three minutes extra when you're rounding on your lonely hospital and nursing home patients to chit chat a little bit. Give someone that you either know or don't know, a genuine compliment. Send flowers for no reason to your mom, sister, aunt, cousin, best friend, or someone you know who's struggling in their life.

Let someone go in front of you in a line. Offer a genuine compliment to a parent on their children, in front of their children. You can feed a parking meter that's about to expire. You can send a quick email to someone who's made a difference in your life. You can give someone a bear hug, give them a really good squeeze; not just like the kind a little pat, but give them a squeeze. Pay the toll for the person behind you. Let one or two people merge in front of you in traffic. Hold the elevator for somebody. Give a tissue to somebody who's crying. Say hello to a cleaning person. Donate a little money to a charity you believe in. Leave a generous tip for somebody. You can hand write a thank you note to someone.

You get the idea. It's just a small thing to do to brighten someone else's day. This gets you out of your own head, meaning away from your self-imposed funk, and it changes your focus onto something much more positive. If you find your brain then trying to drag you back into being upset about the original thing that put you into that funk, then just gently remind it, let it know that you'll think about it again later, once you've had a chance to cool off and settle down. For now, you're focusing on something else that serves you.

I want to encourage you to give this a try and then let me know how it goes over on the show notes page for this episode, which you can find at [katrinaubellmd.com/35](http://katrinaubellmd.com/35) and then tell me what you decided to be grateful for and what you did for someone else. I can't wait to hear all about it, so fun. Have a great week and I'll talk to you soon, buh bye.