Katrina Ubell: Hello my friend, how are you? How are you doing? Kids are back to school. I'm recording this right after kids went back to school. Hallelujah, I love summer but I love me some routine. I don't know about you but man on man, just knowing what the days will look like, having that predictability. I mean there's still tons of craziness, who am I kidding, but having more of that predictability is just such a weight lifted off your shoulders. Had a great summer, hope you did too, but I am happy to be back into the swing of things. I always feel like it's September and then here we go October, right downhill, right through the holidays, right before we know it we're in a new year. It's going to be so fun getting to talk to you and teach you so many more things.

I did want to tell you, I realized that I had told you I would tell you what Hamilton was like with my son in Chicago, and I don't think I told you. As you can guess it was amazing, it was even better the second time. We thought the first time was so ridiculously good. Oh my gosh, the guy who played Aaron Burr, the second time, was so good, so good, really, really good. It was just so fun. About 10 minutes in I was just seriously in my heart beaming with joy over the fact that I could offer this kind of an experience to my son. Years ago, I had kind of read some things about giving kids toys versus experiences, and you probably had this happen too, by the time they get enough toys, they end up getting so many toys, you're like we've got to dial this back. This is way too much, what else can we offer to these kids?

We've really been trying to focus on experiences and I took my son to a really nice dinner afterward and we were sitting there talking and I said, "See I would much rather spend a gazillion dollars taking you to see Hamilton then to buy you a whole video game system." Not to judge anybody else, but that is just our and my decision making on how to spend our money and what's important, and I really think that that's going to be one of those moments in his life that really make an impact, so to speak. I was super, super excited to be able to do that for him, it was such a great opportunity to have one on one time with him, which is so great with kids. If you're thinking about doing something like that too I want to strongly encourage you, it was so good.

When I work with my clients I notice a really, really common trend among so many of them, and I want to talk to you about that today. I want to talk about how we make things so much harder than they really have to be. I'm going to give you a few examples, because you're probably like, "Oh I don't do that." When we have had a really busy call week and we haven't gotten much sleep, we feel tired, actual physical fatigue, but then we also have thoughts about the fatigue. Thoughts like, "This is ridiculous, I'll never get through this day. This day's going to suck. This day's sucking so bad. I'm such a black cloud. I'll never get enough sleep.

Why did I choose this field? That was a bad decision, what was I even thinking? I definitely need a new job because nobody should have to live like this. This isn't fair. Nobody else has as bad of calls as I do", and on and on.

Or we walk into clinic and we see the schedule of patients for the day. Our thoughts immediately go to, "Oh no, they're coming in today? Oh crud, I'm totally double booked, that patient didn't get booked correctly. When are the staff ever going to figure out how to book people the right way? My day has already blown up and it's only 8:30 in the morning. There's no way I'm going to get any lunch today so forget following my eating plan, I might as well just go have some bagels and doughnuts that are in the break room now because I'll need the energy to power through this day. I wish I just had a desk job sometimes so I didn't have to interact with all these people everyday. This day is going to be totally hellacious." Sound familiar?

Or we pick an eating plan so we can lose weight and we start following it and we start seeing results, but then we start feeling bored with it. It's the same food all the time. We start having thoughts like, "I need some new recipes. This is so boring I can't live like this. I need variety in my life. I'm definitely missing something because this is so hard. I could never eat this way forever. I'm deprived of so many amazing things to eat. I can't follow my plan anymore until I find new recipes or new ways of making my food taste more interesting." Recipe for disaster, right?

Or we get on the scale and the number is not in the middle of our BMI range. We have thoughts like, "I'm a disgusting, lazy, piece of you know what. How could I let it get this bad? This is totally embarrassing. I've been so good with my eating and I'm not even seeing my weight go down, this is total crap. I don't even know why I try, it's so unfair that other people can eat whatever they want and not gain weight. This is so frustrating, I should just go eat whatever I want because even when I try to lose weight it doesn't work so what's the point?"

Finally, we have a party or event or a weekend filled with lots of activities coming up. We have thoughts like, "This weekend is going to be hard. I never do well on weekends. I'll be around all these delicious foods and it's so hard to resist them. Weekends are my downfall. I do better during the week because I have structure then. How am I expected to follow an eating plan when everyone around me is eating and drinking and I'm missing out on all the fun food? I can't go to this party and not have a cocktail or glass of wine because everyone will definitely look at me weird if I'm not drinking. They won't think I'm any fun and I'll feel really left out. I don't want to be the annoying person that has to ask for their food to be prepared in a really special way like Sally in When Harry Met Sally, it's way too embarrassing. I basically just have to eat what's offered to me. I can't offend them by not eating it. It would devastate them. I'm just not that kind of person, so I'm just going to have to not follow my plan this weekend. I just have no choice.

Do any of these situations sound familiar? They do right? What I want to introduce you to today is a concept called math versus drama. The math of a situation is the neutral fact, or facts, or the circumstances in the thought model. Everyone would agree on them, there's no room for interpretation by anyone, and everything else that's left are just thoughts, and those are completely optional. In these examples, the thoughts create tons of drama for us. I'll tell you what the math is for each situation that I described.

When you're tired after a call the facts are that you were on call for a certain number of hours and you got a certain number of hours of sleep during that time, that's it. When you're in clinic the facts are that you have certain patients booked at certain times and your staff booked those patient appointments.

When we pick a new way to lose weight the facts are that we're following a certain prescribed eating plan that we willfully chose, the end. When we step on the scale the facts are the number on the scale. Another fact is the time of day you stepped on the scale and what you were wearing or not wearing and that's it. When we have an event or a busy weekend up ahead the facts are that there are certain events we've agreed to attend, food and drinks will be served or are available for purchase at these events. You can see why I call that math right? Math is totally unemotional, it's very black and white, no room for interpretation.

Drama is all about interpretation and creating our experience of the math. I've pretty much always prided myself on not being an overly dramatic person. I really always thought of myself as being quite emotionally stable, and once I found coaching I realized that this was not true at all. Mostly I was emotionally stable because I ate and drank to smooth out the emotions, and without the food and drink I was a mess. Even with overeating I still had my share of drama that I seriously did not recognize as drama. I would judge other people and myself, sometimes mercilessly. I would catastrophize upcoming events with certain people. I made a mountain out of a molehill really pretty frequently, but I just did not see it in myself. I really honest to goodness thought that I was one of the most emotionally stable people I knew. Goes to show how little awareness I had of my thoughts.

I was just talking to my husband about this recently, how I've discovered that now that I manage my thinking so much better how much less drama there is, and I still find my brain trying to stir up drama from time to time. When I was talking to my husband about how stressed I used to get before interactions with certain people he said, "Yes, sometimes I kind of thought can't we just see how it goes? Does it have to be horrible?" I totally started laughing because he's totally right. I would be so convinced the interaction would be horrible that guess what? It was horrible. I couldn't see it through any other lens. Even if things went really pretty well I still had at least one or two things, no matter how minor, that I could perseverate on to support my dramatic story that it wouldn't be good. So fascinating right?

That's why it's so good to do thought downloads on a regular basis and then look at your thoughts and decide if they're even true. So much of the stories we tell ourselves aren't even true, but we believe them wholeheartedly and then create that drama for ourselves when it didn't even exist before that. Something as benign as weekends will be harder is luckily just a thought. Same with it'll be hard to convince my family to change their eating habits, and same for it'll be hard not to eat tons of flour and sugar all the time. Everyone who's worked with me knows exactly how I respond to comments like these. The first thing I ask them is, "What if it was easy? What if weekends were easy? What if it was easy to convince the family to change their eating habits? What if it was easy to not eat tons of flour and sugar all the time?" They always respond that if it was easy that would be so amazing, that would be just the greatest if it wasn't a struggle.

The best news is that it can be easy because who determines if something is easy or hard? You do. When you decide to believe the dramatic thought that something will be hard guess what it is? Yes, hard. This is one of those dead end thoughts because you don't let your brain problem solve for you, and you have this amazing, brilliant, extraordinary brain that just desperately wants to help you if you just direct it in the proper manner. If you find yourself thinking the weekends are harder for staying on your eating plan, ask yourself what the weekends would look like if it was totally easy to stay on your eating plan. What does someone who doesn't struggle with their food on the weekends do? What does their day look like? Ask yourself how you can make it totally easy to stick to your plan, even with weddings, and sports games, and girls night out, and conferences, and brunch with the family. That sets your brain to work looking for solutions.

I'm always amazed at how quickly my clients can come up with really good solid solutions when they spend just a few minutes looking for them, it doesn't take long. They get out of the drama and just look at the math, they realize that there actually isn't a problem there at all. All of it was just dramatic thoughts that created the problem for them. The same goes for the other examples. When you're tired post call, you make the experience of being tired post call so much worse for yourself because of your thinking about the night and about how physically and emotionally tired you are, and this actually makes you infinitely more emotionally exhausted because of all the energy and time it takes to spin these doom and gloom self-pity stories for ourselves. We actually make it a worse experience for ourselves.

A better way to approach it is to recognize that you're tired and make a list of all the things that absolutely must get done before you can sleep again. Be careful here because your brain is going to try to convince you that every single thing on your list is required and send you right back into your pity party. When you look at it rationally, meaning determining what the math is about what you have to do, you'll find that it's actually not that much. You probably have to do very little. Now you might say, "Well no, I have to see a full days work of clinic patients." But you really don't, right? If you had the stomach flu and couldn't leave the bathroom you could get out of seeing the full day of clinic patients. Instead you're choosing to see a full day of clinic patients post call and exhausted for probably some really good reasons. Reasons like you like to get paid so you can keep up with your bills and support your family. You like to not have to reschedule a bunch of people until later days. You'd rather just get it done now than have to make it up later.

If that's the case then you can stop feeling sorry for yourself about having to see the full days worth of patients. You're choosing it and you like your reasons. See, you're taking all the drama out, you see how that work? When you look at the facts and the math then you can buckle down and get to work. Be efficient and productive, and just bang it out so you can go home, and then you make sure you don't stay up too late on social media or drinking wine and watching Netflix. No, you go to bed as soon as you can and refresh your body and mind so you can start the day again in the morning. These are all decisions that are made when we drop the drama and focus on the math.

When you walk into clinic and see the list of patients you have for the day you can drop all the drama. Now that's not to say that you don't maybe schedule a meeting to talk to your schedulers about how they're booking people. If they can somehow improve what they're doing to make your day flow more smoothly then that totally makes sense to do that, but you don't have to keep cursing them out in your head all day, blaming them and making them into the villain so you can stay in your victim role. You can see who's on the schedule and decide that you can see any patient, it really doesn't matter who it is. You can decide that it's the perfect day to practice your skills on not letting patients bring up a whole bunch of extra problems at a visit and asking them to schedule another appointment. It'll probably feel really uncomfortable, but that's okay because you can do uncomfortable things right? Remember all the discomfort of med school and residency? You've totally got this.

Just like earlier, you buckle down and get to work. Start seeing those patients and stay focused on the task at hand. Say no to any extra thing that's asked of you, especially when someone else can do it. Then see how your experience of your day completely transforms. You actually have a decent day, you finish up on time, or just a little late instead of crazy late like you originally expected. You offered tons of value to your patients and you did the best you could. You don't have three hours of charting to do at night. That's an amazing day right? When you pick an eating plan and then start getting bored of it, and you see your brain trying to distract you with recipes, and trying to entertain itself with food drama, you drop all of it.

You remind yourself that the math is that your body just needs fuel for food, and it doesn't need much because you're replacing a meal every day with the energy stored in your body fat.

The drama is just the brains way of trying to go back to old familiar habits and you don't have to participate in that story at all. You keep preparing and eating the same old stuff and keep seeing the scale drop. You decide to actively figure out new ways of entertaining yourself. You decide to believe that boring food is just fine, there's absolutely nothing wrong with it, and you create the weight loss results you've always wanted.

Finally, you get on the scale. You don't make the number mean anything besides feedback on how you've been eating as a whole. The drama is over-analyzing every last thing you ate and then self-sabotaging because you didn't see the results you wanted. The drama is working yourself up into a tizzy about what the number reads and what that means about you as a human being and the world. The math is that it's literally just data that's a result of your gravitational pull on the earth at that moment in time. You don't need to try to determine why it's up a pound. You know and believe that there are so many non-food related reasons for the scale to fluctuate, and so you double down on following your plan to make future scale readings that much easier to interpret because you're actually doing what you said you were going to do.

I want to encourage you to ramp up your awareness of your thinking. See if you're more dramatic than you thought you were. I certainly was. Start questioning those thoughts that just seem like you're conveying the nos. What result do you get when you believe those thoughts? Is that the result you want? If not, what would be another way of thinking about the exact same thing that would drive you toward that results, and start practicing thinking that way. I promise your whole life will change for the better.

All right, have a great week, take care, buh-bye.