



WEIGHT LOSS FOR BUSY PHYSICIANS

— with Katrina Ubell, MD —

Katrina Ubell: Well hello my friend. Happy New Year. Welcome to the podcast. I'm so excited for this bonus New Year's podcast that I have planned for you. Did you watch the Rose Parade today? That is my absolute favorite parade of all time. Even as a kid I totally loved it. I even lived in Southern California, but I've never gone live. I would love, love, love someday to go. I think my parents just felt like it would be so chaotic with all the people and the traffic and everything. They just never wanted to do that after New Year's Eve, fun. I would love to do that sometime, bring my kids. I think it would be so great. Who knows maybe I'll actually decide after that, that watching it in my jammies from my couch is really better. You guys can let me know if you've been there live. Let me know what you think. I think it would be so much fun. It's so beautiful. They always have such cool floats and all the bands. It's just such a fun, fun time.

Then what we do as our tradition for New Year's and our family is on New Year's Eve around 7 o' clock we do our countdown, because the kids need to go to bed. What I usually do is get some of those little headbands that say the next year on them, and some of the glasses usually that say 2000 whatever, and some beads, and some noise makers. We just have a good time, have a little dance party, countdown, celebrate. The kids have their little sparkling apple juice, or whatever, sparkling cider. Then we get ready and we go off to bed. My husband and I don't stay up till midnight either because who are we kidding? We have to get up the next morning, right? If you're the kind of person who loves to go out on New Year's Eve I think that's fantastic. Good for you. I'm definitely showing my age apparently. There's no draw to that for me at all anymore. All right, well let's get started; With it being the new year I know many of you have a resolution for this year to lose weight.

In this specifically New Year's bonus podcast episode I want to tell you why you should not go on a diet to lose weight in 2018. This might sound counterintuitive. You might be thinking, "Katrina, I need to lose weight. How else am I going to do that if I don't go on a diet?" That's a good question. What I want you to know is that diets don't work. They don't. This is really not a surprise when we look at the reality of it. We see evidence that diets don't work all around us. Most of us have plenty of our own evidence to prove that diets don't work, right? What I mean by diets don't work is that they don't solve the problem. Very rarely does somebody go on a weight loss diet and permanently solve their weight issue for good. Now there is that half percent of people who go on a diet plan and keep the weight off permanently. Yeah, that's right 99.5% of people who lose weight on a diet will gain it back, and usually a little bit more, or a lot more.

The people who keep that weight off are a special breed of person if you will. They tend to be quite compulsive in the way that they approach most things in their lives. They're compulsive about following their diet plan while they lose weight, and then they're compulsive about continuing to follow their diet plan once they're in maintenance. What about the other 99 and half percent of us who aren't like that? What are we supposed to do to lose weight permanently if diets don't work? The answer is to become a naturally thin person. Naturally thin people do not need a diet plan to keep them thin. Here's what naturally thin people do to stay thin without any effort, or chatter, or negotiations, or self-loathing, or anything like that. First, they eat when they're hungry. They only eat when they are hungry. If it's a mealtime and they aren't hungry they just don't eat. They're the people who forget to eat a meal. It just doesn't occur to them to eat because they weren't feeling hungry. They only give their bodies food if their body's asking for nutrition with a hunger signal. This is a totally novel concept to a lot of us.

I've had many clients tell me that they aren't even sure what hunger feels like because they never go long enough between eating to feel hunger. Or they think feeling hungry is one of the worst things in the world so they do, what I call, prevention eating. They're preventing any possible future hunger by eating now. They're making sure they won't feel that physical sensation of hunger that they interpret as being uncomfortable or unbearable at anytime in the future. Or the flip side is that we don't honor our hunger signals by pushing through at work. Then by the time we do eat we have all kinds of thoughts and beliefs about the fact that we've had to endure that hunger. Then we eat for fuel, but we also overeat to neutralize those uncomfortable emotions of self-pity and despair and exhaustion, et cetera. If a naturally thin person has a long case in the OR or a busy night on LND or ends up having to work through lunch their body just accesses their fat stores for fuel.

It's really not a big deal not to eat. They know there's plenty of food. When the right moment arises they'll eat and they'll get enough. They don't have scarcity thoughts about food and they don't worry about when they'll eat next, or what food might be available to them at that time. They know they can figure it out. The next thing that naturally thin people do is they stop eating when they're no longer hungry. This does not necessarily equal feeling full. This is a very important point. I know for me, when I was over weight, the amount of food that I needed to eat to get to the fullness level that I wanted, that I thought was necessary was too much food. Once I was able to recalibrate my hunger and fullness I was able to feel satisfied with less food, which is actually a normal amount of food for a woman in her 40s. It's not like I'm eating nothing. Those of us who were raised with the clean plate club mentality don't even factor in how full we are when we're eating. We just eat until it's gone.

If you grew up with multiple siblings you might eat really fast because if you were slow then there wasn't anything left if you were still hungry, and you went to bed hungry. Maybe you started eating really fast and eating too much during medical school or residency. Remember team breakfast? Especially on surgery we'd round so quickly so we had time to fill up on a very hardy breakfast before we started cases in the OR. The idea being that you might not be able to eat again until many, many hours later, so you needed to be really full so it would last you. Plus your first case probably started in eight minutes so you had to wolf your food down super fast so you got there before the attending did. We develop these habits and at the time there seems like there's an upside to them for us. We don't tend to reevaluate them over time. Do I still need to eat this way? Do I even want to eat this way? Why am I choosing to eat this way?

For so many of us it doesn't even feel like it's a choice. It feels like just what we do or who we are, or how we were raised. I want you to know that you can change that and learn how to stop eating when your body no longer needs food. The interesting thing is that we're all born with this ability to only eat when we're hungry and to stop when we're satisfied. None of us was born without normal hunger and satiety cues. We just lost them somewhere along the line. We subbed out other habits and other ways of approaching food and eating. Those habits and beliefs are creating the body that we currently have. It's always so fascinating to me to watch children eat. Especially young ones. They're so good about knowing whether they're hungry or not, and when they're full. We all know this, right? Kids who aren't hungry usually have terrible manners at the dinner table. They don't want to be there. Over-eating does nothing for them. Especially if it's healthy food. If they were hungry, but now they're getting satisfied they'll stop mid cookie and leave the rest, or they'll leave two small bites on their plate.

How I was raised was with encouragement then to finish those last couple of bites so that they weren't wasted. A little extra food compounded over many, many meals leads to an overweight body. The good news is that we all have this innate ability. We just have to tap back into it. We have to relearn it. We have to learn to let our body signals determine whether we eat and how much to eat. We have to stop using food to make ourselves feel better and to amplify the joy in our lives. The next thing that naturally thin people do is they thoroughly enjoy every bite they eat. People call this eating mindfully. Before it had a name it's what naturally thin people did. They don't grab things and eat them before they even know what happened. They don't disassociate from themselves and use food to dull their negative emotions. They don't grab bites here and there while they're cooking or putting away the leftovers, or making lunches for the next day. They don't scarf down their food while dealing with the kids misbehaving at the table and then eat more a little later because they feel like they missed out on the pleasure of eating that meal.

They know that there's an inherent pleasure in eating and they make sure they take advantage of experience that pleasure when they're eating. They know that more food does not equal more pleasure. They recognize that there's a curve to the pleasure you get from eating. Initially it's high and then before long just as your body is getting enough food the pleasure begins to decrease and this is when they stop eating. They don't keep going until they get the overly full signal from their body. I would sometimes keep eating Oreos at night in front of the TV so mindlessly that I wouldn't stop until I felt sick. I'd get a headache and I'd feel a little nauseous. Naturally thin people never do this. The final thing that naturally thin people do is they think differently. They don't think about food all the time. It wouldn't even occur to them to use food to entertain themselves or comfort themselves or cheer themselves up. Food is just food. It tastes good, but it's fuel for the body. They get their entertainment and excitement and comfort from other things that serve them.

Because of this they don't have all that brain chatter as I like to call it. They aren't constantly negotiating with themselves about what they can eat next and when. They don't think about foods as good or bad or healthy or unhealthy. It's just food, and because of this they don't struggle to maintain their ideal body weight. This is what I teach my clients in my Weight Loss For Doctors Only coaching group.

I want to wish you a very happy and wonderful New Year, and hope that 2018 is the year that you stop trying diets and start becoming a naturally thin person. Take care. Bye, bye.