



# 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 there, my friend. Welcome to today's episode. Super happy you're here with me today. We're going to be talking about a topic that comes up a lot with our weight loss or doctors only program members. This is something that we coach on again and again and again. In fact, it was one of the coaches who works for me who recommended or suggested that I do a podcast episode [00:01:00] on this topic. So shout out to Jamie.

Thanks to Jamie for for suggesting this one. It is actually something that is an issue for lots of people in lots of different ways, and I'm excited for you to maybe see how this might be playing out in your life. And if anything, just to give you a little bit of a framework to figure out what you want to be doing. So like not doing it at your own expense. So what we're talking about is capability versus capacity. What I mean by that is being capable of doing something compared to your actual relative capacity to do it right. So the way that this shows up for people is that for many women, if we were asked to do something, if we say no, we may be concerned that we will be seen as incapable of doing the thing and we don't want to be seen as incapable.

[00:01:55] We want to be seen as incredibly capable. I think this shows up, particularly [00:02:00] in a work setting and particularly in medicine. If the woman physician is in a specialty that is historically more male dominated or you're just surrounded with more men, it doesn't have to be this way at all. But there is something to be said for this kind

of maybe subconscious or innate desire to prove ourselves. It might even be almost like a habit, like your whole life or, you know, your whole, like, more advanced educational life. You always felt like you had to prove to the world, to your colleagues, to your professors, to whoever was evaluating you. But also to yourself that you deserve to be there, that you were capable of doing it.

And that habit of thinking in that way might be continuing on even into, you know, possibly well into your career. And another issue, though, that I think as women we don't always really recognize is that there's lots of things we can [00:03:00] do, but our capacity is often more limited than maybe our male colleagues or colleagues with just a different life situation, background, things like that. So let me just give you some examples of things that we've seen in our program, right? So things that our members will often say yes to in order to avoid being seen as incapable when it might actually serve them better, to just acknowledge that they just don't have the capacity to do it, which is, of course, completely.

[00:03:32] Okay. So some examples taking on extra call days, right? So there's a call that needs to be covered and they come and ask you, you say, yes, no matter what you have going on, you're like, Yeah, I'm having a birthday party for my twins, but sure, I'll take call during that time. Just one example, another example, leading committees or taking on new initiatives at work or, you know, anything new developing something new. Maybe it's more [00:04:00] research, something along those lines. Helping your adult children with child care because, quote, That's what good moms and grandmas do, unquote. Right.

This is actually oh, man, we could do a whole episode just on this. The idea of feeling like you should do it. You're a good mom. This is the right way to be. If you sacrifice yourself essentially, to go and help your adult children with child care. Okay. Covering for coworkers in their absence. So maybe that's covering clinic, taking on extra cases, things like that, taking in relatives with disabilities or other needs. So either having them come and live with you in your home or maybe they're living somewhere else, but you are very active in their care taking.

[00:04:55] Taking on leadership roles like becoming department chair. [00:05:00] Maybe that was something you didn't have on your radar at all. But now it's been something

that has, you know, you've been suggested or kind of tapped on the shoulder to be considered, and now you're taking that on. And hosting events, right? Having family for certain holidays or, you know, certain family events or even other events maybe for your children's school or some sort of fundraiser event, things that take up a lot of that time. So there is nothing wrong with any of these things. I want to be clear about that. So it's not saying that these things are bad. There are tons and tons of people who are more than happy to do these things and they have the capacity. So they are capable and they have capacity. Amazing. Absolutely.

They're so good and not saying anything negative about that whatsoever. So if you kind of check both of those boxes as it pertains to a certain area of your life or some commitment that you have, amazing. We don't have a problem. Where it becomes a problem is when we don't [00:06:00] really have the capacity for it, but we don't want to be seen as incapable. We don't want people to think that we can't do it. It could even be that we just don't want them to think negatively about us, or we just don't want them to think that we're selfish or, you know, that we're not committed to the organization, or that we're not a team player or that we don't help out or, you know, whatever it is.

[00:06:20] Ultimately, we want to be seen a certain way. And so whether or not we have the capacity, we say yes to it and then we kind of suffer the consequences. And that's often where coaching comes in. It's usually one of two things. The first is the option. The opportunity is presented and the person is trying to decide like, okay, do I actually really want to do this? Do I have the capacity for this? Or the person has already said yes to the thing and is now recognizing, I really don't have capacity for this and is trying to sort it all out, right? Like, so what do I do now, now that I've [00:07:00] said yes to this?

So I think there's lots of different ways that we can approach something like this. But I think what this all really kind of boils down to is your opinion of yourself, your relationship with yourself. What I mean by that is, you know how you treat yourself, how you think about yourself, how you interact with yourself. All of those things are part of your relationship with yourself, right? Like if you are somebody who says you're going to do something for yourself and you do it, then you have a strong relationship with yourself. If you're someone who says, Yeah, I'm totally going to do that thing that really supports me, say I'm going to, you know, hit up my favorite yoga class twice a week and I've set all these things in place so that I can go and do it.

[00:07:41] But then someone has asked me to do all this extra stuff and the first thing that goes by the wayside is your yoga classes that help you so much, right? So maybe we don't have the strongest relationship with ourselves. Not to say that we don't make exceptions from time to time, but we want to be doing it really taking everybody into consideration, [00:08:00] including ourselves. So not saying, oh, but they really need help and no one else can do it. And you know, there's really nobody else who's qualified. But like, where are you factoring in about your capacity or how you're spending your time or even whether you want to do it or not, Right.

So we want to be factoring everybody in. It could be, hey, they really need someone to do it and nobody has a home who can accommodate the whole family but don't have the capacity. So I will not be taking that on. Right? So part of what's difficult about admitting that you don't have the capacity to do it is that you will ultimately end up saying no to something and people will have feelings about that. And I think the fear of what they may think and feel is often what ends up driving us to say yes to it.

[00:08:52] Even if we don't have capacity, we are uncomfortable with other people's discomfort. If it's family or personal life [00:09:00] kind of a thing, it might be even more intense for us than if it's a work thing. Could be that you have some sort of mentor who's really, really encouraging you to do something and it just you just don't have capacity, but you feel like, yeah, but to preserve this relationship or to be able to advance in my career the way I want to, to be able to reach those goals that I've always said that that I wanted in my life. Like I need to say yes to this.

Those are all situations where we really want to kind of like zoom out, slow it down and really think, take a beat and just really, really understand what we are saying. Yes to. Going back to the relationship with yourself kind of a thing. What's so much more important and this is what we're all invited to, to work on and consider and recognize, is that it's so much more important that you see yourself as capable than for anybody else to see you as capable. Okay. We're very often [00:10:00] concerned that others will consider us or see us as incapable. And we don't like that. We want them to think a certain way about us. And so then we do things that don't serve us or that we don't really want to do.

[00:10:14] Essentially, we do things that are own expense in order to try to essentially manipulate other people's opinions, other people's thoughts about us. And, you know, from time to time, maybe that's an appropriate thing to do. But what I will say is that eventually that catches up with you. And I see that every single day where we have women who are so stretched thin, who are just weary, who feel like they just have not got one thing left and slash or but mostly and and the way they've been getting through all of this is by eating right.

Like if you don't have anything else for yourself, like if you don't have capacity to do this thing, but you took it on anyway. [00:11:00] Well, you know, what's a way to make that a little bit better? Snacks, you know what I mean? If you can eat something while you're doing it, then that kind of softens the pain of it a little bit. So then when we're looking at, well, how do we get ourselves to stop overeating, we have to look at issues like this. Okay. This is just one example of how overeating really doesn't have that much to do with the food. So here's a bit of a framework for you to think about. So there's some sort of opportunity. Somebody has asked you to do something. Something has come into your awareness as a new project or a new, you know, thing that you could do.

[00:11:39] And you're keeping this conversation, this this podcast episode, this content in mind. So how should you approach this? Well, I have a few questions that I would just encourage you to really think about. The first thing is, and we want to be like really honest with ourselves, okay. I just want to say, like, I'm as guilty of this as the next person that [00:12:00] I can talk a really good game and I can get behind why I should do it. But the way I'm going to teach you to answer this question is going to help you to see what's behind that, because there are definitely I'll just speak from my own experience.

What I have definitely done at times is talk myself into believing that, yes, I can do this and this won't be that big of a deal and I'll totally be able to do that. And then in the future, I'm like, literally, what was I on? Because what would make me think I could do this? You know, It was like I really wasn't taking my future self into consideration. And so now, for a while now, I've really been trying to think about that like me in the future, is she going to be so happy? I said yes to this today. Let's be really honest about that. You know. So the first question is, do you want to do this thing? Okay. If no, if you don't really want to do it, then I think we're done.

[00:12:55] I mean, there are times when we don't want to do things and [00:13:00] we do them anyway. I'll just say as an example, like pretty much like 95% of parenting, you know, at any age, and we still say yes to it. But, you know, we don't really want to. Let's just, you know, just an easy example. We don't really want to change the dirty diaper. But actually part of us does want to do that because we love this little nugget and we want to take good care of them and we don't want them to get a diaper rash. And we can imagine, like it's not very nice to sit in that. So even though part of us is like, Oh, the last thing I feel like doing, another part of us is like, Come on, let's get up and do it. Because it's really it's in alignment with who we want to be as the parent. Okay?

So if you just like intuitively know, it's a gut feeling. It's a no, you just know it's a no, then it's a no. And think what a lot of people struggle with is having that feeling of like, I shouldn't do this. This isn't right. You know, it's not the right time or I'm going to regret this or have [00:14:00] those feelings. And then they're trying to find the logic to back up that feeling. So this is something that I personally have been working on as well recently, for the last year or so, is allowing myself to follow that feeling, to follow that intuitive hit, even if I cannot explain it well, and I don't have to wait until I have the explanation.

[00:14:24] You know, this is what I have been teaching my oldest son as he's going to be leaving the nest here pretty soon is just this idea of like, if you are anywhere and you just get a bad feeling, don't wait around to find out why you have that bad feeling. Just get the you know what out of there. Just get out of there. You probably will never know. You may never have any idea. That's great. Just get out of there. So similarly, when you just have that feeling like this isn't going to work out well, this isn't the right thing. I don't think that this is really something for me. Then that's enough.

You don't have to have, like all the apologies [00:15:00] and the explanations and trying to find some other solution around it. You really aren't obligated to do that. Okay, so if it's a no, do you really want to do this thing? Not even do you really want to do you just want to do this thing? If the answer is a no, then please just let it be a no. And there's lots of graceful and gracious ways to say no. Thank you for considering me. I'm so honored that you would even think of me.

[00:15:25] Whatever it is, in a different situation, this might be something that I could do, but right now it's just not something I'm available for. Whatever. That's just one way of saying it. So if the answer is yes, do you want to do this thing? And there's even a part of you that says yes, then you want to answer why? Okay. So ask yourself why? Why do I want to do this? And you can do this in your head. It's I think it's more powerful to write it. But if all I'll get from you is doing it in your head, then that's fine. But otherwise write it down. So why do you want to do this thing? Then ask yourself 4 or 5 more times. Why? Okay. So do [00:16:00] you want to do this thing then? If the answer is yes, you say why and you're going to get a response.

This is why. And then you're going to ask yourself why. Again, you're going to say why? Why is that important? Why does that matter? Why do I care about that? Like something along those lines, ask yourself why again? Then you're going to get another answer and you're going to ask yourself again, why is that important? Why do I care about that? And just keep doing it? I mean, five times at a minimum total, maybe even six. And it'll be really, really fascinating to see what you find. So when you go through all of those whys, you start to really more deeply understand what is behind this.

[00:16:39] Yes. And make sure that you feel really, really good about that. Okay. If it's like I'm saying yes, because ultimately I want people to love and respect me. Hmm. That's really good to know. And something we may really want to explore further before you give an answer yes or no to that thing. Next, what will you say no to [00:17:00] or quit doing? Or somehow, like AX? In your life. To make room for this because everybody I know has all of their waking hours, generally. Accounted for. You know, there's. There's something you're going to be doing. And maybe you do have some free time and you kind of find some things to do and you could do it during that time.

But even so, what you'd be giving up or saying no to is some of your free time, some of your leisure time, some of the time that you do fun things that you like to do. But what I see more commonly is that what women are ending up saying no to is all the activities that actually help to support them. So like before I gave that example of not going to your yoga classes, but what I see more often in my program is that all of a sudden we're not doing the things that support us so that we're not overeating anymore, right? Not overeating becomes easy when we know [00:18:00] how to fill our emotional needs and meet those needs in other ways.

[00:18:03] When we stop meeting those emotional needs in those ways, because now we've taken on something else that we really didn't have capacity for, guess what often happens? We start meeting our emotional needs with food again. And that's what we want to avoid doing. That's what we want to hopefully stop doing. By not doing that, by consistently meeting our emotional needs without food, if things that are not food or alcohol, that's how we create permanent weight loss. Okay, so what are you going to say no to? Like where is the time and space in your brain and just the capacity in your brain, the thinking energy that's going to be required to do this and possibly physical energy. Where is that going to come from?

What will you say no to? So you can do that thing if it means you need to stay up late to get in extra work time to get that thing done and then that means you're going to be too tired to wake up to do the, you know, exercise that you like to do the next morning that really makes you feel good [00:19:00] in your body and sets you up for success for the day. I mean, that's not a great thing, right? That's maybe a habit that's been awesome for you. And then now you're going to throw it out the window potentially for this other thing.

[00:19:13] Do we really want to do that? What are we going to say no to? We got to make sure we're okay with that. And then finally, do you have to do it yourself? Who can help you. So just going back to our previous examples, if someone is asking you to take on extra call days, maybe you can say, Hey, I see that there's four days you need to cover. I'm willing to take one, right? Because we do want to be team players and we want to do our part and we appreciate it when others help us, when we need our call covered and things like that. Right. Like like I'm not saying the answer should always be no. I mean, like, do you want to do extra call? Probably not.

You know, but if you being able to take extra call means that when something comes up for you, others will help out too, then, yeah, maybe you do want to do that, right? So [00:20:00] do you have to do it yourself? Maybe not. Maybe those extra call days that call requirement or need can be filled by multiple people similar with like leading committees or new initiatives. Could be that you're like, Hey, you know what? I don't have the capacity to lead this or to be the the top organizer of this, but would be more than happy to participate as a member.



You know, sometimes there's there's in-betweens, right? We're like, I'm not going to be the one sending out all the emails about everything, but I would be more than happy to show up to a meeting once a month and let you all know, you know, what I think about stuff and help guide this maybe, right? Helping adult children with child care, right? Maybe it's like, hey, you know what? I can't do the whole day, but if you get a sitter for, you know, this amount of time, I'd be happy to finish up with the last 2 or 3 hours or whatever it is, whatever might make sense.

[00:20:52] Right. And also very helpful to to examine what you believe good moms or good grandmothers do. Because [00:21:00] otherwise, if you don't if you don't want to do those things and you don't do them, then you will always think that you're not a good mom or grandma and that doesn't serve anybody. So this is similar with other things, too. You know, maybe you're being asked to take a relative in who has some other needs. Maybe them being in your home isn't the right thing, but maybe you can assist in finding them some sort of, you know, facility or place where they can go, where they'll be treated really well. I mean, often when you are in the medical profession, you actually have an inside look into which places actually do a good job taking care of people and which ones maybe aren't so great. And, you know, maybe you can offer some assistance in terms of that without having them actually in your home.

[00:21:41] Same for hosting family or events. Maybe having it in your home is just not the thing. Or maybe you're like, Hey, yeah, you know what? I'll host everyone here, but I'm going to get the whole thing catered. F.y.i. So if someone's going to be mad that the food wasn't homemade, then let's do it somewhere else. Or maybe you don't host it in your home, [00:22:00] but you are, you know, you know of a great location or restaurant or club or whatever that you can go to and you can help facilitate that.

But, you know, it's you don't have to have it in your home because that's what people expect or make it take up an inordinate amount of your time. And also like taking on a leadership role like department chair, it is okay to recognize that maybe it's not the season in life for you to do that. And I think when we're in scarcity thinking like this is the only time they're going to consider me, then we feel like we have to say yes, even if we don't have the capacity for it. And I just want to encourage you to think about it from an abundance mindset. Thinking about it more like, this is an amazing opportunity if I were

in a different season of my life. But it's actually not an amazing opportunity because I do not have capacity to do it right now.

[00:22:49] So what I will choose to believe is that an amazing opportunity like this, or one that's even possibly even better, will come [00:23:00] into my life when I'm in a different season where I am able to take that on and I'm going to continue to believe that and continue behaving and acting the part of someone who will be in, you know, their department chair or leadership, you know, in a leadership role, whatever, five, ten, 15 years from now. And just working on believing and knowing that that still is up ahead. It's not like there's only one opportunity.

And sometimes we still tell ourselves, well, no, but then they're going to pick this person and that person is young and that person's going to be in that role for a super long time. People leave jobs all the time for all kinds of different things. You never, never know. Maybe it won't be at this organization. Maybe you'll be recruited to be the department chair at your dream organization, and you're not even factoring that in right now. Right? You know, you just have to believe in that idea that what you want is coming to you and it will be available to you when you're in a season of life where you have the capacity to do it. Okay. So just to review those questions, [00:24:00] to ask yourself, do you want to do this thing? If no, then let it be a no.

[00:24:04] If yes, then why? And do at least five whys. Okay. What will you say no to or ax or quit doing to make room for this thing? What are you going to say goodbye to? And what really what will the after effect of that be? What will the consequence of that be for you? And finally, do you have to do it yourself? Who can help you? Okay. You really probably don't have to do it yourself is the answer. All right, my friend, Those are the things I want you to consider. You know, it's amazing when we have all these super great responsibilities or opportunities become available to us in our lives, and we don't have to do everything all at once.

It's not the only time it's going to be available. Okay? And we don't have to say yes to things that we know are not going to work for us. That is something we all can work on. Really being [00:25:00] willing to say no and being confident in that? No. Thank you so much for considering me. It is not the right time for me right now. I wish you the best in filling that position or finding someone who can cover for that or whatever.

All right, my friend, have a great rest of your week and I will talk to you next time. See you soon. Bye bye. Ready to start making progress on your weight loss goals. For lots of free help, go to [katrinaubellmd.com](http://katrinaubellmd.com) and click on Free Resources.