



WEIGHT LOSS FOR BUSY PHYSICIANS

— with Katrina Ubell, MD —

Katrina Ubell: Hello, my friend. How are you? Welcome back to the podcast. Episode number 39 already, I can't believe it. We're going to be at a year with this podcast before we know it. Super fun. How was your weekend? It might not be ... Well, I guess you're gonna maybe be listening to this on a Tuesday, so you might be pretty close to your weekend. For me, I'm recording this on a Monday so I've got weekend on the brain. We went to an amazing new apple farm that's near us. It's actually not new. It's newish, but new to us. It's just amazing. It's the coolest place.

They built this beautiful barn. I know that sounds crazy, like a barn, beautiful? Really, it's this new beautiful barn. I hope they're planning on doing some events in there because people who are into weddings, wedding receptions in a barn, should totally do it in theirs. It's so great. They've got these amazing organic apples, so we picked and we tasted. It was delicious. We had a great, great time. Very typical fall in the Midwest kind of experience. I don't know if people are as into apple farms and apple picking in the fall in other parts of the country. I don't know if that's a thing, but it certainly is.

My first job when I lived in Michigan growing up after babysitting, we all started babysitting first, but so my first real job after babysitting was working at an apple orchard. A cider mill, basically. These cider mills are a big deal in Michigan. This place made their own cider; it's totally unpasteurized. Literally, they take the apples, crush them, boom. Put it in a jug, and there you go. They had the apple cider donuts, and sold a whole bunch of other cute little tchotchke things, and popcorn, stuff like that, pumpkins, squash. It was just a great little side gig job to do on the weekends.

The family that owned it had a daughter who was a classmate of mine. I'd known that family for a little while. I wasn't super close with her, but we knew them and they offered me the job. It was really fun. I did that for a little while. It was just one of those nostalgic things. It's just like when University of Michigan football is on, and they're playing at home in the big house. I just watch that on TV and I just think about going to those games. It's so nostalgic and it's so fun. I just remember what it was like. Those were the days. Anyway, we had a great time at the apple farm. Super fun. Definitely good idea to have some fall fun with your family, if you haven't planned for that yet.

Listen, thank you for the iTunes reviews. Oh, my gosh. It's seriously so fun to read them. Not because of the nice things you guys are saying, but because of the amazing results you guys are getting just from listening to this podcast. Isn't it so fun to know that all you really needed was a little bit of guidance, a little bit of information, and you can make huge changes in your life?

Even those of you who don't have a lot of weight to lose, or any weight to lose, are letting me know that your thinking is changing so much. That your whole experience of your job, of your family, your whole life is so much better. That's what I'm so happy about. That you're actually applying this information that I'm giving you. It's so, so good. I love it.

You know what we're going to talk about today, is staying motivated while we're losing weight. I hear this so often from clients. They'll tell me, "I'm not following my plan. I was great for a while, now I'm not following it anymore. How do I get motivated to get back on track?" I've occasionally had clients say, "Give me some tough love. I need to get back on track," like I can give them motivation somehow. It's so interesting because they talk about it like they've just lost this thing that they had. When you think about it, the definition of motivation as I looked it up on Google is the general desire or willingness of someone to do something. The general desire or willingness of someone to do something. A general desire or willingness is an emotion. When we talk about motivation like it's this tangible thing, we are confused. We talk about it like we can hold it in our hand. People say, "I just need to find the motivation to do that." I'm like, "Really? Where is it hiding?" "I lost the motivation to stay on track." Like, "Where did it go?" We talk about it like, I just lost it. It's just gone now. It's a very passive way of approaching motivation.

Motivation is a feeling, and what creates our feelings? Ding, ding, ding, you got it. Your thoughts. Our thoughts always create our feelings. If we are not feeling motivated, it's because we aren't thinking thoughts that make us feel motivated. It's really, really simple. Isn't it so funny how we over complicate things? Like, I just need to find the motivation. I just don't know where it is. Right? No. You just need thoughts that make you feel motivated. What's so interesting too is the thought 'I need to be more motivated' doesn't tend to create the feeling of motivation. Instead, it makes us feel apathetic and disappointed, right? Because we don't feel motivated. We think we need it. If you put motivated on the feeling line in the thought model, what does motivated create for you? Which actions?

In terms of weight loss, it drives you to follow your plan. Right? Do what needs to be done and keep going. Stop stopping, right? Keep on going. Then the result that you get, you get the result that you want. If you follow your eating plan, and you do what needs to be done, and you stop stopping, and you keep going with weight loss, what do you think happens? Yeah, you lost the weight. Isn't that amazing? It's pretty, pretty cool to just know that you can put what you want on that result line. You can create it for yourself.

This does not have to be complicated. What we then have to do is find thoughts that make us feel motivated and think them intentionally. Now, there's some ways to do that. Right? Maybe learn some more, or read something about your plan or the benefits of weight loss. In doing that, that might result in thoughts about how important it is to you to lose the weight once and for all. Then you feel motivated. Then you follow your plan, do what needs to be done. Then you get the weight loss results that you want. Sometimes focusing on the results keeps you motivated, even when it feels really tiring or you don't really want to continue.

I'm going to give you an example that's not weight related. I am generally good about keeping a neat home, but as you guys know with children things pile up, right? Everywhere they go they end up with all the little cruddy piece of junk toys, and little things, and activities, and papers. Then different holidays, or birthdays, or things like that come up and they're getting new things. Plus, they're outgrowing clothes and needing new clothes. There's just always that cycle that you have to go through where you're thinking, you know what? These are great toys, but developmentally they're not even appropriate anymore. You don't even like them anymore. You loved it two years ago, but you don't anymore. It's time to send it on.

I'm quite good about decluttering things for my own self, my own things. My husband is, thankfully, also quite good about it, but with our children we have to teach them. That's one thing I learned from Marie Kondo, is that we are not born just knowing how to declutter. Many of our parents didn't teach us how to do it. We have to teach our children how to let go of things, stuff that we have that no longer is serving us, that isn't bringing us joy anymore, and is not providing value to us in some way. I knew that it was time to do a big declutter, a big purge on the kids toys, but I feel like at their ages now, which are 4, 6, and 11, that I can't really just do it behind their backs. They're at a point where they do have their favorites and they know what's important to them. I just need to guide them through that process.

This weekend I took each kid individually through a number of areas where I wanted to go through toys, and just other things. Just asked them to tell me what are the things you absolutely love? There might be some things that are nice, but you just don't love it that much. We can just let that go. Somebody else is going to love it. There are children out there that don't even have one doll. You have so many, so why don't we give some of those dolls that you don't even really like that much to some of those kids?

The kids totally get it. They're like, "Oh, yeah. That's cool." It was so interesting, my 6 year old, I told him we were going to do that. He was like, "Oh, yeah. That's great. We should go through my stuffies, because I don't even play with a lot of them." I was like, "Sweet. Yes, please. Let's do it." He got so many of his things, it was really fascinating. Really, really fascinating. He is not very attached to things, but he is also not attached to his money because he likes to spend his money. It burns a hole in his pocket. That's another issue.

Anyway, so I spent the most of the day on Saturday, and the vast majority of the day on Sunday going through their things with them. Then packing it all up, and getting it into the car. We took a big load to Goodwill, and packed the car up again. It was so funny, my husband was unloading at Goodwill. Apparently, another woman who was unloading saw what he was doing and said, "Are you getting rid of your kids too?" That's how much stuff we were getting rid of. It was so great. In the process of doing this, I was super motivated at first because I've been wanting to do this for a while.

Even though it was a beautiful weekend I thought, you know what? I'm going to feel so much better when I just get this done. What I was doing was focusing on the result. The result of having the house more tidy. The result of having more space in the house, which is very, very visually pleasing and makes us so much happier in our homes when we don't have so much to look at. I was super, super focused on this result. That kept me going even when I wanted to stop, even when I wanted to sit down, even when my back was starting to get tired, even when shopping for more clothes for my kids seemed like a good idea at the time. I didn't do that.

What I did was I kept on going. I stayed motivated by my thoughts about what the result was. I wanted everything to be picked up 100% in the basement by the end of Sunday because I knew that this week I wouldn't want to spend time on it. I wanted our cleaning lady this week to be able to get in there and clean. I didn't want her to have all the stuff strewn all over the place that she couldn't get around. That was very motivating for me. I really wanted to get that done, and I made sure to get it done. Also, remember that however much time you give to a certain task is how long it will take.

I had dinner plans with a friend last night. There was no way I was going to come back from having a beautiful dinner with a friend and then do some more decluttering. I knew I had to get ready at a certain time and I needed to be done with everything by then. I got it done. I was moving, even though I wanted to stop. I was motivated, yet I was also feeling a little sorry for myself, but I knew what that result was. I wanted that result badly, and so I kept on going.

The same thing applies to weight loss. You are motivated because you want that result of a thinner body. You want your knees or your hips to stop hurting. You want to be able to feel comfortable wearing a sleeveless shirt. That was one of my big motivators, especially in the beginning. I just didn't love my arms and never wore a tank top. I just was like, "I want to be able to wear a tank top and not be constantly thinking about the chub on my arms." That was motivating for me, but I had to create that for myself. Because sometimes in the middle of winter I really didn't care about my arms. That wasn't that important, right?

You know what was important? Was not feeling like I was going to die, gasping for breath when I was skiing down a mountain. That was pretty motivating, right? You come up with different things that keep you motivated so that you want that result. You can brainstorm a long list of possible thoughts that feel true and believable to you, that you think might make you feel motivated. Then you have to try them on, so to speak. We think about it like trying on a new outfit. You try on this thought. You try thinking it in the moment.

Then you see, does this really make me feel motivated so that I stay on plan, I take the actions I want to take? Or no, not really. I think there's better ones out there. You don't have to get the right thought immediately. In fact, you probably won't and that's completely fine. You have a long list of thoughts to try. You might find sometimes this thought works great at this time or in this situation, but it doesn't work that well in another. A different thought works better in that one.

This is that work that I talk about, doing the work. That's staying committed to what you want, your commitment to lose the weight, and putting in the effort required, not expecting it to just fall off of your body without you putting any effort in. You find your favorites, and then you think those thoughts intentionally and deliberately, over and over again. Your brain is going to go, "Oh, I don't want to do this." You're going to think that thought. Here is the big secret; big, big secret here. If you've been zoned out, come back to me. You do not have to feel motivated to stick to your plan.

When everybody says, "I don't have the motivation. I'm not sticking to my plan," they're making that mean that they can't follow their plan because they're not motivated. That is not how it works. Remember, at least half the time you will not feel motivated. If you believe you need to feel motivated to get things done, to stay on your plan, then you often won't stay on your plan because you won't be feeling motivated. When you have your commitment to the process you bring yourself back to that. To me, being committed feels like doing something even when it's the very last thing I feel like doing.

Here's another example, again, a non weight loss one. I record a podcast for you every week. I'm committed to doing that. I know so many of you can't wait for Tuesdays to come. You've told me about how we drive to work together on Tuesdays, or I take your walk with you on Tuesdays, that you are expecting me to show up in your podcast app every week. I'm 100% committed to making sure that happens. Skipping a week because I didn't feel like doing it or I lost motivation is not an option at all. I don't roll like that. That is not who I am.

Last week I was doing a whole bunch of other work. I was being super productive, getting a whole bunch of other things done that I needed to do for one of my groups that I have going on right now, my coaching groups. That was great, but I didn't get to my weekly podcast. Sometimes I don't do my podcast first thing in the week. I've switched up how I do it. For a long time I did it Fridays. Then I started doing it first thing on Monday morning. Just getting it done, so I knew it was finished and I could focus on everything else the rest of the week. Sometimes I am not ready on Monday.

I am one of those people, if you remember listening to the strengths podcast where we talked about my strengths, I have intelligence high. Which means that I need time to think about things. Sometimes I pretty much know what I want to talk about, but I'm still formulating it. Right? It hasn't quite solidified yet, and I need a little more time to think about how I want to convey what I want to tell you. I don't get to it on Monday. Well, last week, Wednesday went by and I hadn't done it because I was doing other things. Then Thursday I had a lot of other commitments and appointments, didn't get to it. Friday, I was going to do it. A few other things had happened that I needed to do and before I knew it, it was time to pick the kids up from school and my work time during the day on Friday was over.

Then I had a chance to negotiate with myself. Right? Well, do I want to do it on the weekend? I knew I wanted to declutter. I really didn't want to have to record a podcast on the weekend. In theory, I could push it off to this week and do two podcasts, but that didn't seem like a good idea at all really. Because I love recording podcasts for you guys, but it takes effort. It takes work and it takes energy. It's putting off the inevitable to say, well, I just don't feel like doing it now, or I can't do it right at this moment. I'll just do it later. I knew my future self would not be happy with that decision.

What I decided to do was to do it Friday night after the kids went to bed. Do you think that's what I felt like doing, like at all, in the slightest? No. In fact, what ended up happening was I coached my clients online for a couple of hours. Then I started recording last week's podcast at 10:30 at night on a Friday night. It was not at all what I felt like doing. I had lots of good reasons why I could not do it and put it off to another time, but I was committed to doing it. I knew that the net effect would be positive for me if I got it done, if I did the uncomfortable thing right then, so that I could have the net positive effect and the positive emotions in the future knowing that I got it done.

It's important to be very clear on what your longterm goal is, and keep asking yourself what someone who is at that goal already does. When I ask myself, what does somebody who puts a podcast out every week do? Do you know what they do? They create a podcast. You know what? They do it every week. Maybe they batch it, maybe they do six in one week. Then they don't have to do any for over a month, but they are committed to getting the work done ahead of time so that it's always there.

If you know that your longterm goal is to weigh 140 pounds, then you know what you need to do. You keep doing it, even when it's the last thing you feel like doing. What does a person do who lost all that weight? What did she do? Do you think she dinked around, and gave into all her indulgent emotions, and felt really sorry for herself a lot? Did she just get over herself, and buckle down and get to work? Right? She doesn't indulge in all this confusion and overwhelm. She just pulls up her big girl panties, made some decisions, and just implemented like crazy. You have to think, does she trade comfort and pleasure in the moment for a net negative effect in the future? Is she willing to be uncomfortable in the moment, so she can create the results she wants for herself?

My four year old daughter, God love her, had a two and a half hour long tantrum the other night. I stayed with her and I handled it, even though it was pretty much the very last thing I felt like doing. Why did I feel motivated to do that? Because I did feel motivated. Even though it was very uncomfortable, I still felt motivated. I could have just given in and let her have her way. That would have been a lot more comfortable for me. The reason I stayed motivated was because of the net negative I would get by letting that behavior go unchecked. I knew it.

It was not at all what I wanted to do, but if I didn't nip that in the bud then I could just see ten years down the road what I would be handling or trying to handle, trying to deal with. I knew it wouldn't be good for me, and it wouldn't be good for her either. You can create motivation for yourself anytime you want it, but another thing to remember is that 50% of your emotions as a human being will be negative. That is on a good day. If you feel like you're overeating a bunch and your emotions are 50% negative 50% positive, you probably actually have more than 50% negative emotions. The only reason it's even is because of the buffering that you're doing with overeating, right, with eating a bunch of flour and sugar, eating off your plan, or drinking more than you should. Remember, you won't be motivated all the time. It's not possible if half of your emotions are going to be negative.

When you're not motivated, you follow your plan anyway even when you don't want to. You don't make not wanting to mean anything about what you're going to do. You expect that you won't want to do it, maybe even most of the time. You do it anyway, because of the immense pleasure and net positive that you'll get on the other end of that. You know what that kind of pleasure and sense of accomplishment creates for you in the future? Motivation. Motivation to do other things, and to achieve other big goals that you have for yourself. You are motivated to cross something else off your list. You create this one big goal to lose this weight, and permanently keep it off. Then you get that done, and you go to the next one. That's how you start creating the exact life you've always wanted, so super duper good.

Alright, please have a wonderful, wonderful week. I will talk to you soon. Take care, bye bye.