



# WEIGHT LOSS FOR BUSY PHYSICIANS

— with Katrina Ubell, MD —

Katrina Ubell: What's up? What's up? How are you, my friend? Welcome back to the podcast. Super excited to record this one for you. This has made a serious, serious change in my life what I'm going to teach you today, and I can't wait for you to put it into your toolbox, so to speak, another thing that you can utilize when you're going through this human life that we're experiencing.

I am fantastic. I had a great weekend with my family, and I am back, ready to go. I wanted to read you a quick iTunes review. We're getting closer and closer to my goal of 500 reviews, as you all know. This was such a great review. It's by Surf Peach, and the title is Insightful Advice for The Self-critical High Achiever. I don't know anybody who's like that. Do you?

All right, she writes, "I started listening to Dr. Ubell for weight loss advice, but consistently find myself applying her pearls of wisdom to other areas of my life. I had always considered myself an organized person, but had never considered that my brain and/or thoughts were so full of chatter, confusion and, ultimately, subversion of my goals. Trading my indulgence in confusion with an organized approach has helped so much. Thanks for the work that you do."

You are so welcome, Surf Peach.

Listen, if you could leave me a review, if you've not left me one, I would so appreciate it. It really, really helps the podcast and, in turn, it helps other people get the help that they need so that they can organize their thoughts and minds, too.

Okay, so I want to talk to you today about a tool that I came up with a few weeks ago when I was struggling with something and doing my own self-coaching. As you guys know, when I come up with something that really helps me, then I share it with you as well, and this tool has really made such a huge difference for me in my life. I can't wait to share it with you.

When you think about times when you feel at odds with someone, that's basically what all of our relationship problems are, right? We have some sort of a relationship with somebody and, somehow, we're not agreeing on something. Something isn't working right. Something feels a little bit stuck. It's just not flowing as smoothly as we would like.

Maybe it's much more in-depth than that. Maybe it involves being really upset with somebody, really frustrated with somebody, really offended, something like that, and this really can be with anybody, right? It can be your spouse or your partner, your child, your boss, your employee, your co-worker, and so many physicians now, since we are employed, many of us, and then our office staff are employed by a separate entity, they're not employed by us, they really are our co-workers, so that could be like your medical assistant or your nurse or your receptionist. This could be your mom, your mother-in-law, your sister, your brother, your dad, I mean really anyone. Like think of anyone that you are at odds with, and this can be helpful.

The important thing to remember with relationship problems, and really any problem, is that the problem is all in our thinking. What they say, what they do, what they think, how they act, all of that is neutral until we assign meaning to it with our thoughts. We think that they should be different, meaning, the person, not our thoughts. We think our thoughts are correct.

We think that the other person should be different, but they aren't, and so we struggle with that, right? We try to convince them or we just chew them out in our head or to somebody else, have the full debriefing, I've definitely done that before, otherwise known as gossip, somewhat gossip/venting, and so when we think they should be different, we put up this barrier. We create a separation between us and them. It's like drawing that line in the sand. We're over here. They're over there, and we are at odds.

When this is happening, there are many, many emotions that we can be feeling. Just a few might be ... We might feel defensive. We might feel really attacked. We might feel rejected. We might feel offended, annoyed. We might feel righteously indignant. We might feel beat down. We might feel disappointed. I mean, the list goes on and on, right? Our thinking is about how we differ. We think that we're right and they're wrong, and we have a whole long list as to why we're right and why they're wrong, and it's possible, depending on the situation, that maybe we can see some sort of fault in what we did.

If you remember, when I taught you about taking feedback and criticism, the first thing that we do is we look for the truth in what's being said, right? It's possible that you might be able to see some truth, but we still think that they're wrong.

Emotional adulthood is where you take full responsibility for your thoughts and feelings, and you recognize and acknowledge what part of the problem is ours, which part of the problem is yours, which part are you creating, and the best answer is all of it because the problem is always created by your thoughts, so, when you're in emotional adulthood and you're taking full responsibility for everything, that means you're not blaming anybody else. Nobody else is at fault. You're taking full responsibility.

This can fine, and I had something come up that isn't something that I can really share in the podcast to give you all the specific details, but there's something that came up, and I was doing a lot of self-coaching on it. I felt really very comfortable with how I had showed up in the whole situation, and I didn't think that I had done anything wrong. I would, in fact, have done it all exactly the same, but somebody else disagreed, so how do I assimilate that, because I feel totally confident in what I did and their opinion is different?

I don't think there's a problem, but they do, and the reason they have a problem is because of their thinking about me and what I had done, and so I was working through it and I could see that my thoughts were creating the problem, that they should agree with me, blah, blah, blah. I got through all of that, yet, I still just couldn't get past feeling rejected, feeling disappointed, feeling confused. All of those emotions were just not really changing when I changed my thoughts, so I knew there was something deeper there, and what I ended up coming up with is what I am now calling a "just like them" statement, so it can be "just like her," "just like him," so a "just like them" statement.

I'm going to give you a number of examples for you to see how this plays out and then I'll explain what it is that you're really doing, so, say, one of your kids doesn't want to go to school. You have a toddler who's just, "I don't want to go to school today." The way you would use a "just like them" statement is you would start identifying with the parts of how he was responding that you do as well, so you could say or think, "Just like him, I don't always want to do what I have to do either." I mean, that's true, right? I mean, he still has to go to school, but you can see, "Just like him, like I don't always want to do what I have to do. I get it. You know. You don't want to go to school and you have to. Yeah, I get. That sucks."

Your husband forgets to do something that you clearly asked him to do. "Just like him, I sometimes forget things, even important things." I bet there's a time you can come up with that you can remember where you forgot something important, so you see how you're identifying with the way the other person showed up.

Here's another example. Your mother criticizes you because you need to lose weight. She's making comments. "Just like her, I want what I think is best for my children, too, and sometimes I also don't know the best way to convey that." We often make something like that mean that our mother only loves us if we're thin or that we're totally rejected because we're overweight, but, usually, especially with moms, it's coming from the opposite where she has such immense, intense love for us that she wants what she thinks is best and what she thinks will make us happy because if we're happy, then she can be happy.

She just doesn't know the appropriate way of letting us know that. Maybe she thinks that beating herself up is the best way to make herself change, so she thinks that beating you up might work, too, emotionally, of course, not physically, but that's kind of this emotional beat up, this emotional abuse, so to speak, right? Maybe she's thinking, "Maybe if I really get her to understand, then she'll lose weight, and then she can be happy, and then I can be happy," because, remember, the only reason we ever want anything is because of how we think it'll make us feel. Why does she want you to get thinner? So she can feel better, and the only reason she'll feel better is because of her thinking about you.

This does not mean you have to agree with her. I want to make sure you really understand this, okay? It doesn't mean that you're like, "Yeah, I'm totally fine that my husband forgets to do all these things all the time. I'm totally fine that my child has this tantrum every day going to school." It doesn't mean that at all. It means that you're identifying with the parts of their response that you do as well or that you have in common with them.

You might never criticize your child the way your mother does about your weight, but you might criticize your kids about some other things or you might criticize other people sometimes, so you can see how it's easy to think that you know what's best for somebody else and not be that kind in expressing it. Sometimes that happens.

Say, your medical assistant makes a bunch of mistakes. I hear this oftentimes from my clients that they're upset that there's just chronic spelling errors or just omissions of things that are important or just lack of attention to detail, things like that. I thought you could have a, "Just like her, I sometimes screw things up, too. In fact, I often screw things up. I don't know about you, but I do all the time, but, also, just like her, I prefer it when people help me to get better and do better and improve, instead of just treating me with passive aggression and annoyance and eye-rolling, because I know that I actually do better when people approach me with love and encouragement instead of ignoring me and wishing I was different."

You can see, right? You start to identify. Yeah, I wouldn't be making those mistakes. I know how to spell these things, but I get it. When you're trying to do something and you're doing it wrong and no one's telling you or you think you're doing it right but it's wrong and no one's telling you, and then they're being all passive-aggressive and not being very friendly, what kind of work environment is that to work in? You start realizing, oh, maybe I really could show up in a different way as well. Maybe she'll continue to make a bunch of mistakes. I don't have to be okay with that, but I can see that mistakes happen, and maybe I haven't been approaching her in the right way, because I know that, if I were her, I would like to be approached in a different way.

Here's another example. Your teenager get really mad when you say that she can't go somewhere with her friends. I'm sure those of you with teens have had this experience, so, "Just like her, when I really want to do something and someone tells me I can't, I have a bit of a tantrum about it." It sometimes happens. I have many clients who are told by their hospital administration that they have to do something and they don't want to do it that way. They get really mad, too, or sometimes they really want to do something a certain way and the administration says, "No," and they kind of have a tantrum about it in their heads, right?

We think that our teenagers are so ridiculous and so immature. Yeah, B.S. We still act like that a lot of the time, many of us. Maybe not hourly. Maybe we're not stomping around and like screaming, "I hate you," at everybody, or maybe we are, who knows, but inside our heads, sometimes that's what's going on, right? You can see, of course, she's upset. She really wants to do that. This is extremely important to her, and she's not being allowed to do that. I get it. That makes me feel that way, too.

Here's another good one. Your patient leaves a not only negative review, but an also overtly mean review. They make some mean snide comment, something that you know is just in there to kind of kneel a little bit to try to get back at you. These are some of the hardest reviews to work through. "Just like her, when I pay a \$50 copay, I like to leave feeling like I got my money's worth. Just like her, when I'm dissatisfied with something, sometimes I've left a slightly mean anonymous review to give me a little dopamine hit and make me feel better," like have some ... how I retaliated in some way, right?

Think of all the people who leave these kind of mean or obnoxious comments on Facebook. I mean, their name is even there, but when you've got that bit of anonymity, the filter goes away. You're just like, "I'm just going to just let that person have it. I'm just going to let them know exactly what I think."

When I was putting this together, I was thinking, yeah, I can think of one time where I kind of did that, not to a doctor, but to somebody else. It wasn't horrible. It wasn't like scathing or anything, but what I will say is that my comment was a 100% reflective of where I was in my life and what my thinking was and had nothing to do with the person I was leaving the comment about.

Have you ever done that? Think back. There's probably some time you've done that, and when you leave that review, it gives you that little bit of lightness, a little bit of relief. It's like eating a little bit of chocolate or candy when you're really stressed out at work. It just gives you that little bit of a dopamine hit, so not to say that you agree with the patient's review or that you think that their thinking is on track. You might be like, "This person is nuts," right? It has nothing to do with it, but you can see what might drive somebody to do that. Okay?

Your boss calls you in to talk about some negative resident feedback that you got, and you spent some time finding the truth in it. You're doing all that, but you're still struggling to find a new thought that feels true and believable to you. You're still feeling hurt. You're still feeling offended. You're still feeling unappreciated. Now what?

Just like them, just like the residents, when I think I'm working really hard and I'm not getting the guidance that I think I need or want, I like to make my opinion known. I mean, it's really very neutral. Sometimes, we do that, too. You don't have to agree at all with them. You might be like, "I am like the biggest badass that they've ever experienced. They just are confused and can't recognize it."

That may also be true. In fact, it probably is true, to be honest, but they are thinking that they should be getting something different than they're getting and, especially in an anonymous kind of a setting, they're able to very bluntly make that opinion known. What's the whole point of having feedback is to be able to collect all that information, so something to really think about is what is going on with them that's just like how you respond?

Say, your dad drinks so much that he gets drunk every night and then he sometimes says some really mean and hurtful things when he's drunk. "Just like him, I use things or eat things or do things to make myself feel better that end up having a really negative net effect that I'm not happy about or proud of."

If you're still overeating, it's the exact same thing. You eat all these things just like he gets drunk every night, and sometimes he says some really hurtful things, and sometimes you say some really hurtful things to yourself about the fact that you overeat. You get it. Just like him, it's a little bit different, you're not agreeing with him getting drunk every night, you're not saying it's okay, you're not condoning his behavior, but you're getting it. You're understanding. You're recognizing how someone could do that.

Your mother-in-law never seemed to like you and, now, doesn't even try to pretend that she does. "Just like her, I want my children to be happy. Just like her, sometimes, I don't get my way and I don't really know an appropriate way to act, so I just react. Just like her, sometimes, the filter falls out of my brain and something totally inappropriate fall out of my mouth. Just like her, I have struggled to accept reality and I have judged other people harshly." I mean, I think that's pretty much every single one of us, that we struggle to accept reality and judge other people harshly. It's the exact same thing she is doing.

Your sister is jealous of your financial success. You have the nice big house now. You have a quality car. You're not driving a beat up junk anymore. You're able to take nice vacations now, and sometimes she makes comments about how it must be nice and things like that. Just like her, when I don't think something is fair, it sometimes upsets me. Just like her, when I don't think something is right, I sometimes say something about it. Just like her, when I feel sorry for myself, I sometimes try to turn things around or make up a story for why my life is better than theirs.

What you can see in all of these examples is how this "just like them" statement helps you to cross that line, that division that you've created between the two of you. It helps you pretty much step inside their shoes. You take a moment to go, "Okay, what do we have in common here?" Maybe not with that specific thing. Maybe that's not how you would show up or what you would do, but I guarantee you, there's some sort of commonality there and, once you can see it, at least in my experience, it immediately starts to diffuse things. You start having some compassion for that person, just some understanding of where they're coming from because, so often, we're so confused, like, "Clearly, I'm right. How can you not see it?"

This helps you to get like, "I get why they're showing up in that way. I understand how that might be, how they're interpreting this." Again, it does not mean that you agree or condone it. You just can see their point of view, and this starts to really change everything. It starts to soften things enough that you're much more likely to be able to find some new thoughts to become more abundant in your thinking, not be so set in scarcity, to do whatever you feel is the next right step, but to do it with love in your heart, to do it from a place of compassion and love for that person instead of feeling defensive or annoyed or feeling like you need to get back at them at some way or that you just even need to convince them of your point of view, because as we know, in many of these situations, you're not going to be able to convince them.

You cannot control what they think, and they probably really want to keep their way of thinking just like you want to keep yours. We don't have to convince them. All we have to do is choose the line of thinking for ourselves on the situation that makes us feel the way we want to feel, so I want you to give this a try. Try a "just like them" statement. It has made a world of difference for me. I use it all the time now, and I can't wait to hear what you think about it.

All right, if you could leave me a review on iTunes, I certainly would appreciate it. Remember, once I get to 500, I'm going to stop talking about these at least for a while, a very good long while, until I get ... here decide we need to 2,000, but in any case, if you could please leave me that review, I sure would appreciate it. Have a wonderful week, and I'll talk to you next time. Bye bye.