



WEIGHT LOSS FOR BUSY PHYSICIANS

— with Katrina Ubell, MD —

Katrina Ubell: Hey my friend, welcome back to the podcast. So excited to have you here. Today with me, I am really, really excited to share with you something that I learned from Tony Robbins that I think is going to be amazing for you to understand and know. It's kind of like his framework, but then of course, I've given you my twist on it and I think it's going to be really, really meaningful for you and for you to observe in other people as well.

It's so much easier, very often, for us to understand what's going on for other people before we can actually see it in ourselves. So in this kind of situation, I actually want you to spend some time seeing if you can identify what's going on for other people, to hone your skills in this and then you're going to be able to see how it's playing out for you and your life.

So people ask me all the time why they're not doing what they know they should be doing. They want to know why they're not committed to losing weight. They want to lose weight, but they're not committed, right? They're not doing the things that create the result that they want. They're oftentimes doing things that create the opposite result of what they want, and they're just spinning their wheels with this whole weight loss thing. Like they'll make a little progress and then they backslide for whatever reason, and then they make a little progress, and then they backside. They're just not making meaningful movement.

And I've also had people tell me that they wish that their husband or their friend or their adult child or someone else in their life would do what they need to do to lose weight. They see this person struggling with her weight, having a hard time because of their weight, but they aren't changing what they need to change to make progress and they wonder why. So this is going to be really, really useful for you if you know someone like that, for you to pay attention.

And even outside of weight loss, we've all known people, and some of us might be these people, who like to complain about something but never seem to change it, right? There's so many people that do this. It could be their work, could be their relationships, it could be their debt or overspending, it could be their lack of systems and organization in their life, and it really can be any number of things. So lots of people who just love to play that woe is me game and spend a lot of time focusing on that.

But ultimately, there's really a ton of factors at play here that create this. But what I'm going to focus on today is one of them, and that is what needs to happen in order for you to change. It's really common for us to identify a problem and then not do what's required to actually change it. So why do some of us recognize that we're overweight and we take care of the problem, while others of us think and talk about it for months and years and never solve it? Have you ever wondered that? Why do some people identify a problem in their life and decide to work to improve it while others don't? What's the difference there?

So what I'm going to share with you is this framework. Like I said, I learned it from Tony Robbins, and I'm going to give you, again, like I said, my personal twist on it. What Tony teaches is that there's five stages that lead up to someone deciding to make a meaningful change in their life. So I'm going to go through those five stages with you here. The first one is satiation. And I think of this as identifying that the problem exists. Like whatever is going on, it's too much. You have too much weight on the scale, your clothing is feeling too tight and you start thinking, I should probably do something about this, like you're actually recognizing that a problem exists.

Well, Tony uses this as an example to demonstrate the concept of satiation in different ways. If you ate your absolute favorite meal three times a day for six months, you'd start to feel like you'd had enough of that food. You're satiated. You're just like, "I probably don't need to eat that again for a long time", even though it was your favorite. And so I think of it as just identifying the problem and having had enough.

So you've had enough of the bickering with your spouse, you've had enough of leaving work everyday, drained and in a terrible mood, you've had enough of grabbing outfits from your closet and them being too tight, you've had enough of the clutter and disorganization in your house, you've had enough of yelling at your kids to get them to do what you want them to do, you've had enough of the worry and the stress around your debt and your bills, or any other thing.

But having had enough actually isn't enough to initiate lasting change. There's more steps that we have to go through. So many people just stay in satiation and they never make a change, and they wonder why. And it's important to recognize this. It's like, oh, you're satiated, but you just have more steps, more stages you need to go through in order to make an actual, lasting change.

So the next stage is dissatisfaction. And dissatisfaction is whatever you've had enough of is starting to create some pain or emotional suffering for you. This is when people start to entertain the idea of making a change, but they still won't change yet. So they're kind of like, "Oh, it's a possibility that I could change. That's available to me", but they aren't ready to change yet.

This is when you're really recognizing that the issue is a problem in your life. You're recognizing that not everybody thinks and feels the way you do about this situation in your life. You understand that there are solutions out there and there are things that you can do to change, but you're still not at that point of really being ready to do that yet. You're not really ready to change. And so many of you listening to this podcast are in dissatisfaction with your weight right now.

So you can maybe think, a little introspectively, is that what's going on for you? You've identified the problem and it's creating some pain for you, you know that you have some weight to lose, it's creating some pain free in some way, but you aren't at the place yet where you're really ready to make true, meaningful change, take massive action that's going to be required to fix this problem. And when you're in information consumption mode, you're in the dissatisfaction stage. That's what a lot of you who listen to a lot of podcasts are in. You're in information consumption mode, but you're not taking action. Moving to action is not fully available to you here at this stage. You're just in dissatisfaction.

So if you listen to this podcast and you think, That's so great and I should totally do that and you don't do it, this is why. Okay? You're just in dissatisfaction. You're not at a stage where you're ready to actually make a lasting change. If your problem is your work, you might be thinking about looking for other positions, but you haven't taken the steps required to find out what opportunities are available, what's out there. You're just staying in thinking mode.

If you're dissatisfied with your debt and you know that a financial planner can help you, then that's great, but if you haven't asked around for recommendations or checked out what someone like that could really do for you, you're still just in dissatisfaction. You're not moving forward. Your House is in disarray and you know there is people in programs that can help you get that all straightened out, but you haven't really looked into them. Or maybe you know your marriage is in a rough patch, but you're not doing much about it. And if this is the case, you're probably in some emotional childhood here. And what that means is that you're probably blaming your spouse some, thinking that he or she needs to change in order to solve the issue, in order to make things better. You're not taking full ownership. So that's dissatisfaction. That's where a lot of us live.

Then the next stage is the threshold, and this is really the breaking point. And when you reached the threshold, you know that the time to do something about it is now. So if something happens or you have some sort of thought or epiphany, often for me, this happens in the shower. It just pops up into my head, and you just know that you can't take it one more second, that waiting or taking your time is no longer an option for you here, it is time to do something about this.

And I think you can probably recognize some time in your life where this has happened, where there was some sort of problem, maybe you're driving some junky car and you're trying to just wait it out or wait until you got your bonus or something to buy a new car and then something happens with that car and you're like, "That's it. I'm done." Or I know that this has happened for a lot of physicians who have a nanny or some sort of other household helper, where maybe you've been dissatisfied, you're kind of like, "This person is probably not the right fit," and then something happens. You're like, "And you're fired. That's it." There is a breaking point.

This happens for women in abusive relationships. We so often wonder, he's beating the crap out of her. Why is she not leaving? Because she's in satiation or dissatisfaction, or maybe not even satiated yet. Maybe it's going to take a lot for her to be satiated. But then one day something happens, and that's when she decides to do what she needs to do to leave. That she's just... That's it. No more. That's the breaking point.

When we know we should lose some weight, sometimes the threshold is stepping on the scale and seeing some sort of upper limit number. Many of us have a number on the scale that's like, "No matter what, if I reach that number, something needs to change. Something has to happen." Or sometimes we see ourselves in a picture and have some clarity as to what's actually happened, what our weight is actually manifesting as on our bodies.

I've had many clients tell me that they think that they've got the reverse of body dysmorphic disorder, where they think they look better than they probably actually do. And so sometimes seeing yourself in a picture, you're kind of like, "Oh wow, okay. I didn't realize that that's actually what's happening right now." And I do want to point out that this does not mean hating on yourself. I think for a lot of us, it is hating on yourself because that's just habitually what we do. But it doesn't mean that you step on the scale and then you're horrified and disgusted with yourself and beating yourself up like crazy so that you make some change.

Do you do that? It's not going to be lasting. We know this for a fact. So this can still just be like, "Wow, I just love myself too much to continue gaining weight. I love myself too much to just turn a blind eye to what is actually going on for me here." So, ultimately, it's really just being ready to make the change. It's being ready to call the financial planner, being ready to make a plan to declutter the house, and then maybe taking a course on setting up family and home systems, being ready to stop, avoiding, looking at your finances and just figuring it out already, being ready to uproot your family in order to find a better working environment for you, whatever that may look like.

So that's the threshold. You reach that threshold and you're like, "Okay, I am ready. Let's do something." And once you reach threshold, what often happens is the stage of truth. So truth is when you become aware of what you're thinking and feeling and doing that's creating that problem and recognizing that you were the only one who can change or fix it, that it really all comes down to you. You stop blaming other people and you move into emotional adulthood. You recognize that it is 100% up to you to actually make the change if you want it. And you recognize that if you keep waiting for someone else to take the reins or thinking something else should be doing it, or it's their job to be changing it, then you're going to be waiting for a long time.

So I think that there is a lot of clarity and peace in this stage. You're just ready, even if you're terrified, even when you're terrified, even when you have a lot of doubt and worry and confusion and overwhelm, you just recognize that yes, all of those emotions are uncomfortable, but this is your job and your job alone to fix this, and this is just what needs to happen. So the truth is, this is up to me. Here we go.

And then the fifth stage is what Tony calls opening. I think of it more as the presence of opportunity. So what Tony says is that when the truth arise, that there is an opening, and he says it's only there for a second. I beg to differ on that, but he says that it's there for a second. It's scary because you don't know what's on the other side, but you jump through that opening anyway, trusting that what's on the other side has to be better than what you're experiencing right now.

I think of this a little differently. I think of it as opportunity showing up. And those of you who grew up on Oprah out like I did, you will remember that Oprah always said that luck is the meeting of preparation and opportunity. So you've been preparing, preparing, preparing, preparing, opportunity presents itself and you take that opportunity, and then we're like, "Oh look how lucky we are." But through satiation and dissatisfaction and threshold and truth, you've been preparing yourself. That's the way I look at it. It's just been all preparation, then opportunity shows up and you take that leap.

And that's what my weight coaching group clients do. They see the opportunity to work with me and get my help, and they jump through that opening. And here's what's interesting. Some of them charge for it and they're like, "This is it. I know that this is what I need to be doing." And others are screaming banshees. They're like, "I am so scared. I don't really know, but I'm going to do this." So it doesn't have to look like a stoic soldier marching into battle. It really can look like, "I am terrified, but I'm going to do it anyway."

And these clients know that their weight and overeating struggle is their work that only they can do. They stop thinking that they need more support from other people or that the hospital cafeteria needs to stop having such delicious cookies. They just see it as their own work, and they see opportunity to do it with my guidance and support. That opportunity can be hearing about a new job maybe through networking or a trusted contact, the opportunity can be a program or a course to go through exactly what you've been needing, that opportunity can be to work with someone or follow a book that helps you to get your finances straight, that opportunity can be recognizing that you are responsible for your relationships and then getting the help that you know you need so that you think about it differently and change how you're showing up in your relationships.

So this is really, really good stuff. I think it's really helpful for us to see this framework and look at it like, "Alright, I'm just in dissatisfaction. I'm not actually at a point where I'm ready to make that true, meaningful change, and that's why I'm not doing what's required." We as physicians are so good at beating ourselves up and hating on ourselves and being mean to ourselves that we just tend to very easily look for any opportunity to show ourselves or interpret something as we are not measuring up or not good enough. And I think that's what often we end up doing in this kind of a scenario.

But what I hope that this can help you with is just recognizing there's nothing wrong with you. You're just not at the stage where you're ready to really make that meaningful change, and that's okay. It's okay if it takes some time for that threshold day to come. There is no rush. Doesn't have to be a timeline on this. I do want to just give you an example that... I love giving you examples that are not something that's super deep and meaningful necessarily, but can demonstrate this, because I think it's so much easier for you to understand it when you see it playing out in something that's not so intense.

So I'm going to share with you a product, of course, that I think is amazing and I think you all should know about if it's for yourself or for people that you know or maybe even your patients because it legit has changed my life. But I'm going to tell you the process of how I got to owning this thing and allowing it to change my life for the better.

So let me just set the stage here. So I am 43, just turned 43, and for the last two years or so, I have periodically woken up with absolute drenching night sweats. And it's not predictable when it happens, but when it happens, it's usually for a number of days in a row, sometimes even a week or more, and then I don't have it for a while.

And so for a while there, I was trying to pay attention. Were there any trends to it? What could it be? Of course, I had to coach myself out of my thought of like, when are night sweats actually cancer? Worked myself through all of that, and I was spending... I probably spent about two years, maybe less, maybe a year and a half trying to figure out what was going on with that. So let me tell you, I was in the satiation phase then. I had had enough of this waking up drenched in sweat business. That's how I knew I was satiated. I was just like, "You know what? I don't think this is normal. I would really prefer not to wake up like this. It really is something that I could do without. I've had enough."

So that's the satiation phase. Then I moved to dissatisfaction. And in dissatisfaction, I was like, "This is gross." I was starting to experience some pain. I was experiencing some suffering from this. There were some other issues that were a result of me waking up so sweaty. I couldn't make the bed for a while because I needed the bed to air out and dry out. I would always have to wash my hair in the morning because it was so gross and sweaty, it was just easier to start over than to try to fix it. And I was waking up, obviously, uncomfortable because I was so damp, and so I was feeling more tired because my quality of sleep was more poor.

I didn't feel like I had control over the quality of sleep that I was experiencing, so I was definitely experiencing some dissatisfaction. I looked a little bit into options. I talked to my GOYN about it at a couple of different annual visits and she didn't seem to be very concerned or thought that I should really do anything different. And so I just stayed in dissatisfaction for a while. I really liked to complain about it in my head for a while, and I would complain about it to my husband too. I would just be like, "Look at me. This is so gross." And then I'd handle it and then go about my day.

So finally, probably about two months ago, I hit the threshold. And for me, that was the breaking point, when I realized that this is probably not going to get better for at least another decade. Like if this is going to be a normal perimenopause kind of a thing that women go through, then it's really not going to change. There wasn't any pattern I could come up with, it didn't seem to be correlated to anything that I could change, so this is probably not going to get better. It doesn't seem to be just this weird phase or something I'm going to be getting over anytime soon.

So that was that breaking point. And then the truth that followed, here was the truth. I am the only one who can work on solving this problem for myself. I was tired of hearing myself complain and complaining in my head about it. It was like a broken record. And the truth was I can either work to just tolerate this, and that's fine. This is just something that happens to me and it's okay, or I can do something different. And once I recognized that truth and approached that stage, then there was that opening or the opportunity, like I like to think about it.

I saw an ad... Actually, I had seen the ad many months prior and looked at it very briefly and just never really spent a lot of time with it. But I saw an ad for this product called the ChiliPad, and it was a discount for this thing.

And I had looked on it, and it's kind of expensive, so I just wasn't really sure if it would help me or not. But once I was ready for that opportunity, I was like, "This might be the thing that I really need." And so I just spent an hour or two doing some extensive research on it and other options and really made sure that it helps people who have this problem that I have. And I bought it and I set it up and it is the best thing. It has totally changed my life.

So let me just briefly tell you what it is. So it is a pad. I just bought the twin size because my husband doesn't need it. And you put that underneath your fitted sheet on your bed. And what's in it is some very tiny little tubes that go all the way through it, snake all the way through it, and then it connects to this unit that has some distilled water in it. And you can set it to heat or cool that water to whatever temperature you want. So you can cool all the way down to 55 degrees and you can heat all the way up to 110.

And it has low remote so you can have the machine on the floor and use the remote to change it if you need to, and it just circulates that water through the pad all night long, I think it goes for like 10 hours, and keeps you cool, and/or warms you up if you're a cold person. And it has literally changed my life. I was really like, "I don't know." I made sure they had some sort of return policy. I was like, "Really? Is this going to be that good? Maybe it's going to be really loud and annoying. I already sleep with ear plugs in any way."

But I told my husband... I was like, "It's supposed to just sound more like white noise, so I think it's going to be okay, like a fan blowing." And he was like, "Okay." And it's been totally fine for him. But I'm telling you I have not had one of those sweaty nights since. And I think of it because I have an engineering background, I'm like the dorky engineer. I'm like, "Oh it's just a heat sink. That's all it is."

It's like I can feel the mattress pulling heat off of me. It's rather than cooling me, I sort of more feel like the heat is just being pulled down off of me. It feels great. It feels like that great feeling you get when you climb into crisp sheets that are kind of cool. It's like that all night long. It is amazing. It is absolutely amazing. So I highly recommend it. The ChiliPad, I have no financial interest in this. It's just something that has helped me so much, and I think that it's so great.

Sometimes we don't have... because our house is old, you don't have great aeration, air movement in our bedroom, it gets hot. We have one vent where the AC comes out, and it's, of course, by my husband's side of the bed. So I'm over there sweating like a crazy person, but no more because I have the chilly pad. So you can see how there was a process that I went through going through these different stages to get myself to the place where I was ready to spend the money on this thing.

So I want you to think about which stage you are in in terms of your weight loss. If you're doing okay with your weight loss and that's all good and you're just maintaining, or you have some other area in your life that you want to work on, you're just not changing it meaningfully. Think about which stage you're in in terms of that situation in your life. Think about other people that you know who have a problem in their life and they are or aren't changing it, and just try to identify like, "Oh, I wonder which stage they're in. Are they in satiation, dissatisfaction? Are they at threshold, truth or opportunity?" Well, I call it opportunity, he calls it opening.

So sometimes we like to beat ourselves up because we're not doing anything meaningful to change a problem in our lives. We're like, "What's wrong with me?" But I just really hope that understanding what stage you're in will help you to give yourself some grace. If there's one thing that we physicians need, it's a little bit of grace for ourselves. Hey, you're just in satiation or dissatisfaction, of course you're not going to be doing what you need to do to change, and that is okay.

At some point, you'll hit that threshold or maybe you won't. Maybe the problem will just go away. But probably at some point, you'll hit that threshold, and from there you can work on taking full ownership of the problem, seeking out that opportunity, whatever it may be, and creating that opening for yourself, taking that opportunity and making meaningful change.

And maybe for some of you, that'll be the next time that I open up my coaching group or it will be something different. But I think that this is going to be really, really helpful as a framework or structure for you to assess where you are in terms of making change or not making change. All right.

Have a wonderful, wonderful week and I will talk to you very soon. Take care. Bye.