



# WEIGHT LOSS FOR BUSY PHYSICIANS

— with Katrina Ubell, MD —

Katrina Ubell: Hello, my friend. Welcome back to the podcast. If you are new here, an extra special welcome. So glad to have you here.

Now, I do want to clear up one thing before I get started talking about today's topic, and that is the topic of my dogs. And you guys know that earlier this year I was really struggling. We got two puppies. If you're kind of newer here, we got littermate puppies, boy and girl. And you know, really, what could go wrong? It's kind of what we thought. We're like, "It's going to be fine."

Well, it was super challenging, like really, really, really, really challenging. And there were some added kind of elements to having littermates that we had sort of been warned of and warned about but we decided to not listen, as we sometimes do, right? And they really came true here. I think it really can work out for some people, but it was really, really, really challenging for us.

And so, the reason I wanted to talk about this is because some things happened earlier in the year. And I just felt so kind of sensitive and raw about it, I didn't feel comfortable sharing it on the podcast. But I realized that some people are a little bit confused. Because one of my friends just texted me, she's like, "Wait, did you get another dog?" And I was like, "What? No. Why did you think that?" And then I realized it was because of something I said on a recent podcast.

So here's basically what happened. We had the two puppies. And we were working really, really intensively with a trainer who's like a behaviorist. I always said she was like a dog psychologist, not really, but really, really, very, very skilled.

And the little girl puppy that we had, her name is Sunny, she was so adorable. But she was just not in the right home, is essentially what it came down to. She had something called resource guarding. And all of you veterinarians out there will know what I'm talking about. But basically anything that a dog deems as a resource, they'll guard. And they'll bite because of it sometimes. And so, it's pretty typical for dogs to do that around their food if they aren't kind of trained properly as puppies.

And what's interesting is she didn't actually guard her food. What she guarded was all kinds of other things. She would guard the open dishwasher. She would guard the grass. She would guard the firewood in our house.

She would guard definitely like toys and things like that. But she basically would bite, and she had bitten all of us more than once except for my youngest daughter. She was the one who got away. I think she just probably tried to avoid her somewhat. But she totally just was a challenge.

And so, apparently resource guarding is one of the only behavioral things that can not be trained out of a dog. So we invested lots of time, lots of money. She went and did multiple weeks, days, with our trainer at her house working on this. And she would come back and totally bite. So she had bitten my middle son actually on the nose. I mean, it was really like, now, on telling the story, I'm like, "Oh my gosh, it just was so obvious." But when you have your heart in it and you think that you're doing what you can do to try to help the dog and try to make it all work out, you're just in it still, right?

And so, what ended up being kind of the final straw was she had just spent two or three weeks with the trainer at the trainer's house, and she came back and within a week she bit someone at doggy daycare and drew blood. And so, it was like, "Oh my gosh. Okay. And so, that happened. And then I guess two or three days later, she bit my husband twice. And then she bit my son again. And I started looking up what's the liability of having a dog that is known to have drawn blood, definitely bites. And you know, in our state, it would just be on us, and so ...

To add insult to injury, she was the sweetest, softest, most pleasant-to-pet dog you could ever meet. She was like a stuffed animal. And so, what that meant then was that children especially, all they wanted to do was just to love on her all the time and pet her and pick her up and snuggle her. And she was so far opposite from being a snuggly dog. Like you could see her being held by children and you could tell she didn't want to be held. She didn't really like to cuddle or snuggle with any of us. It's just not her thing.

And so, what would be hard is we'd have a friend over and then the friend would be snuggling the dog. And I'd say, "I think she's done. I think you need to put her down." And then I'd turn my back, and a minute or two later, child is snuggling the dog again because she was just so cute and soft. So I understood that. But it was really only a matter of time until she bit someone else too, like not a family member and not someone at daycare.

So it really was kind of one of those, you know, quote unquote come to Jesus moments of like, okay, so what actually needs to happen in order for us to decide that this isn't working out? Because we need to have some sort of end point here. Because this is just not good. And so, the more we talked about it, the more we realized like, I mean, what is it going to have to take? Like she's going to have to draw blood from a child's face? What is it, right? It became very clear that the line had already been crossed.

So it just killed us to do it, because we really did love her and we had just tried so hard to make it work out. But we ended up using the Westie Rescue, and they found her a lovely home without children and without another dog up in Northern Wisconsin. And she is just living her best life up there. So she is great. She's living a great life.

We did keep the little boy. We kept Auggie. And his behavior actually improved significantly once he didn't have her around either. So I think it was just better for both of them, which is what most people will say about getting littermates anyway. That is just, can be really a challenge.

So, you know, it didn't work out. We were sad about it. We still got our little Auggie, and we love him so much. But the reason why I have two dogs then, because I still do have two dogs, is because my friend Nicole has been living with us for a while, and she has a Westie. So her Westie, his name is Duke. And so, he ended up coming to live with us maybe a month or so after Sunny went to her forever home.

And so, Auggie loves that, loves having a playmate. And they're best buds, and they love each other so much so ... And luckily Duke is older, he's six. And he was able to help Auggie kind of grow up a little bit more. And so, a lot of the issues that we had with him in terms of potty training stuff and things like that very promptly solved themselves once he had a big-boy brother to kind of show him the ropes on how we do things.

So that is the story with the dogs. And you know, the kids are already asking for another puppy. And I keep telling them that we have to get Auggie trained up really, really well first, because there's no way that I'm bringing a puppy in here who's going to learn some of his bad behaviors. So that's where we're at with that.

Okay. So what I want to talk to you about today is ultimately this resistance to doing the thought work piece. I know that last week I had a weight loss success story, and next week I'll have another one for you. That's so amazing. And you know, so many of my clients who've worked with me will say, "I just, I really didn't want to do it. I had resistance to doing it. I didn't think it was going to make a big difference. I didn't think that I really needed to write it down. I really thought that having it in my head was just fine and just working through it in my brain was totally perfectly adequate. I don't know why I really needed to dig in." And so, I've talked about that before. And hopefully you've found that that made a difference for you, that you really do need to write it down and really dig in and look at those thoughts that you're having, really investigate them.

But what I'm finding more and more is that there's another layer of resistance that a lot of people have. And that's what I want to address today. And that's ultimately kind of a fear-based resistance. So it looks like doing thought work but keeping it really superficial and kind of more like a diary entry or kind of more like a to-do list or just sort of like a little bit of a rundown on how the day went. Kind of just keeping it real surface level and not getting to what's really going on.

So what I have found with people like that, when they're struggling with that and they feel like the story they tell themselves is "I can't go deep" or "I don't know how to get deeper. I don't know how to get to what really is going on for me," often there really is a level of resistance or fear of what they might find if they do the real-deal thought work, like really start digging into what's going on in their brain. They're kind of like, "Ugh, it might be really bad, and I don't necessarily want to have to work through that or be faced with that."

And I find this to be, first of all, a normal response completely, but also really interesting in the parallel that it can have to the way a lot of people approach their health. Because those of you, especially those of you who take care of adults so often, right? People, they know that something's wrong. They know that this hacking cough that they've had is not normal and they probably shouldn't be having that, and that they probably should go to the doctor and get it checked out, but they don't go, right?

Denial is so powerful in just telling yourself like "It's totally fine. It's not a big deal. It's just this cough. It's just my allergies. It's just, you know, whatever," whatever they kind of blame it on and not ... They don't really want to go find out that they have something wrong with them, right? My husband will talk about that as an ear, nose and throat doctor. People come in with this huge neck mass. I mean, they've known it's been there, and they just didn't want to go get it checked out.

So the good news here is that not doing deeper thought work is not going to kill you. So that's good. But it might significantly influence the amount of joy that you've experienced in your life and just the overall number or amount of positive emotions that you experience.

But it's just interesting, right? Our brains are like, "You know, that thing that I really think will probably help me, I'm just kind of scared to go in there and figure it out." Kind of like if you go up to your attic and your attic is a total mess, you're kind of like, "Ugh, what am I going to find? There might be like dead animals up here. This seems like a whole lot of work."

But here's the thing: once you've dug in and actually cleaned it all out and looked at everything, you feel so much freedom, right? You are so proud of yourself. You're so happy that you did the hard work and got through it and cleaned it all out, so that you can utilize that space or just know that you don't have all this excess that you don't need around you.

So I think that the first thing to do when you're recognizing this resistance is just understand that it's normal to feel some fear about it. And I think it's easy to believe that if you're afraid to do it or if you have that resistance to doing it, then you shouldn't do it. But it's the exact opposite, right? When you have that feeling of "I probably shouldn't do it," that's when you need to dare yourself to do it, right? That's when you go, "Okay, the fact that I'm even resisting this means that 100% what I need to be doing next is digging in and really looking at what's going on for me here."

So if you can look at yourself as some compassion and "Of course I'm going to be resistant to doing this. Of course it's scary. Of course I don't know what I'm going to find," rather than judging yourself because you aren't able to go deeper, right? Or judging yourself because you think you're weak or something like that because you're not really willing or wanting to go and figure out what's going on there.

I think there's also an element of fear that will come up because I think some people are afraid that what they find might drive them to make a huge change. So, for instance, some people are very, very resistant to really digging in deeper to their marriage relationship, that they know they struggle with, that they know has problems.

But they don't want to dig into it because they're ultimately afraid that what they might come to is the realization that they don't want to be married anymore. And the idea of going through a divorce and the whole process of doing that feels so frightening that they would rather just not know what's going on and just deal with kind of the status quo, which is also not great, right?

It's a similar thing to weight loss. It's like, hey, if I don't ever look at the scale, sure, I can tell that I'm overweight, but then I don't have to really know how overweight I am. Because if I really knew the number on the scale, then I would have to do something about it, right? So it's just important to recognize like, okay, there's this element of denial here. Like I just, I don't want to believe that there could be something else. Or if I believe that there might be something else, then I don't want to have to potentially make a change.

But that is kind of a harsh way of looking at it for yourself instead of looking at it like this is just something I want to explore. I just want to get to know myself better. I just want to get to know what's going on in my brain better. I just want to be like a student of myself, a student of my brain. And I don't have to make any decisions at all. I don't have to change anything if I don't want to. But I think it would be helpful for me to at least know what's going on in there and take responsibility for all of what I'm creating for myself. And from there I can figure out what I want to do next.

So in our attic example, right? Just going like, "Sure, I have some stuff. I might even have a lot of stuff. I might have storage units full of stuff. And that's okay. It's totally fine. Maybe some of the stuff I actually want to keep. Maybe I could even really use it. Maybe it could totally help me right now, but I don't even remember that I have it. So there's no way that I could even use it because I don't even know what's in there. So what if I just go through everything, take some inventory, figure out what's going on, get rid of things that are broken or ruined or I'm never going to use, and then kind of see what's left and decide what to do from there?"

I'm not asking myself to get rid of everything. I'm not asking myself to empty out the storage units or get rid of all my stuff. I can keep whatever I want. But I just want to see what's in there, right? Totally different than "Oh my gosh, I got to go get rid of all of these things and completely just restart my whole life all over again."

And I think that's what a lot of us think when we think about digging in deeper with our thought work. It's like, "I'm going to figure out something, and then I'm going to find out something really awful about myself or I'm going to have to really dig into this shame that I've just been suppressing."

Here's the thing: anything that you have hiding in there, it's already manifesting itself in your life, right? If you feel shame about something, you can't just be ignoring that. For sure that's resulting in you hiding and isolating yourself in some way. So there's already some influence of you avoiding it. It's already happening. So we might as well just learn more about it, figure it out, decide if it's what you want to keep doing or if you want to kind of change things, right?

I mean, what we would definitely always recommend to a family member or patient or anybody who's got some sort of health thing going on that seems a little weird, we would definitely say, "Yeah, I think you should probably get that checked out." It's way easier to treat when you get it checked out now, right? If we look at it now, we might be able to do something about it now rather than you having more and more negative effects from whatever is going on and potentially the treatment might be more involved, right? Of course, we're going to encourage them to get it checked out.

So if you think about it in that way, it's just like checking out your own brain. It's looking at it like, I do other hygiene for my body, and this is hygiene for my brain, to be able to just figure out what's going on in there and clean it all up.

Now, what I do know is that when people are resistant to doing this deeper thought work, what ends up ultimately happening once they've gone through the process of really digging into some element of what's going on for them and working through it, they feel so appreciative of themselves on the other end. They can see the benefits of it that often they really become kind of believers in it. They're like, "Well, that was so amazing. Even though it was hard potentially. I definitely want to dig in to the next thing too, that other, that next subject that I've been avoiding, that other area of my life that I haven't really been wanting to do this work on. I really do want to do it now because I want to recreate that same peace, that same calmness, that same contentment that I'm experiencing in this other issue that I thought I'd never get any peace over or I just wanted to believe wasn't a big deal even though it really was creating a lot of pain for me in my life."

And I noticed this so much in my clients. As you know, I have a continuation program now from the Weight Loss for Doctors Only program called Weight Loss for Doctors Only Masters. And so many of the women who are in the Masters program will say, "I had amazing results in the regular program. I lost weight and I worked through all these issues and all my relationships are so much better and I'm liking work again and it's so great."

But so many of them are like, "But now I think I have to do the thing I've been avoiding, and that is work on my relationship with my mother," or whoever it is, whoever that kind of hard person is. They're like, "Okay, I think I have to do this."

And it's like chewing glass, right? They're like, "Ugh, if I have to, I guess I will." But they know, because they've had so many great results from doing the work on other issues, they know that it can be so much better on the other end. And that's why they're willing to dig in. That's why they're willing to put that effort into it.

So I just want you to know that being afraid, feeling resistance, all of that is completely normal. If you're feeling that way, nothing is going wrong. But that also doesn't mean that you don't do it, right? So what you really want to do is be committed to doing the hard thing, knowing that the outcome will be something that is going to be useful for you.

And sometimes we're like, "Well, but how long do I have to go through it? How long is it going to take?" And of course that's up to you really, ultimately. It depends on how much time and effort you're willing to spend on it and how often you look at it. But also sometimes, especially some of our relationships with family of origin kind of people, some of those can take some time just because there's so much history to unravel. There are different dynamics than, say, just a friendship, right? When you've known these people your entire life or different things have happened.

And all I can say is that being willing to dig in is what's going to make all the difference for you in your life, right? We can try to avoid it. We can try to suppress it. We can try to think that doesn't exist and sweep it under the rug or sweep it under the bed. But it's like you still know it's under there. You still know there's a mess there, right? It's like your attic is there. It's like it's still occupying space, mental space. You're still holding it even though you're trying to ignore it all the time, you know? It's like you're holding this 15-pound bowling ball and trying to pretend that it's not there. It's like, yeah, but the lightness that you'll experience when you just are able to put it down, it makes a huge difference.

So I just want you to know that if you have been resisting that thought work, if you've been thinking, "This is just something that I don't want to do. It seems really hard. I'm sure there's nothing in there," or you know there is something in there and you're just afraid of what might come of actually looking at it, what will come of looking at it is you being able to live really your best life, as much as we joke about that, but really being able to create the experience of your life that you want. When you look at it and you think, "When I'm 95 and sitting in the rocking chair talking to my great grandchildren, am I going to be so glad that I never dealt with this issue? Or I'm going to be thanking myself for actually doing the hard work so that I could experience so many decades or freedom from that."

So with that, if you are kind of like, "What is she talking about, this thought work? I don't even know. I'm new here," just remember that I have that podcast roadmap for you to take you through 30 episodes in 30 days to really help you to dig into the episodes that are going to help you to lose weight the fastest and to really dig into learning all of this work so that you can get the results that you're looking for. So the way to get that is [KatrinaUbellMD.com/start](https://KatrinaUbellMD.com/start). S-T-A-R-T. Again, go to [KatrinaUbellMD.com/start](https://KatrinaUbellMD.com/start). I can't wait for you to dig into your deeper thought work, and I can't wait for you to listen to those episodes. You can start losing some weight.

Awesome. All right. Have a wonderful week, and I'll talk to you next time. Take care. Bye-bye.