



# WEIGHT LOSS FOR BUSY PHYSICIANS

— with Katrina Ubell, MD —

Katrina Ubell: Well, hey there my friend. Welcome back to the podcast. How is your December going? Do you feel like you've just stepped onto the moving sidewalk at the airport and the month is just flying by? That's how I always feel. Like, "Whoa, here we go." It is a busy one, we have lots to do.

Okay, today I want to address a very short question that I got. You know, I often say if you have questions for me, things you want me to address on the podcast, then definitely let me know. You can either go to the show notes page for this episode or any episode just by going to [KatrinaUbellMD.com](http://KatrinaUbellMD.com) forward slash the number of the episode. So this would be forward slash 152. The numbers 1-5-2. And leave a comment there, or you can just reach out through the contact section on my website and let me know what you want me to cover for you on the podcast. And so this is from an email. This is actually from a client. So she still emailed in and said, "I'd love it if Katrina would do a podcast on this."

And this is what she said. She said, "I miss my friend food. What do I do now?" And I thought, that's so good because so many of us feel that way. And if we don't feel that way now, then we worry that we're going to feel that way. Right? Where you're so reluctant to start losing weight because what are we going to do when we don't have our friend food anymore? It's like RIP food. And we feel sad and we feel a lot of grief about it and we don't know what to do. We're kind of like despondent and unmoored and we just don't really know what life is like if we don't have food there as our friend.

Now, I happen to know that the person who wrote this in is an OB/GYN. And I don't know if it's totally true that maybe the OBs struggle with this a little bit more than other physicians. I think there's actually physicians of every specialty who struggle with food in lots of different ways, but I've just worked with a lot of OB/GYNs and I know that using food as a way to comfort yourself, as a companion for yourself, as that kind of just little sidekick is the way that so many of you get through the difficult call, the long call, and just dealing with all the ups and downs that come from that specialty. Now again, there's so many other specialties that have the same, or potentially we could argue even worse experiences, but like I said, I notice this a lot with my OB/GYN clients.

And so I think this is just such a great question and I can't wait to address it on this podcast. I wanted to just look up what the definition of a friend was because I thought it would be helpful in making the points that I want to make today. And I found a couple of different ones.

One said a friend is, "A person whom one knows and with whom one has a bond of mutual affection." And another definition was that a friend is, "One attached to another by affection or esteem." And so I thought that was so good, right? Because it's one attached to another by affection or esteem. That's why I could think that you're my friend, but you could think that I'm not your friend. Right? Like if we're friends, then why don't we both agree we're friends? Well, because it's really just all our thinking about the other person.

Like if I think you're my friend, that's because I think thoughts, friendly thoughts, about you. It's a belief that I have. It's a thought that I choose to think. And you may not share those same thoughts. Right? So that's what that comes down to. So, here's what's interesting about food. Right? We say a person whom one knows and with whom one has a bond of mutual affection. So if we're both friends, we have mutual affection for each other. But food doesn't have affection for you. It's just sitting there. It's literally just molecules of different elements coming together. And food just sits there. It's just sitting there. It's really not your friend. And that's what's so hard about this. When we say, "I miss my friend food," we think we're just telling the truth. Food was my companion, food is my friend and now I miss it. What do I do now?

Well, the first thing you have to do is you have to look at your thoughts about food being your friend and completely change your whole relationship with food and the way you think about it, but also your whole relationship with yourself. So I'll get into that in a little bit. So when you think about food, what does it do? It just sits there. It literally just sits there. And we know that it just sits there and it means nothing until we have a thought about it, because think about food you don't like. When it just sits there, I've shared this before, I hate black licorice. Black licorice can sit on my desk all day long and I am never ever tempted to eat it. In fact, I'm repulsed by it. I don't want to eat it. But if you put red licorice on my desk, then I might have different thoughts about it. Right? So what's the difference? It's just my thinking about what happens to be sitting there. Right?

Because I know that black licorice tastes amazing to other people and they would have a totally different experience. So it's all my thoughts about it. So why do we even have thoughts about food that are so friendly? Why do we think thoughts that food is our friend? And I think that the main reason why is because we're not our own friend. We develop this relationship with food in our thinking about the food, especially while we go through our training, and food is the thing that's always there for us. It always comes through in a pinch. Like we can't drink alcohol when we're on call, but we can eat food. It's socially acceptable to eat food and to overeat food, to eat a lot of food, but it's not socially acceptable to do some other things. So we develop this relationship with food where we just start thinking these thoughts about how food is so great and food is kind of like our savior. Food is our friend. Food is what comes to the rescue. Food is the treat. Food is the way we reward ourselves. Food is just the ultimate in amazing companionship.

But that's just our thinking about it. And here's what's so interesting. Why don't we think that way about ourselves? Why don't we think that we're our own best companion? Why don't we think that being around ourselves is the best experience? Like it doesn't matter what's happening outside of me. It doesn't matter who I'm with. It doesn't matter what the experience is or how tired I am or how long it's been since I've eaten, or how mad the patient is or any of that stuff, I am a good time and I'm my own companion and I love being with myself. Well, most of us aren't thinking that way. Right?

And the reason why is because we don't have that affection or that esteem for ourselves that's in the definition of a friend. We have esteem for food in the way that we think, but we don't think thoughts of affection about ourselves, and we don't think thoughts of esteem for ourselves. And that's why we're looking for something else. Because here's the thing, for this client, it's food. For other people, it's exercise. For other people, it's gambling or looking at porn or playing video games all throughout the night. Right? That's their "friend." Drinking alcohol, doing drugs, all those things. So, for us who are listening to this podcast, it just happens to be food, but you can do the same work with anything else that you're overing, you're doing too much of that isn't serving you. So instead of going, "What do I do now? I miss my friend food? What do I fill that with?" Instead, you could start looking at, "Why am I not my own friend? Why don't I have the affection of a friend for myself?"

If you have some good friends you know that you might be like, "Oh, I'm just totally such a terrible person and I just so awful and so ugly and so fat," and whatever you're thinking. And they're like, "Are you kidding me? You're amazing. What are you talking about? Don't talk about my friend that way. You are awesome." Right? They have so much esteem for you and they have so much affection for you. But most of us aren't thinking that way about ourselves. We're thinking that we're just telling the truth when you have those negative thoughts about ourselves. We don't spend time actually creating, generating, affection for ourselves. We don't think about all the reasons that we should have esteem for ourselves.

I see this all the time with my weight loss clients, where maybe they've lost like 20 pounds and then they go on vacation and they gain a couple, and they're like, "I'm the worst. I'm so disappointed in myself. I'm so awful." I'm like, "What are you talking about? Okay, so you messed up a little bit. You have an opportunity to learn. It's totally fine. Why don't you have esteem for yourself that you've lost 20 pounds? That you're still here showing up? That you're asking for help? That's so amazing."

And I think sometimes they're kind of like, "Well, she's just trying to put a positive spin on it. She's just trying to make me feel better." That's not it at all. Those thoughts are available to you as well about yourself. So the question is why don't we think this way about ourselves? Honestly, I think it's because we've very rarely had anybody who could model this for ourselves, and if we did see some modeling of it, it usually was in a way where they were stuck up, arrogant, egotistical, very full of themselves. Like it wasn't a positive way that they had esteem for themselves, right? It was a way of one upmanship. It was in a way to kind of make other people less than so they can be feeling better about themselves and have more esteem for themselves.

That is not at all what I'm talking about. What I'm talking about is truly having affection for yourself. Truly loving yourself and thinking you're awesome, 100% all the way around. Not just awesome in some of these ways, and then in these other ways you're actually really screwing it up and really failing, or like these are the parts that are wrong with you. Like truly having esteem for yourself means actually letting yourself spend some time in your successes and not immediately jump to the next goal or the next thing that needs to be solved so that you can be whole and good enough and okay. Right? When you feel like you have a lot of self worth, you have esteem for yourself. When you feel like you're valuable, you have esteem for yourself. So this all comes down to that opinion of yourself work. Right? Spending time intentionally thinking thoughts that create affection and esteem for yourself so that you really are your own best friend.

If you know you've always got you, then it's not a problem that you don't have food around. Right? You don't need food to be that kind of sidekick for yourself because you're your own sidekick. While I was looking up the definitions, I also came across the definition of a friend in the urban dictionary. If you've never looked up a word in the urban dictionary, I suggest you do. It's pretty fun. It's pretty good. But this is their definition of a friend, which is actually quite lengthy and I don't think I'll go through the whole thing, but I'll just read some of it for you. They write, "A friend is someone you love and who loves you, someone you respect and who respects you, someone whom you trust and who trusts you. A friend is honest and makes you want to be honest too. A friend is loyal."

So you have to think about that. Are you your own friend? Right? Do you love yourself? Do you respect yourself? When you're making decisions that are not in your best interest, you're probably not loving and respecting yourself. Do you trust yourself? So many of us don't trust ourselves, because we say we're going to do one thing and then we do the next. Right? We do something totally against it. It's like this paradox of we don't do what we want to do and we do the things we don't want to do. That's what we have to sort out, right? A friend is honest and makes you want to be honest too. And being honest with yourself is not just saying, "Well, it's okay, it's not a problem. I'll just start again tomorrow. I'll just start again on Monday." That's not being kind to yourself. Being honest with yourself is going, "I'm really struggling. Why is this still a problem that I haven't been able to solve? I might be missing a piece here. If I'm truly being honest with myself, I might need some help." Right?

A friend is loyal. That means that she's not just the fair weather fan, kind of thing. When things are going great you think you're great, but when things aren't going great you think you're a piece of trash. You think you're awesome no matter what you're doing. Even when you're doing those things that you know you shouldn't be doing, you're like, "You're awesome and I know you can do better than this, because I believe in you and I love you. And I'm being honest, you can do better. So let's do this." Totally different way of talking to yourself, right?

I love this one, this is so good. "A friend is someone who is happy to spend time with you doing absolutely nothing at all. How often are you willing to be with yourself doing nothing at all? So often, the minute we're by ourselves for a second, we're like, "I need to turn on an audiobook or a podcast," or "I need to be talking to someone," or "I need to be on Instagram." I need to be constantly having some sort of input because I can't actually be with myself. Right? It says, "A friend is someone who doesn't mind driving you on stupid errands, who will get up at midnight just because you want to go on an adventure, and who doesn't have to talk to communicate with you." Think about how fun that person is. You can be that person for yourself. You can be on stupid errands and not like, "Oh, what a slog." You can be like, "Hey, well, we get to hang out together. So that's cool. I get to be with me, my favorite person. So awesome. It's so great."

I love this one. "A friend is someone who will come with you when you have to do boring things like watch bad recitals, go to stuffy parties, or wait in boring lobbies. You don't even think about who's talking or who's listening in a conversation with a friend." I love that, right? You're doing these boring things and you're not in your brain going, "This is so stupid. What a waste of time." You're just like, "Hey, it's not my favorite party. This is the epic bad recital that won't end. I'm totally bored out of my mind, but actually I'm not because I'm with me. It's totally fine." Right? That's what we want to be creating and cultivating for ourselves.

"A friend is someone for whom you're willing to change your opinions." Think about that. Your opinion of yourself is terrible, so are you willing to change that to be your own friend? To see in yourself what others see in you? That's what you need to really be asking yourself. "A friend is someone you look forward to seeing and who looks forward to seeing you. Someone you like so much it doesn't matter if you share interests or traits. A friend is someone you like so much, you start to like the things they like." Right? If you resist who you really are, you resist the interests or traits that you have, that's not being a friend to yourself. You decide to like those things, to own them, to be you. Truly 100% unapologetically you. That's how you become a friend to yourself. So you don't need food to be your friend when you this friend to yourself. That's what I really want you to be aware of.

All right, so I can help you with this as well. Okay? I can help you with your weight loss. I can help you with this piece of it, this part about your relationship with yourself that makes all of the difference, okay? When you're your own friend, you don't need to eat more food than you need. You don't need that ice cream to be your companion at night. You're your own companion. I'm telling you what, this is the work people. This is the deal, right? Even when you think, "Oh, I'll lose the weight and then it'll be better." Like in this client's case, she's like, "But now I miss my friend food, what do I do now?"

This is the piece that your traditional weight loss programs are missing. What do you do now? How do you figure this out? That's exactly what I can help you to do. This is exactly what we do in the program and this is literally everything. Okay? Losing the weight is great, but I promise you, sorting this stuff out is what creates the best possible, most satisfying and fulfilling life that you can possibly have for the rest of your life. And that is not just hyperbole. It really truly is the truth.

I cannot wait to talk to you again next time. Have a wonderful week. Make sure you're taking a moment, just be present with yourself, present with your family, present with this time of year.

Take a breath. It's all going to be okay. We're going to get through it. Okay? I love you so much, you're doing a really great job.

Thanks for showing up here again today for yourself. And I'll talk to you very soon. Bye bye.