



WEIGHT LOSS FOR BUSY PHYSICIANS

— with Katrina Ubell, MD —

Katrina Ubell: Well, good morning there, my friend. You may not be listening to this in the morning, but that is when I'm recording this for you. I don't know what's happening to me, as I continue on in my forties, but I tell you what, some interesting things happen in your body and brain. And so what happened for me is that I woke up at 1:30 this morning, wide awake, tried to go back to sleep for an hour and couldn't. So, I got up at 2:30, and I just decided to do some work at three. Now, I've been getting up at 4:30 anyway to work on writing my book. So, it wasn't actually even that much earlier than usual. But I've already worked on my book this morning, and I've already done some other things I needed to do, and it's not even four o'clock in the morning yet.

So I had this idea for a podcast. I thought, you know what? I'm just going to record a podcast because why not? The house is quiet. I've got an idea. I'm dialed in, and I'm right here with you. So, I love it. Why not? This is a first, but I'm into it. Maybe I'll do this more often. Who knows?

So, I wanted to talk to you today about something that comes up very often for my clients, and I always know that, when I'm coaching on something like this on a regular basis, that so many more of you are struggling with this as well. And so, of course, I want to share it with you on this podcast to be able to give you some good help, so you can just take it and run with it. Right? So, this is basically what I end up seeing.

I end up coaching one of my clients, and they will come to me and they'll present with a story that is a variation on what I'm about to say. So some sort of variation on, "I don't really understand why I can't lose this weight." So, they'll say, "I am totally goal oriented in my personal and work life. I set a goal and I accomplish it, and not even usually on time, like usually before it's actually due. I meet or exceed every single deadline. I am the person who, when I have to give a talk to the students or the fellows or for grand rounds, it is better than perfect. It is done. It is dialed. I am rehearsed. I know exactly what I'm doing. I come in there with guns blazing and I knock it out of the park. I do an amazing job.

"When I say I'm going to do something for someone, I am 100% there. When I'm taking care of my patients, I'm totally focused on them. I follow through. I make sure that my office just runs on a super tight schedule. We just take care of people in the best way we know how. I show up in my personal life the way I want to. When I want to spend time with family or friends, I make sure I do that. I am loving to them. I am thoughtful for them.

I do things that help me to feel like I'm being the person that I want to be in my life. I set these big

goals and I've always accomplished them. I have so much evidence to show that, when I do these things, I get all the results I want in my life. I have created so many amazing things for myself, and I just cannot understand why this weight thing and this overeating thing is just the one area of my life where I cannot get it together."

So, usually, they're telling me, then, that they've set a big goal, a big weight loss goal, and a date. Like it's totally measurable, exactly how we do goal setting, know exactly what they need to do to get it done, and then they're just not doing it. So, that may look like they plan their food for the day and then they just don't follow it. Right? Like there's something else to eat and they just eat it, and they don't really even know why. They don't have an awareness as to why they won't follow it or can't follow it. And so then they're of course asking for coaching for help with that because they are just confused.

They're like, "There's this issue where I see myself in this one way and identify myself in my life as this one person, but then this other section of my life, it's like it's not even me. It's just like it's this alter ego of mine or this other version of myself, and I want all of it to be in alignment with itself. I want all of it to be something that makes sense. I want to be able to know predictably that, when I say I'm going to do something, no matter what it is in my life, that I'm actually going to do it."

And I, of course completely identify with this, as I'm sure you do as well. I mean, 100% accountable and overly accountable to others. That's completely how I lived my life. Other people's needs or what I had promised them was of utmost importance and there was no way I was going to be letting them down at all. But when it came to myself, it was just one let down after the next, after the next, after the next, and I just couldn't figure it out.

And I've shared before on this podcast, how I just really thought I needed better systems. I kept thinking, like, "I just need to have a better way of keeping my recipes organized," or, "I just need to have a better way of grocery shopping and meal planning to make this easier." For a while, I thought, "Well, maybe I just need to get my nanny to prepare all the dinners for us, so that when I get home, dinner is basically made." And we even tried that for a while, and that really didn't solve the problem.

Like I kept trying to action my way out of this overeating problem, which seemed very logical because the overeating is an action, right? If I'm doing an action that I don't like, or it doesn't give me the results that I want, then it seems logical that what you would want to do then is to take different actions, right?

It's like, "These actions are not giving me what I want, so how about I try taking different actions to create a different result." And that seems like it will work, and sometimes it does, for a short period of time. Right? Yeah, there were times where I'm like, "This is great. I'm planning out the meals for the nanny. I'm making sure we have all the food that she needs, and then all she has to do is prepare it for us when she has nap time for the little ones," or something like that.

But then it was only a few weeks or so before I was right back to not feeling like eating what she had made, and then back to my Prosecco and popcorn in front of the TV sometimes, when I felt

particularly beat down and tired from the day, and all those things. So why didn't that work?

Now, if you are familiar with what I teach, you know about the thought model, and in the thought model, the actions and results are just a part of what actually creates our results. It's just kind of like the end point of what creates our results, and there's this whole section that's in front of it that I wasn't aware of. I didn't know about this.

And even once I did first know about it, like I had learned the concept, I didn't really understand it. I wasn't living from that place in the sense of really understanding that was really what the problem was. So, let me just review the thought model, especially if you're new here. I just want to make sure you understand what I'm talking about.

So, there's five components to the thought model. The first is the circumstance, and the circumstance is the neutral facts about a situation, such as, "I eat dinner most nights." Right? Like that's something that I could prove, I could show, I eat these things, this is what I do. I eat dinner most nights. Something like that. Something very, very neutral.

Then, we have thoughts about that circumstance. And we often think that our thoughts are also the neutral fact. Like deciding what to make for dinner is hard. But that's actually a thought because not everybody agrees, right? If it's a neutral fact that everybody will agree, some people love deciding what to have for dinner. They think it's amazing. So, we know for sure that's a thought.

And then our thoughts actually create our feelings in our bodies. They create our emotions, and our emotions then drive our actions. Okay? And then, of course, our actions create our results. So, when I was looking at the action line, and what I was doing for actions and what result I was creating, I was failing to recognize that there were feelings that were driving those actions and thoughts creating those feelings.

So, I could try to just swap out the actions, but if I continued to think the same thoughts and create the same feelings for myself that drove my old actions, the actions that I didn't want to be taking that were creating the results that I didn't want to have, then I was just going to go back to my old problem, and that is exactly what happened. I would lose a bunch of weight on Weight Watchers and then gain it right back again, and lose a bunch of weight on Weight Watchers and gain it right back again. Couldn't figure out what was going on. Of course, what was missing was the thought and feeling component.

Now, before you're like, "Yes, I've heard her talk about this 20 million times," I want you to know that many of you will be like, "Well, I know. I know it's a thought. Well, yeah, yeah, I'm aware of that. I know that." And I wanted to suggest to you and offer to you that, yes, you have some awareness of this. You have some knowledge of this.

You have maybe a cognitive understanding of it, an intellectual understanding of it, but this level of understanding is similar to you reading something somewhere, someone lecturing to you about something, you watching a video about something.

It's just knowledge acquisition. It's not actually living from it. It's not actually incorporating it into your operating system. You're not believing that it's the truth to a certain extent, like to the extent

where you are actually operating from that place and knowing deep within you that this is what's going on.

And I know this because you guys will come to me and be like, "Well I know this is a thought, but planning for dinner really is hard." Something like that. And it really isn't. And if you truly, truly understand that it's a thought, then you recognize that that thought is 100% optional, and it's creating the result of you maybe not planning your dinners, or overeating, or something like that.

So, it's really important that you understand what that thought model is with those actions. So, in this case of what I was telling you, how so many of my clients tell me that they're doing all these things and their life is amazing and they're so reliable, and they create tremendous results in so many other areas of their lives, but they aren't in the area of weight loss, they're really focusing on actions, right? They're like, "I'm doing all of these things and I'm not doing all of these things." And they don't really have the awareness as to what the thoughts and feelings are that create the result of them following through and doing all those things that they want to be doing. And they also don't know what the thoughts and feelings are that are driving the actions that they don't want to be taking, such as eating food that's off their plan, eating things that they know don't serve them.

So, I want to point out that there's two separate reasons that this kind of a scenario comes up, and I want to point them both out to you and you can decide if both of them are applying to you in your life. I think they probably are. Maybe one of them is more of an issue for you than the other. And you'll want to focus on one first over the other, or maybe just work on both at the same time.

So, the first thing to be aware of is that, when you are accountable to somebody else, meaning someone has asked you to present at grand rounds, someone has asked you to mentor a student, someone has asked you to volunteer at your child's school, or even one of your kids has asked you to fill out forms for a school event or something, right? You are accountable to somebody else, and you then have enough respect for them that you won't let them down. So, no matter what it is that you're doing, when someone else is involved, there is this level of respect for them, right? You respect them enough to do what you said you were going to do.

And some of this can be a little bit of people pleasing, like at times, it's kind of like the situation of, "Well, I don't want them to think negatively about me, so I'm going to do this. I want them to think that I'm smart. I want them to think that I'm capable. I want them to think that I'm a good mom." You know, we want them to think some sort of good thing about us because when they think something positive, then we allow ourselves to think something positive about ourselves as well. They are kind of the middleman that we allow to determine how we feel about ourselves.

But also, sometimes it just comes from you liking to show up that way in the world, right? You're just like, "I'm just a stand up person who want to say I'm going to do something, I'm going to do it, and I don't see any reason to do something kind of in a half-assed way. Like if I'm going to do it, it's going to be the whole ass, right? Like I'm going to be there, I'm going to do it, I'm going to show up and give it my full effort and I'm going to do a really good job, because that is how I show up in the world."

But there's always this little caveat that, that's how I show up in the world when someone else is involved, when I'm accountable to somebody else, when I know someone else is expecting this

from me. Okay? So when it comes down to a goal that you have that's 100% for you, you are much less likely, then, to hold yourself accountable to that, which I've done a whole podcast about self accountability and why that's so important. That's a huge part of my program, learning to be accountable to yourself, so that you're not relying on a coach, relying on some outside guru or somebody to make sure that you do what you want to be doing.

What this ultimately boils down to, is you don't hold yourself in high enough regard to do the same for yourself as you do for others. Okay? So what this comes down to is really a lack of self respect, and this may be something that you're not super aware of right on the surface.

You might be like, "No, I totally have self respect. Are you kidding me? I don't let people treat me poorly." But you let yourself treat yourself poorly. So interesting, right? You let yourself treat you poorly by not doing what you say you're going to do, by eating food that doesn't serve your body, right? By doing things that go against how you want to be showing up in this world.

And I think that's something to spend some time pondering. I definitely find clients who are like, "Oh, okay, I don't have self-respect. Great. How do I get self-respect?" Like what's the how-to manual? And I get that, right? Because we're all good students and we're like, "Listen, I just need to know how to get the A in this class, and then I will do all of it. I'm an excellent student and I excel at all of this. So just giving me the details and I will do it." But that's not how this works. Ultimately, respect is a feeling, and the way that you feel respect for yourself is by thinking thoughts, thinking respectful thoughts, and that's where your work lies.

So, first you have to find out what you actually think about yourself. And this requires a lack of self judgment, and it requires tremendous curiosity. And just asking yourself and asking yourself again, and coming with curiosity to just try to figure out what's going on. I even think that, it's so interesting. When I was back in practice as a pediatrician, sometimes people would come in and they would just have this issue.

Like for instance, maybe it was that, this is a family that had a baby and they were just really struggling to get this baby to sleep properly, and in a way that would work for the whole family. The parents were exhausted and up all night, and by this point, the child for sure had the capability of sleeping through the night, and I would just give them my all in terms of curiosity and asking questions, open-ended questions, and really working on finding a solution, problem solving, coming up with what could be the possible issues here. Inevitably they'd tried all kinds of things and know those things had worked.

Now, I always felt like my undergraduate degree in engineering helped me with this, because I always feel like there's not a lot that I've gotten out of my engineering degree except that I am extraordinarily masterful at packing a dishwasher. I will just give myself credit for that right now. I would say my whole degree, that's what I got out of it.

But no, really when I got out of it is knowing how to think, the skill of how to think, how to problem solve something, but I don't think that's unique to people who have an engineering degree at all. I

think that all of us, as physicians, have this skill where someone comes in with a complex problem and we are just there working to solve it and figure it out. I want to encourage you to approach this issue with the exact same kind of curiosity and openness and belief that there's a solution.

I never had a patient come in where I was just like, "Well, this baby's screwed. This one's just not going to sleep." I never gave up on it. I just kept going and going, and the parents would come back, and they'd say this and that, and I would spend more time counseling them. "Let's try this instead," and, "Let's try this other thing." Just continuing to keep going in terms of a commitment level to solving the problem. And that's what you need to be channeling in terms of figuring out what you think about yourself as well. Okay? So, this isn't necessarily something you're going to find super quickly. In fact, for my own self, it took me quite some time to really come down to it and come to it from myself. Like other people had kind of offered to me what was going on, and it still just didn't feel true.

I'm like, "I don't know. I don't really think that I believe that about myself." And then I had that moment of like, "Oh my gosh, look at this. I believe that something's fundamentally wrong with me and I'll never be good enough. Wow. Okay. Interesting. But that makes so much sense." Right? So, I want you to approach figuring out what you think about yourself and how you value yourself or don't value yourself, how you respect yourself, how you don't respect yourself. What are all of those thoughts? I want to encourage you to come to that place with that same level of curiosity and persistence. Why are you then worth losing weight? Right? If you don't think that you're worth losing weight, you will continue this whole cycle where you set goals and then you don't follow through. Okay?

Now, the second thing I want to point out to you is, if you are getting all of these amazing things done in your life and you are just showing up as an A+++ student in all areas of your life except for the way that you're eating, you do need to recognize that you are still using food to neutralize your negative emotions. So, it's not like the whole time you're planning grand rounds, you're like, "This is amazing. It's my favorite thing that I ever do. I love creating these complex PowerPoint slides," and all that stuff. That is all something that is difficult. It's a bit of a slog, right? And we have to work at it in practice and it's hard.

And the way that you are most likely getting through that difficult situation is by using food to help you feel better. And so, the way that you are showing up at such a high level is it's very likely that you're able to do that because you still are using food to neutralize your negative emotions. So, it's totally okay to be doing this difficult project if you've got a snack by your side, or if you can reward yourself food later, or give yourself some sort of treat.

So, what you're asking yourself to do, then, when you're losing weight and following an eating plan, is to still show up in that very excellent way, in all the areas of your life, but not use food to make yourself feel better anymore. And this is a really big deal. Okay? I want to make sure you're not glossing over this like, "Yeah, yeah, yeah."

This is huge because this is the ticket, right? You have to be willing to feel all of the feelings that are created in your life in order to stop the overeating. Right? It's really not that puzzling, when you are not following your eating plan, to figure out, "Yeah, of course I'm not following it. The way

that I've been able to have so much success in my life is because of the food that I eat."

And I'm not saying that you're necessarily chowing down on massive amounts of food. You might be over eating healthy food. You might be like, "Yeah, but they're apple slices. They're carrot sticks." But it's still excessive food. It's still more food than your body needs, and it's still using food to make yourself feel better, to get yourself through a negative emotion that you don't want to feel just on its own.

So, before you're like, "Oh, okay, I have to feel the negative emotions. Okay, let me just go ahead and move on with that." Instead, I want you to not rush to try to fix any of this and instead spend time in awareness of this, and noticing how you use food to make yourself feel better, or the promise of food to motivate you to do all these extraordinary things in your life. And see how you are using food to create that amazing life for yourself, in so many different ways, to make it so that your life really is tolerable.

And from that place, you can start to figure out what you want to do. Maybe there's some changes you want to make in your life, maybe what, instead, you need to do is develop some resilience in terms of actually being willing to feel your negative emotions. And then you can work on that, and of course, then, following your eating plan follows along as one of the next steps, right?

I think, when we get so focused on, "I have to have lost X amount of pounds by a certain date," for some people that just really messes with them, and then they use that as a way to feel bad about themselves because they haven't met their goal. And in that case, I think it's much better to have a goal that is something that 100% you're in charge of. Like, I will make sure that I do a thought download and access my emotions every single day.

Because you are 100% in control of that, right? "I will make sure that I write out what my top three emotions are right in that moment before I eat something that's off my plan." Right? At least just develop awareness about what's going on for you before you use the food to make yourself feel better. Like things like that are such a huge step in solving this problem.

So, like I have said so many times before, but especially if you're new, I want you to know, it really isn't about the food, right? I have so many clients that tell me all the time, they're like, "I know you always say it's not about the food. And I didn't really believe you, and now I really think I get it." But it really isn't about the food. This is so much more about what is actually going on for you on an emotional level and once you work through that, the food really ends up falling into place.

So, I would love to help you with this. I know that so many of you didn't get in on our January Weight Loss For Doctors Only Group because we sold it out mid December, sold out super fast. So, I want to make sure that you get your opportunity to hold your spot. The way that I enroll my groups now is I don't even have like an opening anymore. I just take deposits, and we're able to completely fill it in that way.

So, this is not something to dillydally over. If this is sounding like something that resonates with you and you know that you would like some more help, in fact, as much help as you could possibly need in terms of solving this for yourself, then it makes so much sense for you to just

sign up, place your deposit for the program. And then you just know you're in. I give you some things to do in the meantime so you can get yourself really prepared to hit the ground running.

So, if you are wanting some more information about the program and what it all entails, I want to encourage you to go to katrinaubellmd.com/info, I-N-F-O, and you can find out all that information about the program. I can't wait to work with you. This stuff is a serious, super duper game changer, and it's everything. It's just, this is the solution that you've really been looking for. And I know so many people say that, but in this case, it's the real deal.

So, I hope you have a wonderful, wonderful week. This will hopefully give you some things to kind of mentally chew on and I can't wait to see what you do with it and how you create some amazing results in your life.

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