



WEIGHT LOSS FOR BUSY PHYSICIANS

— with Katrina Ubell, MD —

Katrina Ubell: Hello my friend, how are you today? Welcome back to the podcast. I'm so happy to have you back here with me today. It's July. Can you believe it? This year, 2020, what a year? Right? I think everybody's feeling that way. We're a little like stunned and confused. Like how is the year half over? And wow has a lot happened. Life is super different than it was on New Year's Day. Right?

As I'm recording this, my kids, my youngest two, have their last day of school and so that's super exciting. I'm feeling like, okay, we're really going to be hitting our stride this summer with summer from home, very little to no structure and parents who are working and we're going to figure it out. We are going to figure it out. I also know that these days are so fun for them and they're going to fly and I'm actually really excited for them because it's just such a great opportunity as a kid to just have that open day, to just figure yourself out and get creative. And I just think that's awesome for them. So I'm excited for them for that.

All right, today, I want to talk to you about a concept. I've actually been thinking about it for quite some time. And I think that there's really never been a better time to discuss this. And it's overall, the overarching concept is the difference between fear and love and creating results in our lives from fear or from love. And so, of course, we want to lose weight, we want to get to an ideal weight for our bodies, and we want to keep it off permanently. And there's lots of ways that you can do that, but whatever you do, however you achieve it, it's always driven by an emotion. So let's just review the thought model, which is what I teach all my clients and talk about here a lot. I just want to make sure that you're clear on the different parts.

There's five sections to it. The first is circumstance. These are the facts of the situation. This is what everyone would agree on. These are just the neutral facts. Then we have thoughts about those facts. So the meaning that our brain assigns to the circumstances. Then our thoughts create feelings for us. So these are emotions. We also have to be careful here because the way a lot of us speak is we say like, how do you feel? And we'll say, well, I feel like this and that, which is another thought. A feeling is usually a one word descriptor of the emotion that you're experiencing.

So you have an emotion and then your feelings are always what's driving your actions. And we know this to be the case because right, when we're feeling really energetic and productive, we take certain actions and when we're feeling really lethargic and tired, we take other actions typically, right?

When we're overwhelmed, feeling overwhelmed, what do we do? We do a whole lot of nothing, right? We don't do the things that actually help us to move down our to do list or things like that. So our feelings are always driving our actions. And then of course our actions create our results.

Now it's so clear to me and I want to make sure you understand this too, that the absolute vast majority of weight loss programs and plans focus on the last two lines. So they focus on the action line and the result line, and they come in and they say, hey, listen, you want the result of having lost 20 pounds. Here are some actions to take in order to create that result. And you're like, okay, awesome. I'm going to do that. And so you do those things, maybe, hopefully, right? And you create those results, but we only can hang onto those results for a period of time, a short period of time typically and it doesn't take long before we're actually gaining the weight back again. And we don't understand why.

Why can't we just follow those actions? Why can't we figure out a way to "eat like a normal person," right? Why can't we figure out a way to make our actions create the result of maintaining that weight loss. And that's where all of these weight loss programs and plans fall down. They don't help you to figure out why you were overeating in the first place, and then how to make sure that you stop overeating so that you can lose the weight and then maintain that weight loss ongoing for the rest of your life. So that's where the thought model is just so killer, because it really dials in on what the problem is.

So if the result that you have is that you're 20 pounds overweight. And the actions that you're taking are that create that overweight is that you are eating more food than you need, you're eating a bunch of sugary stuff, you're having more alcohol than you know that you should. Rather than just going, hey, I need to change those things. What we want to do first is understand what are the feelings that are driving those actions in the first place? And then what are the thoughts that create those feelings? Because if we still have the same thoughts that create the feelings that drive us to overeat or over drink, we will go back to creating that result of the 20 pounds too heavy body. No matter what they taught us about super foods and how kale is good for you and things like that, right? That's not what we're thinking about when we're overeating, we're thinking different thoughts. We need to know what those thoughts and feelings are that create the current result that we have.

Then we can go, hey, you know what? I want to create a different result. I think these are some things I'm going to try to create that result, but then how do I need to be feeling in order to drive that result? And what thoughts can I think that create that feeling. Then we think those thoughts on purpose so that we create the feelings we want to feel to drive the actions that give us that result that we want. This is everything. I've just broken it all down for you. If you're like yeah, yeah, yeah. Like go back in and repeat that, go back and listen again. This is so important, super critical stuff. But here's where fear and love come in.

What many of us do is we take the action from a feeling of fear and we're like, hey, but that's worked for me before and I've been able to lose the weight. A lot of people can lose weight from fear. Tons of people have done it. And when I say fear, I look at it like fear is all negative emotion because all negative emotion essentially boils down to fear. If we really look at what's going on underneath there.

So negative emotion driving our actions to create that result that we want. We typically don't want to be feeling that way. We think like, hey, I'm just going to beat myself up or shame myself because I'm a fat, disgusting pig. Like that will help me to eat properly so I can create this long lasting result, except that feeling that way about yourself feels terrible. And so can you keep it up for a while? Sure you can, but I've never known anybody who's been able to shame themselves or scare themselves thin and keep it off long term.

Because experiencing that fear, that negative emotion all the time, if that's what's required for you to maintain your weight loss, it feels so bad to be you in that experience. That what we typically end up doing is using food and maybe alcohol to feel better because it feels so bad. And then when we do that, we don't maintain our weight loss. Do you see how that works? So, so many people, I mean, I'm going to make a generalization here, but I would say 85 to 90% of people, if not more, who are losing weight are doing it from a place of fear, doing it from a place of rejecting themselves, disgust for themselves, afraid of what other people think, being so frustrated with themselves, just thinking that they're completely not acceptable the way they are. This is the general mindset of the dieting woman in general, right?

It's all about rejection and I'm not acceptable. This isn't okay. And I need to lose this weight. And so we can make some progress. Like I've said, it's just as never long lasting and it feels bad. It feels terrible to do that. This is why I focus so much with my clients on truly creating a relationship with themselves, where they love themselves and they support themselves. And they are their biggest cheerleader. They are their biggest fan base because when you are basically in love with yourself, right, completely enamored with yourself and not in an egotistical way. Okay, I'm not saying this is arrogance. I'm just saying like actually seeing the true value that you possess and have possessed this whole time. You just wouldn't let yourself see it. Then you can lose weight from a place of love. And so you are thinking, you know what? I'm awesome. And I'm so awesome that I actually don't want to feed my body food that it doesn't need.

I want to feel physically better in my body. I would like my clothing to feel differently on my body because it's uncomfortable the way it is right now. And I am so valuable to myself that I'm going to go ahead and do what's required in order to lose that weight. Right? So those thoughts that create a feeling of love. Think about love driving your actions of eating on plan. I know for most of us, this is like such a foreign concept. We're like, come again? What? But really think about that. Love and respect for yourself driving your actions of eating in a way that really serves your body and then creating that result of weight loss. Imagine how good it would feel if you're doing all of that from a place of love and respect and support for yourself. Would it be hard to continue doing that if it felt amazing because you were feeling love all the time? Sure would be a lot easier, wouldn't it?

That's something that drives longterm results and is something that you can keep up because it feels good. It's not shaming yourself. You never are like, you know what? I'm so in love with myself that I've got to make this feeling go away. Why don't I have a glass of wine, right? That's not what our experience is. And I find for so many doctors that we feel like we have all this evidence that beating ourselves up or shaming ourselves has created good results for us. Like I've had so many clients say, but listen, like me talking to myself and this inner narrative that's so negative is what got me through undergrad, medical school, my training. This is just how I accomplish things. I don't know any other way of accomplishing something.

And what I say is like, yeah, you did accomplish those things. But look, your brain is still miserable. You did it. But from this place of it being terrible and more hard than it really needed to be. So can you do that? Yes, of course you can. It's just such a terrible experience that you typically won't keep it up. The other thing I'd say is that you can beat yourself up to getting better grades or working hard in medical school when you have food to make you feel better. And what we're doing here is we're asking you to take away that food that suits you, right? That bomb that makes it better, that makes it okay that you beat yourself up. Well, when you don't have the food to make yourself feel better, it's not tolerable anymore. It's not something that you can keep up.

And then when you're in the habit of beating yourself up, then you wonder what's wrong with me? Why can't I not just follow this plan and lose this weight? I'm so capable in every other part of my life, every other angle, like literally, why can I not get this done? And this is why, right? If you're getting everything else done, because you have food and maybe alcohol by your side to make it better, when you don't have that anymore, it's a different ball game. Right? So when you think about the things that you do, that don't feel good or create a result that you want in your life. It's fear that's driving that. So I've been talking about in terms of weight loss, but this extrapolates to every area of your life. When you impulse eat, that's fear driving you. Right? We don't think about it. We're like that food just looks good. Those brownies just smell amazing. I just want one.

But the reason why you want one is because you're afraid that if you don't have it now, you won't get to have one later, right? You won't be able to enjoy yourself as much as you think you will if you have the brownie, you're going to be missing out on something, right? FOMO has fear in the name, right? So every time we impulse eat, that's fear driving us. Every time we talk ourselves into eating something at a party, at a holiday, at any kind of gathering, right? We have this plan, we go in and then we're like, oh look, there's pizza. There's this thing that I haven't had in a long time. We talk ourselves into eating it. That is scarcity, which is fear. Scarcity is the fear of there not being enough. Or you not getting the peace that you feel like you deserve or want.

Every time you're stressed about your day or your schedule, right? Every time you're worried, how are you going to see all your patients and get everybody taken care of, that is fear. Fear that you're not enough, that you're not going to be able to do a good job. Every time that you're worried about the people that you care about, your partner, your kids, your parents, your friends, your siblings, it's always fear, fear that something bad is going to happen. Fear that you're not doing a good enough job. Fear that if they don't change, then it's not going to work out well for them in the future. And seeing for ourselves, right, when we're worried about ourselves, it's all fear. Fear that something is not going to work out for us.

Whenever we yell at our kids, like why do we do that? Because we're afraid. We're afraid that if they don't change, that something bad is going to happen. Right? So I mean, every kind of thing that you're doing, that you're not super proud of or happy about, it comes back to fear. So you have to think about what would love do? If I were coming from a place of love, love for myself, love for the other person, love for my struggle within this weight loss concept, how would I respond? How would things be different? If the food is in front of you and you're coming from a place of love for yourself, we often think, well, if I love myself, then I'll be like, well, yeah, go ahead. Have the cookie. But that's not what love says. Love says, you know what? You're good. You've got this. Your body doesn't need it. It's totally cool. You can have that any time.

It's so funny to me, how often I hear this from my clients, and then I've experienced it myself too, where we get all worked up, that this is our chance to have this thing. And we didn't know it was going to be there and it's going to be so good. And the vast majority of the time, it's totally something that we can go and buy any day of the week. And we don't. But all of a sudden it's under our nose and we're like, oh my gosh, I need to have it. So funny, right? Love talks to you at a party or holiday or gathering and says, listen, it's just food. This is not the best part of this party or this gathering. Food is just part of it. How about you just eat what your body needs and then set your brain to work really loving on the people who are there? Really enjoying connecting with those people and having an awesome experience?

When your schedule is cram packed full of people, love says, you know what? You're going to get through all of it. You are more than enough. You're totally going to be able to do an excellent job with everybody. So let's just get to work. Let's just do it, right. It's not going like, hey, you're going to be missing out on with the family or things like that. It's just like, hey, it's all going to work out. Everything is okay. You don't even need to worry about anything. Love for yourself. Love for the people who scheduled you, love for your patients, love for your family who is waiting for you at home. It feels so much better.

So your experience, like what you do is the same. Your actions are the same. You are still seeing the patients. You're still charting. You're still answering phone calls. You're still doing all that same stuff. It's just your experience of it is so different, right? It's the same way you are wanting to eat something. You can try to shame yourself. Like you're such a fat, disgusting pig. You shouldn't be eating that kind of thing. You don't deserve to eat stuff like that and see how well that works. I haven't known anybody who's been able to keep that up long term. Or you can say, you know what love? I think you might've had enough. How about we just skip it? It's okay. That's that supportive friend that we always wished that we had, that supportive voice in our ears.

When you're wanting to yell at your kids, you're frustrated with your kids, right? What would love say? What would love do? Love would be like, okay, they're having a hard time. I'm having a hard time because I want to yell at them. So we have a lot in common. Who do I really want to be? If I knew that everything was going to work out amazingly well for them, how would I respond to this? Would this be as big of a deal as I'm making it? And do the people that you worry about, right? If you think, you know what my job is just to love them while they're here with me, while they are going through whatever struggle they're going through, I can just love them. I don't have to worry that something is going wrong. I can help in whatever way that I can help, but I don't have to approach this from a place of fear. And those are just some examples, but I want to challenge you to really think about how often the emotion that's driving the actions that you're taking is something that's based in fear.

It's more than you think. It really is. It's really fascinating to spend a little time contemplating this and paying attention. But I want you to think about, and just consider what it would be like to lose your weight, have it be the last time you lose the weight and you lose it from a place of love, love for yourself. How might that experience be different from every other time you've tried to lose weight? Do you think that if you did it from that place, you could keep it off permanently? The chances are probably a lot higher. Yeah.

So this is something that I can teach you how to do, right? Because we're like, okay, yeah, that sounds great. But I don't know how to love myself. I totally can teach you how to do that. And this is exactly what we do in my weight loss for doctors only program. This is the ticket right here.

When you can get to that place of actually loving yourself, then you can get to work, losing weight. So sometimes we have some work to do before we can even really get to work, losing weight, because we have to work on that relationship with ourselves first.

All right. I want you to take this week to really think about what are the emotions that are driving the actions that you're taking. Which go in the fear pile, which go in the love pile? And can you work on increasing the number that are in the love pile? It's so worth it. I tell you, this is your whole experience of your life. When we talk about enjoying the journey, this is what I'm talking about here. The journey is actually fun and interesting and much more pleasant when the actions you're taking are coming from a place of love.

All right. Have a wonderful week and I'll talk to you next time. Take care.