



# WEIGHT LOSS FOR BUSY PHYSICIANS

— with Katrina Ubell, MD —

Katrina Ubell: Well, hello there, my friend. Welcome back to the podcast. If you are new, I'm so glad that you're here today. I don't have a lot to offer to you today in terms of sharing things about my life. My poor oldest son has a migraine today. There is not a lot exciting going on here, but we're just trucking along as we do, right? This is our life in COVID-land, actually.

It's a beautiful sunny day today, and I'm actually really excited to record this podcast for you. I've been thinking about it a little bit and I was actually so excited about this topic that I gave a little sneak peek to my VIP members, who I had a call with just about an hour or two ago.

So VIP. So in my program, you start off in Weight Loss for Doctors Only. If you want to continue on with us and join the community, we call that Masters. If you're in Masters for more than one round of six months, then you're a VIP. So I do a special call and special focus topics and stuff for the VIPs because they have been around for longer and they're ready to take things on, just to go to a deeper level. So I love having those calls with them.

So I was like, listen, I'm excited about this topic, and here's what I'm going to teach. So it got me even more dialed in to get ready to tell you all about it.

Okay, so I did an episode many moons ago, episode 57, called Understanding Pleasure. If you haven't listened to it, you might want to go listen to that one. It was actually really well received. I remember getting a lot of positive feedback on it. If it's one that you haven't listened to in a while, you might want to review it.

What I talked about on there was the concept of natural pleasures versus kind of false or concentrated pleasures, which are things like eating sugar and flour, because normal regular food that grows up from the ground isn't as intensely sweet or as processed as sugar and flour. Just doing things like internet shopping, right? It's easier than ever to spend your money. It's easier than ever to gamble. It's easier than ever to overwork. You know, just all the things that we overdo, those are those concentrated pleasures. Natural pleasures are things like accomplishing things, eating healthy food, resting, having sex, things like that.

So what I have noticed, though, is that the way we approach experiencing natural pleasures is as though pleasure is not important. But we know it's important because we want it so desperately, we're just very confused about how to get it.

What we think is that we're here to live this life and this life is very challenging and devoid of pleasure, and so we need more pleasure in our lives and we therefore then go and ask food and maybe alcohol to create a lot more pleasure for us. So many of us think like the best way for me to have fun is to be eating or possibly drinking as well. Like that's when I get the most pleasure.

But what we're really confused about is that there are so many opportunities for us to experience natural pleasures in our lives all day long, every day, that we are not taking part in, that we are denying ourselves. So then when we're doing that all day long, of course by the end of the day, we're like, listen, I had a day that had no pleasure in it at all. All I did was toil away. So can I have just a little pleasure? Can't I just zone out in front of the TV or in front of my phone on social media and have a snack and maybe a glass of wine on the side, right? That's why we end up wanting to have these false pleasures, these concentrated forms of pleasure, because we feel like there's no other natural pleasures for us that are apparent.

Now, what I want to offer to you is that the natural pleasures are pleasures that are not screaming at you super loud. They're much more subtle than that. They're like, hey, I'm here. It's kind of like... Oh my gosh, I just thought of this analogy. I'm going to get it all wrong. But there's a Taylor Swift song, and I don't even know the name of the song, but where she basically is singing to this boy that she has a crush on, but they're friends, and he has a crush on some other girl who's like way more popular or the cheerleader or whoever, whatever she is. So she's singing about how that girl's like different than me, but I'm over here actually like really loving you. But she's there every day for him, like loving on him and being in good friend, and he's just not noticing.

You are the guy in this scenario, okay? You have a crush on the cheerleader, which is the food and the alcohol, maybe if you drank. And your natural pleasure is that you are completely not paying attention to like the friend that's there for you every single day and is like, I'm over here. You could pay attention to me. You just are not noticing how awesome I am. That is the scenario, right there in a Taylor Swift song, all summed up. If you don't know the song, then you can just imagine what I'm describing here.

So these natural pleasures, you're taking part in them pretty much anyway, you just start noticing you're not letting your brain pay attention to the fact that they're there and that that is pleasure. So what I find with so many of my clients is that their capacity to experience positive emotion and to experience pleasure is so limited outside of in consuming food or alcohol. So in order to be able to feel more of your negative emotions, which is so important, you have to also be able to experience more positive emotion.

So we often think, well, there's just not that much positive emotion in my life. Well, part of the reason for that is because you're not actually paying attention. You're not letting your brain see all of the opportunities for pleasure that there are in your life.

So I want to, on this episode, talk to you about a list of 15 extra pleasures, natural pleasures, that are already happening in your life. Like you literally are not going to have to make very major changes at all. It's truly subtle changes of just paying attention in order for you to experience so much more pleasure in your life. Because we truly here, as humans, are here on earth to experience pleasure. Like there's a reason we are able to experience it, and we don't have to deny it from ourselves any longer.

Okay, so 15 ways to get more natural pleasure in your life.

Okay, so we're going to just do this as though you're going through your day. So the first thing is taking a shower. Cleanliness is one of the natural pleasures, and we know this. We know this to be the case. You take a nice hot shower, it's like, oh, I feel so good. Or if you're in a hot place, sometimes taking a nice cool shower actually feels amazing. Right? So what we usually do, though, is like the shower is just one more thing on the to-do list. We're like, I've got to get in, I've got to get out. Or like, I've got to get in there and I've got to wash my hair today and I've got to shave and I've got to whatever else you got to do in there. Exfoliate, you know? I've got to do all these different things, and it's just another task.

I also find that some people are like not rushing through their shower, but they're listening to a podcast in there. They have a waterproof speaker. Or they're listening to some sort of news channel or something like that. They're completely distracting themselves while they're taking a shower.

What I want to offer to you is that even if you need to take a... Well, no, it's not called a Hollywood shower. If you're on like a Navy boat, like an aircraft carrier, they call a Hollywood shower, I think, a shower that's any longer than like two or three minutes. All of you military listeners can correct me, but I think they call it a Navy shower. I could be wrong.

But if you have to take a very, very short shower, very, very quick, you can still focus on enjoying the process. Focus on how the water feels on your skin. Focus on how good it can feel to just have your hands or your washcloth touching, or your loofa or whatever, your poof, touching your body, scrubbing certain areas, rinsing that all off. That feels good. Massaging your scalp, if you're washing your hair. Like actually getting in there and feeling that. Feeling the sensation of getting clean. It's like a massage, and we love massages. But you give yourself one every day if you pay attention. You can also do it from a loving place. You're not like scrubbing yourself as though you were like a filthy dirty dish. You're like, no, lovingly cleaning your body, and your hair or your face or whatever. Right? So taking a shower is one.

Next, getting ready in the morning. So often we are in a rush and we're like hurrying. If you're moisturizing your skin or putting on your serums or whatever you do, peptides, things like that, you're putting them on and you're just like slapping them on like a means to an end. Like I've got to get done so I can get dressed and get out of here and get to work or help the kids or do whatever it is that you need to do. Or, again, you're distracting yourself.

Which I don't think there's anything wrong with listening to something from time to time if you're getting ready, but just notice how you're actually treating yourself. Is it a pleasurable experience to get ready in the morning? Even if you are putting on the same makeup you always put on every single day, can you just notice how loving it is for you to apply it. Right?

Just actually paying attention to what you're doing. Can you look at your reflection in the mirror and not just point out all of your flaws and all the things that need concealer on them and noticing the wrinkles that maybe you don't like or things like that. Can you just look yourself in the eye and offer yourself some love and gratitude and respect? Can you honor yourself?

I was thinking like, when you are moisturizing a baby after a bath, you don't like slap the moisturizer on, right? You take that lotion and you give them a little baby massage and you have fun and you connect with the baby, right? They're either crying, so you're trying to calm them down, or they're cooing at you and laughing and maybe you're tickling them or something. It's a really nice connection. You can offer that to yourself as well.

When you get dressed, you can put on clothes that fit you and that fit you properly. Even if the current size of your body is not your ideal, even if it's not the right size for you, you can still dress the body that you have in a way that respects it and respect you so that you are wearing clothes that flatter you and that actually fit you. That aren't pinching you, aren't itchy, aren't scratching you.

Even if you wear scrubs all day, like you can wear a properly fitted bra. You can wear underwear that isn't shifting around and doesn't have holes in it. Right? That's a way of loving yourself. You get pleasure out of treating yourself with respect by dressing yourself properly.

Even if you put your wet hair up in a bun on your head and run out the door, you still can do it lovingly. You don't have to be like ripping the hair up and all that stuff. You can do it with intention and pay attention and enjoy the process.

Okay, next. If you are picking up your house, I was doing this last night because today is Monday as I'm recording this and the house just had some clutter from the weekend. I said to the kids, you know what? I want to start tomorrow morning with the house all tidy it up. So go around, find stuff that's yours, and put it away. And if all your stuff is put away, then help your siblings if you see more of their stuff. Help them put their stuff away.

You can get so much pleasure out of tidying up your home. Even if the process of it isn't your favorite, you can still make it fun, and afterward, how great it feels when your house is all tidied up and you have everything in its place, everything cleaned up.

You know, Oprah used to say that your home should rise up to meet you, right? Like you want to respect yourself enough to have a home that is to your taste, looks the way you want it to look, so that it's beautiful to you. Not beautiful based on like what Joanna Gaines thinks, or what they're showing at some furniture showroom, or whatever Pottery Barn is selling or something, but what is actually beautiful to you. Like having your home be truly authentically you, whatever that is. That is a massive natural pleasure.

Now, a lot of people say, well, I don't have an eye for that. That's not something that I have a strength in. It's so expensive to hire a designer. Well, first of all, it doesn't have to be expensive to hire a designer. Even if you do hire an expensive designer, so what? Isn't making your home absolutely beautiful to you a worthwhile way to spend your money? Your hard earned money that you work so hard for.

Like you really can, if money is an issue, I mean, there's so many ways for you to get ideas or to work with someone remotely, which is a lot less expensive. I mean, like whatever obstacles your brain is coming up with, just know that there's for sure solutions that fit within your budget when it

comes to that.

So if you aren't in love with the way your home is looking, or it's not your goal home, how can you still make it beautiful to you? I mean, maybe it's literally just tidying up. Maybe it's just changing out a couple of pillows just to freshen it up. Maybe it's literally just buying a couple flowers, right? So, I mean, flowers, you buy them at Costco or Trader Joe's or places like that. They're not very expensive. You can often buy just like a couple flowers and have them in a jar or maybe on your nightstand or in your bathroom or in your kitchen. It's an amazing pleasure that you create for yourself every single day.

But you have to notice them. How often have you had flowers in your house and you're like, oh yeah, now they're dead. Like, you don't even notice them until they need more water. They're just like one more thing to do. Or you can really look at them as this is an amazing way for me to treat myself and to experience pleasure every single time I look at them.

Okay. Let's talk about making food that nourishes you. So often many of us are like, I don't like to cook. Cooking, meal planning, getting the groceries, it's like so much work. I don't like doing it. But when you just take a moment to make some food that makes you feel good physically in your body, that's such a great way to take care of yourself, right? It's such a good anticipation of the pleasure you're going to get from eating it. It's such an excellent way to take care of yourself and to take pleasure in that, right?

So it doesn't have to be like you're making desserts or things that are more difficult for you to manage your mind around. It really can be just the usual salad that you like to eat, you know? Whatever that normal grilled chicken or whatever it is that you like, you can really enjoy the process of making that for yourself so that you can really nourish your body.

The next thing is eating food that nourishes you. Can you sit down by yourself with no distractions, no TV, nothing to read, nothing to listen to, and sit and eat a meal and actually enjoy it. Make sure you taste everything. Notice the taste of foods that you've eaten a million times over, but notice how this one tastes. I was thinking like, how does this carrot taste? How does this apple taste? How does this piece of pork tenderloin taste? How's this, whatever it is, green bean taste?

I'm making green beans tonight. My friend grew a bunch in her garden, gave me some. I'm excited to try them.

So when you are able to sit there and actually focus in on the true pleasure that you're getting from your food, you will not need as much pleasure from other food, from extra food. We do this all the time. We distract ourselves throughout the meal, and then we're like, oh, I didn't feel like much. Are there some chocolate chips around that I can snack on? Like, we feel like we need to up the ante and have more, and you really don't if you pay attention to the food that you're eating.

Okay, the next one is self-care activities. I've talked many times before about self-care activities. This can be anything from yoga to taking a walk. This can be taking a bath. This can be meditating. This can be tapping. This can be doing your thought work and journaling. This can be anything. But what I wanted to offer to you is that sometimes even when you're doing those

things, it doesn't necessarily feel super pleasurable, it might, but notice how you feel afterward. You probably feel a lot better, which is why it's a self-care activity for you.

So can you take a moment afterward and notice, just stay with yourself, at how much better you feel, rather than rushing onto the next activity, checking something off the list. Make it mean, like, okay, now I did that. Oh, okay, what's the next thing? Right? Instead, just sitting, even if it's just a minute or two, with like, oh, that felt so good. I love that I give myself the opportunity to feel how good that feels. I feel that way after I meditate, even though sometimes, I meditated this morning, my brain was all over the place. But still, afterward, I'm like, oh, that was good. I'm so glad I did that.

Okay. The next thing is nature. I have found this to be the case so often. I feel like I'm relatively connected to nature, and I'll be like outside with a group of people and I'll be like, oh my gosh, you guys, look at the sunset. People will be like, oh yeah. Okay. Then they're like off to the next thing again. I'm like, no wait, but did you actually look at it? You have to notice it, though. You have to stay with it.

Same in spring when all the flowers are blooming. I mean, it never gets old. Right? Same when there's a snowfall. I live in Wisconsin, and so we get plenty of that, you know? Or gosh, I love a good rainstorm. I mean, I just love seeing the rain coming down.

I mean, the delight I get from nature, it's just ongoing, but it means that you have to actually pay attention. Right? You have to be looking. I have so often been like, oh my gosh, look at that pretty flower, and someone's just like, oh yeah. Like, no, but did you look at it? You've got to look at it. Look how pretty it is. Like that is pleasure. That is real, real pleasure that you can get for free from nature all of the time.

Okay, the next one is moving your body. Now, if you're like, oh no, moving my body does not provide pleasure to me. That's because you haven't found the proper movement, okay? So we don't exercise in order to lose weight, because all the research shows that it does not help. We move our bodies because we like how we feel when we do it. Okay?

Maybe it helps you with your mental attitude. Maybe it helps you with your sleep. Maybe you feel like your anxiety is a lot less. Maybe any depression that you have is improved. Maybe you have a lot less pain in your body when you're stronger. Maybe you just like the feeling of getting a good sweat on. All of those reasons are good reasons to move your body.

So again, it can be a task that you just get through. Another thing to check off your list. Or you can move your body and then just go, oh, that was good. That was really good. Same for even like stretching. Sometimes when nothing else is in the cards for me, I'll just do just a little bit of stretching. Like not even anything fancy. It feels so good. This is natural pleasure for our bodies in our bodies. Our bodies are meant to feel good when we do those things. Our bodies are rewarding us for doing those things.

Okay, another way to experience pleasure is loving on your pets. If you have any pets, especially of the furry variety or the petable variety. But even if they're not petable, there's so much delight that comes from animals if you're an animal person. If you're not, then maybe this one doesn't apply.

I cannot even tell you how awesome it is to just be able to be in the presence of an animal. Maybe it's your horses. Maybe you have large animals that you like to spend time with. But spending time actually loving on them, seeing them, focusing on them for a moment, really being in their presence and being with them is absolutely natural pleasure. It feels amazing and I recommend doing it every day if you're an animal person.

I mean, and even I actually really love watching the birds outside the window. We have this little cardinal couple that I love watching. I love seeing goldfinches flying around from time to time. I love being able to see, I think one of our neighbors has a butterfly garden, and so I see all these Monarch butterflies all around. I mean, you can even love on them. I just take a moment and I just watch. I just don't take it for granted. There's so much pleasure in that.

Okay. Now, loving on the humans. Loving on your family or your friends or your loved ones, the people in your life that you love. Maybe it's your coworkers. Whoever it is, spending time really listening to them, loving on them. I know a lot of people we can't hug right now, but the people that you can hug, like just being with them, listening to them, enjoying their company, laughing with them. These are the natural pleasures.

You do not have to be eating or drinking anything alcoholic or caloric in order to have this experience. You can just be with one another and enjoy the company. It's a massive, massive, natural pleasure.

Okay, the next one is loving touch/sex. So many women forgot about this. So I'm not going to delve into all the... You know, sex is a whole rabbit hole that we can go down another time, but our bodies are designed to experience sexual pleasure. Especially for women, there literally is no other purpose to certain parts of our bodies than to experience sexual pleasure.

So this can be a part of your life whether you have a partner, no partner, multiple partners. However you roll, loving touch can be a really, really important part of that. So that can be actual sex. It can be hugs. It can be snuggling and cuddling. Don't forget that that is a possibility. That that is an amazing way to reconnect and to feel natural pleasure that feels amazing.

As a complete aside, I hesitate even telling the story, but I read a book, I'm not going to get into it, but I read a book where this woman talked about how it was all about experiencing sexual pleasure and things like that. What she talked about was how she noticed how so many women, right before their periods, having so many cravings. Like PMS symptoms, right? You know, cravings, and urges to eat, and things like that. So as an experiment, she decided to masturbate every four hours during that time to see what her experience would be like. She found that all of her urges went away. All of the cravings went away.

I thought, that's so fascinating, right? Like maybe it's not the food that we want. Maybe what we just really want is pleasure. I'm not saying that you should go masturbate every four hours. That's not probably going to work for most people. But it's an interesting thing to think about, right? When we think like, oh, that's the last thing I want, but is it? Maybe that's not actually true. Maybe you could experience something different or you could just experiment and try something that you

haven't tried before. Maybe it's not involving someone else. Maybe it's something you do on your own. I don't know. But it's something to consider. When I'm talking about pleasure, it absolutely deserves a seat at this table for sure.

Okay, next one. Watching TV. Looking on social media. So I'm not going to say that that is not a pleasure. It really can be. But what I've found is that the pleasure that comes from this kind of thing, like kind of just the entertainment type stuff, is it's easy for it to be free of boundaries. Meaning we're like, I'm just going to watch one or two shows, and then the next episode thing keeps clicking and clicking and clicking and moving us ahead, and now we've stayed up way too late. We're totally exhausted. We're so tired that we got a snack that we didn't need, or things like that.

Or social media, like you got sucked into that vortex, and the first five or 10 minutes was fun, and then now you're like, I don't even know what just happened. Why did I just waste this time? I think that it's a lot of natural pleasure for you when you have boundaries around it. How you create those are going to be up to you. You can experiment, figure out what works best for you. But looking, whether it's setting a timer for yourself, looking, getting the pleasure out of it, and then letting it be complete. Right?

It's like with a shower. We're not like, ooh, like a long, hot shower. I mean, what's the longest shower someone takes? Maybe 20 minutes? Maybe 30 if they have a really big hot water tank, you know? But you're not in there four hours later, right? Mostly because you don't have hot water anymore, but also it wouldn't feel as good anymore, right? Your fingers would be all wrinkly and the pleasure would have worn off.

The same thing happens with watching TV, social media, things like that. So it's good for you to give yourself that boundary of like, I'm going to watch one show and I'm going to turn it off then. I'm not kind of want to turn it off, because the teaser is going to make me really want to go onto the next episode. But I'm just going to stop it. I'm going to see what this experience is like because getting ready for bed as the next one, and that one's important too.

Getting ready for bed can be such a pleasurable experience, and it doesn't have to be anything fancy. I really do try to wash my face every single night, brush my teeth, things like that. You guys know about the hair stuff that I put in that I'm super diligent about and I love. So definitely if you are interested in that, you've got to check it out. It's so good.

Getting ready for bed is like a whole process where you're kind of unwinding for the day. I love just like the feeling of climbing into bed. Like feeling the sheets on me. I've got two night gowns that I wear. If you're a nightgown or pajama person, like find some sleep attire that actually feels good, that makes you feel good in your body, that you're comfortable in when you're sleeping.

Some people like to sleep in the nude and go for that. That's awesome, if that's you. But I have these two nightgowns. I love them. They're so comfortable. I just like rotate through them. I just love them. They are so great.

So getting ready for bed is such a great opportunity to feel some natural pleasure as well. Like



sleep is coming. You get to rest. The day is over. You can just start fresh again the next day. All of these things are pleasures that you can be paying attention to, letting your brain land on the idea that this is pleasure. This is the good stuff in life. Even if the whole rest of your day was crap, this is the good stuff they get to experience.

Then the final, the 15th thing, is sleep, right? Sleep, even though we're unconscious, it definitely is a pleasure. Because when you've gotten enough sleep and you wake up and you're feeling good and you're ready to start your day, oh my gosh, amazing natural pleasure. Amazing natural pleasure. It's so, so, so, so good.

So prioritizing that, right? Rather than staying up, watching shows too late, eating food, beating yourself up. Like none of that gives you the pleasure that you're seeking. What you want to be doing is focusing on these things is that really, really help you to experience pleasure.

Now, imagine if throughout your whole day you're paying attention to all of these things? I didn't even add like awesome interactions with patients at work. There's so many other things. I could have kept going on and on. I figured after 15, I should stop because we'd go over too long here. But if you are on the lookout for opportunities to feel pleasure, because you know that this is part of your experience as a human being on the earth, I really, really, really am curious to see what your relationship will be with food, especially as the day progresses and into the evening, if you'll find that you need so much of the concentrated pleasures as you have been getting or have been getting before.

Super fun. I mean, it's like a being on a scavenger hunt. It's like, how can you find something else to get pleasure in? Like, what's just sitting around you right now you can get pleasure in? If you're driving your car right now, can you get pleasure in just how nice it is to drive your car? I know sometimes I'm driving my car, I'm like, I love this car. It's so nice to drive this car. Like, it's great to notice that, even though I've been driving it for almost a year, right? Just to remember like the pleasure of driving this car is so great. It's amazing. I love that I have this car. Even if it's not your favorite car, maybe there's something that you like about it, right? Maybe there's something you can find that you actually really enjoy and if it wasn't part of that car, you would miss it, and just notice it.

When you are thinking about how you're experiencing pleasure right now, you are not in the past or in the future, right? You're not feeling sad about what happened in the past, you're not beating yourself up, and you're not feeling anxious or worried about what's coming up ahead, right? You're actually in the present enjoying your life the way that you were designed to enjoy it.

So give this a try. I can't wait to hear what you think. You can leave me any comments at [katrinaubellmd.com/191](http://katrinaubellmd.com/191). That is the page for this episode and you can leave me comments there. I would love to hear from you.

On that note, I will leave you. Have a wonderful, wonderful week. I love you so much. I'll talk to you next time. Take care.