



WEIGHT LOSS FOR BUSY PHYSICIANS

— with Katrina Ubell, MD —

Katrina Ubell: Well, hello there, my friend. Welcome to the podcast. I'm so, so, so glad you're here. I want to talk to you about the new music. We have not talked about this yet. I realized, I'm like, "They're probably like, 'Is she going to say something? What's happening?'" If you're new, you just started listening, you may not have realized that a couple episodes ago, we switched up after four years, the intro music. I thought I might just tell you briefly the backstory about that. Basically, when I first set this podcast up, I hired a production team to help me and I was so grateful for their help.

They had somebody who was helping me figure out what would the vibe be like, what kind of music. And I just had no idea. I just honestly was just at a loss. And she said, "Well, if you are going to be speaking to this huge group of people and there was going to be music that was going to accompany your introduction and you walking on the stage, what kind of music would it be?" And at the time, I said that it would be something from Journey, it would be totally Journey rock music like that. So they found me some different options that were maybe along those same lines. Here's the thing about me, is I am pretty good at making decisions like that. I don't hem and haw and have to listen to 100 different samples. Of the ones they gave me, I was just like, "Yeah, this one's good." That was the level of planning that went into selecting that, so that has been the music for four years. Did I totally love it? Not really. Was there anything wrong with it? No, it was totally fine.

Well, as we were approaching the four year anniversary, sometimes I like to mix it up. Change the picture or do something different. And I thought, "You know what? Let's change up the music. I never even like that old music that much anyway. Let's just change the mood music up, it's kind of fun." So I found an episode or two from someone else's podcasts that I liked and I sent it to the production team, I'm like, "Something along this vein, what can you come up with?" And they sent me five options, and the one. There was obvious that this was the right one. I feel like it's much more me. It's much more energetically where I want to be. I enjoy this music, so I hope you do too. But that's the story, that's why we have new music because it's kind of fun, right? Something else I need to talk to you about, because I have not told you this yet and I feel like we need to have this discussion. That is the Peloton bike. Because I know so many of you love your Pelotons, I've been hearing about it for years.

I always thought it was a great idea, I just didn't really think I would be that into it. I didn't think I would like. If you followed this episode ... Oh boy. Okay, you're going to be hearing Auggie, he's chewing on his antler right next to me. It feels loud to me, you may or may not hear it.

If you do, that's my dog. You might've heard me earlier last year talking about how I had done a lot of work on the mind body connection and some chronic pain that I had, and I really had this longstanding history of having a lot of knee pain whenever I rode a bike. Whether it was taking a spinning class or riding an actual bike outside. Biking and me, we had a little bit of a tenuous relationship there. So I was just like, "Yeah, that's not for me." And then I guess it was maybe in October or so, right when school went back in, because our schools did go back in.

My two younger ones, their school reached out and they basically were like, "Listen, like even though some gyms are open and stuff, we're really asking that our teachers don't partake in exercising outside of the home in a gym like setting. So we would appreciate it if you also wouldn't because it seems like the issues that we're having are coming from adults, not the actual kids." Which of course seems to be the case. So when they directly asked like that, of course, I had gone back to Orangetheory once they opened back up again. I talked to my husband. I mean, selfishly, I really wanted to go because I liked it there so much. But it did make sense. I was just considering all the circumstances around it, it was like, "All right, fine. Then I'll stop going." I really said, though, I honestly going to ... It was just without researching it or anything, I'm like, "Well, fine. Then I'm buying a Peloton." I was just like, "Whatever, I'm going a Peloton. I'm going to figure something out."

And I feel like when we first went into lockdown and quarantine and stuff, I didn't really ... I did some different things for exercise, but never really settled on anything that felt great. And it was springtime, so I spent a lot of time outside and walking. I live in Wisconsin and it's super snowy, and it's been in the single digits here lately. So that was not going to be a good option for me longterm. Anyway, we had to wait for a long time for the bike to come, it came right at the very end of December. Okay, I was missing out because that thing is amazing. What? I love it so much. We need to talk about how awesome Peloton is. I am seriously so, so, so, so into it. Not that it means I'm getting on it every single day or anything, but I just enjoy it so much. I love the instructors. Jess King is my current favorite, I'm really ... I just love her energy, I love her positivity, I love her story and just everything about her. I think she's just great.

Last night I actually went to one of her Jess King Experience classes live. If you don't know what I'm talking about, you feel like, "Oh, the Peloton." Basically they have some live classes that you can attend as well, obviously virtually. But this Jess King Experience kind of class, she has a live DJ and he's awesome. He was wearing a full on sequined jacket that was knee length. He's dancing around like crazy, the music's amazing. Her outfits, her costume outfits as she's working out are always super fun and it's a good time. I don't get anything out of this Peloton. If you want to work together, let me know. But I am super loving it and I just wanted you to know that if you want to find me ... because this whole following thing, I'm not even totally sure why you'd want to do that. The social part of it still eludes me. But it's really simple, I'm just Katrina U. So if you want to follow me on Peloton, then you can do that. I'm just loving it and I totally get it now.

It just came at the right time, it'd be easy for me to be like, "What ... I've been missing out for so long." But no, it's awesome to the point where my husband and my son both now have accounts, and shoes, and the whole thing and we're all just super loving it. That is super, super fun.

I have got such a weird song in my head. I have How Do You Solve A Problem Like Maria from the Sound Of Music in my head. I have not heard that at all. Don't you just wonder what's happening with those brain cells?

What happened that made the brain just be like, "Let's just sing this one on repeat all day long today." I don't know where that came from. So weird. Today I want to talk to you about a concept that I've been thinking about a lot, I'm calling it Belief Setpoints. When you think about your beliefs, it's just what you think is true. You've thought it so many times that you think it's true and you believe it. What many of us, most of us, don't really understand is that we limit ourselves with our beliefs. We think we're just telling ourselves the truth about what's possible for us or what's available to us in this lifetime or what our bodies can do, and we'll have all kinds of supporting evidence. "This is the genetics, this is the family I came from. This is who I live with. This is what my job is like." All the evidence that we think supports what we think is true and our beliefs.

And when you have a belief that limits you, it will be very, very challenging for you, arguably possibly impossible for you to create something that's outside of that belief. Because your brain wants to confirm what it believes is true, so it will create environments within which you cannot succeed in a way that will disprove your belief or push you above your belief setpoint. So if you think ... Let's just use this as an example, getting into medical school. I mean, I didn't know for sure I was going to get into medical school, but I believed that it was for sure possible. A lot of people, they try to get into medical school and they don't, they're not able to do it. So I didn't know for sure, but I was like, "No, I pretty much think I can find a place to accept me. I think this is going to happen." So that's, of course, what I created.

Now, if I had a belief that probably no one's going to accept me into medical school, it would have been so much harder for me to create the result that I wanted, which would be the acceptance letter. The way that this shows up is if you don't believe that it's possible for you or you think it's really, really unlikely, then ... Let's just using this example of getting in a medical school. The way that you show up to the whole process of applying to medical school is different than if you think you've got a good chance. When you're writing your essays, it's coming from a different place. People can pick up those intangibles. If you go for any interviews, people can tell, they can feel that you don't really believe in yourself. That might result in you not getting what you want. You have to believe that it's possible. I see this all the time with weight loss, where I work with physicians who deep down just don't believe it's possible that they can lose weight. They have all this evidence, all the times that they've tried.

They can look at their genetics, all the obesity in their family, all the things. They have the whole story to support all of that, but they really do want a different result. They want to be able to have freedom from the extra weight, they want to feel more comfortable in their bodies, they want to feel better in whatever way that they think losing weight will help them to feel better, but then they wonder why they struggle so much and why they're self-sabotaging. Well, when you have a belief that it's not possible, then you will create environments to self sabotage where you end up eating more or you ... I mean, these things can happen without you even being aware.

This is why using a food journal can be so helpful. Because we want to just very quickly and easily forget what we ate and pretend like it didn't happen, and then we're totally confounded by the results that we get or the lack of results that we get. So our beliefs about ourselves, about what's possible for us, possibly even our beliefs about the world or people around us will create a setpoint like a thermostat.

It's like, "You're set here." If you have too much success, you're going to come back to this setpoint of belief that you have. I've seen this time and time again, where until you've done the belief work to expand your brain to the place where you really believe that you can create that thing that you want, you will not have success in creating it. We see this with weight loss all the time. What do you do if this is what you believe? I mean, people who come to me with 10, 15 pounds to lose, they're like, "Yeah. No, I think I can lose 10, 15 pounds." Usually we don't have too much trouble with it in the group that needs to lose less weight. But for people who have more weight to lose, it's very, very common. I feel like it's more ingrained the more weight folks have to lose where they really just don't believe it's possible. Some people are like, "Listen, I probably weighed the supposed mid BMI range weight in fifth grade, I literally can't wrap my brain around that."

And the good news is that there's just a great solution to this, and that's incrementally increasing that belief setpoint. That is first of all, requiring that you understand what you currently believe and that you understand that it is a belief and not just a fact or the truth. It's not just what is, or what your destiny is, or anything that. If you want to create something different, then that's something you can create, you just have to do the mindset work, and the brain work, and the belief work together. So first you understand what you think. Let's say you have 100 pounds to lose and you're like, "Listen, I literally ... I want to lose 100 pounds, but it's really hard for me to believe that that's possible." What I like to do is just to break it down into smaller chunks until we can get to a place where we can believe it. We don't have to believe that we can weigh 100 pounds less right now.

But first we have to understand that our belief that we can't lose 100 pounds is not a fact. That is not just the truth about you, that is a thought that you think is true. It's not a fact. So then what you can do is break down the goal until you get to a section of belief, so to speak, that you can believe in. You might say, "Well, can I believe that I can lose 50 pounds?" Maybe you can, maybe you can't. If you can't believe that you can lose 50 pounds, maybe go, "What about 20 pounds? Do I think I can lose 20 pounds? What if I did that? Or what if I just lost 10% of my body weight? Can I get behind that? What about even 10 pounds? What about five? What about three?" We might have to get to that place like, "Maybe. I think it's possible I could probably lose three pounds." Okay, then what we're going to focus on is losing three pounds. We're just not even going to spend any time in focusing on 100 pounds. We don't need to worry about that at all.

We focus on losing our three pounds and then once three pounds are lost, then we reassess, "What do I believe I can create? Hey, I just created this three pounds of weight loss. Maybe I could lose five. Okay, cool. Let's get to work. Let's lose five." And then we keep moving from there. Now, as you lose more and more weight, you start to be able to change your beliefs. You start going, "You know what? I'm starting to think that maybe I can do this. This might actually be possible."

And then as you're trucking along, you're like, "That's it. That's what's going to happen. I'm going to do it." And you're raising that belief setpoint. Now, sometimes what happens though, is that our brains start to decide, "You know what? Finishing up that goal, how about we just stop here? Because that seems really hard and it seems like it's not possible. And isn't this just good enough?" People will be like, "Listen, I lost 80 pounds." Or, "I lost 95 pounds, do I really need to lose five more pounds?"

People have said to me how great they look and they feel amazing and, "Do I really need to lose this?" And of course the answer is no, you don't have to do anything. You don't have to lose any weight if you don't want to. But there's something to be said for digging in and doing that final work. Because invariably for folks who are having trouble losing those last pounds, it's because they still want to use food at least a little bit to make themselves feel better. The point of that whole exercise is to fully break down the habit of using food as a way to deal with your emotional life and then your body cooperates to that ideal weight. And then if you don't like weighing that or you don't want to do that anymore, then you can totally gain some weight back. No problem whatsoever. But it's the work to be done about your emotions and not using food or possibly alcohol to feel better that is the whole point of all of it. I think weight loss is a great example of belief setpoints.

What we think is possible, what size we think we can wear, what we think we can create and what we think we can't. Even things like it's just a fact that you can't make cellulite go away. What if that just wasn't true? There are people who say that they've been able to get it to go away. If that was something that you really wanted to create, you could change your belief setpoint. You could say, "You know what? Maybe for most people it's not possible, but I think it might be possible for me. It might be possible for somebody. If it was possible for somebody, might it be possible for me? I mean, maybe." Just the slightest little shred of belief starts to raise that setpoint so that you really can start to create what it is that you want.

I think that some of the best work you can do when you're embarking on any big goal, but in particular weight loss, is to get really clear about what you think is true, what your beliefs are, what you think is possible for you, what you think you can create, all the things you think. Even just what you think your body responds well to, or how your body functions best, what you think you have to do or will have to do, what you think is going to be really, really hard and really awful and painful about losing weight. Find out what all those beliefs are so you can figure out which ones are the ones that limit you. And then from that place, you can start to work on increasing that belief setpoint so that you can start to believe something new. Once you believe that something new is possible, you can get to work creating it. But all of our results come from a thought first.

It's so interesting to think every single thing that is around you, like the chair that I'm sitting on, the microphone I'm holding, everything came initially from a thought from some person. So if you want to create something new, if you want to create a body that is at a healthy weight and stays there permanently, it has to come from a thought first. And if the thoughts that you have that are running below the surface, which are your beliefs, if those are going to limit you, it's going to be really, really hard for you to overcome that.

Alright my friend have a wonderful rest of your week. I'll talk to you next time, take care. Bye bye.