



WEIGHT LOSS FOR BUSY PHYSICIANS

— with Katrina Ubell, MD —

Katrina Ubell: Well, hey there my friend. How are you today man, I've got a good one for you today. I'm really, I'm really fired up about this topic and I actually have been for quite some time and I've been coaching on this with my clients for a while now. I actually thought about bringing this topic to the podcast and had sort of talked myself out of it. Honestly, I had decided that it maybe wasn't totally appropriate or I just kind of was like, no, I don't know. That might be kind of like on the edges of what I really talk about here, even though I basically talk about everything as you know and how it relates to weight loss. But something happened yesterday. I actually had planned on talking about something else on this episode, but something happened yesterday that clinched it. I was like, you know what? That's it. I'm doing it. I'm gonna talk about this on the podcast. We're totally this. All, everything I talk about today relates to weight loss and emotional eating as well.

You'll see why, because all the stuff that we're gonna talk about, these are all reasons why we end up overeating, emotional eating, trying to numb out our emotions with food and possibly alcohol. So this is actually really important for lots of different reasons. It's really, really important for physicians to be listening to, but I know there are plenty of you who listen who are not doctors and maybe aren't even in the medical field at all. This is actually really important information for you to understand as well, just for you to just for your own personal knowledge and for any just people that you influence just in your whole perspective. So I'm excited to talk about this, really what we're gonna be, well, I guess lemme just back it up and tell you what started this whole thing off as of yesterday.

So my husband, my dear husband, who is an ear, nose and throat doctor, sent me a text yesterday, which was a screenshot from some continuing medical education that he does. So it's, I, I'm not even sure what the details are, but basically I think he has to answer like a couple questions every week or whatever it is. I don't think it's every day. It's probably like every week. And then at the end of the year, he has enough continuing medical education credits. So here's what he sent me this picture. And so the question was, over a 30 year career, how much less is a female academic otolaryngologist predicted to make when compared to her male counterpart? This is CME. I was like, go them.

He's like, yeah, they have some interesting stuff sometimes. Okay, let me repeat it. Over a 30 year career, how much less is a female academic otolaryngologist predicted to make when compared to her male counterpart?

So it's multiple choice. You get four choices. The first is \$300,000 less. The second is \$1.2 million less. The third is \$3.3 million less. And the fourth option is pay is the same. What do you think the answer is? Should we do a little jeopardy? The answer is, my friends, \$3.3 million less.

Can you believe this? \$3.3 million less. So here's the explanation among all medical and surgical disciplines combined, otolaryngology had the second largest gender pay gap with female otolaryngologists earning 77 cents for every dollar that their male colleagues earn the salary gap set. Each professor at level are, these are the gaps. Instructor, \$68,000 assistant professor, \$93,000 associate professor, \$128,000 and full professor \$118,000. Using these numbers, the amount of income lost over 30 year career, assuming, you know, various years at the different levels is \$3.365 million.

So he sent that to me and I was like, shut the front door. What? I just had never seen it laid out that way. But then he said that doesn't even account for compound interest. So he put it through a compound interest calculator, 6%. So that's, you know, modest interest that is over \$7.1 million over a 30 year career. That is lost. That's crazy. So I actually went onto the US Department of Labor blog 'cause I just wanted to get a little bit more info to share with you because if you're anything like me, I knew that this existed. I knew that this was a fact, but I, I guess I just hadn't really seen it in my face in this way, at least not recently.

So I actually looked up some things and so according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the gender wage gap in the US across the board for 2020 was 82%. So that means that for every dollar a man earns, a woman earns 82 cents and the gap is even wider for many women of color. Women earn less than men in nearly all occupations somehow. I don't, I I don't think I fully understood that it was nearly all occupations. That's really, really interesting and really important to understand. Women earn less than their same race and ethnicity counterpart at every level of educational attainment.

So some people will start throwing education in there. It says, in fact, most women with advanced degrees earn less than white men on average with only a bachelor's degree. And then I think many of us know this, but I've been seeing this in the news too, that the pandemic has set women's labor force participation back more than 30 years. 'cause so many women have been just with lack of childcare and all the educational strain, they have been the ones who've decided to stay home. So it's really, really interesting. So, so understanding that, here's what I wanna talk about because this is something that I've been, I've been seeing other people talk about. It is confusing a lot of people and I see a lot of women physicians struggling with this and I don't agree with the way that this is being taught by some people.

And so, like I said, I've been teaching this inside my paid programs, but I wanna share it with you today too because I think this is, it's just really, really important for so many reasons, but especially in this gender wage gap issue. Because here's the deal, the wage gap is not likely to disclose itself. It seems to me that people need to do things and most likely the people who will have success in creating a smaller wage gap are closing it completely are going to be women. So therefore that's going to be us. And so therefore it's our responsibility to learn how to negotiate and to learn how to work with people to be able to get the compensation that we think is fair.

Interestingly, last night at dinner, as we were talking about this, my little seven-year-old daughter, as I explained to her what this means, she was just like, what? And I love that when, when kids just identify something that makes no sense immediately, like, you know, she doesn't even understand all the details and the backstory and the history and whatever. She's just like, what? No, if I'm doing the same work as someone else, even though they're a boy, I should get the same compensation. And I agree with her, I agree with her.

So here's where people get confused. People get confused about value. And so I wanna talk about three different kinds of value so that you understand what you are actually negotiating and being compensated for in your role in the workforce. So there is your value. That is the value you have as a human being. And my belief is that your value is a hundred percent infinite whole, perfect. It has nothing to do with what you do. It is just because you're a human being on this earth breathing air that you are fully valuable exactly as you are doing nothing. We never think that a baby that's just been born who's incredibly needy and and takes, takes, takes, takes, takes, is not valuable. Yet somehow we think that as we get older, our value is tied to what we do, what we accomplish, what people think about us, the awards that we get, the promotions we get, how much we get paid and we start getting really confused. We start confusing all of those other things with our value.

But our value has always been the same. It will always be the same whether you do a ton of things and accomplish a bunch of things or whether you do nothing and accomplish nothing, you will still be valuable as a human. And you know, this is basic human rights, right? That that we're all valuable no matter where we come from, the color of our skin, our educational background, that we all have equal value. Okay? So you are an incredibly valuable human being baseline, this is a fact. Okay? Then we talk about your values with an S. So your values, I actually went around on the internet looking for a description, a definition of values that I liked. And the one I liked the best was on mind tools.com and it says, your values are the things that you believe are important in the way you live and work. I was like, yeah, it doesn't need to be complicated. Some of the other definitions were harder to understand. Your values are the things that you believe are important in the way you live and work. So your values have nothing to do with your value.

I think this can be confusing for some people, right? Your value, we agree you are just a valuable human being just doing nothing laying on the couch, okay? Your values are the things you believe are important in the way you live and work. It's the things that you want to spend money on, the ways you wanna spend your time, just the way you wanna live your life, the kind of person that you want to be, those are your values. Then there's the value that you offer to the world and that value is what you're compensated for when you have a job. Okay? So you are not compensated for your value as a human being. Okay? This is really, really important. So listen to me. You are not being paid for your value as a human. You're being paid for the value that you offer.

Not everybody talks about it this way, and this is a very, very important distinction. Your value as a human is innate, it just is. But no one pays you to be a human, okay? What they pay you for is the value that you can offer. So since this is a podcast focused on physicians, let's talk about doctoring, right? If you can come and operate on people and solve people's medical problems, you are providing value. Now, if you suddenly couldn't provide that value anymore, that would not make you less valuable as a human, but you would not be able to provide that value anymore and they would not pay you that same amount anymore because you're not providing that value.

Where I see a lot of people getting confused is in thinking that because you have a certain degree or certain experience, that if you are working in a different capacity, doing a different job offering different value, that you should still be paid based on the other value that you're not even offering in that role, right? So like let's just say that you were a doctor for, you know, 10 years and then you decided to go work at Starbucks and you're like, Hey Starbucks, listen, I'm a doctor, you should pay me like I'm a doctor because I'm a doctor. Well that's unlikely to happen because Starbucks is like, yeah, but you're a barista and this is what we pay people who offer the services of a barista, whether they are a doctor or not. You see, do you follow me here? This is important to understand. So the reason you get paid what you get paid as a doctor is because you're providing the value that a doctor can provide.

When you think that you're being paid for your value as a human, you will be much less likely to actually ask for more compensation because you will be afraid that if they say no, that that means something negative about your value as a human being. Do you understand? Should I say it again? When you think that you're being compensated for your value as a human, when you think that they're paying me like I need, I should know my value and I need to ask for my value, you're getting really confused. 'cause you're not being paid for your value as a human. You're being paid for the value that you can contribute, right?

So because you can be, let me just give you an example. You could be a doctor who comes in and you're like, listen, I don't teach, I don't contribute in any way to any kind of, I don't do any kind of extra help for any of the ancillary staff. All I do is I come in and I see patients and I take care of 'em and I leave. And then someone else comes in applying for that same job and is like, Hey listen, you know what? I'm gonna do all those things. I'm gonna take care of all those patients. But you know, what I also really like to do is I also like to really mentor some students and trainees. And I also like to do a lot of enrichment activities with the staff. And I really like to come in, in and help to lead the team. That's a different amount of value that that person is offering. So they may be compensated more or maybe they could ask for more compensation because they're bringing more value. Okay?

So when you think what you're offering them is you, it's gonna feel super vulnerable When they say no, it's gonna feel super terrible 'cause your brain's gonna be like, see, I knew you were not valuable when that's not the truth. And it actually prevents you from providing the value that you really can offer because you think it has to do with you and it doesn't have to do with you. What it has to do with is what you are offering, what you're able to contribute, what you're able to give to them. So if you ask to be compensated a certain way and the answer is no, what that means is one of two things. That means that either one, you haven't done a good enough job explaining to them what the value is. So they do not understand the value. They do not see the value 'cause they don't understand it, or secondly, they don't value what you offer, are able to contribute at the same pay scale that you value it. Neither of these things has anything to do with your value as a human. How good you are as a human, whether you're good enough or not enough or all of those things. It has nothing to do with that because remember, your value as a human is innate.

It's completely separate. Your whole imperfect and worthy and all the things, even if you did not one more thing ever a day in your life. So the reason why you should ask for more money and work to close to that wage gap is because you are providing a lot of value and you are either not helping people to understand what that value is. Probably you can because you maybe don't value it yourself enough, right?

If you're devaluing what you can contribute because of just a lack of a positive relationship with yourself or opinion of yourself, you won't ask, you'll be like, no, they shouldn't pay me more for this. I'm not gonna ask for more. Or if you do ask for more, they may not understand it or they're just entrenched in whatever they're entrenched in.

And then, you know, we work to either disentangle that or maybe we find some other place that is working to compensate people adequately. The reason this is, well there's just, gosh, so many reasons why this is, is important, but I really want to also touch on how it's really pretty common for women to just downplay. Like they don't think that they should be getting all of that money, that they don't need it, that that, you know, lots of beliefs and stories around it not being necessary for them that other, you know, if they take more compensation than others are getting less.

And what I want you to understand is what we need in this world is more women with money, okay? Women use money, generally speaking in really positive ways. When women have money, they give to charity, they support family members, they support education, they support causes that help other girls and women. And even if you don't support any of those things, women having money is important. Women having money allows women to invest in ways that are important. You know, generally we don't invest our money in companies that we don't support.

Like if you hate, you know, some company, you're, you're probably not going to be investing your money in that company. So the more money that the quote unquote good guys or good girls or good women have, the better our world becomes. There's so much, there's so much work that can be done around money, of course we coach on that in our program, but it's really important if you think that you shouldn't, you personally, like women should get paid equal, but like for me, eh, it's not so important. Then you've gotta have a look at that. You've got to understand where that's coming from and why you're thinking about it in that way. Why you're downplaying that, why you're not valuing what you bring to the table and how you might possibly be tying that into a lack of self-worth and overall not valuing yourself as a human being.

Okay? I've just seen so many women physicians get really, really upset when they try to negotiate their contract or negotiate for a higher salary and they don't get what they want. And it, it's almost like this entitled kind of thing of like, well, I know my value and this is my value. No, no one's paying you for your value. What people are paying you for is the value that you can offer. So if they're not willing to pay you for that, they either don't understand why it's valuable or what all the value is, or they don't value it the same way as you, and then what do we do, right? Are we at an impasse? Can we negotiate further? Is there more information that we need or that they need? Or maybe we need to change institutions and go somewhere where they are offering something that closes that gap. I will also just say that I think that it, as I was just even reading this Department of Labor blog, it was saying one of the things to be that could be done to close this gap is just more transparency about how people are compensated. And I do just wanna say that I think it is important if you feel comfortable,

I'm not saying you have to or anything, but, but I do think it's important to be willing to talk about money with other people with similar jobs as you. Because you know, when there's this hush hush and no one can talk about it and it's, you know, it's ghost to talk about money and we can't talk about these kinds of things, that only holds us back as women when we don't know that our, you know, calling down the hall who has the same job as us is getting paid less or more than us, we lose negotiating power.

We lose our ability and capability to go to the people who make the decisions about how much we're paid to tell them, Hey, this is not okay, this isn't fair. So I could go on and on, but I'm not going to, because I think I laid it out there pretty clearly a little bit on fire about this because it really is something that sounds good, but actually backfires and holds people back. And the reason why this is influential with weight loss is because when you do not feel that you are being valued, you will feel like crap. And when you feel like crap, you'll want to feel better. And when you want to feel better and you're someone who overeats, you will use food and possibly alcohol to feel better.

So when you're wondering like, you know, how can I get myself to stop doing this? You know, obviously it's not gonna be some, you know, low carb diet, like that's not gonna be the solution. The solution is to understand your value as a human being, how that is stable and solid no matter what happens and living in that place as a truly valuable human. Then looking at, okay, what value am I offering? Am I the person who sits around and gossips a lot and complains a lot and you know, kind of isn't that pleasant of a person to be around, but yet I'm complaining that, that they don't want to gimme a raise. Like maybe, I'm not saying you need to be nicer, but maybe a more positive attitude and contributing more maybe would help, maybe not, I don't know. But when you are in this place of even being able to pay attention and think about it and take responsibility for the value that you offer, you might be able to start offering more value that is then recognized. And then when you're negotiating, you're able to say, well, hey look, here's all this value that I'm offering. This is all incredibly valuable. If you brought in someone else to do this, it would cost you twice as much or it cost you another 50% more and I'm willing to do it for only this much.

It makes complete sense. But you have to know deep down, solidly that you are valuable and whatever decision they make, like you're not, you're not offering yourself, you're offering the value that you can offer. That is what you're selling to them. That way your value as a human is protected. It is whole. It's untouchable. It's not able to be damaged because it just is. And when you live from that place, you can understand that some people are not gonna agree with you, they're not gonna wanna give you the raise, they're gonna think that your perspective is wrong. You might be at an impasse and you might have to consider working somewhere else. That's all okay, because you still know that you're a totally valuable person. You don't have to feel bad about yourself, like something's wrong with you that you're actually not as valuable as you thought you were because they said so. No, no one can say anything that takes away from your value as a human ever. And then understand that the value you bring to any job has nothing to do with another job that you have or any kind of educational background that you have. It has to do with what can you offer in this particular role.

Very, very important distinction. Alright, we'll leave it at that. Alright my friend, thank you so much for listening. I hope that this gives you something to chew on, something to think about, and I hope that next time you negotiate, you're able to help to close this gender wage gap. And so come on, otolaryngologists out there, my friends, we've gotta start making some movement on that for sure. Alright, have a lovely, lovely rest of your week and I'll talk to you very soon. Ready to start making progress on your weight loss goals. For lots of free help, go to katrina.ubell.md.com and click on free resources.