



WEIGHT LOSS FOR BUSY PHYSICIANS

— with Katrina Ubell, MD —

Katrina Ubell: Well, hello there, my friend. How are you today? I'm so glad you're here with me today. Whether you're new or a returning listener. I'm so glad you're here. This is a really, really fun interview that I've got today that I can't wait to tell you more about.

I brought back a guest that I had on the podcast a little over a year ago. Her name is Emily Wong. We know her as M. She was actually in episode 208. I looked it up. So in case you want to go and listen to more of Em, if you can't get enough of Em and you want more, then that's how you can listen to the other episode that I did with her back then. She was one of the weight loss success stories, because she did go through the Weight Loss for Doctors Only program and has continued on as well. Just a great asset to our community. Then she became a life coach, and now she is one of the coaches in our program who we just super love, and our clients love her as well.

But one thing that she has a specific interest in is aging. And I have an interest in that as well, just because I'm aging and so are you, believe it or not. So I just thought it would be really fun to bring her on to discuss aging. Because first of all, I haven't really talked about it too much on this podcast. But, there was something that happened that I'll actually allude to a little little bit in the episode in the interview, but I wanted to give you more of the specifics here.

There's actually an article in the New York Times that I read. I'm just looking at it now. And it looks it was published back in August of 2021. And it really kind of blew my mind. The title of it is What We Think We Know About Metabolism May Be Wrong. A new study challenges assumptions about energy expenditure by people, including the idea that metabolism slows at middle age. It basically talks about an article that was published in the Journal of Science. And I won't go into all the details. If you're interested, you can find that article, and the paper is linked right in the second paragraph. So you can find that really easily. But it just made me immediately think of Em because she is just an amazing human being as you're going to find out. And also, well she'll tell you more about herself, but she's trained in integrated medicine. She has kind of an interest and focus on aging.

So I thought wouldn't it be fun rather than me just riffing on this to have her come on and we can talk about it together? So she definitely knows way more about it than I do. It was just a fun conversation just discussing what happens when our bodies age, but also most importantly, our thoughts and beliefs about all of that and how that is one of the most important things for us to be looking at. But what this article really brought to light for me is we should always be questioning even conventional wisdom. We should be just rethinking things and just deciding if it serves us.

So many of us think that our metabolisms slow down when we get older. And then basically, this article tells us that that's not the case. And so with Em, we discuss why it's much more likely the reason why that happens and things that we can do about that. But I just think it's always so interesting when there's something that we think is just the way, and then it turns out that it's just not the way, or it's just not actually how it is.

And I think it's just another reminder to not take everything at face value and to not believe everything you think. Okay? Or not believe what everybody else thinks always either to really take some time to believe on purpose and to think on purpose. Particularly, to create results that really work for you. All right. Well, I can't wait for you to listen to my conversation with Em. I had to get up early. She stayed up late. She's in Hong Kong. So I just appreciate her taking the time to have this conversation with me. Please enjoy my conversation with Emily Wong.

Katrina Ubell: Hi Em, welcome to the podcast. Welcome back to the podcast.

Em Wong: Thank you.

Katrina Ubell: So glad to have you here. So you are kind of our resident expert in aging, all things aging.

Em Wong: Oh gosh.

Katrina Ubell: And thoughts about aging. So this is just a topic that I think is really interesting, probably just as I'm aging myself. And I know it's a concern for so many of our clients. It's something that I think about a lot. And I just knew that having you be kind of a co-presenter or not even presenter necessarily, but just having conversation with you would make so much sense. Because you know way more about this stuff than I do. So I'm so excited that you're here, so we can talk about all of this stuff. So just remind everybody what your background is, because you are a doctor yourself.

Em Wong: Yeah. Yeah. So I am trained as a general internist. And I sub-specialize in women's health as well as integrative medicine. Yeah. So I've been working with you now on your team for almost a year. And it's been amazing. So I live in Hong Kong. I have a practice here. Yeah. So I do some brain health coaching on my own.

Katrina Ubell: Yeah. Awesome. So it's kind of more an interest, aging for you in your practice too, right? It's not necessarily all you do, but really looking at it through a lens of health aging, which is probably a big part of

Em Wong: Yeah. I mean it sort of naturally kind of comes with the territory. Because when you're doing brain health coaching and for me specifically working with caregivers and dementia prevention, you're clearly working with an older population from the get go. Those are the people who are going to be interested in the kind of work that I do.

Katrina Ubell: So good. So one of the things that I think is so interesting about aging is just like anything else, there's all kinds of beliefs that we have that we pick up along the way that are almost never intentional. Like generally speaking, we are not deciding on purpose, I'm going to think about aging in this way. It just kind of happens.

And it can be from anywhere from when you're a small child, maybe people who were older saying things about themselves. I mean, even my own dad has said things like, "Getting old isn't for sissies. Things like that. Kind of this idea that it is so hard. And I don't want to take away, there are challenges for sure. But also societally, there's such a messaging system that getting older ... now, and this is in, obviously different cultures are different. I'm kind of talking more of the more specific North American kind of messaging, because obviously there's parts of the world where aging is totally revered, and elders are massively respected, and it's totally different. But where I am and where you live for a long time, really the messaging is do everything you can to sort of avoid aging in terms of your appearance, but also just this kind of idea that at a certain point particularly for women, you no longer are desirable, important, valuable. I've read articles of women saying, "At a certain point, I just feel like people literally don't even see me. They do not even notice that I exist."

So of course when you're living in that kind of societal soup so to speak, it's going to inform what you believe is possible for you as a person. So where this comes up in terms of weight loss and particularly permanent weight loss that we see all the time is women who are let's say maybe 50 or maybe even kind of around the menopausal period, whenever that is. Late forties or fifties and older, having these deeply held beliefs that it's not possible for them to lose weight. And then because we work with doctors, they often have data to back it.

So one of the things I think is so powerful is just questioning what you think is true. And deciding again, if you want to keep believing that or if you want to believe something different. I think this is particularly difficult when pretty much everybody around you agrees with you, right? So your friends or your peers, people who are in that same age group are thinking similarly. So it really does take some concerted, not even necessarily effort, but a decision to kind of question it and decide a thing in a different way. So I would love to just hear your take on all of that.

Em Wong: Sure. Yeah. It's interesting because when you had me on before, I talked a little bit about how I'd grown up believing that I was always going to be overweight because in my family, right, we have a bunch of people are overweight. So I was like it's just in the genes. Right? So it's the same kind of belief. And I think that my personal experience, and I'm sure other people can relate to this is that I sort of felt like I got to this age. I don't know, I had my kids my late twenties into thirties. And then I felt somewhere around sort of 35, I started putting on maybe half a pound to a pound every year. And then it sort of crept up all the way up kind of around 40. And I remember thinking, "This can't go on." So then I got into this big fitness boom, where I was like, "Okay, I'm doing triathlons and I'm doing half marathons," and stuff like that. And trying to basically outrun my diet. Yeah.

So I think that a lot of people kind of have that experience. And when you look around you at your peer group, a lot of times I worked at a women's clinic at the University of Washington. And I just saw the nurses, the MAs, the other doctors, they would almost all also be sort of putting on a little bit more weight each year. And I was just like this is just inevitable. It's just what happens to people. And I have to say that I actually was out of vanity, was kind of like, "Well, do I dye my hair? Do I do Botox? What am I going to do to make myself look younger?"

And what I actually ended up deciding is that the one thing that I could do to make myself not only look younger but feel younger is actually just to take care of myself, and lose some weight, and get to eating a little bit more healthy, sleeping more, exercising more, and really coming back to those basics. And all of that happened around the same time as I was doing this integrated medicine fellowship at University of Washington. And I think that just a lot of the basic principles that he teaches around sort of taking care of ourselves is much more sort of the very basic what do we do for ourselves? Nothing with fancy supplements, nothing with whatever. It's just basically what can we do for ourselves with our self-care?

Katrina Ubell: What I love about that is that the foundation of that is that our bodies know what to do if we just support them in doing that. Right? Our bodies can be very, very healthy and function at an optimal level. It's like a less is more kind of a thing. You know what I mean? Because I think there is in so many areas, this big push to do a gazillion different supplements. And before we start recording, we're talking about you can drink these disgusting ketones drinks. All these different things that in theory, are supposed to create some sort of improvement. It's kind of, what brings to mind is my kids do ski racing. And you can buy those fancy suits that are basically skin tight and have a little padding so that they're not in their big, bulky snow pants and stuff.

So we kind of always joke once we're talking about fractions of a second in terms of what your place is and the race, then it's probably worth it to invest in that. But up until that point, your snow pants are not slowing you down to justify the cause.

It's like if you are someone who has already optimized everything and then you're still interested in something else, yeah, maybe that is a great next step for you. But for the majority of people, it's not really going to be making a measurable difference. And, it's really the same thing as with weight loss how it's like if you could just take a pill and lose weight, would you do it, right? We're like yeah. Because we often don't really want to do the work of examining our thoughts or actually doing meaningful lifestyle changes like getting the sleep that we need and meditating.

Em Wong: Looking for that fast kind of fix, or the hack, or whatever.

Katrina Ubell: Exactly, exactly. Just working with your patients, just people you interact with in general, and working with our clients, I'm just curious what you see for women let's say 50 and up. What you find are some of the more common limiting beliefs that they have about, particularly around aging, but more specifically even their bodies and what's possible for them.

Em Wong: Yeah. I think that a lot of what I see is people want to blame something. Right? So it's kind of like I've tried everything, and nothing works, and it must be because of menopause. It's a hormonal thing. Right? Or it must be because I have reached this certain age, and then my metabolic rate is somehow slowed down. I think that people also tend to believe that their genes kick in. My whatever family member is like this. So this is just the way it's going to be.

So I think that for me, the sad part about it is that that kind of belief sort of ultimately tracks back to it's my body that's broken. Something's wrong with me. So it's almost like however much you may have dealt with issues of not loving yourself when you were younger, you only get to hate yourself more the older you get. And I feel like that is a lot of what I work with in terms of really trying to address this issue.

Katrina Ubell: So it's almost like you give yourself more reasons to reject yourself.

Em Wong: Yes, yes. Yeah.

Katrina Ubell: Which is interesting too. Because for those of us who struggled with that kind of thing, it's not like when we were 20, we were like, "I look awesome," right. We just had different problems. We had acne that we didn't like, or whatever it was that we thought was wrong. And then we just swap it out for different ways to self-love essentially.

Em Wong: Yeah. Yeah, exactly. Yeah.

Katrina Ubell: I feel like this is the case. I feel like it's such a disempowered, I mean anytime we're blaming anybody, we're giving away our power. But it's just like well, there's nothing you can do to stop the passage of time and your body getting older. So there very much can be this just sort of giving up energy around it. Just like, "I mean, I guess I can sort of try. But who are we kidding?" It's not going to-

Em Wong: Yeah. Yeah. And I want to say that because there are so many societal messages around ageism, like youth is the best time of your life. And your life goes downhill after whatever 35 or some age like that and some arbitrary number. And I do think that our brains have a way of using that against ourselves. And I think that you just have to kind of wake up to I want to say this messaging, this marketing messaging that is just like why do we have to assume that everything is just downhill and degenerating after a certain age? Right? That's really actually not even true. Because you probably know and I probably know people, I mean I do know people. They're feeling better now in their sixties than they ever were in their forties. They're taking better care of themselves. They're at a better level in terms of energy, in terms of their weight. Everything, because they shifted their focus. Right? And they're not as stressed out as before, and they're really sort of making an effort in that direction. So I just think that there's a societal narrative that it's really easy to buy into that you don't have to.

Katrina Ubell: Yeah. Right. And I think the first step is recognizing that there is a societal narrative, you know what I mean? That this isn't just the truth or just the way it is.

So one thing that really brought this up for me was that article, this was several months ago. Maybe in the intro, I'll look it up and give the actual citation so that anybody listening can look it up if they want to. But I saw it in the New York Times basically. And I think the article was published in the Journal of Science, I think.

And basically saying that we have this so many people talk about this. This is just absolute fact that your metabolism slows as you age. And this study basically showed that between the ages of 20 and 60, it really doesn't. So essentially, any weight gain that you may be having just isn't because of your metabolism. And I was just like, "See, now that is just the perfect example." See, now that blew my mind. I know it didn't blow your mind as much as it did mine because you already were in a place of questioning now. But people are so committed to this belief that it's your metabolism is the problem. And that if you're a woman, you're kind of screwed because your metabolism isn't on par or whatever with what men experience.

And that hormonal changes like menopause is a major cause of it. And of course, there are so many hormonal influences that I personally of course definitely don't, I'm not an expert in that. But I think there's just a lot that's still not understood.

So not to just say that there's nothing that's causing it, but it's just such a paradigm shift. It's such a reminder to just question whatever the conventional wisdom, it is not necessarily true. And you can question that even without data to support it. You can just decide you know what, that actually isn't a problem for me. And what I think when you get into that different mindset, you're thinking differently. You're getting into a place where you're just more focused on creating results, creating what you want in the future, rather than resigning yourself to accepting whatever terrible result or undesirable result may be there.

Em Wong: Right, right. Yeah. Yeah. I mean, I will say that in that particular article, they put a lot of emphasis on this thing we call the basal metabolic rate, which is kind of the amount of energy that your body burns, just your organs kind of just to keep itself functioning. And there are other factors that as we get older ... and I would say probably the biggest factor that I think of that contributes to weight gain is actually that we lose a little bit of lean muscle mass every year. So about half a pound of lean muscle mass every year after the age of 40. So what happens there is that that half pound doesn't just disappear from your body. That half pound actually just becomes adipose tissue, right? Which is fatty tissue. And that fatty tissue not only is three times the volume for the same amount of weight as lean muscle mass, but it is metabolically less active. So in the study they actually corrected for lean muscle mass, meaning that if you had more or less lean muscle mass, they didn't factor that into the basal metabolic rate because that's not considered basal. So I think that what I try to encourage people to think about as they're aging is that you are losing that lean muscle mass. So the only way for you to really prevent that loss is actually to lift weights, right? To actually proactively be doing that resistance exercise and building back that muscle mass so that you're sort of staying toned, and you don't have to be a weight lifter or anything. But it is a very important part of maintaining your strength as well as your sort all the things. Agility, flexibility, all of that. Yeah. As well as weight.

Katrina Ubell: Just curious what your thoughts are about that half pound of lean muscle mass loss. Do we know that that just happens regardless for adults as they age, or is that also a situation of for many people as they get older, they just aren't as physically active? Even if it's just I'm just not running around after small children anymore or even carrying small children anymore. And they're heavy, you know what I mean? And that's your strength training right there for a lot of people. Is it more situational, or is it

Em Wong: I think it's, yeah. I mean, I don't know the answer to your question, because I haven't looked at those studies in detail. But my understanding is it actually is a lot hormonal. And when I say hormonal, I'm not talking ... I mean, there is some like loss of testosterone for both men and women as we get older. And that's a big builder of lean muscle mass and growth hormone as well. So human growth hormone also declines. But I would say that there definitely is a component of the activity as well. Because the point is that you don't have to lose that muscle mass. You can proactively sort of maintain it.

Katrina Ubell: Yeah. Yeah. Which I think is why it's so important to find a way of moving your body that you enjoy. Right? Because to think, "Well for the rest of my life, I have to do this thing that I hate." Who's like, "Sign me up. Me, me, me. I can't wait for that"? You have to find some way of moving your body that's enjoyable. It can be gardening. It doesn't have to be actually lifting weights in a gym that smells like gross people or something like that.

Em Wong: And I also think about that too. In the old days when we were thinking about the sort of diet mentality, calories in, calories out, right? You would always go for the cardio exercise because that burned more calories than lifting weights. Right? Or doing any kind of resistance exercise. But our metabolism is so much more complicated than that. Right? And there's all these hormones and all these other factors going on. So really, what we're finding is that the lean muscle mass is actually equally if not as important as cardiovascular exercise. So don't just simplify it too, like the calorie count. Because that's just a tiny bit of the equation. Yeah.

Katrina Ubell: Exactly. Exactly. Exactly. Yeah. And I feel like that message is trying to get through about the strength training. I've sort of noticed it. There's been more of a push just in various areas where I notice people kind of mentioning it. It's just coming up more for people, which I think is great and also can hopefully help to prevent injuries and things like that, which is another reason why people become sedentary.

So much of this idea, it just ties in in so many areas. Because as you know and as I've talked about on this podcast before, I've done a lot of personal work on chronic pain. And just this belief, whatever XYZ thing's wrong with your body and you're going to experience pain from that forever. You can question that and aside that's not actually ... pain or even other symptoms. I mean for me, a big part of it was ongoing heartburn.

So just questioning the idea that even if you do have that injury from whatever when you ran track in high school or something like that, that doesn't necessarily mean that you are destined to have this ... that you won't be able to do things that you really enjoy doing.

Em Wong: Right. Right. Yeah. I think that the way that we sort of pick up beliefs is just so subtle. And I sort of even think of like it's not even the programming in your brain that's the computer, right? It's not even the software. It's the operating system. Right? It's kind of like you don't even realize it's there. But when I think about aging, and weight gain, and all of that, I get so much of that messaging from my mom, and my aunties, and all these women that I've grown up with. Right? And a lot of their idea of what it means to age. Right? And I think that we have an opportunity in our generation here to really redefine what that means, what it's going to look like.

Katrina Ubell: And I think a big part of that is deciding to become a part of the solution in the sense that you do your own work to clean up your own thinking and decide to believe different things for yourself. And then you share that with other people as well. You don't allow yourself to get caught up in those conversations about poor us. And isn't it so awful? Not like you'd necessarily be this big evangelist trying to change everybody else's beliefs, but being an example to other people that you don't have to view it in this way that most people look at it.

Because I just think too, in my mind I'm like look, it's hard enough to lose weight. We don't need to also then believe that this thing that we have no control over, i.e. how old we are, is sort of like that ball tied to our ankle that's making it that much slower and harder. We could just decide.

That's really not an issue and drop it, and just move forward. But I think it's like we have to change the whole narrative around it.

One of my very good friends is 10 years older than me. And she's a great example for me. She just does not literally ever, ever say anything negative about age. And I think if possible, it's great to have someone like that in your life. And if not, you can become that person for yourself and for others. And then of course, so many things, all of our belief systems that we're passing down to younger generations, we can have that influence in that way. I kind of think of it too as there's so much support for young people as they go through puberty. And I actually just read an article recently about why is there not more information for women about perimenopause and menopause? And I've been so flabbergasted at the lack of support and explanation. And even when I've asked what about this? It's just perimenopause. It's almost this waist basket diagnosis. I don't know what you've got. But whatever it is, it's probably because your hormones. So it's like immediately go and blame the hormones, blame the body. It's just not a great place. I find that I feel disempowered. I'm just stuck like there's nothing that can be done. And that is not a great place.

Em Wong: Well, it's interesting. Right? Because I'm trying to remember, it was a podcast you did not long ago where you were talking about cycles and how the whole menstrual cycle is something we don't talk about. It's sort of like somehow, low grade shameful in some way.

Katrina Ubell: Or even high grade shame for some people.

Em Wong: Yeah, yeah. And I feel like menopause is even worse. If it's bad to talk about your period, it's way worse to talk about menopause. Because all the memes out there, all the societal messaging is menopause is a bitch. And your wife is going to become a whatever, crazy person when she goes through menopause. And you're going to have horrible hot flashes and never sleep. And all these things.

And I've been a women's health specialist for 30 years now. And I can tell you that walking people through the perimenopause and menopause conversation is equally as important, if not more important than taking a young woman through her first pap smear or a young girl through her first, "This is how a pelvic exam works. This is how we're going to do it. You can tell me to stop at any point."

Making it safe for them is such an important right of passage. And I think that we as women really go through these life stages, right? We have a certain point in our life when we're childbearing, and then we have a certain point in our life when we're not. And it's actually something to celebrate when you go through that phase of life. And it's sort of like I've done my time in this stage. And now it's time to move on. And I look forward to the next stage when I'm going to be free of hormonal swings all over the place, and have this freedom from whatever other burdens I was carrying in this earlier stage. So yeah.

Katrina Ubell: Yeah. Yeah. I mean, it's not going to be me. But I would love to see there just being more support. And it seems to me like the foundation is being laid for that to happen. Like apparently, there's going to be some books to be published very soon and things like that. Not like there haven't been books in the past, but it just has felt like there's this dearth of information and support.

Em Wong: Well, it's been very sciencey oriented. So it's almost like how I want to say maybe 10 years ago, we would talk about sex in a certain way that was very sort of almost clinical. Right? And then, there wasn't so much of the experiential piece of it. And now it's getting to be a little bit more, people are maybe willing to be more vulnerable or sharing more from a vulnerable place, like their personal experience. And I feel like that is the kind of I guess support that is really more meaningful.

Katrina Ubell: And learning to celebrate it like you said. It's just even like how many girls get their first period and are told by some older woman, "I'm sorry," or something like that, rather than this is-

Em Wong: Now you have a curse.

Katrina Ubell: Now you have curse. Exactly. This is like a celebration of what your body can do. It really is just again, what is the story you're going to tell yourself about this experience? And when you're not intentional about it, you just take on the story of those around you. So it's just self perpetuating, right? Just continues on and on from that.

Em Wong: So I'm trained in acupuncture and Chinese medicine. And the messaging that we get around the menopause time is that that is when your body, the yin part of your body is weaker and there's going to be vulnerabilities that show up in your body. So that is actually a time when you need to be extra nurturing, when you need to actually pay more attention and potentially try and rebalance whatever is out of balance in your body. And I think that that's the kind of I want to say mindfulness and intentionality that I would love to see more people embrace as they go through this perimenopause time.

Because a lot of times, it actually coincides with a lot of other things going on in people's lives, right? So their kids may be growing up, their parents may be aging. They may be looking at career changes or whatever else is going on in their lives. And I think that to just keep powering through may or may not serve them during that time.

Katrina Ubell: And I think it's just like what you were saying, what came to mind for me is there may be actual physical imbalances. But I think there can be life imbalances too. There can be priority. I think that as you age, one of the best parts about it for me is understanding yourself better and understanding who you truly are better. And then, learning how to show up in the world in that way. And that may or may not be well received by those around you. But rebalancing that, you're not who you were 20, 25, 30 years ago. But are you pretending to be still that version of yourself, allowing yourself to grow and then letting things kind of settle out from there?

But I think yeah, you're 100% right. The demands and challenges are different and can be a lot more depending on what you're going through. And I was just thinking literally, balancing can be like you know what? I need a rest. I'm not going to run from kids sports game to kids sports game from Friday at 5:00 until Sunday evening at 8:00. I've got to put myself on the list of what's important, and get creative and figure that out. I just think that that's an overall important message of just looking at things as a whole and deciding how to put yourself back on the list, on the to-do list. Or not even on the to-do list, the list of importance. What are the things you value? And having yourself be at least on the list. If not, relatively high or top.

So I think that this has been a great conversation. So thank you so much for that. I think it brings us back to the idea you're the expert of your body. Anybody that you follow, or work with, or interact with to help with any of these things is a consultant that you were bringing in. And then you get to decide, does this work for me? Does this make sense? Because there's so many different ways of approaching this. You can decide, "Yeah okay. I'm going to really look at this differently." And then it can get super overwhelming when you start looking at, or even just talking to people. Asking friends, crowdsourcing. So many different options, it can be almost paralyzing to know what to do next. But literally, what you can do is maybe move your body. You know what I mean? Maybe do a little strength training, maybe prioritize sleep a little bit more. Do some things that would move the needle for yourself and make a big difference, and kind of build from there, and looking at what your thoughts and beliefs are.

I think that's one of the things that's so powerful about coaching is as coaches ourselves, we know because we have experienced it too, where we're like, "No, but blah, blah, blah." And then the coach is just like, "That's not—" and you're like, "What?" Even as a coach, we're so in it, we cannot see it. And that's where coaching can be so helpful.

And we've seen so many women come in. I was actually, we were just looking at this, how many of our clients are 50 and over. And it's almost a quarter. So I think a lot of people think, "This is just for younger people," or whatever. And it's not, it makes a really big difference. And I always find it really fun when I'm coaching women who are a little older or more toward the end of their career. It's so fun to help them to see so much more possibility for themselves just in terms of career or just what they want to do. It's so easy to just think, "Well, now I'm washed up and I have so little value. Why even dream or think about what we want to do in the future?"

Em Wong: That just breaks my heart when people say that or even think that. Yeah, yeah.

Katrina Ubell: Yeah. Or I'm near the end, I'm like, "You're 52. What are you talking about?"

Em Wong: Yeah. It's taken me so much coaching to actually be able to say, "I'm 55 years old. I'm postmenopausal. I don't have any shame about that." And I want to say that the last 40 years of my life, I feel like it has been kind of like, "What's my age?" Ha ha ha. Let's not talk about that."

Katrina Ubell: Right. It's like your birthday. 29 again and then 39 again. Right. Right, yeah. Just accepting it is, it just is, yeah. I guess the first thing would be looking at it from a neutral perspective, right? If you've had this negative of a viewpoint, can we get to a place where it just is? It's not good or bad, it just is. And then deciding if we want to put a positive spin on it. Just to share something that I have decided just from a little bit of traveling that I've done in foreign countries is you can tell just by looking at older women, that the priorities can be different. And seeing how beautiful these women are and kind of deciding for myself as I always say, I reserve the right to change my mind.

But right now, it seems like almost a cool challenge. I'm going to see if I can do that. Still obviously take amazing care of myself, and also allow myself to look my age. You know what I mean? And without shame. This is an amazing thing. What a gift to be able to lit that long rather than this burden where we're just sitting around waiting for the end, I guess. Whatever it is.

Em Wong: Yeah. And you can tell. You can tell people who have decided that they have totally bought into that narrative. And then you can tell people who haven't. And people who haven't, we say, "Oh wow, those people are so extraordinary." But really, you can be one of those people. Right?

Katrina Ubell: Totally. Right. And really, what it always comes down to is the way you think about it. That's going to be the root of everything. So it's like no matter what actions you want to be taking or how you want to be showing up, it's got to come from your thoughts and your beliefs, which is yeah. And just even recognizing that we can change those I think makes a really, really big different.

Em Wong: Yeah. Just having that awareness. Yeah.

Katrina Ubell: Amazing. Amazing. Well Em, thank you so much for coming on and talking aging with me.

Em Wong: Yeah. Thanks for having me.

Katrina Ubell: I'm just going to age super gracefully.

Em Wong: Absolutely. I don't think it's just even gracefully. I think that aging is awesome, and I absolutely look forward to ... I always tell people my grandmother is 102.

Katrina Ubell: Is she really?

Em Wong: Yeah. Yeah. So I'm 55. So I'm like, "I have a pretty good chance of living to at least 102, if not 110." So really, I'm just halfway there.

Katrina Ubell: Right. So much more time. And if you think about it, right, it's like you could spend 30, 40 years of that time just sitting around, waiting to die. If you weren't thinking about it differently. Right?

Em Wong: Absolutely. Yeah.

Katrina Ubell: Just kind of sitting around.

Em Wong: Well, I'm determined to basically bring my best energy, my best kind of focus, my best attention, my best creativity. This is my time. Right? My kids are grown. I can do what I really want to do with myself. So yeah.

Katrina Ubell: I love it. Amazing. Well, thank you so much for coming on.

Em Wong: Thank you.

Katrina Ubell: It was a great conversation. Thank you.

Em Wong: Okay. Really appreciate it. My pleasure.