



WEIGHT LOSS FOR BUSY PHYSICIANS

— with *Katrina Ubell, MD* —

Katrina Ubell: Welcome to the podcast, my friend. Thank you so much for being here today. I am really, really excited about the episode, the interview that I have for you today with one of our beloved coaches, Emma Caronna. We're going to be talking about journaling and writing and self coaching through writing and how written coaching can be so powerful topic we really haven't discussed on the podcast before. So, I'm super excited to share that with you.

Emma's going to tell you all about herself and her very interesting upbringing and how she came to coaching. And, she really is someone who loves written coaching. There are a lot of coaches it's really not their thing, or they just don't like it that much.

And, I see the benefit of all of it, which is why we offer all of it in our program. But, Emma has a particular affinity for written coaching. And really, she wanted to share that with everybody. And I thought it was such a great idea, helping you to understand how you can use written coaching as a tool for yourself on your own and also how it can be so helpful when you are actually working with a coach or in a coaching program. So, it's a great conversation, so fun. She's from the UK. Well, not actually originally, but you'll find out more about that as we go along. But anyway, she's just such a lovely human being and it just oozes out. I know you're going to be able to feel that. So, we love Emma in our program. Our clients love Emma so much and I'm so happy to be able to share Emma with you today. So, please enjoy my conversation with Emma Caronna.

Katrina Ubell: Emma, welcome to the podcast. I'm so glad you're here.

Emma Caronna: Thank you for having me. I'm happy to be here.

Katrina Ubell: So, will you please start off by just introducing yourself a little bit, let us know who you are, what you do and cap it off with letting us know why you're so passionate about written coaching.

Emma Caronna: Amazing. So, my name's Emma. I've been working as a coach in your team since 2019. It's been about two and a half years now. So, I can't really believe it's been that long already.

Katrina Ubell: I know. Right?

Emma Caronna: It's just been... Yeah, it's just been such a privilege.

Katrina Ubell: Time flies. Although, I feel like you've been here from the beginning in some ways.

Emma Caronna: Yeah. It's just been so great. We have such a wonderful team and something I always say has been one of the best surprises about this job for me is, that piece of how much we get to know and love our clients. It's really been a wonderful experience. My background is actually kind of corporate. I worked in research and consulting before I came to coaching. And, I don't know if I've ever told you this story, but I think it was actually... It felt like almost a bit of a calling to me. I remember years ago, I would kind of watch therapists on TV, I remember watching the Sopranos with my husband, who's originally from the New York, New Jersey area. So, we watched all of the Sopranos and having this kind of, "Oh, I'm going to do something like that. I'm supposed to do something like that." And then, eventually I got the courage to start studying counseling and I did that alongside my job. And then, from there I discovered coaching and just really took to it.

Katrina Ubell: Amazing.

Emma Caronna: And then I think...

Katrina Ubell: Yeah, I didn't know that.

Emma Caronna: And how you and I connected. I don't know if you remember, but I think...

Katrina Ubell: I do remember, but tell everybody.

Emma Caronna: Yeah. Very early on, when you had started coaching, I signed up for coaching with you myself. And one of the... I think the big things for me back then was, I was really suffering a lot with headaches and migraine and I didn't know exactly what triggered them. But, I knew some of the things that made it worse. I knew if I was drinking alcohol, if I was overeating, if I was really stressed, that would trigger headaches. And, it was just so frustrating because, I was literally making myself sick and in pain and then I'd do it again. And then I just couldn't solve that piece of, "I know what I'm supposed to do", and I'm just not doing it yet. And I think you said to me, why not just give it a try and see if it works. Which I did.

So, when you were looking to hire a coach, I feel like I already had that, a lot of faith in you and in this process. And, I just thought it would be incredibly meaningful to help doctors which it really has been.

Katrina Ubell: Oh, I love that. I remember. We coached and then we weren't in contact for a while. And then, when we were looking to hire a coach and your name came up, I'm like, "Wait. Is that the same, Emma? I know her. That's so cool. She'd be our coach." It was so great. Oh, so great. And, you can get into as much detail or as little as you'd like, but you struggled with your weight as well in your earlier life.

Emma Caronna: Yeah. I think it's just been one of those things that has been kind of up and down. I think, I particularly struggled with drinking and I feel like, although I was in a very different line of work, there's some parallels in the... I would say my career for a long time was high stress and long hours and a lot of traveling and a lot of business dinners and things like that. So, that was all kind of an ongoing struggle for me. And so... Yeah.

Katrina Ubell: I just always think it's helpful, when you're like, "Okay. This person really knows what I'm talking about. This coach has been there and is ahead of me on the path." I think that's always helpful to know. Can we also share one thing? Can you tell everybody where you grew up?

Emma Caronna: Oh yeah. So, I was born in Manila. I grew up in Singapore mostly. And then, after funnily enough, just almost by coincidence really. After I finished up university here in the UK, I went back to Asia and I lived in Hong Kong and then Sydney and then Tokyo and then Singapore again. So, I'm pretty well traveled.

Katrina Ubell: Yeah.

Emma Caronna: One way or another.

Katrina Ubell: I think that's so cool. I love it. So, tell us about why you're so passionate about written coaching.

Emma Caronna: It's funny enough. I don't know if you know, but I'm doing this advanced certification training right now. And, one of the other coaches, I'm sure she won't mind me sharing this. She was talking about how she had realized she wasn't taking advantage of written coaching because, she didn't quite have that belief that it was as effective as one to one coaching. And I think, my belief has always been, written coaching can be incredibly powerful and that's what I've experienced myself. And, I feel as though I've had some really big kind of "Ahas", some really big shifts through coaching myself. In a sense, there's a little bit the thinking cycle in action. So, my belief is that written coaching is incredibly powerful and that's exactly what I've experienced in my life.

Katrina Ubell: I love that. I guess I do agree with you. A lot of people gloss over the power of it. If it's available to them, they think, "Oh, I don't really need to spend time on that. We'll just talk, it's easier just to talk." And, sometimes it actually is easier just to talk. But, there's the power in writing and I would love for you to touch upon that. What is that power in writing?

Emma Caronna: Yeah. Well, first of all, just to say, I do think that the two things are very complimentary. They're different. When we're so face to face, of course there's a whole layer of communication there, that's kind of nonverbal that we can pick up in body language and in someone's emotions. And in a sense in written coaching, that element is not there, but there is something different there. And I think, the two can be very complement. It's usually a kind of slow down process almost when it's in writing. But I guess, if you think of writers all through history, so many of them have talked about how writing is almost like medicine. It can be a way of healing. It's a way of... I think, most of us kind of have a sense of that experience.

It's like, if you are obsessed about something, there can be a lot of relief in just pouring the words out onto the page, almost as a release of that emotion that's there. But I think, also it can give you that distance, it can give you that clarity, that kind of place to organize your thoughts and to discover what you are thinking about. It's like access to the mind, access to the unconscious almost.

Katrina Ubell: A 100%. I agree with that. And I just have to say that, I'm not someone who as a child or young adult, wanted to journal. I have always had a story that I don't like to write. So, that's why I tell myself. So, I had to really... Even though I knew the value, I had to overcome my resistance to the sitting down and doing it. And, I 100% agree with you. So, on multiple levels. First, so often our brains just have thoughts pinging around like crazy. We can't even focus on anything because like, "And don't forget this and oh, I'm so mad at her about that." And there's so much going on, that I think of it as, when you write it down, it's like you're able to literally put it down.

You don't have to carry it with you anymore. Now, you don't need to think about it constantly. Because, now it's there and you can come back to it later or you can spend some more time looking at it now, thinking about it. But, it feels like a groundedness to me and a level of peace that I think is different than other forms of coaching.

Emma Caronna: Yeah. And I do think...

Katrina Ubell: I think that it's helpful in that way. And I also think... Sorry, one more thing. I also think that it allows you some space. Like, when you're having a conversation, so many of us are uncomfortable with any kind of gap in the conversation, that we are just looking to fill the space. Where with journaling and writing, the space makes sense. What I mean? You write something and then you can just pause and sometimes you can follow the breadcrumb trail through your brain. Like, "Oh, look. Now we're on this subject." Or, sometimes it gives you that moment to really just sit and think like, what do you think about that or whatever it is, that's the next step for you.

Emma Caronna: Yeah, totally. And I think, going back to your point about not feeling like you were drawn to writing. I think, that's so common and I just almost really want to encourage people who are listening to it. If you feel as though you are that person who may be... It doesn't come naturally. You said there was some resistance there. Just to consider the idea, I think often a large part of the reason people don't like to write, is maybe that they have some judgment around that. Or it's as if, "Maybe I'm not doing it right or I should be getting somewhere", all of that kind of thing can come in. And actually, I hear so many times from clients in the program that, when they can really just commit that time to doing it, they discover that it can actually feel good. It can start to become something you enjoy and feel supportive.

Katrina Ubell: Definitely. And I think too with so many things. We talk about this. When we can't write in the moment, we're like, "Oh man, if I could just write, that would be so helpful right now." But then when we do have the moment to write, it could be hard to overcome that resistance. Like, "Well, I just don't feel like it right now or I don't want to get into it. I don't know. I just want to curl up in bed, whatever. I don't really want to do it right now."

Emma Caronna: Yeah.

Katrina Ubell: So when the time, that's for sure has come up for me, when the time is there, then I just really don't want to do it. And so I think that, it's like so many things. It's like, if you want to get back into exercising, those first few times, you have to really get yourself to do it. You have to overcome that activation energy.

But, once you do it on a more regular basis and you see the benefits of it, then it's so much easier for you to overcome that resistance. I think the resistance decreases, but also you start to see, "This actually really helps me. So, I want more of that. I'm going to come back and do it."

Emma Caronna: Yeah. For me, the obstacle was often the time scarcity piece. "Why really can I find 10 minutes?" And I will often say to myself, things like, "What if 10 minutes now, actually creates more time in the day? Maybe it's going to make the rest of the day easier or more efficient."

Katrina Ubell: Yes.

Emma Caronna: And, that has been really helpful for me in just actually sitting down to do it.

Katrina Ubell: I love that. And I found that for myself. I find, one of the big advantages for me is, even if what I'm writing about isn't necessarily "Positive", it might be that I'm actually working through something really painful. I do feel afterward, I have a more positive outlook. It's easier to feel good about myself and my life. Again, it's kind of like, "Okay, I've put some effort towards that. I don't need to think about it right now, because the next time I journal, I can come back to this again." It really is kind of like a lightning. Lightning of mood, lightning of that sort of emotional heaviness that we often will feel like we're carrying around.

Emma Caronna: Yeah. I totally experienced that too.

Katrina Ubell: So, what do you tell people who are worried that, if they journal, someone is going to find what they wrote. And, a person they don't want finding it.

Emma Caronna: Well, I have a lot of confidence that we can problem solve for that. I think, everyone we work with is smart enough to figure out a way around that. Whether that's, "Okay, I'm going to have a confidential journal or it's going to be a password protected document or I'm just going to rip things up and throw them away immediately", there's a solution out there for sure.

Katrina Ubell: Definitely. And I love it. The reason I brought it up is because, it is a limiting factor for a lot of people. They're just like, "Well, I just can't do it. My family's too nosy", or whatever. But, when you think about it in this way, for sure there's a way. So, what are the options and start finding that solution. That's so good. Yes. So, what is different between journaling and self coaching?

Emma Caronna: That's a good question. So I would say, one of the biggest differences really is that, when it comes to self coaching, you are really reflecting on what you've written. So, I know that for some of us, certainly this has happened to me. As you're journaling, it can almost seem like you are writing a diary entry or a to do list, something like that. And, actually one thing that I started doing for a long time is, I would just keep a post-it note or something alongside my journal. So, all of those things that just felt like they're going on the to-do list or they're, "What about this?" Or just go on that list. And then, I could bring myself back to the journaling. But, I think one of the keys is that you are trying to go a little deeper with what you are writing.

So, you want to be asking yourself questions. "How am I feeling about this? Why is that a problem? Where did I learn that?" Really looking at what you've written and asking yourself some questions about that. When I was in Japan, I came across this idea. I don't think it's from Japan actually, but I just happened to come across it there, proprioceptive writing. And, it's this idea that you... It is very, very simple. You ask yourself, what do I mean by, and then you look at one word or phrase in something you've written. So, maybe you've written something about being a good mom and you ask yourself, "What do I really mean by being a good mom? Or you've written, "I'm not doing a good enough job as a doctor." And you ask yourself, "What do I mean by doing enough?" And just simple questions like that really help you take things deeper. And I think, it's kind of like a process of inquiry really. You are getting to know yourself, understand yourself better. I think that's the key.

Katrina Ubell: Yeah. I 100% agree with what you said. I think, also some people put pressure on themselves that, if they're going to do self-coaching, there has to be some sort of bow at the end. Meaning, everything's all wrapped up and there's some sort of resolution and now I feel better and it often doesn't feel that way. So then they think, "Oh, I'm doing this wrong." We get that a lot from our clients. They're like, "I just don't know what to write about or I'm doing it wrong. Or I just don't think that I'm not... I tried it a few times. I didn't see any value in it. So, I just don't do that." And I think, so much of it comes down to just being open to more of the process.

It's not really the end goal so much. It's the process. And, if I could use one word to sum up the value, or I guess maybe sum up what you should be bringing to self coaching, it's curiosity. This happened or I said this or I discovered this about myself or about this other person or whatever. So, I wonder what I think about that. And it's curiosity without judgment. It's not like there's an energy behind it. Like, "I have to figure this out or I need to stop thinking this way or there's no pressure." It's really genuinely just wanting to work it out. And, I know you've heard me use this metaphor before. I don't know how often I've used it on the podcast, but I always think of it as if you ever traveled with several necklaces in a jewelry case. And then you get home and they are a tangled, horrible mess and you have all these little tiny chains completely stuck together.

And it's just a total rats nest. And you're like, "Oh my gosh. Where do I even begin?" And where you begin is you just try one place. You're like, "Well, let me see. Can I loosen this part? Okay. I got that little further. And now over here, can I loosen that?" And, you just start somewhere and you just keep wiggling and loosening and you keep at it and keep trying different angles until eventually you have all those necklaces separated. And I often think that, the problems that we have in our lives, it's like those necklaces. All tangled up. And the coaching, the journaling can help you to untangle all of it. What is this really about? Why is this really a problem for me? And, genuinely wanting to know the answer. Not going, yeah, because you're a jerk and I knew that anyway. Really genuinely wanting to understand yourself better. And, we always talk about a close relationship with yourself and this is another opportunity for that as well, just to understand yourself better, to know who you really are at your core. So, it's nothing to be afraid of. It's just something that can be really, really supportive. So, let's talk about what do you write about. What's your answer to that? If someone's like, "Ah, okay. But what do I write about?"

Emma Caronna: Yeah. It really goes back to your necklace analogy. I think, it's... You can really start anywhere, but if there're issues that are bothering you, if there are things that you want to change, if there's a result that you are not getting, that's a really great place that you could start.

It's essentially, that's one of your necklaces that you can start to try and unravel. And, maybe it's going to take a week or a month and that's totally okay. But, something I'll sometimes say is, if you are somebody who's resistant to journaling or you've found that you haven't really enjoyed it in the past, is to start with something that maybe feels a lot lighter. Really having a look at what's going well right now? What's something that's bringing me a lot of joy?

There can be a lot to learn in the positive too. So, that can be a kind of easier and lighter place to start. And, maybe you come to some of the topics that are a little heavier or a little harder when you're ready and when you've established more of a practice with it. I wondered if this was a good time to mention as well that, within the world of program, of course we have those prompts that you can sign up to. So, that's really helpful I think, if you don't have a topic, then that's something that you can sign up to. So that, here's a specific topic that you might want to work on today. Of course you never have to, but...

Katrina Ubell: No. And, what you are describing is in the Weight Loss for doctors only program, it's totally optional part of the program. But I would say, the majority of our clients sign up for it. We actually will allow you to sign up to get a text prompt Monday through Friday. And I think, Monday and Tuesday and Thursday and Friday, they are questions like journaling prompts, Wednesday is some sort of quote. And so, that can be a good one to just even contemplate and what do you think about that quote and just to mix it up a little bit and I have no problem with that. Sometimes we just need something to kind of get us started.

I think sometimes, even certain journals will have prompts even within them. I personally have a bit of a mixed relationship with that, because sometimes I come in, going, "Okay. I really want to journal about whatever." And then there's a question at the top of the page and I'm like, "No. I don't want to write about that. And then somehow I have this dissonance of, "No, but I'm not answering that question. I need to find some blank page somewhere", which I know is like that anyway.

Emma Caronna: Yeah. I'm a bit the same. I prefer to really pick my own topic and sometimes even just try and work on the same topic, day after day. Of course you never have to, but I find that's one way to really start to make some progress with something.

Katrina Ubell: Definitely.

Emma Caronna: I love those text prompts in that. They're a really good mixture of... There's some things in there that are very practical. Like, where do you need more learning or skills to make the next step? Something like that, that's more concrete. And then, mixed up with some are very reflective.

Katrina Ubell: Yeah. And I think you're right. Something as simple as where do you need to learn more or something like that, for someone who's feeling stuck or confused, that's such a great way for them to access the wisdom that they already have inside of them. Which we often in coaching, if someone came to us and said, "I just don't know what the next step is?" We might say, "Okay. Well, what do you think it might be? And, that's essentially what you're asking yourself." And so, just to kind of advance this a little bit further, I think that, as you...

For sure you don't have to work with a coach to get tons and tons of value out of journaling and written coaching. But, if you've had the experience of working with a coach or you're doing this while working in a coaching program or with a coach, I know that I found for myself is, if I feel like, "Well, okay, I feel like I'm at a stopping point or not sure what to do next. I'll often think in my head, what would my coach ask me next?"

Emma Caronna: Yeah.

Katrina Ubell: And then, that's my question. It's coming from my brain, but I'm sort of giving credit to the person who I think knows more than I do or is the person I'm using as a leader to help me through the process. I think, that can be helpful too. And, whether it's a coach or could just be even a mentor or a really close friend or anybody like that, you can just channel that person. What would they ask me next? And then, that can get you rolling again.

Emma Caronna: What would Katrina ask me next?

Katrina Ubell: I've had full coaching interactions with people in my head. Thanks for coaching me, even though you weren't there.

Emma Caronna: That's so great. And, we haven't mentioned at all, adding in of course the thinking cycle.

Katrina Ubell: Yeah.

Emma Caronna: Of course, after you've done your journaling, if you just pull out one thought or one feeling or something to put in the thinking cycle, that can be something that's so immediately practical and useful.

Katrina Ubell: Yeah.

Emma Caronna: That might be something that you're able to see immediately. This thought is not serving me. Here's a more useful way I could think about it. This is something that could have an immediate impact on my day. And of course, that's something that would not be a part of journaling, but is very much a part of self-coaching.

Katrina Ubell: Definitely. I love it. And, there's so many different ways to do that. I keep doing this thing, I keep taking this action that I don't want to be taking. Okay. Well, let's use the thinking cycle to figure out why that might be. When I do that thing, how am I feeling? And then, what am I thinking that's making me feel that way. It gives you so much insight into yourself. Because what we typically do is go, "Well, I keep doing this thing I don't want to be doing, so must me and that something's wrong with me. I'm a terrible person." Whatever it is, we just come to these conclusions that just flat out not true, because it's our thoughts and feelings that drive those actions and give us those results that we have.

All right. So, let's start talking a little bit more about how we incorporate written coaching into the Weight Loss For Doctors Only Program, which of course we lovingly call WALDO. And then of course, for people who are in masters or VIP, which is our continuation program, we offer written coaching as well. So, we call it Ask for Coaching. Would you like to give our audience a little summary of how Ask For Coaching works?

Emma Caronna: Sure. So, you jump in here if I miss anything.

Katrina Ubell: Okay.

Emma Caronna: I kind of explain how it works. So, basically how it works is that, clients can submit a question literally, which I find quite remarkable actually. They can literally ask as many questions as they want at any time. So, a client will write in with a question and then those questions are then published anonymously with an answer on the program website. And then, we've got different forums there. So, there is a generic Ask For Coaching section. And then, there's a section dedicated for masters and VIP members who have been doing this work for longer. And then, we have a section specifically for questions relating to food.

Katrina Ubell: And weight.

Emma Caronna: When they ask... Yeah. Literally anything about ingredients or have your food journal reviewed. So, once a question is submitted, they're answered daily Monday to Friday. Almost all of those questions will be responded to within 24 hours, unless there's something that we as a team want to consult with you about or discuss amongst ourselves. Yeah. So essentially, now we've got this huge database of more than... I think there's well over 13,000 questions in there, which are now searchable by any new member. So, you could just go in there and search on, I don't know, like patient complications or racism or I don't know, a root flower.

Katrina Ubell: Whatever.

Emma Caronna: And then, you can bring up all of the past questions have been asked on that topic. And, there truly is gold in there.

Katrina Ubell: Truly.

Emma Caronna: There's just now so many questions that have been asked and coaches give a thoughtful response to each and every question and you can just go in and read what other people have asked and the answers they've had. And what's nice about it is, there's that convenience that you can do that at any time. So, I know...

Katrina Ubell: Literally 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Emma Caronna: Yeah. So, I know that clients will talk about, "Okay, I was on call and it was the middle of the night. And I just went into that section and submitted a question. And then I was able to have an answer the next day."

Katrina Ubell: Yes. And you get an email that lets you know your question's been answered, which is really nice. So, if you've submitted something and you're waiting for the answer, you get an email just notification to let you know. And the other thing that's really cool is, we have the search function, but we also have a favorites function. You can star certain questions and answers that you found particularly helpful and then filter through that. So, I know so many of our clients love that. Because they're like, "Well, this one. I want to come back to this one again and again", and you're easily able to do that there. I just want to touch on how just the true richness of this experience. Because people are like, "Well, it's anonymous, but still I can't share. People are going to see it, but really what you end up seeing is, you are sharing in the collective wins and struggles. It ends up helping everyone.

So, you're getting all of the help that you need and want, by asking all of your own questions and getting those coaching responses. But then, just whenever you're in a group setting and then someone else asks a question you hadn't thought of and you're like, "Oh, yeah. That's a good question and I wanted all the answers to that too." You get to take part in that as well, within the program. So, that's truly the richness of being in a group, where other people are struggling with something, you see the coaching answers and then you can put that through the filter of your own life to allow it to help you as well. So, maybe you don't have that specific issue going on in your life, but the coaching still 100% applies to you. I think also sometimes we're just in a really good place.

We're like, "I don't even know. I don't know that I need some help." But, you can still be learning and understanding yourself more deeply by reading other people's questions. So great. And, I just want to touch on why we keep the form for food and weight and all that separate. I have always just thought that, if you're doing well with your food and you're doing well and you're losing weight, it's not useful to you to be reading about other people who are struggling with their food and weight. It can actually create more mind management requirements in your mind. You're, like, "I thought it was fine, but now this person says they're doing this. Maybe that's what I should be doing. Maybe I should throw out my whole plan and do something different." Like, "No, don't do that. Just keep doing what you're doing."

But, there's so much rich, great help available to you. So if you are in a plateau, if you're looking for some ideas on how to change your eating plan or whatever, that's all available to you, just in a separate place, which I think is nice. Because then you know you're going there, because now you're looking for some food related help.

Emma Caronna: Yeah. Something I wanted to touch on as well, which I think is tremendously important about this is, because it's anonymous. I think it's such a great forum to bring up subjects that you're maybe not ready to talk about face to face. So, I see clients will maybe come to Ask For Coaching, to maybe explore things around. I don't know, body image or infidelity or feelings about getting sued or maybe that might be the first place they start to talk about a trauma. And I think, there's just can be a tremendous amount of relief in being able to share and kind of have somebody really just to share that with, before you are ready to speak it out loud. I think it's Brene Brown, talks about that idea of, shame likes to stay in the dark, likes to hide.

And I think, that's a really important function and it's just also really great for a client who might be a little shy to ask about something in person. They can back and forth in written coaching, before bringing that to their one to one. And to your point, I think there's a tremendous power there in seeing that you are not alone. That maybe there are other women out there who are struggling with imposter syndrome or... I was thinking, how you were talking about being able to save favorite posts. One of the posts that was particularly popular in the last six months was relating... Somebody had posted a question saying that they felt a lot of shame about having a favorite child. That was a really popular post. And I think, it was something that we didn't want to talk about. And, touched on something for a lot of people.

Katrina Ubell: Definitely. Yes. And so, I just want to mention. You said that there've been over 13,000 questions that we've answered. Do you remember how many of them have been answered by you?

Emma Caronna: Yeah. Just today, I went into check actually, because I wasn't entirely sure. And funnily enough, which is a coincidence, exactly 3,300 today.

Katrina Ubell: Oh really? Oh my gosh.

Emma Caronna: Yeah.

Katrina Ubell: That's great. It is a lot of questions.

Emma Caronna: Yeah. And I have to admit, I've got to that point a little how you were talking about. Every now and again, I'll be struggling with a topic and I'll search in there for some wisdom and think, "Oh, I had quite a good answer to that. I forgotten I said that." So, I'll actually kind of coach. My past self coaches my current self sometimes.

Katrina Ubell: I love that. Oh, that's so good. I love that. So, we've defined four benefits of written coaching. Let's just touch on them briefly. The first is that, you can often gain a lot of clarity about what you're dealing with, just by writing it down. What are your thoughts about that?

Emma Caronna: I think, I'm sure that you've had this experience too. Just the actual act of trying to frame your question can be really illuminating.

Katrina Ubell: Yes.

Emma Caronna: Very often, I find that I'll be trying to figure out what question I want to ask and then you kind of figure things out or coach yourself almost on the way. And, you are several steps further on by the time you come to ask a question.

Katrina Ubell: Definitely.

Emma Caronna: So I think, just the actual process of clarifying what the question really is that you want answered, where you want help, that process in itself is very valuable.

Katrina Ubell: Totally. Even if it's just... Sometimes people are like, "Well, this is almost like I'm just dumping out all of my thoughts", but good. Because, that obviously needed to happen.

Emma Caronna: Yeah. We're totally fine with that too. Very often, we will receive questions that really are just like, "Okay. Here's my thought dump and that's okay too."

Katrina Ubell: Yes. So, the next benefit is using written coaching as a way to move forward between group coaching sessions or one on one individual sessions. So, how could somebody do that? They have a great coaching session and then how could they benefit from written coaching in between?

Emma Caronna: Yes. I really think this can be such a big benefit, especially to someone who really wants to make the most out of the program. You can discuss a topic in your one to one and then, you might have multiple back and forths between... Not necessarily with that specific coach, but you can be working on the issue and submitting questions and getting some coaching. And it's just a really terrific way to be moving forward on something. So that, then by the time you come back to your next coaching session, you are in a different place. And there's sometimes, I think that can really fuel a tremendous amount of growth. And of course, it's absolutely never necessary. You can show up and just come to your individual coaching sessions or groups coaching sessions and that's absolutely fine. But, I do find that a client who is really grappling with things in between sessions, that to me is a really great sign. They're going to learn, they're going to grow. They're going to figure things out.

Katrina Ubell: Right. There's like a determination behind it. It kind of keeps the momentum going. I kind of sometimes think about, I can be so visual. But, I think of it in the airport, when you step on the moving walkway. It's like, "It's just like stepping on the moving walkway. It just takes you forward a little faster. It gets you where you're going a little faster."

Emma Caronna: That's perfect to know. Yeah.

Katrina Ubell: So, our third benefit is, thoughtful responses. Not something that's just quick and hurried. What are your thoughts about that?

Emma Caronna: Yeah. So I think, it really comes down to the power of one or two amazing pieces of teaching or really powerful questions. I'm sure you've had that experience too, where somebody can just ask you a question that really changes everything for you. And as a coach, it's quite a different experience coaching in written coaching versus face to face. Because, we do have time to really reflect on the client's words and consider different ways of responding. And, it's a very different kind of process.

Katrina Ubell: Yeah. When I was doing more... Now I don't spend as much time answering those questions, but I did for a very long time. In fact, my very first group was almost exclusively written coaching. I loved having as the coach, the space to really think, what does this person really need? What are they really saying? What is going to be super powerful, so that it is that one question, that's just so powerful.

Emma Caronna: It's like, boom.

Katrina Ubell: Yes, exactly. And, I think from the client perspective, it's very efficient. It's just like, you put that all in, you get that question back. It's like, "Okay. We're off to the races. Here we go."

Emma Caronna: Yes. Absolutely.

Katrina Ubell: And then the fourth benefit is that, space that is there between when you post and when you receive a reply. So, tell us more about that?

Emma Caronna: Yeah. So, I think that, when we were initially thinking about some of the benefits here is, we're thinking about how in that space where you've submitted your question, but you haven't received a reply yet, I think it almost is as if you start to self coach yourself. You are kind of anticipating then, what the coach might say. And I think, that's something that similar to what you said earlier. It's almost like, you begin to anticipate how the coach might answer that question.

Katrina Ubell: I think, the reason why that's so powerful is because, we often will get into this mindset where we think, "Well, I need the coach. I can't do any of this. I can't work myself through things. I need a coach." And, what you're doing when you're working yourself through it, even on your own is, you're building up that evidence that you have so much more wisdom and insight into yourself and whatever you're going through, than you think you do.

Emma Caronna: Yeah. And, that's really what we are trying to do for everyone in the program is, to have you get to that place where, "Okay. I know what the coach might ask me."

Katrina Ubell: Right.

Emma Caronna: I'm ready to do this by myself now.

Katrina Ubell: Which is the point, right? The goal is not that people become totally dependent on us. It's that, they actually really know how to support themselves moving forward. And I think that, sometimes it can be confusing for some people thinking like, "Well, I'm going to submit this question and then the coach will tell me what to do." And often, it's not what to do. It's more curiosity on the coaches' part. Tell me more about this. So, I guess the what to do is, answer this question that I have, that will help you to move forward, but not I'm going to solve all your problems for you and tell you exactly what to say to your boss that you're struggling with. That is not what we do. We help you to figure out what is the best thing for you to say to your boss.

Emma Caronna: Yeah. I think, that can sometimes feel maybe a little surprising to clients at first, that sometimes we very directly will say... Let's say as an example, somebody's in a plateau and is wanting to figure out what to do in terms of changing their food or what to do next. And, we might say to them, "Here's some resources. Have a look at this, you review and then tell me what you think. And then, I'll share with you what I think." We are not giving that immediate answer then. But, what we are really trying to do is, help every client to have the confidence to figure things out on their own. We'll be there to support them through that process. But, they're not just getting that answer here and now as to what to do, but they're learning how to, "Okay. Whenever I'm in a plateau, this is what the process that I can use to help myself figure out how to go forward."

Katrina Ubell: And, I personally am particularly passionate about us doing it in this way because, so much of the weight loss industry is centered around you. Obviously can't... The messaging that you obviously can't trust yourself, because you're in this predicament to begin with. So, I'm the expert, I'm going to tell you what to do. Just do what I say and then your problem will be solved.

And then, if you don't solve your problem through that, then something must be wrong with you. And, that's just not true. That's just not how it is. Nobody can possibly know what's going to be the right thing for you. Even us. So, we can give you resources, we can give you our opinion, our thoughts, based on experience and information. But, it's much more of a collaborative process with the goal of empowering the client to really understand that they do know the answer.

You can trust yourself. You have way more knowledge than anybody, about yourself and your body and how it feels and how it responds. And so, it's building back up that trust that you have with yourself and your body, that you really can figure this out. So, I think of us as like, we're the guides as we're helping you to recreate that experience, because you're born with it. It's just, we lose it along the way. And so, if we were really just come in and tell you what to do, that's actually detracting from one of the most important skills and lessons that you can learn.

Emma Caronna: Yes. I mean, it's so tri... I often feel as though one of the pieces of our work as coaches is to really help clients lean into trusting their own authority and wisdom about their body and in their life in general.

Katrina Ubell: Yes. Love that. Okay. So to finish up, we have a few lessons that you've learned from answering over... Well, literally 3,300 coaching questions and Ask For Coaching. So, what's the first one?

Emma Caronna: Well, I'm not sure if these are the most profound things. I've obviously—

Katrina Ubell: Sometimes, the most simple are the most profound.

Emma Caronna: There's obviously been a lot of learning during that time. But, these are some of the things that I felt as though stood to me the most. And the first one and this really won't come as any surprise to anybody listening is that, physicians are often, I think, reluctant to ask for help. And, we know there's the culture of self reliance and being strong and being reliable and not needing help. But, within our program, we have this resource which allows you to literally ask unlimited questions. And I've noticed so often that, clients will be afraid of overusing the service or maybe doing it wrong or am I allowed to ask about this kind of thing? And so, we are always really trying to encourage you to use the resource as much as you possibly can. And, it's fascinating how much caution there can be that, "Oh, maybe I shouldn't be asking." And we're always saying, "Okay. It's okay. You can ask anything you want. Literally anything."

Katrina Ubell: Yeah. Like you're taking up too much of the resource or... I always find it interesting, because people are worried, they won't get the help that they need. But then, they don't take advantage of the help that's available. Is that so interest... Our brains are fascinating.

Emma Caronna: Yes.

Katrina Ubell: All right. So, what's the next lesson?

Emma Caronna: Another thing that I've really noticed is that, we need to hear the same lesson sometimes in different ways. Sometimes, it's going to take hearing or asking the same question 10 or 20 times, before you really hear the answer.

So, sometimes we'll have a client and some of it's really interesting, sometimes go back through and look through these long threads where a client has worked on the same topic for a long time and been back and forth. And, it might be a question number 25, that they might have the breakthrough or something really Lance with them. And, I think this has been one of the real benefits, the real beauties of having multiple coaches answering questions. In that, we are all trained in the same way, but we all have different styles.

We all have different ways that we might explain something or different analogies that we might use. And, sooner or later, it lands. And so, I think that is very noticeable to me, that there are times when we just hear something immediately and it clicks. And there are times where we have to keep asking and we do say like, "It's totally okay to keep coming back with the same question. Like, ask and eventually you'll figure it out.

Katrina Ubell: Exactly. And I think, especially people who are so used to having negative self-talk or beating themselves up, will tell themselves a story that they shouldn't ask again or they should already know this or at can't believe I'm back at this same thing again. And we're always like, "There's nothing wrong with this." It's been my experience that I circle back to the same things again and again. I'm sure it's been yours as well. This is just how it works and there's absolutely nothing wrong with that. I think, maybe also they start thinking like, "Oh, coaches are probably getting frustrated with me", and we never are. We never, never are. Because what we really understand is, being human is hard and human brains are sometimes a bit of a tough nut to crack. And so, we are just there with you, trying to help you in any way we can for as long as it takes.

Emma Caronna: Yeah. It's almost the opposite. I think, when somebody keeps coming back and keeps asking questions like, "You said this, but I didn't really understand that. And how do I..." Yeah. I'm always thinking great. They're really trying to figure this out.

Katrina Ubell: Yeah. I'm excited for them, because I know this is the kind of person who's going to be figuring this out. "She's here asking this, I am not worried about her. She's going to get it." All right. What's your next lesson learned?

Emma Caronna: So, something I think is important to talk about is, this piece and I know that you've talked about this in many different ways in the podcast. But, that mindset is really what's going to matter when it comes to losing weight. And I think, there can be a tendency and we see it in written coaching to get very focused on the details of what exactly I'm eating, as opposed to the bigger picture of how I'm approaching this whole process and what my mindset is, when it comes to losing weight. We've really answer a tremendous number of questions about food, which we are delighted to answer. But, we've answered maybe, I don't know, two or 300 questions about coffee, for instance.

There's really a tremendous amount of detail already in there. And I think, there's maybe this idea that it's something that's a bit easier to control and to think about to focus on the fine details of what we are choosing to eat, is maybe an easier thing to manage than to be thinking about, "Okay. What are my underlying beliefs here? What's my mindset? What's really going on for me, that is getting in the way of me persevering or is supporting me to do that?"

Katrina Ubell: I think, it's also really familiar to focus on the details. Every diet plan that your weight loss program or whatever I did, it was so detail specific. Even my Fitness Pal app or whatever, you just have to get like all the details right. Super detailed. And the part that's really missing, is that big picture mindset piece. And so, it's just like, "What do we know how to do when we're trying to lose weight? Focus on, exactly how to get the coffee right." Because, we're convinced that it's the coffee that's going to make or break, whether we get the results that we want. And, we've seen this with some kinds too, where they're like, "Listen. It took me even... Going through WALDO and masters, it took a while for me to really deeply get on board with this idea, that it is your brain." Which is fine, because we're here for you for as long as it takes.

But, it is such a great lesson to share. When you find yourself getting stuck in those details or thinking those are the most important things, it's actually probably the opposite of that, that you should be focusing on.

Emma Caronna: Yes. It's not that we don't want. Of course, it's always great to ask those. If you've got a query about whether you can have this food or whether this is a good idea, it's always great to ask those. But I think, what we are trying to communicate is that, there are many different ways. There's probably a 100 ways that you've got 1000 ways in terms of what you actually put in your mouth to lose weight. But, what's really going to matter is that the underlying beliefs and the underlying...

Katrina Ubell: And, that's what makes a weight loss permanent too. Because, there are so many different ways you can lose weight and they will work if you're willing to do them the rest of your life. But, most of the time we're not willing to do the rest of our life. And, we haven't really solved for the issue of why we were eating more than our body needed in the first place. So, well, this is...

Emma Caronna: Should I just wrap up with one more or...

Katrina Ubell: Yeah, let's do one more. Great. Let's do it.

Emma Caronna: Okay. I think, this is one I wanted to mention because, I think it's such a huge benefit of the Ask For Coaching forum and that's the power of community. Because, we encourage clients to share their wins, their struggles, their breakthroughs. And, there's just so much wisdom in there. There's so much that generosity in terms of people's shares and what they found works for them. And, I just think there's so many just amazing pieces of learning and wisdom that come up that way.

Katrina Ubell: Absolutely.

Emma Caronna: I've certainly borrowed things. For instance... I'm sure she won't mind me sharing and I want to acknowledge this. But, a client probably a year or so ago, wrote in with an analogy that she uses and it was okay. When I have this idea that I'm about to... Maybe I've eaten something off plan and then I'm like, "Well, now we'll just write off the whole day and start again tomorrow." She said, "It's kind of like you are drifting onto the chatter bars or the rumble strip at the side of the road."

Katrina Ubell: Yeah.

Emma Caronna: And she's saying, "Okay. I'm on the rumble strip. So, I may as well just drive into the ditch."

Katrina Ubell: Right.

Emma Caronna: And I just thought, that was just such a wonderful analogy. And as I think helped so many people. And so, I just really wanted to use this as an opportunity to thank each and every client for the things that they have shared. Because, you've really been giving forward and thank you for that.

Katrina Ubell: Totally. Well, yes. Thank you to them. And, I know they're all so grateful for each other. They get so much out of... And even inspiration, from hearing when other people are succeeding and having success. And, there is that sense of community. We hear this again and again, where clients come in and they're the biggest thing that I like, one of my biggest takeaways is we are all working on the same things. And I thought, I was the only one who struggled with this. And, that can make... It sounds simple, but it makes such a huge difference when you realize like, "What? It's possible that nothing's wrong with me." Maybe nothing's wrong with me. It's just, I haven't learned what I needed to learn, systems around me, make it more challenging, but I can totally succeed when I show up for myself and really allow myself to receive the help that I need.

Emma Caronna: Absolutely.

Katrina Ubell: I love it. So, so good. And, I just do want to touch on, if somebody is like, "Well, this is all great, but I can't join your program. So what do I do?" Going back to what we were talking about in the beginning of the episode, there's a lot that you can practice, just by putting pen to paper or typing. Although we encourage pen to paper if possible, just getting in touch with what's going on for you. Rather than focusing on so much on, or maybe solely on what you're eating. And, if you're snacking or not, and all these different things, making sure that you're valuing, understanding what is going on in your brain, what do you really think? What do you really feel that connection is something that's going to be valuable no matter what.

So, we encourage you to not only give it a try, but I think sometimes we think I'll give it a try. I know for me, I'll be like, "Oh, I'll give it a try. I'll do it once or twice and be like, Eh. Or I might even be like, that was good. I should do that again." And then, I don't make sure that I do it again. And, this is something that we work on of course, with our clients, as well as how do we actually turn this into a practice? Which doesn't mean that you have to do it necessarily every single day. So that, you understand the value and it's something that you want to be doing, because you know how much it helps to move you forward in all the ways. So Emma, thank you so, so much for coming on. So much wisdom, you're such a wonderful addition to our coach team and I appreciate you so much.

Emma Caronna: Thank you, Katrina. This was fun. Appreciate it.