



WEIGHT LOSS FOR BUSY PHYSICIANS

— with Katrina Ubell, MD —

Katrina Ubell: Well, hello there my friend, how are you today? So glad you're with me. Thanks for joining me.

I'm really excited to talk to you today about today's topic. It's been mulling in my head for a little while. Sometimes I have these episode ideas where I let it simmer for a little bit. It's like on the back burner, literally, like in the stove of my brain. It's kind of just like in the back on the summer burner, just like, what do we think about that? How do we want to approach that? And I'm excited to share that with you today.

I feel like we're mostly women here I think. I'm sitting here going like, okay, I can't move. With the Nordstrom anniversary sale that was, I think last month or two months — yeah, probably about last month or so, I got some new bras because I realized I hadn't gotten any since COVID.

There's so many things, like I'm going to go see the dermatologist for the first time since COVID. I'm not sure if you know how pale I am, but that's not a good idea. So, I'm going to be going and getting the full skin check here coming up soon.

Anyway, I got some new bras and they're so much more comfortable, thank goodness. Except this one that I'm wearing today, is like a squeaky one. You know how there'll be a little... I don't even know what it is; like where the strap attaches to the actual bra, there's like a little metal ring or whatever, and it's just like real squeaky today. I feel like every time I move, it's like... on there, but I was like that's probably not going to be too nice to have squeaks on the podcast. So, I'm like, I just will not move, I will breathe and talk and that's it.

Anyway, if you're ever looking for new bras, I was really impressed with the pricing at the Nordstrom anniversary sale for those types of things. I think I just never really kind of picked up on that. And theoretically, like you're supposed to replace these things way more often than we typically do. Like I think even a lot of people say like once a year, if it's being worn on a regular basis.

So, anyway, and I was proud of myself because I did all my own measuring and yeah, I worked it out, so go me.

Anyway, I know that's for next year. I'll just not move. Actually, I can even hear them squeaking a little as I just move my arm. We're going to leave it; if there's some squeaking, my apologies.

So, what's going on over here? So, it is a beautiful, gorgeous summer day, and I have my oldest son who was in Boston for seven weeks. He is now back and I had all my kids home for about what? 18 hours. And then my two little ones, 9 and 11 went to two weeks of sleepaway camp.

So, they are there right now, and I know they're having the time of their lives, they're having so much fun, but I miss them. This is the thing; like when my kids were toddlers, I'm going to be straight up honest, I didn't really miss them that much when I was away. That was a tough time for me. I'm definitely not so much of like the little kid, baby mom type of thing. It was fine and I enjoyed it, but I am much more of a mom who enjoys older kids, that's for sure.

And so, I miss just having them around and talking to them. They're cool little people. So, anyway, they've just been gone a couple days and it feels like it's going to be a long time until they come home, but I know they're having so much fun. And in my personal opinion, it's so good for kids when they're ready for it, to spend some time away from their families and just work things out, like being at camp. So, yeah, they're having a great time.

Alright, what else do you have to tell you? So, do you know that we have a book ambassadors' group for the book? So, my book that's coming out here in on September 20th is called, *How to Lose Weight for the Last Time* (the name of the book) and for the first time ever, creating a community for anybody who wants to join to help support the book in getting the word out there, but also, having this great, amazing community experience.

So, it's going to be super fun. If you're interested in learning more about that, then just go to katrinaubellmd.com/announcement, and you will find out more information about that. It's totally free to join and it's going to be just a really fun thing. Like I said, we've never done it before and it's not on Facebook by the way.

So, listen, I'm not the hugest fan of Facebook. Like it's just not so great for me. So, I was like, "If I don't even want to use it, I'm not going to host my community on there." So, we actually have a different platform that's really amazing and also easy to use, but doesn't have the whole Facebook element tied into it. So, that's where we're going to be hosting it on, and it's going to be great.

So, if you'd like to join us, you still can. You can invite any friends, really, anybody. Like I said, this one's not just for doctors. It's the first time I'm really offering something to everybody who wants to get some help and also provide some support for the book. So, like I said, katrinaubellmd.com/announcement. If you'd like to know more about that.

So, what I want to talk about today is the term “emotional eating.” So, like the term, those two words together, but then also what emotional eating means. And I've talked about this before, but recently, I've been getting just sort of rumblings kind of around like what are people thinking and talking about.

And the term emotional eating is kind of getting a bad rap in the sense that there's kind of this idea of like should we not even use that term anymore? Is that somehow judgmental of people? Is it offensive to say that somebody's an emotional eater and things like that?

And it was so interesting to me when I heard this because I was like, “Huh, what do I think? You know, is it? Because I use that term.” But what's so interesting, of course, like with anything, it's the way that we think about it, that determines how we feel about it.

So, first of all, let's just talk about what being an emotional eater means or emotional eating, the action. It means that you're consuming food for a non-body needing energy reason. So, like there's physical hunger that we feel in our bodies because our bodies need nutrition to keep all of our cells operating at the optimal level, and so we need to eat in order to supply our bodies with those nutrients.

So, eating for those reasons is not emotional eating. That's eating for physical hunger, to keep ourselves healthy. But when we are not hungry or we are feeling an emotion and we're trying to regulate that emotion with food, that would be emotional eating.

And what I want to offer is that identifying as someone who engages in emotional eating behavior is absolutely not a judgment. This is not like a bad thing. It is truly just an explanation for what has been going on. And it's an explanation for why you've been struggling.

What I have found is that when people don't identify or really recognize their emotional eating habits, they actually are much less empowered. So, they are more disempowered when they don't realize that they emotionally eat.

And the reason for that is because it seems like their bodies just are operating against them. It's their metabolism or they're too short, or they're too something. Like it's their genes or something that's really out of their control.

“Something's just wrong with me, I don't have enough discipline, I'm somehow broken.” That's what we start thinking; “I just wish I didn't like food so much.” That's what we think when we don't recognize what's actually going on.

So, what I want to offer to you today is the idea that recognizing that you are an emotional eater is an absolute gift. This is not something to be ashamed of or embarrassed about or something that you feel like you need to hide. Or thinking that like something's wrong with you because you do it. Guess what? Everybody does it. We just don't know that we're doing it.

And even if we do engage in emotional eating behavior, when we know that's what it is, we're not like "I just don't have any willpower, I just can't control myself." We're like, "No, you know what? That patient interaction, I'm really angry about it. And you know what? I'm eating this food right now to help soften that." At least we have awareness around it. And I guarantee you, when you have awareness around it, you will do it so much less often.

So, trying to convince yourself that you're not an emotional eater, I do not see the upside of that. If anything, it's like when I realized that I was an emotional eater, it was such an incredible epiphany that helped drive me toward what actually helped me to stop struggling with my weight and to create peace and freedom around food.

I wore like a badge of honor. I think I've shared before when people said like, "Oh, what did you do to lose weight?" I just personally didn't want to get into all the details about everything. Because everyone wants to know like what food you eat and whatever. And I just knew that's not actually, what's important. I said, "I just stopped eating for emotional reasons." Everyone's like, "Oh yeah. Okay. Yeah, that will do it." You know what I mean?

They didn't follow up with like "Now, tell me more about that." They were like, "Yeah, good, good stuff. Yep, yep, I do that too." And even like really fit people being like, "Yeah, I could work on that." It's not something that we need to be hiding.

And here's something that I think is actually really interesting. So, I recently was reviewing a couple of survey reports. So, Medscape every year does a variety of surveys.

In 2021, looking at their report for a national physician, burnout and suicide, one of the questions they asked of physicians in the US; how do you cope with burnout? 35% of people said eat junk food. 26% of physicians said drink alcohol and 21% said, binge eat.

Let me just repeat that; how do you cope with burnout in this physician survey — 35% said eat junk food, 26% said drink alcohol, 21% said binge eat. Interestingly, coaching is not even on the list.

Now, there's a couple things that say "other" on there also who knows if maybe people listed that, but I find it really fascinating that they don't even list coaching as a line item because there are so many, now, published articles showing that coaching is really useful in helping physicians get out of a burned-out state. So fascinating, right?

So, we have evidence right here of an emotional state feeling burned out, and then trying to use food and alcohol as a way to regulate our insides, our feelings. We're trying to feel better and we don't know another way, even though there's so much data that shows that coaching helps, we know this so much.

So, the Medscape people did another survey, this is for 2022, a physician lifestyle and happiness report. And in that report of... this was self-reported from physicians; 55% of female physicians reported that they're trying to lose weight.

So, we're in this position where we're trying to lose weight, yet we're also using food and possibly alcohol to try to regulate our emotional life. And then we wonder why we're struggling.

And what I want to offer to you is recognizing that you engaging in emotional eating behavior is such an important, amazing realization, and a step toward actually solving for the problem, separating the consumption that comes in through your mouth, from your emotional life.

I mean, we've worked with so many clients who are burned out and helped. I mean, it's not like really our specific outward aim, but you just work with enough physicians and this is what we do. Coaching helps this stuff, coaching helps people to stop using food and alcohol outside of themselves to regulate their internal, emotional life.

So, I just want to offer to you that this is not ... we don't have to decide that somehow we can't use the word emotional eater anymore. Somehow that's like mean or rude, or somehow like fat-shaming people, or somehow saying that you need to be as skinny as possible.

Like it has nothing to do with that. In my mind, I'm like these are completely separate issues. And when they start conflating, then people get so less able to actually see this as the gift that it is, the real solution.

Even if you never lose any weight, even if you don't want to lose weight, if you don't have to lose weight, recognizing that you do not feel peace and freedom around food, that you somehow feel controlled by food or think about it more often than you would like, you have to understand the emotional connection there and that's what we work to separate and resolve.

So, recognizing that you emotionally eat, really, truly opens the door toward that permanent solution that you've been looking for. So, I just want to encourage you to really think about that. Like do I really do that? What does it mean to be an emotional eater? And do I engage in that? And if the answer is, yes, it's like welcome to the club, you are not unique, so many people do this.

So, we don't need to make this thing that so many people do that's considered very socially acceptable. We don't have to be ashamed or embarrassed about that, or even just recognizing or owning it. Like, yeah, okay, that's what I'm doing, and that's why I'm in the position I'm in. So good to know in terms of moving ourselves forward.

Alright, my friend, thank you so much for your attention. Alright, have a wonderful, wonderful rest of your week. I'll talk to you next time. Take care. Bye-Bye.