



WEIGHT LOSS FOR BUSY PHYSICIANS

— with Katrina Ubell, MD —

Katrina Ubell: Welcome, welcome, welcome, my friend to episode 300. Can you believe that? I was actually counting on my fingers here just a minute ago like how many years has this been? And we're getting close to six years of this podcast. Can you believe that? Feels like it's just completely flown by into the three hundreds onward. It's so good, so good.

I'm so excited to bring you today's episode because what I'm going to be doing is answering questions from my women physician clients. I thought how fun would it be for them to essentially interview me?

And so, I got great, great questions. I'm not going to be able to answer all of them on this episode today, but I have an idea of how to repurpose some of them in other ways so I can get those As to your Qs. But I chose 10 to answer today, and so we're going to get right into it. But before I do that, I do want to put out a request; if you've purchased my book, *How to Lose Weight for the Last Time*, or even if you've been following this podcast for a long time, you picked up a copy of the book or the audio book and you've maybe gotten started, but haven't gotten through it all yet, would you please be so kind to just go over to Amazon and leave a review about the book.

You don't have to have read the entire thing in order to leave a review about what you think about it, and it would really help the book so, so, so much. I know it's such like a huge ask, it's such an interesting situation these days though.

It's like one of those things where you have to just keep bugging people and bugging people and bugging people because it really is that important for the book. So, I'm not going to belabor it. It would mean so much to you if you've gotten any value out of this podcast at all.

If you were excited to purchase that book, please go ahead and leave a review. And like maybe ask your friend or your partner or whoever to leave one too. My goal right now is to get to a hundred reviews, we're very close. But after that, my goal is to get to a thousand reviews. So, you know I'm going to keep asking you until you do it.

And if you already have left one, thank you so much. If you recommended the book to anybody, maybe you could ask them to leave a review as well. And it really doesn't have to be anything like crazy, anything elaborate. I mean, just your honest opinion would be so valued. So, thank you so much for doing that.

So, where do I even start? Alright, I want to start with an easy one. I don't usually answer a lot of questions about food because as you know, this really isn't even about the food. I don't give my clients recipes. That's like not a thing. We don't do that kind of thing because we don't need them.

I mean, really for the vast majority of people, you already know what you like to eat, that's not the problem. You don't need more exciting dopamine hits from new recipes. But I thought this was actually, a really good question.

The question is, "What are your favorite on protocol, flour or sugar-free recipes? One each for breakfast, lunch, and dinner."

And I was thinking sometimes it's just nice to hear what other people eat. I think sometimes we're like, "My food must be boring. Someone else must be doing something better than I am." And no, what I eat is like really simple stuff.

Like for breakfast, I love just all milk, yogurt, plain and fruit. The yogurt can be an acquired taste if you're used to the sweet stuff. But there are different flavors, like some are more tart than others and you can find some that tastes good to you.

Another little trick is if it tastes too tart for you or you're just trying to wean yourself off that sweetness, then put some cinnamon in the yogurt, that helps too. So, so easy, so quick, whatever fruits and season, it's a great one.

Lunch, for me, often is leftovers, whatever we kind of have laying around from previous night's meals, that's usually the easiest thing. If we don't have that, I might do like a little bit of cheese and some cut-up veggies and maybe some fruit or something like that. Just like really simple stuff.

And then for dinner, we love our Traeger grill. You know the Traeger? It's spelled T-R-A-E-G-E-R. It's basically like a smoker grill. I've always been scared of grills until I got a Traeger and I can use the Traeger. And it's really hard to mess food up. It's really, really good.

And we started with one that I got, and then it wasn't actually that great in the winter because where I live, it gets very cold. It basically just could not come to temperature in the wintertime. And that was a bummer because we really liked using it.

And then it was like one of those classic Costco moments where I was walking by and they were catching my eye, I was like, “Oh, I have one, it’s great. Just wish it worked better in the winter.” And they’re like, “Oh, come on over here because we fixed that problem.” And before I knew it, that night, I had bought a new Traeger. So, they’re very good salespeople.

But what’s so great about it is now we really can use it throughout the entire year, which I super love. So, I mean, what we do is really simple stuff, like maybe put some salmon on there. And what I mean by that is like you put salmon on a piece of foil or like one of those mats and then you just lay that right on the grill.

You can put whatever seasonings you want on there. Pesto is a really nice one, just like pre-made pesto, you can put it on there, so easy and cook that up. We really like roasting potatoes in the oven. We like roasting sweet potatoes in the oven.

I like any of the starchy veggies, like winter squash, butternut squash. I just like to cube that up. Some olive oil and some salt, super good; 425 for depends, maybe 18 minutes, something like that. I like it a little on the dark side. So, simple stuff like that. And then a salad or roasted broccoli or something like that.

And by salad, like what I mean by salad, like our main salads are like a green that’s usually like romaine, carrots, bell peppers — what else do we put in there? Tomatoes, if they’re looking pretty good, cucumbers, that’s like literally it. We don’t go crazy.

So, that’s usually what we do. Something really simple. Or I do enjoy my old vegetarian stuff. I really do enjoy some good beans and brown rice, and a cooked veggie and maybe some avocado. It’s like so, so good. So, like simple, simple stuff.

I find the taste is always very, very satisfying and it’s just like you’re not missing anything. If it’s like, oh it’s flour sugar-free, but it just happens to be that, it’s not like I’m eating like a diet recipe or something like that or like something special. It’s just good food that doesn’t need flour or sugar. So, that’s what I always suggest. Just keep it really simple.

Alright, “I’d love to know what has been the highlight for you on your journey as a life coach so far.” I mean I cannot even begin to tell you how much it makes my heart sing when one of our clients reports back maybe at the end of their program or something; “You know what, I have lost my weight” and maybe they’re like, “I weigh what I weighed on my wedding day” or whatever their goal was.

“I weighed what I did in high school” or something like that. And then they say, “But that’s not even the best part. The best part is ...” and then they start going into how much their life has improved, how much happier they are with their life, satisfied. Like just basically, describing the results of what life coaching can do for you.

And I just love that because so often we're like, "No, I'm pretty sure if I just solve for my overeating and my weight problem, like things would get so much better." And this is such a great example of how it's like, yeah, it's nice to not struggle with that anymore. I mean, I'm not going to lie, it's true. But it isn't the best part, and what it takes to not struggle with it anymore ends up improving the whole rest of your life.

And that, ugh, just makes my heart sing. It never gets old to hear about that or read about that. And just the fact that me just trying to solve my own problem and then thinking, hey, there might be a few other doctors out there who might want this help that it's resulted in that, is just like, I mean in some ways, it's a little hard to even wrap my brain around. Like that's just so, so awesome. I love it so much.

Okay, so then there's another question; "What is the most difficult situation you've encountered as a life coach for other physicians and how did you manage your mind around it?"

I think one of the things that's hardest is when I have a client where I can see how awesome and amazing they are and they just aren't there. They just can't see it. Of course, it's also always really difficult when we get somebody who is in a place in their life where they're starting to maybe have suicidal ideation. Of course, suicide amongst physicians is a major problem.

It's just difficult in the sense that I just hate that doctors struggle in that way and anything I can do to help or assist or connect them with the resources that they need – of course, of course, of course, my team and I always wanted to help with that.

It's one of those your heartbreaks kinds of things where you're just like, "Man, I wish I could just take this pain from you. I wish that I could do it for you." But of course, it's all our own journey that we're on. And what I love is that my team and I, we never give up on people. Like we never are like, "Well, it's just not going to be possible for this one." We just know that it's all related to the way that you're thinking anyway.

And so, if we keep discussing it and that client keeps showing up — I'm not talking about the suicide stuff right now. I'm talking about not seeing, not believing in yourself, not really seeing yourself for who you truly are.

Like if we just keep showing up for that person, we'll crack that nut eventually. I'm like, "I don't give up easily" and I would never want to just be like, well, that's whatever. It's not possible for her.

Of course, with our clients who are contemplating taking their own lives, it's like we take that extremely seriously and never would ever start to think that all they need is coaching that. Of course, we want to get them all of the help that they need, whatever is best for them. But yeah, that sucks.

And then how do I manage my mind around it? I mean, honestly, the same way I manage my mind around anything. I always remind myself like being an adult, human being is hard work. We are all going through it in one way, shape, or form. And I just have so much compassion for all of us because it's just really, really hard being a human being in the world.

And when I move to that way of thinking, I'm less resistant to it being the way it is. Not thinking like it shouldn't be this way, like apparently it should be this way because it is this way. So, now, how can I be of assistance. Resisting it doesn't allow me to help the client in the best way that I possibly can.

Alright, let's lighten it up; "What is your funniest internship or residency memory?" I'm like nervous to share this because I'm like, "Will I get in trouble?" I mean I might, I don't know. It's been so long ago.

Okay, so my husband one time when I was on call as a resident, I think, yeah, no, it was my third year, it was my final year in residency. My husband smuggled my dog into the hospital to come visit me in the residence lounge.

I mean, they had like the furry fomites, they had the therapy dogs that would come in. So, it's probably not like the worst thing in the world. But yeah, that was funny. I remember so much I like wanted to like play with her and like snuggle with her because she really was my first child, but all she wanted to do was run around and sniff everything. There was so many new smells and stuff.

So, it wasn't quite the experience that I had expected, but it sure was funny that he was able to get away with it. That was funny. Okay, "What have you found to be the best motivating tool for you to stay on your own weight maintenance journey?"

That's a really good question. I mean, I honestly think like part of it is like I never ever want to go back to that place where I struggled, where it was so up and down. And because of that, as soon as I start noticing there's something a little funky or weird, I'm like on that, I mean dog with a bone. I'm like, I'm not messing around, I just will not tolerate that in my life anymore. Of course, I'm coming from a place of love for myself, but there's no space in my life anymore for all of that up and down drama. I just I do not want my life to be that way. So, as soon as I get any kind of hint of it from time to time, then I deal with that right away.

And honestly, the longer it gets, the less that even comes up that much. But it's there from time to time. Occasionally, I'm trying to think of the last time and right now, I'm having a hard time thinking of what it was.

But sometimes, I think for me now, it maybe is more so just like if I'm not really paying attention too much, all of a sudden, I'm like, oh, huh, I've been eating that. Like all of a sudden, I had like a little something to eat three nights in a row, huh, that's weird. Maybe we'll just stop because I just don't want it to become like this new habit or like a hard thing that I have to undo.

It's like that ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. I think that's my approach really to the whole thing. "How is it best to approach a pre-teen/teen who has a fixed mindset and is living a smaller life than you'd like?" Ah, there's some good questions about parenting here, I'm going to answer a couple of them because I know people struggle with this a lot.

The thing that we have to remember about anybody, but especially our children, is that we are here as a guide for them. We are here to make sure their basic needs are met, and it's our job to offer them unconditional love.

Unconditional love sounds amazing but can be hard to offer because it means like I'm going to offer you love even when it's hard to love you. Even when I disagree with your choices, even when I think you're doing something that is not the right thing. So, with a child who has a fixed mindset, I mean just even recognizing that — oh okay, rather than a growth mindset, they have a fixed mindset. Okay, good to know. But we need to make sure that we're not judging them for having the fixed mindset.

Sometimes we can be resistant to that, and we're like, we're reactive. Like, "Ooh, gross. No, don't be someone who has a fixed mindset. No, that's not good. That's not what we want." We want to make sure that we understand all of us very likely have at least one area in our life where we have a fixed mindset. So, this person is no different. And even like saying that that child is living a smaller life than you'd like, it's kind of like, no, I understand that you have a preference, but it's their life. And what I will tell you is that one of the worst feelings as a child growing up or like one of the worst ways to perceive yourself is through the lens of your parents believing that you are not the way they want you to be.

I mean, this is like documented. Like how many kids feel like their parents don't think they're popular enough or outgoing enough or whatever enough. I mean, you name it, the parents have decided that they should be different than they are, and they feel bad about themselves because of that.

And so, I do want to just speak to the fact that it's also our job as parents to sometimes give them some nudges, to encourage them to move outside of their comfort zone and to try new things. And I think that that's a nuance that's going to be individual to each kind of parent child dynamic.

But you have to understand why you are even encouraging them to do that. Because if your belief is like the way they are is not okay, I mean, that's your judgment of them and that can feel bad. It feels bad to be judged and that's how that child is feeling.

If we want to have a close connection with them where they are actually open to hearing what we have to say, then we can make suggestions, we can provide opportunities, we can ask questions, and then we get to let them live their life.

For instance, my oldest child is a junior in high school right now. And I also think what's interesting is that life as a high schooler is different now than it was when I was there many years ago. And it's easy for me to think that what was considered normal or what I liked is what he should be doing when he does not want to do that.

Like that's my work, and so often when we have parenting issues, it's because we have our own work to do. So, my suggestion on that, like how to best approach that, is to work on stopping judging your child to stop thinking that they're living a smaller life than you'd like, to stop thinking that it's even your choice anyway, because it isn't.

And how do you know that living a smaller life, whatever that even means, isn't the best thing for that person, that child right now, or maybe forever — it could be. Not everybody has to have a bigger life or accomplish more. And if you have resistance to that, then that's something to look at.

When it comes to something like a fixed or growth mindset, I think you have to be just real tactful in your suggestions, especially when they're preteen or teen; asking questions, just being real open and curious.

The minute they start feeling like you're judging them or trying to fix them, or trying to make them different, then they clam up or they just dig their heels in even more; "You don't know, you don't know what you're talking about." And so, I think that sometimes, less is more and you just want to be really, really thoughtful about what you're saying and why you're saying it.

I would say that one of my biggest tricks or tips on parenting, you should bite your tongue way more often than you do, is probably really good advice. So often we're like, "Hey listen, I figured out a way to be an adult and you should just do it exactly like me." And even though we don't really think that, deep down, that's what's motivating our actions, that's what's driving our actions to essentially be like, "They need to be different."

Like what do they want and how can you best help them to achieve that? Instead of what do you want and how can you convince them that what you want is the right thing for them. That's tough stuff.

So, the next question is, "How has your parenting changed since becoming a life coach and learning how to have peace and freedom around food?"

Well, I no longer make my kids finish what they eat on their plates. I still have to like just, I always notice when there's like some food left over, especially when it's like... "It's like one blueberry, really, you're not going to eat that blueberry?" It's always mind work. Every time I'm like, "Oh yep, this is just me working to unravel that desire to eat everything that was deeply ingrained in me at an early age." I don't have to do that anymore. It's all okay, we can throw out a blueberry, it's going to be fine.

So, yeah, so I'm working on that all of the time. That's part of my work around my food issues that has nothing to do with the child. But really, ultimately, what really changed the most for me and people often are so surprised when I say that like when I'm personally coached, like literally almost never am I coached on my children.

And that's not because like everything's perfect with them, it's just not an area that I really particularly struggle with. I don't have a lot of mind drama around it. So, why is that? And I think really part, like what really made a difference for me, is really recognizing that their life is not for me to live for them.

I am here to help them to be the best version of them that they can possibly be. It's my job to accept them exactly as they are. The more I work to accept them exactly as they are, the more I'm able to accept myself exactly as I am. That means that I'm beating myself up a lot less for how I parent, with the kind of mom I am.

I'm much more accepting of myself when I realize like all these other moms want to go and whatever the stuff you're supposed to do at school to go and help. And I have less than zero desire to do that. It's not what I want to do, it's just not me. It's just not me. I just don't want to do that.

So, can I then accept myself? There are lots of moms who are going to go run the book sale, use book sale for the high school. I'm not going to be one of them. I'm so grateful to them. Thank the universe that there are people out there doing that. It's amazing, but that's not who I am.

So, I'm more accepting of my kids for who they are, more accepting of myself for who I am as a parent. And I really just work on noticing judgment of myself, judgment of them, and unraveling that. Like what if they were perfect exactly the way they are? What if there was no problem actually to solve here? What if this way that they're behaving is going to actually, eventually serve them really well?

Like if that were the case, then maybe I back off. And usually, the answer is I would back off, I would calm down, I would settle down, I would stop being so upset about it or nervous about it. Or for me, I don't really so much get upset about stuff so much as I kind of ruminate a little where I'm like, "Oh I got to think about that and what else could I do?" And really just like thinking about it a lot instead of just kind of like putting it down or saying, okay, this is the decision for today, what are we going to do moving forward?

And I'm careful not to share specific stuff about my kids because they're too young to consent like for a public forum. But like there's something going on with one of my kids right now that I'm like, "Yeah, I've got my eye on that for sure." And my husband and I are talking about, okay, how are we going to approach that and what are we going to do, and we do not have it figured out yet, but we have some ideas of ways to figure it out and we're just moving forward on that. But I don't feel upset about it. Like I don't feel like I'm spinning on it or... it's all going to work itself out.

I guess the biggest thing to say is like their struggles are important. Like if they never struggle as children, then once they become adults, they will be in a very serious state of pain because they will not know how to get through hard times in life or times of disappointment or challenge. We want them doing that when they have us to help guide them through that. So, as parents, when we try to fix all that for them, we're denying them that opportunity which actually sets them up to struggle more as adults, which of course, we don't want. So, we have to reframe our idea that them struggling with things is a problem that has to be fixed.

My high schooler is staying up way too late in my opinion, basically every single night on homework. Do I not say anything? No, of course, I say something, but it's encouraging, it's solutions-focused, and also, it's up to him. He's going to have to figure out how much tiredness he can tolerate even though I know that your brain works better when you've had more sleep. It's his life.

I mean in a couple of years, I won't even know when he goes to bed. And over the summer, he went and took college classes on a different coast and was by himself for seven weeks and basically, took college level classes and did super well, and had very little supervision it turns out. So, like he doesn't really need me to tell him when to go to bed, you know what I mean?

Okay, "What kind of activities do your children do?" So, right now, I've got a debater. My oldest, he likes debate, he likes Model UN, he likes student congress and likes some of the forensics types of stuff. And he does ski race team through the high school.

So, that's his main stuff. And then my other two, they do swim team. Right now, they're doing robotics through school. They do some little choir and bells thing. And then my daughter's taking a little tumbling class right now. Her friends are in gymnastics and she really wanted to do something. So, we found a way to make that work.

We are on the cusp of being too busy for my personal taste, but we're trying to work it out so everybody can get their needs met.

Okay, "How long did it take you to feel true freedom around food and lose the fear that the weight you lost will come back? Months, years? I think it was a gradual thing. It really was something that took some time and it took evidence for me to go, "Oh, look — look how awesome it was to be in this environment and to feel like I have freedom around food and there's nothing to worry about there. And look, I did it here and I did it there."

So, I think of it as kind of like there were all these different like worries and fears and stuff and like gradually one by one, they've just sort of dropped away. And so, I will also say though that like when I was first learning this stuff, there was a lot of work that I needed to do and things that I needed to learn that were missing.

So, now, what I try to do is I try to fast track that process for my clients as much as possible. So, I've learned a lot personally. I would say my path has been more circuitous than maybe it has to be, but that's good because then I can bring more to the coaching table. I can offer so much more.

But I would say that over the course of time it was like it was years, but it was just like a gradual like, "Oh, and look, I got that too" and oh, "Maybe that got messed up, but like, oh, I'm going to get on top of that" and building up that evidence for myself that I know how to maintain this. I know how to create that freedom around food.

And then I know how to maintain that. And then if that's the case, then there's no reason to have any fear or anything like that. I think there's just one more question left of the ones that I chose. And this is a really funny one because when I was telling my clients, "You get to interview me," I was like, "You can ask me personal stuff if you want to too. You can ask me like, what's your nighttime skin routine?" Of course, someone's like, "What is your nighttime skin routine?"

So, I just want to mention the reason I even have a nighttime skin routine is largely because it's a self-care thing for me in the sense that it's a moment every evening where I'm taking good care of myself and I really don't miss it. Like meaning I do it basically every night. I've always been good about taking my makeup off if I'm wearing makeup. So, I've been pretty good about that. But over the course of time, I've started adding some different products and stuff and it's something that I kind of enjoy.

Sometimes when I'm traveling, I'll watch some videos on YouTube like some of those like Vogue Get Ready with Me or Get Ready for Bed with Me videos and stuff. And I don't know, I just am like for whatever reason kind of interested in that stuff anyway.

So, I mean hopefully, the dermatologist in the audience will not be cringing or anything. I don't think I do anything that's that crazy. But I do a good job with cleansing my skin, and then I use kind of a variety of different little serums and things.

My main skin issues are dryness and rosacea, so I use products related to that. I don't personally do any like injections or fillers or anything like that. I personally, I don't have anything against that at all, I just have never felt like driven to do it. So, I would say like I reserve the right to change my mind if I want to do that at some time, at some point, I will.

But it's kind of like when I think about tattoos. Like I think tattoos are awesome. I have no problem with them whatsoever. I just have never ever had the desire to have one on my body. I just didn't want to. So, kind of look at it like that.

And so, I do just also know that like taking good care of your skin, it's probably something that future me is going to be real thankful about. So, I wash my face and then I do a couple different, like a hyaluronic acid serum. I do one that is — I kind of have like a lastin type of thing just to kind of keep the neck looking a little bit better if possible.

I mean, who knows if this does anything. But I mean it could be just the massage of like putting the stuff on my face as what helps — who really knows. I mix in like a little vitamin C powder into that one. And then my skin is too sensitive to really use any of the retinoid products.

So, like I kind of used two main brands. One is called Viktoria De Ann that I think you have to buy just from an aesthetician or something like that. You can look it up online, Viktoria De Ann — they have a product called Rejuvenator, which is kind of their answer to the retinoid.

So, it's not a retinoid but it also does help with kind of skin turnover type stuff. And then I use the True Botanicals products a lot. I really like a lot of their stuff. And then I also have something for my dermatologist because I do have rosacea. I do have the kind, I have the acne kind. I just got something pretty recently from my dermatologist that's basically like ivermectin to help with like the little mites that live in your skin and create that, which is super fun.

But I would also really like to not have an enormous lumpy red nose when I'm older. So, that's why I use some of that. And then because my skin is dry and it's also where I live, it tends to be so dry, I kind of layer on the moisturizers. I definitely use oil.

And then the latest thing that I've been using is like ... they call it like a sleep mask, which essentially, what it seems like to me is like you leave it on. It's kind of like just whatever is in it, you put a thin layer on and it kind of seals in the moisture. It kind of keeps the products sort of makes it feel like they're not just sort of like wiping off on your pillowcase or like evaporating off and stuff like that. So, I've been enjoying that a lot.

And then I mentioned a long time ago about my Harklinikken hair stuff that I still am a very diligent user of. My hair was definitely, super-duper thinning, and this stuff has changed my life as I know it has many of my listeners, because I know many of you love it too. It's called Harklinikken. It's a Danish company and you just have to put that serum on every night. And I am super dedicated to that because it makes a really, really big difference with my hair. And also, like it takes like for me with my length of hair about like two and a half years to like grow it all back in. So, I even told my husband, I was joking, I'm like, "Look, if I'm ever in the hospital and I'm in a coma, you need to come in and put my Harklinikken in it on so I don't wake up bald."

And he's laughing. I'm like, "I mean, I'm kind of also not joking, okay?" Part of me is not. So, that's the main stuff. And then I get my pajamas, that's kind of like the indicator to me, it's sort of like the message that I give to myself if it's like it's time to wind down now, time to start slowing down so that I get to that place where I can get enough sleep because that's been an ongoing goal of mine that I'm usually in various states of doing a good job.

Right now, I'm doing pretty well. For a while there, I had a really good stretch. I'm in the middle right now trying to get it a little bit better again. But yeah, I just know life is better when I get enough sleep and I think that's the case for most of us.

Well, listen, this has been so, so, so, so, so fun. Like I said, I've got so many more questions that I'd love to answer and I'm thinking of something new that I might do to be able to answer these questions. So, make sure you're listening, make sure you're here on the podcast so that I can tell you what that's going to be.

And of course, if you are not a client or didn't have a chance to submit a question and you have a question for me, you can always email us hello@katrinaubellmd.com. And while you're on your phone or your computer, just pop on over to Amazon and leave me a quicker review on my book. I'd appreciate it so, so, so much.

Alright, friends, 300 episodes, we did it. How fun is this? And I mean, here's to another 300. When we get to 600, I'm going to be like, "You guys, can you believe it? 600 episodes?" Thank you, thank you, thank you for listening. Whether this is your first episode or you're 300th,

I'm just so grateful that you're here. Thank you so much for just giving me your time and hopefully, every time you listen, you get something that really makes a difference for you. So, have a great, great, great rest of your week and I'll talk to you next time on episode 301. Bye-bye.