



WEIGHT LOSS FOR BUSY PHYSICIANS

— with Katrina Ubell, MD —

Katrina Ubell: Well, hello there my friend, how are you today? So glad you're here. Thank you for joining me today. I'm actually going to say this literally every time. Maybe the reason I always tell you that I'm excited to tell you what I have to tell you — I was going to say to have this conversation with you, and I understand it's a one-sided conversation; but still, in my mind, we're having a conversation.

I think the reason I'm always so excited is because by the time I get to the point of recording, I've worked it all out in my head and I'm like, yes, I know what I want to say. And so, I'm ready to do it. So, now, I'm excited. So, here I am. Thanks for joining me. I'm really, really glad that you're here today.

There is something that's come up recently that I think is super sneaky. It's a way that we sabotage ourselves and I can't wait to point it out to you because I don't think it's going to be what you are guessing it's going to be.

So so good. I also just want to put out another request. You probably know — if you don't, I'll just let you know that I had a book that was published a couple weeks ago that I wrote, it's called *How to Lose Weight for the Last Time: Brain-Based Solutions for Permanent Weight Loss*.

And so, if you've already picked up a copy of that, I just want to say thank you so much, I really appreciate that, but what I'd appreciate even more is if you would leave a review about it on Amazon, please. It really does make a difference. If you think about it, I mean, literally we can't even help ourselves. We're always checking to see what the reviews are before we purchase something.

I was just thinking the other day, I actually had to buy more doggy poop bags for walks. We used to just use the kind of extra plastic bags that came through, but we use a lot of reusable bags. We don't really have a lot of those bags and kind of, sometimes it's sort of a waste. It's like a big plastic bag for just one walk.

So, I was looking on Amazon and looking for these bags and there was one that had like ... I don't know, it was a ridiculous number, like tens of thousands of positive five-star reviews on these poop bags for dogs. And I was just like, "Dang, okay, I want those." I mean, it made the decision so easy for me, and it's just so funny. We're like, "Hey, everybody else likes this bag, I probably will too."

And so, when people are looking for help with weight loss, rather than them being directed to the latest fad thing that requires them to do all kinds of crazy adjustments with their food and things that just are not going to be helpful to them, we want to signal to them, hey, there actually are a lot of people who know a better way and it involves using your brain. The way we can send them that message is by making sure that there's lots of Amazon reviews.

So, we just crested a hundred reviews, which is amazing. And so, if you sent in a review already, I thank you so much for doing so. If you have not submitted one yet, I wanted to ask if you could please do that.

So, Amazon is a great, great place to do that. Of course, if you want to leave a review at Barnes & Noble or Goodreads as well, that would be also amazing. That's like extra, extra points. But if you could just do Amazon, it does not have to be lengthy, but whatever you want to share, it would be great. I would really appreciate that.

Okay, so let's talk about this sneaky way that you're sabotaging yourself. So, let me tell you a little story about how this idea even got into my mind. So, with the book being out, I've been asked to do various different things, and some of it's promotion, but a lot of it is more just speaking to groups of people and helping them, which I'm always happy to do.

And so, recently, I was invited to be a guest on a podcast. So, I did that guest appearance, and then the host of the podcast said, "Hey, in my business, I ..." and I think he's got, at least like 500 employees, it's like quite a large organization.

And he said, "It's really important to us, we're really always working with all of our employees on various ways of being healthy and feeling well in their lives. And this month, it turns out that we actually are talking about weight and health, and I was wondering if you'd be willing to come and speak to them all just about weight and answer their questions and things like that." And so, I said, "Yeah, of course, I'd love to do that. I'd love to help out."

So, I went there, such a lovely group of people, super diverse from all over the world. It was actually really fun to see people from all over the place on this call. It was meeting style on Zoom so you could see everybody's faces. So, that was really fun.

And so, there was one question that was asked that lit the fire for me in terms of this episode for you, because it is such a sneaky way that we talk about things, and we don't realize how much it's harming us. And so, I pointed it out to the person who asked this question, but I want to point it out to you too, because there's a really good chance that you're doing it as well.

So, what happened was, this woman, a very nice woman, raised her hand and she proceeded to talk to me about her frustrations with weight. And a lot of it, as she is explaining it all, really centered around things that her perspective on were making it much worse.

So, let me explain; she was saying a lot about how unfair it is that when women are trying to lose weight along with men. So, assuming this is like a hetero-relationship like something that way, or maybe if it's just in the workplace, if there are women and men working and losing weight at the same time, that it's just very unfair that men tend to lose weight much faster. They don't need to make as many changes, it's just so unfair that women are working harder at it, and they're not getting the results as men.

It was very interesting seeing her kind of loop on this and talk about it more and more about how it was just so unfair. And then she said, "I'm in my forties, but I don't even want to whisper the word "menopause." It was like shocking to me how negative she was about something that's a completely normal and natural part of existing as a human.

So, then she was essentially saying she just knew that with perimenopause and menopause that the weight struggle will get even worse, and so what to do about this. And of course, typically people would expect you to say, okay, I've got this supplement, or I've got the metabolism booster trick, or I've got this hack, or this is the way that you should eat. But instead, what really is so desperately needed here is a shift in our thinking.

So, what I want to point out to you is that the way that she was talking about menopause was actually really ageist. And this is, I think, a sneaky thing. So many women have lamented forever, they try to lose weight at the same time as a man, the man loses weight faster. My answer to that is yes and.

Like, okay, yeah, that's happening. Why are we choosing to think about this as the victim of someone else's success? Like let's be happy for people who are getting the results that they want and focus on doing what we need to do for ourselves. I just don't see at all how spending a lot of time thinking about how somebody else, anybody else is losing weight faster than us is beneficial to us or serves us in any way at all.

So, let's just leave that part there. Like, let's keep our eyes on our own paper. You remember putting up your folder sometimes so people couldn't copy? Like you'd open up a folder and like balance it on your desk so that none of your neighbors could copy off your paper? That's what I'm envisioning right now.

Like let's keep our eyes on our own paper and eyes on our own test and do what we need to do for ourselves and let other people get whatever results they get by doing whatever they need to do to get those results. I just don't know how comparing that is helpful in any way at all. It just makes us feel terrible about ourselves.

But the thing I really want to point out is this terrible negative thinking we have about ourselves and our bodies in terms of how we age. And I see this even in people who are still in their thirties. There's these ideas, these thoughts about how horrible it is to get older and how our bodies are working against us or we're battling with our bodies, or it's only getting worse from here.

And again, I'm sure a lot of people could be like, well, here's the evidence to prove that you have more aches and pains and you lose muscle mass as you get older. It's harder to maintain that. Like, yes, okay, all of that may be true, but why are we thinking about it in a way that's so ageist? What I hear so often is women who are upset by society no longer valuing them as they get older, yet the way they think about themselves, they're not valuing themselves either.

So, maybe we can't control how society views women as they age, but we sure as heck can control how we think about ourselves. Menopause and just aging in general is a natural, normal part of being a human woman.

This is not a disease. This is not something that needs to be fixed. I'm not going to say that it doesn't come with a lot of challenges for a lot of people. I'm not saying that you shouldn't get help for those challenges. I'm not saying that at all. What I want to speak to is the way that we think about it. We have to work on being open to our lives getting better and better as we get older.

And I mean, you might withdraw when I say this, but you have to be open to your body and your experience of your body getting better and better as you get older. It doesn't have to get worse. It doesn't have to be something that you can't even stand to whisper because you're dreading it so much, okay?

There are amazing things that are awaiting every single one of us, no matter what our age is. And when we focus on those things, we can focus on the future. We can think about what are all the good things that could come for us moving forward.

And when we can see the future, when we can see what else is available to us in our lives, no matter what our age is, then we can start going, okay, "Well, am I in the body that will help me to fully accomplish those things, be a part of those things, enjoy those things?"

What I'm thinking of is like maybe you want to travel and you want to be able to hike, and right now, hiking is a real challenge for you. Okay, well, so you know what, if our goal, what we see in our future is that we want to be able to travel and hike, then what can we do today?

We don't have to sit around thinking about how sad it is that other people lose weight faster than us. We don't have to sit around thinking about how sad it is that there's some sort of very natural physiologic change that's going to happen to us sometime in the future.

We can get to work today creating that experience of our bodies that we want. That might include weight loss, it might not. It might involve working on strength. It might involve figuring out how to eat in a way that really supports your body and helps you to feel really, really energized, and like any issues that you may have, other underlying issues that are influenced by your way of eating like those things are all under control.

But when we just are thinking that our lives are going to get smaller and smaller and more closed down, and it's only getting worse from here, it's insulting honestly. Like we're insulting ourselves and we're insulting our elders, we're insulting the people who are further ahead of us that it's such a horrible, bad experience.

And it doesn't have to be. But I will tell you that if you expect it to be horrible, because we know that our thoughts create our results, there will be some element of interpreting things as being horrible. Even though you can also interpret many, many other things or maybe even those same things in a different way or in a really positive way, that serves you.

I think that when ... I mean, it's very interesting to just think about different cultures and how different cultures view the elders. In a lot of cultures, elders are really revered, they're really respected, their wisdom and the way that they approach life and what they have to offer is something that's really special. And in our western culture, that largely, is not the case anymore.

But again, we teach people how to treat us and for other people to treat us the way we want to be treated, we have to go first and treat ourselves the way we want to be treated.

That means thinking about yourself and having self-talk, the words that are in your head about yourself, that you tell yourself about yourself. Having those be loving and supportive and compassionate when you're struggling, and appreciative and grateful and focused on the things that are good.

I definitely do not look at my life and my body as like things are getting worse and worse. Things are changing for sure. If things are really a problem, yeah, I'm going to look for solutions for sure, of course. But why would it benefit me to think that things are getting worse and worse, or only going downhill from here? I'm only going to struggle more with my weight.

What's interesting is my parents — I think I've mentioned this here before; my parents have moved into an independent living building that was really recently built and they moved here in the spring, and they were the second people to move into this big tower.

So, over the course of time, more and more people have moved in and we'll go there and have a meal with them and meet some of their friends and stuff. And what I find so fascinating is how definitely there's people who are probably higher weight than they might like, but there are tons and tons of people who are in their seventies, eighties, and beyond who are fit, who are healthy, who are totally active.

And so, why is it different for them? Not probably because they're special. I mean, maybe they've got some sort of genetic help in their corner, but I guarantee you they're doing something about it because they want to live their life in a certain way. They want to have a certain experience of their life.

There's a man in his nineties that goes on three to four mile walks every single day and my mom said, if you want to go with him, you better be ready to move because he does not walk slowly. So, there's probably a reason that he's fit and active in his nineties, cognitively healthy, all of those things.

So, we just have to invite ourselves that maybe the way that most people talk about women's bodies as they age and just what our experiences are of aging, that maybe, they could be wrong, and we can invite ourselves to think differently.

We don't have to force ourselves to think differently, we don't have to make ourselves, but we have to just understand that it is a choice. And if we want to continue thinking that old way, then we're choosing to think a way that doesn't support us. And I just want to point out for everybody who is on the younger end of the spectrum, this also applies when people are talking about having children. Your body's never the same and all the horrible things that can happen to your body after you have a baby.

And again, I'm not saying that changes don't happen, I'm just saying we don't have to be so sad about it all the time. Like, yes, our bodies change. Why does that have to be a bad thing? We can learn how to dress our bodies, we can learn to love and accept our bodies.

A lot of people talk about the changes that happen kind of the aftermath of a pregnancy is like, battle scars or things like that. And if that supports you in thinking about it that way, amazing.

But also, it could be a really cool thing. Yeah, I had this baby and my body had to change in these ways to make that possible. Okay, what are we going to do next? What's the next thing? So, this just really hit home for me because I feel like to a certain extent for me, myself, just like a personal goal is to not develop that line of thinking that is just dread and it's like certainty of horrible things in the future, I feel like that's what it is.

And of course, we can be certain that things are going to happen in the future because we're living a human life, of course. But why are we focusing on that? Why are we thinking about that? There's also amazing things that are to come. Maybe we should focus on those things instead.

So, that's what I propose. Let's stop being ageist against ourselves. Let's stop telling ourselves and others about what a horrible experience it is to get older. Are there challenges? Undoubtedly, no one is saying that there aren't, but there's also really great things that come too, and I think it would benefit us. I think it would be supportive to us for us to focus our thinking and our overall mindset on those things.

That's how we get to the end of our lives going, you know what, I had a really, really good life. Were there challenges? Yes, but you know what, so many amazing great things happened. The amazing great things are happening. But if you don't notice them intentionally tell your brain, "Look, these are those things," you'll miss them. And wouldn't that be so sad?

So, no more ageism, no more lamenting about all those things. Of course, we get to have our thoughts and feelings. We can process through those, and then we get to reconnect with our bodies. This amazing body that makes our existence possible. Without it, there's no ... they have not invented any other way for our consciousness to live in another body or in a robot or a machine or anything like that. Like we need our bodies. They're magnificent even when they change.

And on that note, I'm going to say goodbye for this week. Thank you so much for your attention and for joining me and I'll see you next time. Take care, Bye-bye.