

**Ep #75: Sticking to the Weight Loss Strategy with  
Leanne Cusack**



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DR. PRIYANKA VENUGOPAL

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# Ep #75: Sticking to the Weight Loss Strategy with

## Leanne Cusack

Dr. Priyanka Venugopal: Hey, this is Dr. Priyanka Venugopal, and you're listening to *The Unstoppable Mom Brain Podcast*, Episode 75, A Conversation with My Client Leanne Cusack. Today's conversation with my client, Leanne from the Unstoppable Group, is the perfect client story after last week's episode around doing it all. You're going to hear about how a high achiever like Leanne used to think she had to do it all herself.

How she used to jump from strategy to strategy every single time weight loss felt hard. And most importantly, how she overcame some of her biggest obstacles to start feeling better in her body with hitting her personal weight loss goals, and in every other part of her working mom life. And listen, I want to make sure that you know about my brand new webinar that is happening in less than two weeks, Do Less Work, Lose More Weight, is happening on Sunday, September 17th at 12:00 PM Eastern, 9:00 AM Pacific. You can grab your seat over at [theunstoppablemombrain.com/webinar](http://theunstoppablemombrain.com/webinar). Now, here's why you're going to want to attend this webinar. If you've ever experienced weight loss as a struggle, it feels like it's too much effort, too much time, too much energy, too much work or bandwidth. I am guessing that any results you did create didn't last. You are not alone in this, and this is exactly what you're going to overcome on this webinar. You're going to learn how to lose the weight you want with half the time, half the effort, and half the mental bandwidth.

It is literally going to change the trajectory of how you lose weight, and most importantly, how you keep it off. And right after this webinar, enrollment for the Unstoppable Group will be opening. This is my six month intimate small group coaching program for high achieving working moms who want to lose weight without a calculator and feel better in their bodies now.

Spots are limited and capped, so I highly encourage you to schedule your sales call with me on day one when doors open right after the webinar. Plus, I want to make sure that you know about the very special bonus you get only when you're registered for this webinar, when you're registered for the Do Less Work Lose More Weight webinar, you qualify for a special one-on-one strategy call with me if you book your sales call and join the Unstoppable Group within 48 hours of doors opening. Make sure you're registered. This webinar is going to be so good and it is going to help you lose the weight you want in less time. Block the date out Sunday, September 17th at 12:00 PM Eastern, 9:00 AM Pacific, and I will see you there.

Let's get into today's conversation with my amazing client, Leanne Cusack. If you want to reach your ideal weight and create lightness for your body, you need to have simplicity, joy, and strategic decisions infused into your life. I'm a physician turned life and weight loss coach for ambitious working moms.

I've lost over 60 pounds without counting points, calories, or crazy exercise plans. Most importantly, I feel calm and light on the scale and in my life. There's some delicious magic when you learn this work and the skills I'm going to be teaching. You ready? Let's get to it.

Hey everyone, I have the lovely Leanne Cusack with me. Thank you so much for being here and share with us. A little about bit how you found Unstoppable and we're gonna get into like the best conversation ever.

Leanne Cusack: Absolutely. Thank you. And let's see. I'm a mom, three boys. I have a nine year old and eight old and a four year old, and I'm married to my husband going on 15 years now.

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I'm in the curriculum department in the more administrative role. So that's just a little bit tiny, tiny hint of my life. But all, all the things busiest right now. I came across you, so we knew each other back in my husband's med school days and so we, I, you know, had you on social media and things like that, and as I started to see some of the postings you were sharing, they just really, really resonated with me and where I was and my weight loss journey and where I was just in, in other aspects of my working mom life too. So I decided to reach out.

Dr. Priyanka Venugopal: Yeah, I still remember one of the first conversations that we had was you sharing all of the things that you had tried, all of the things that would work for a little bit and then they would stop working. And I feel like this is actually such a good, good point to kind of discuss, what do you think it was that you heard in something maybe that I posted on Instagram or maybe an email that made you think, you know what, this might be the solution after so many of these other things that you had tried before.

Leanne Cusack: That's a good question. I think it was more tapping into, it was like tapping into the whole, even just the word unstoppable and working mom, you know, I really identify myself as a working mom and a high achiever and all those things. And so to hear that it was something specifically targeted towards women like me, that spoke to me.

But I am trying to remember if there was anything specific that you had said. I do remember on our discovery call that we made, I specifically remember I was sharing with you a worry that I had, so I was in a new position and in a small office position. I don't know if you remember this.

Dr. Priyanka Venugopal: Yeah, I do remember. Yeah.

Leanne Cusack: Yeah. And I was like, yeah, gosh, this sounds good, but I don't have a place to meet during the day, like I was hoping it was Zoom in the evening or super early morning so I wouldn't have to touch work at all.

And I found out it was what, 11 or noon or something and I was like, oh, I dunno. Like I don't have an office and now I recognize it is you right away starting to coach me. Well what's getting in the way of you just telling them what you're doing or not telling them and just be like, I need an hour and this is my time each week, I'm gonna block it off.

You don't even have to tell anybody what you're doing if you don't wanna, or you could. And I just, that alone to me, like, just kind of sucked up my level of bravery and just like, no, I want this. I am going to go after it. Just like that little one thing and sure enough I went and I, you know, and I talked to my boss and just told him, one hour a week I'm gonna meet up with a group and you know, we're gonna talk about leadership and mom life and all that. And he was like, good for you. So, you know, it was, that was a memory that I have just of our discovery call that made me know like, okay, this is really special.

Yes, hopefully it will impact weight loss, but just other aspects as well.

Dr. Priyanka Venugopal: I love that. And I think that this is something that I talk about a lot on the podcast, but it's like one of the core principles. And Leanne, I'm curious about your thoughts about this, but this idea for

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especially high achievers, Of putting ourselves on our own calendar is something that I feel as often as I, and I say this because I've done this too, it feels like a novel concept.

Like I can block out this time for something that deeply matters to me, that I think is going to level up my life, is going to help me hit a goal, help me lose weight. What do you think has been in the way, and what do you think might have been in your way before to put yourself on your own calendar?

That having a specific time and a place in a group helped you overcome?

Leanne Cusack: .Several things come to mind. So I would say one, you know, it is just the thought of, well, what will you think of me if I say that and, you know, how will that be perceived? And then what will I perhaps be perceived as not being a hard worker?

How might, especially being in a new position. And so I, I, I definitely uncovered a bit of that. For me too, something that I've been working on is just this idea of like me attaching myself so much to wanting to help others and to wanting to do and do and do to help other people and this is a perfect example of like, it just got to a point where I was helping other people so much that I just was not even able to fathom blocking out an hour to help myself.

And I think part of that is like this desire to help people and the compassion and all the, all the positive things of that. And it just kind of one day leads the next and one year leads to the next and I've totally neglected myself and not anything I ever purposefully was like, well, I'm going to stop taking care of myself. It just, it just slipped by.

Dr. Priyanka Venugopal: Yes. I'm so glad you said it like that because it's not something, again, like I think high achievers and working moms are very smart people. We're not on purpose, neglecting ourselves. We're not on purpose like letting our life slip by. But I think what this kind of uncovered, and Leanne, I'm curious if this feels true for you, but the idea of putting yourself on your own calendar or even telling your boss or your colleagues or your partner, like, Hey, I'm doing this for myself.

It kind of brought up some insecurities, some feelings of like, oh, I'm asking for help. I'm like asking for, you know, getting coached on something. I'm asking for mentorship on something and what does that mean about me? What might other people think of me? It's really what we think of ourself in that moment of needing help. So what do you think it was for you that maybe made you feel like, oh, I wonder what they're thinking of me. What do you think you were thinking of you before you decided to join Unstoppable?

Leanne Cusack: Oh gosh. I think something I really have uncovered is that I was thinking really poorly of myself, like I had to achieve or I had to be doing in order to earn the whatever it is in order to earn the worthiness of other people in order to earn their, you know, in order to earn that spot or just in order to earn just the right to whatever. I don't even, you know.

Dr. Priyanka Venugopal: Yeah. It's almost like this feeling of trying to, I think a lot of women especially think that if we do it on our own and if we are able to do it on our own, that somehow that's more honorable.

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Or it's somehow better than not doing it on our own. And I think that that's what we got to challenge together because sure we can do things on our own, but I think it's what we make it mean when we're like, you know what? We're not going to do this on our own. We're going to invest in help. We're gonna join a group, we're going to get a coach.

It's actually deciding to believe in advance, like, this is not better or worse than me doing it on my own. What if this actually allowed me to open up more, get farther, faster? If I decided to join a group or get coached, I'm curious if that was how you felt about it.

Leanne Cusack: Absolutely. And then I could add to that too. It's sort of like, you know, in order to get coaching specifically on weight loss, there is an element of like, I have to admit that this is a problem for me. Yeah. I have to admit that this is something that's just, I can not grasp this for whatever reason and so admitting that it felt hard, you know, it's like I knew it, but to really like to bring other humans into it, I feel like just admitting it felt hard. But then in this group, it doesn't feel hard at all because we're all aiming after the same goal. We've all got this thing in our life and, and so that's been, yeah, that's been a really neat aspect of having it be a whole group of other women who are sharing in the same desires and things like that around weight loss.

Dr. Priyanka Venugopal: I love that. And I think that that's [00:12:00] such an important point. I wanna definitely talk about your experience in the group, especially a few of the specific things that you have experienced,, but I'm curious, that moment that you felt that, like, okay. Specifically weight loss and admitting it, admitting that you know, this is something that you want help with, how do you think you overcame that personal obstacle for you to then join the group?

Leanne Cusack: I think I felt the pull from, honestly, just from the way that you talk and the way that we approach it together. It felt so different than, you know, some of the other programs where you are counting macros, or counting points or are so focused on that. I think I got to the point where I needed look at all these things I've tried and like so many things, we talk about this all the time, like so many things in my life I can really rock and I can really do these things and do them really well, but like, why have I tried all these different things and they're not working for me? And so I think the psychology aspect of all of this has the biggest difference for me and just uncovering a little bit at a time and a little at a time and little bit a time has made it where I no longer feel like, gosh I am asking for help on this.

Heck yeah, I'm, I'm working together with other people in this aspect because it's just so much more complex than food. Like, it's just, it's so much more complex than that. And I think seeing how much of your place in life your, the psychology of, of everything, like it gets interwoven with food, but it's all connected. And I think being able to see that, that's just made me no longer be like,

Dr. Priyanka Venugopal: Yeah, and this is what's different, right? When you think about what's the difference between everything that we have tried in the past and we talked about, right? Like counting points and calories and macros and maybe exercising and maybe that new fad thing that we heard about.

What's the difference between all of those ways? And what we do together in coaching is we really explore and uncover the mindset that you have coming into your strategy. Right. So a lot of these other ways of trying to

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lose weight might be effective, but the reason that they're not forever sustainable is most of them don't uncover what you were thinking and feeling that drives you to sustainably follow through on what you said you were going to do.

So kind of just like taking a pivot to that when it comes to this strategy, like the tangible strategy that you learn in Unstoppable, separate from the mindset piece. Where we really talk about eating when you're hungry, stopping when you're not eating delicious, high quality foods. What was your thoughts about the strategy that we were going to employ together in Unstoppable? And what about it felt either like totally easy for you or maybe felt hard?

Leanne Cusack: So I think one of the things right away is the eating when you're hungry, stopping when you're not. And you know, we have a, a range, um, which I studied up on and I tried to memorize, okay, this is a one, this is an aid and, and the language of it all, but like legit, like I did not, I was so out of touch with the feelings in my body that I didn't even know. I mean, sure I knew when it was like starving, hungry and you can hear the ground, like I knew that, but like to decipher the difference between like satiated and full and overly full. That was not, you know, I just ate at the times that I was eating with the rest of my family.

I filled up my plate and the amount, you know, about the size of the plate or things like that, but I just was not at all connected with the way that my body was actually giving me signals of how hungry or how full it. So I think that that strategy is there, and it's something that I still like. Some days I feel more in tune to it and like it better at it.

And other days I'm like, oh, man that is a little bit much but now. I don't like that feeling. And I crave the feeling of like the lightness I crave not eating past satiety. I just know I feel so much better and like that's how I want to feel versus before I just did not even, I was not in touch with that at all.

Dr. Priyanka Venugopal: This is the thing, I think, and if you, if anybody was watching Leanne on video, you were kind of doing this motion where it was kind of like a dance, right?

So like we're kind of doing a dance where we're kind of starting to rediscover our bodies. I think that this is probably a signal that we were in touch with when we were first born. When we're brand new, like babies will turn their face away from the bottle when they're, when they don't want anymore, whether they've had one ounce or six, they will stop the milk when they don't want anymore.

And when they're hungry, they will cry out. And I think what happens along the way, just by conditioning from society and the, you know, we're supposed to eat at 12 and six, or we're supposed to eat x number of calories, points or macros, like, we kind of learn to disconnect from our body.

It's actually like, it's like we unlearn something that we already had, and I think what we've been doing together is rediscovering that. Like, wait a second, what if I didn't need an app or a planner or a spreadsheet? What if I could just rediscover what my gut likes? What would it feel like? What does a three or four feel like?

What does a five or six feel like? And then you get to decide. I think this is the other thing. I'm curious how you felt about this. 'cause I remember you said, I wanna be the number one A plus student. Do you remember

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that? So we have to talk about that. But before we get to the, it's like, I think when we come in with that attitude of like, you know what, I wanna be the best student.

We, again, we, we forget like maybe the level of hunger that I want to be at is going to be different than Priyanka. Or maybe it'll be different than so and so in the group. And I think that that was a big part of your journey, at least what I observed for you is like you getting to discover what feels good.

You getting to decide, wait, you know what? Actually I don't like getting to overflow. Wait. I actually like how my body feels. We did a lot of work around flour and sugar, right? . I actually like how my body feels when I take a break from flour and sugar and like you getting your brain on board with this dance, knowing it's not perfect.

There might be moments that you overeat or that might be most that you go off plan, but what a dance it is. So I'm curious what, like, how you feel about coming in with those rules. Like, I need to do this perfectly, versus like, discovering the dance. What do you think?

Leanne Cusack: Yeah, no, absolutely. So, yeah, because one of the other, uh, strategies is eating no flour and no sugar.

Right now I'm in a very different spot where I'm figuring out how can I incorporate that in a way where I still like, feel good in my body, but at the time it. Like a major failure, you know, like yes. Gosh, I was rocking Priyanka group and I was like losing weight and feeling really good in her group and I thought I was doing so well in this group.

And so when I started to find myself craving the flour and sugar and, and not being able to truly like having such a hard time stopping myself from the flour and sugar. Then it felt like this huge failure to me to realize that none of this is about following the rules or being the best one at losing weight.

It's not about that, it's about listening to your body and figuring out what you want. Like I think the idea of, you know, I remember you saying, or you know, maybe another group saying like, you can have it, like, have the flour, have the sugar. That idea to me is freeing. Like having it, like going for it. Have as much as you want. Nobody can stop you from that.

Like you are, you can do it, have it all. That to me is powerful because then it's like, but wait, do I really want it? Like, what do I really want more? Do I want this cinnamon roll more? Maybe in the moment, but in the long run, what do I really want? And that's that cool weight, you know, that's feeling better in my body and all these things.

And I think when I started to give myself permission to eat the flour and sugar but then at the same time, also really getting in touch with like, what does my body feel right now after I eat the cinnamon roll? Ugh. Like, yeah, that doesn't feel good. I don't like that feeling. Or it's not, you know, I, I think another thing was getting better at, you know, weighing myself each day and not coming to a place of judgment.

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Rather than just coming to a place of evaluation, so you know, you eat a cinnamon roll and the next day your weight is up. Whereas previously I would've been like, oh my gosh, of course I can't believe I did that and really gotten down on myself. Now it's like, oh, well I made that decision to eat that cinnamon roll, and was it delicious?

Today I'm going to decide not to eat any flour or sugar today because I want that number to go back down. And so I think that when I started to give myself permission, eat it if you want. And then really evaluating the results of that and connecting that with what do I want my results to be like that's what made a difference for me.

Dr. Priyanka Venugopal: I just love this. Right, and I think what ends up happening when we give ourselves rules, it, I think, again, for high achievers especially, it very quickly can turn into what you're allowed to do and what you're not allowed to do.

And it gives, I think, us this false idea that we're not in complete control. It's very restrictive and I think humans in general, especially women who are working so hard at home and at work. The last thing that we want is one more barrier. One more barrier to feeling like our absolute best. And I think what happened for you is when you're like, wait a second, actually, I don't have to have these rules because clearly it's possible to lose weight even when you have flour and sugar. If I gave myself permission, I wonder what that would feel like. I think it just melted some of that restriction away for you and it started for you to have, I think, a different question. It's like, I wonder how I might eat this in a way that still feels good for my body.

Maybe I don't have any, maybe I have a little bit. If I have a lot, I know how it feels like you're, I think the quality of how you were engaging with your way of eating completely shifted when you did that. Which is so powerful, and I think that that's, I want anyone hearing this to know that you can have the best strategy, you can have the most like science-backed, most effective plan.

And if you don't come into that plan with the right mindset, you'll turn it into another diet, and I promise you it's going to eventually backfire. As opposed to coming into whatever your strategy is, flour, sugar, no flour, sugar, however you want to eat. Coming into that plan with a way of thinking and feeling that puts you in control.

Which I think is so important. There was another thing that I remember you mentioned. I'm wondering if you remember this, but whenever we do our evaluations, I remember you saying if something felt like it wasn't working, or let's say the number on the scale is not what you liked, You found yourself immediately thinking, maybe I should try points again.

Maybe I should try calories again. Maybe I should, do you remember that you're like, let me, like, maybe I should try a different strategy. What do you think shifted for you? Because evaluation and leveraging results, leveraging quote unquote mistakes is a huge part of what we do together.

What was it, do you think that helped you turn that around where you're like, okay, I'm not gonna keep questioning the strategy. I'm not going to keep jumping ship. I'm going to really be with myself and really evaluate this and figure out what happened in my implementation.



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Leanne Cusack: I think even voicing that to you and to the group and talking about it and saying it out loud and to other people I think is helpful because I'm not the only person ever who could give up flour and sugar and not lose weight.

Right? Like there's nothing that unique like it's gonna work. Like it's totally science backed it works if you do it. And so I just started to make this connection of that's what I used to do. I used to go from one thing to the next, to the next, to the next. And at some point over the course of the past year, this word longevity just keeps sticking in my mind.

Like, this is, this is longevity. This is for the long haul. This isn't me wanting to jump here, jump there, jump there. Like this is just like me wanting to be steady. And longevity of something, and this will work like this is, this is not just something Priyanka made up like, and I think we've talked too, like any of those things will work.

Like you count the points, you're gonna lose weight. And so I think it's me also realizing that it's not, it's not about the rule that is set, it's more about the mindset that you are going into it with and the mindset you are continuing on with.

I just got to a point where it's realizing, like jumping from here to there and there to, you know, like, it's not helping. I've been doing that for a number of years. It's not working, so let me just be steady and, and stay the course.

Dr. Priyanka Venugopal: Yeah, and I actually wanna normalize why high achievers do that. Why is it that we jump ship or jump from this strategy to that strategy, to this strategy than maybe the other strategy?

The reason that we do that is because we're trying to distract ourselves from feeling the uncomfortable emotion of evaluating a result. It's much easier at the moment. Let's say I'm, I'm, there's a result in front of me and I don't love it. Or maybe I didn't, I didn't implement the strategy perfectly, and so I'm looking at the scale and it's not what I want it to be.

In that moment of discomfort, I think high achievers think if I just change strategy, I don't have to feel this way. And so we'll jump ship and brand new fresh starts feel really good for our brain. Our brand new fresh start feels this natural newness, a natural burst of motivation comes in. And I think that high achievers love that because then they get to avoid the discomfort of evaluating, and that is one of the things that I want high achievers to get out of because as you and I both know, jumping from action plan to action plan is wasting so much time. It's just like not going to get you to your goal rather than doing the more uncomfortable work, which is, let me take a look at this result.

Let me see how I created it. I wonder what I was thinking and feeling that drove me to show up in this way that made this result what it is and how can I leverage that information and make a small tweak. We don't have to make big changes and throw everything out and start from scratch. What is, I just made one small tweak to shift this, but it requires slowing down, which I think, again, can be hard if you want fast results.

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I'm curious what you think about being willing to slow down and what it takes for somebody doing this journey to slow down enough to do this work.

Leanne Cusack: Seeing things as an experiment helps with the longevity piece of like, how am I going to eat forever? How do I wanna do this in a way that feels light green and doable?

Dr. Priyanka Venugopal: I love that you called it an experiment so much, because I still remember you did that experiment. I think this was like February, if I'm not mistaken. You're like, wait a second. Yeah, yeah. We could speed this up if I wanted to. I would really like to cut out the flour and sugar, which, you know, on the side for somebody that might feel great.

Leanne Cusack: Absolutely.

Dr. Priyanka Venugopal: And then absolutely, they go do that. It's not a problem. But for you, we did this experiment and we discovered that it didn't feel good for you. And what an experiment to show you. We'd actually, maybe if I slow down, slow and steady changed my goal, I might have more long term permanent results.

And I think what came up, I remember in that coaching call was I think I asked you like, why are you in such a rush? If you really believed, I'm going to hit my goal no matter what, whether it happens in three months or six, are you willing to slow down if this was permanent, if this was the last time, if this was going to be your lasting permanent long-term solution, are you willing to slow down?

I feel like that's what gives our brain the safety to slow down. Because the only reason we are in a rush, or we wanna speed up is we're like not believing we're really going to get there. So we're trying to prove to ourselves like, we're gonna get there, we're gonna get there, but it's just not sustainable to do it that way. What do you think?

Leanne Cusack: I do think so. And then I think I would add to that too, that I had sort of, um, a mindset of like, well, if, if I just really buckle down, I just buckle down. I don't get the flour nor the sugar. I'll get there faster and then I can get back to eating the other way quicker. Like, and then sugar quicker. Yeah.

Dr. Priyanka Venugopal: Right. Yeah. I remember you saying that.

Leanne Cusack: I can do this for a few months, I lose weight, hit my goal and then I can get back to it. That's not gonna work because then it's just gonna come right back. And so knowing that this is just a discovery of how am I gonna take off my body for a very long time, truly food is just good, right? Like it's just like an instant, easy thing that will make you feel good in the moment and way of finding joy. But now that is not quite it because now I enjoy foods that are also, you know, healthy as well, right? Like once you start to eat in that weight. Yeah. But then when it feels hard, you have to be like, Hmm, why does this feel hard? Where am I not giving myself a break during my day? How am I jam packing my day so much with other things that I haven't taken care of myself today?

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And like, I think we even did an exercise once where it was like, I've done all the different ways, like, what could you do to, to just take a break? Like, what, what might that be like? That's not food. And so now it's like I'm at a point where I have a day and I'm feeling like I know I always do this motion like ravenous almost, like give it all to me.

It's like, okay, what? This is actually a signal, like my body is telling me something's a bit awry here and how can I stop and how can I, like for me, like anything outside, going for a long walk or a short run, like anything outside being in nature like just always just helps me to regulate and feel so good. So like now I'm at the point where it's like, okay, I'm feeling ravenous or what, however you might wanna describe that.

Like, what do I need here? And so it's again like tuning into your body and not letting that be like gosh, I failed. Now I'm craving sugar again.. And this is actually my body telling me I need a break um, for whatever reason.

Dr. Priyanka Venugopal: It's just a signal. I love the way that you described it because I think up until becoming aware of this we think, you know what, let me just cut it all out and lose the weight and then I will bring the food back. And what we're trying to bring back is feeling taken care of.

Feeling relaxed, having some joy, having some relaxation, having some connection. And because we've not done the work of exploring how to create that without food, our brain very naturally goes to like food is a quick and easy way. So I love that you're saying, you know what, whenever you find yourself doing that motion, almost like, it's like you are trying to feed yourself comfort.

You're just trying to give yourself comfort, care, and relaxation and food is just an easy way, but what we have been exploring is what if you didn't have to restrict and deprive yourself to hit your goal weight? What would it be like to feel taken care of? To feel like you actually have joy, relaxation, and rest while you lost weight.

Wouldn't that be just the most sustainable way? To get so in touch with yourself that you knew how to do this while feeling taken care of. I'm curious whether you feel like that was a shift that you experienced.

Leanne Cusack: Huge. Absolutely. Yep. Absolutely. Just the idea that it's just a signal, like that's all it's, and like I'm so thankful for that because, For years, you know, years I'm sure, since my first son who's 12 was born, it's me not paying attention to what, what I need and, and things like that. And so, yeah, definitely that's a shift.

Dr. Priyanka Venugopal: I love that. That's so good. And I think that that's kind of how we start breaking out of the rules of weight loss. And what I'm more interested in is how can we fall in love? With the way we're eating, right? Like you, and you've heard me say this again and again, like the way you eat is your ride or die BFF lover for life. . Like it's the one relationship we're gonna have forever. So what if it didn't have to be contentious and full of rules and what we're allowed and not allowed to do? What if we could love this BFF lover we have as a passenger in our car? And what would it look like to reach our goal, drive to this goal, do the work it takes, as you were saying, is sometimes hard, do the work it takes and also not have a contentious relationship with this ride or die BFF lover for life. Which is just so, so good.

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So just taking a pivot, one of the things that we have talked about is, you know, 'cause again a lot of the coaching that we do in the group is not just around food. As you know, we talk a lot about working mom life. We talk about, you know, how you feel about your time and your task list and productivity and being a mom or being a wife.

And I'm curious how you felt like, Being coached on your working mom life, things impacted your journey personally.

Leanne Cusack: Huge. I mean, so honestly, so much more such a surprise to me that I feel so much lighter with so many of those aspects too. You know, in addition to the weight. And so there have been times when we would be having a discussion that started about food and then it was like completely parallel to something completely non-food related. So trying to think of one, like the latest one that I know we've been talking about is uncertainty and this idea of wanting certainty for the future. So whether that be in you in a job position and wanting security or in a relationship needing that certainty for the future. And, but then it came down to me uncovering like, I've been afraid to keep losing weight because it could all come back. I kept looking for this certainty, like once I lose it, it's gonna stay off and almost like holding myself back of really trying to get the pounds off because I always had this sort of voice of like, what if it comes back or it's gonna, it's gonna come back, you know, like that's what it always did, this uncertainty voice. And I don't even think I uncovered that in a conversation that started about food. I think it actually started about, I don't, oh, moving houses.

Dr. Priyanka Venugopal: So we're talking about you moving. That's how that came up. Yeah.

Leanne Cusack: Yeah. And like I want certainty that when I move, my kids will be happy, my husband will be happy. Like everything will be just fine even though we move. And I was really craving this certainty around it. And it's like, it's impossible. It is impossible to know 100% for sure.

And so a lot of those, you know, life situations and my thoughts about the life situations have completely mirrored the feeling.

Dr. Priyanka Venugopal: I remember, I think like one of the things that we were talking about, and I feel so strongly about this specific topic because again, especially I think all humans, but especially high achievers, love feeling certainty before we lean in all the way into making a decision, into feeling total calm and ease in their life.

And what we coached on was hoping for certainty, hoping to feel certainty about the future is creating a lot of uncertainty for you right now. And I think the reason that this kind of translated into how we were talking about food and plans and your weight was that was driving you to second guess your plan, your goal.

It was making you second guess decisions that you had made. And I think that that is what we get to then uncover. It's like, wait a second. Your desire to feel certainty is creating uncertainty now, and that's making you second guess and ruminate and not make decisions. What might it be like if you felt certain in just you showing up in the way that you can show up?

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That's the one thing that you have control over, right? We don't have control over every single thing that's going to happen tomorrow, but you have 100% control and 100% certainty over how you're going to show up. Right? So like what if that was all we needed to answer the question? Will it ever come back?

Here's the, I'm gonna be super honest, anybody that's listening to this, you might gain all the weight back. I've lost a little over 60 pounds next year. This time next year, I could be back at 200 pounds. But I could focus on that "what if." I call them wiffy? What if I gain it back? And that will just drive me to second guess and question and micro quit and have justifications and excuses.

And eventually I will create that as my reality rather than, that's not even a possibility anymore because I feel so certain in how I am with myself now, how I look at results, how I look at if I do a, a Dorito dinner, if I gain a pound, I, the way that I am with myself now is so different that that is not even a possibility.

Right. And I think that we get to feel that and offer that to ourselves, which is how we then create certainty, which is such a roundabout way. I feel like it's such a meta topic to think about certainty and uncertainty, but I want anyone listening to really think about have you allowed uncertainty to hold you back from making decisions?

And how is that the real reason that you haven't got an unwanted result? Right On the scale. Which is so good. So we were talking a little bit about, I feel like we could keep talking about this topic, but I feel like there, the other thing that we were talking about as we've coached on hard moments, the move or relationships or time and tasks in kids, you had said something a couple weeks ago, it's like, you know, I don't have to resolve every hard thing in my life for me to lose weight.

Can you talk a little bit about that? 'cause I feel like that was a big moment for you to be like, I don't actually have to fix every single little thing to lose weight right now. How did you come to that? What was your takeaway?

Leanne Cusack: Throughout this past year of coaching, there's been different life circumstances that have come to the surface with it all.

You know, like there's, there's the job aspect. There's thinking about even things from my childhood that have been bubbling to the surface. There's the kids, there's the marriage, like all these things. And you have a really deeply rooted goal and desire and so anything else is chatter in my brain that I need to let be chattered. I think learning how to process emotions has been huge for me. And just learning how to let myself feel whatever it is that I'm feeling and knowing that that's okay has been really big and keeping me centered around what, what the real goal is.

Dr. Priyanka Venugopal: Yeah, and I think kind of what you're talking about is this idea where we can feel stressed or frustrated or worried or disappointed or angry, and our brain, because just about how our normal, natural human brains work, we want immediately to avoid the discomfort of our life emotions that it will offer you the cookie or the Dorito dinner or the glass of wine. We could keep that, or what if we learned the skill of feeling an emotion, like frustration or worry, or anger, or disappointment and practice that skill, practiced feeling and emotion. And we didn't need food to numb that anymore, right?

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So, and then it's like, you know what, and if I wanna also get coached on my time, if I wanna get coached on my marriage or on my kid, what if I also did that? Which is amazing because we can just obliterate some of those feelings at the root. But what if that didn't have to hold me back from following my plan?

I can feel the stress, I can practice feeling this and also, Totally not go to food. It just, I just think that it, it's such a powerful feeling to know. You can feel any, I, I, you know, when I think about it, I think of it as like the colors of the rainbow. We all have our flavors of crap feelings that we just don't love. For me, it's always been pressure and worry. That's been my personal flavors. I feel like everyone has their own unique blend. That we don't love feeling. And what would it be like, imagine how powerful you would feel if you had any emotion, you could just feel it and not go to food.

And I say this, I know I'm saying it simply, it's not always easy. It's not always easy, but imagine the power, and I think this is kind of what we talk about, like high achieving, working moms are confident, but we don't always feel powerful because it's like, oh, that thing happened that that fight happened, that life stress is happening to me that's where women get power. I can feel anything. I can practice the skill of just feeling it, a vibration in my body. I never have to eat. Think of what unlocks for us then. If you practice that skill. Which is everything. I'm curious what you think about that.

Leanne Cusack: Yeah. That phrase that it's, it's just a vibration in your body. Like that's what it is. Like that's literally all it's, and I've gotten better at just sitting with that vibration that you have to be purposeful and take that time really, truly to sit there and let it feel, but knowing that it's going to pass. And it's just a vibration and I can listen to it and I can give it the space that it needs, but it doesn't mean that I need to eat right now.

And like that difference between like now I can tell is this a vibration of anger or like anxiousness? Like is that the vibration or is it like me actually being hungry and now and I can check in like with my belly, like is, yeah, nope, this isn't hunger. Like, okay, let's just, here we go. Like let it come. Yes. You know? And I, yeah, I think that that's huge.

Dr. Priyanka Venugopal: That's so good. What do you think for you personally is just the lifetime impact of that? Being able to know the difference between that like anxious feeling or that worried feeling versus like actual hunger and then responding to it accordingly. What do you think is the impact for you?

Leanne Cusack: That is so hard to answer because what I think happens so much, 1) weight and health and not just instinctively just going to eat. I think that alone is huge, but you know, me, myself, being able to process emotions and then that absolutely carries into conversations that I have with my kids. Conversations that I had with my husband, it was just coaching my son. He was feeling overwhelmed the other day about where we were, we were doing some deep cleaning and he, his, his desk was like a disaster.

And so he was feeling overwhelmed and so I was able to do some coaching with him. Like, what's the result that you want? Okay, let's start there. And how is your feeling going to affect your actions?

You can sit here and feel really frustrated and overwhelmed, like, absolutely, let's do that and let's feel that, but what do you want the results to be? You know, and so mm-hmm. Being able to even use that with people that I

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love or, you know, even in my job as well, I can, I can use it too. So, gosh, it's hard to even answer that question because Yeah, there's, yeah, it will have a ripple effect in so many ways.

Dr. Priyanka Venugopal: Yeah. And that, that to me is like, I always think about, you know, there's like the tangible benefits of losing weight using coaching as your main and primary modality. What you're just talking about, the ripple effect and the intangible, like the intangible results of how you show up as a mom, how you show up at your work.

Just shifts and changes and it's like, There's probably like innumerable examples of what that even looks like. Like I'm just so curious about your son who heard that, who might have been like, you know what, he might have allowed the overwhelm to drive him to not clean up his desk, right?

And what is it, what was the lesson that he got to learn in that moment? By you modeling it to him?

Leanne Cusack: Absolutely. Yeah. And me not being frazzled about it, like clean your, you know, like that kind of like, even just that too and yeah, it's huge. So.

Dr. Priyanka Venugopal: Oh, I love that so much. So, Leanne, tell us what, anything else that we didn't cover.

I feel like there's so much more we could have kept going into, but tell us anything else that you feel like you would want to share with anyone listening to this podcast about you and your experience in the group, and anything you would want someone to know that's listening.

Leanne Cusack: I think the last takeaway that I would really like to share is the idea of trust.

And we have talked about this quite a bit and I felt like it was sort of layers of me starting to understand that previously feeling like trust had to be earned, like I had to achieve and I had to do this and in order to trust myself. So in relation to weight loss it might be like if I didn't lose weight one week, I would feel like I had to stop trusting myself.

Like, oh, here you go, you're slipping back. Like you can't trust yourself. And that shift to like, no, actually, like you don't even have to earn trust. Trust is just a given that you give to yourself. So just like I trust my own children and like I trust that they're gonna be who they're gonna be and they're gonna find their way.

I can have that same trust in myself, and it's not something that if I stumble or stumble, if I, you know, if I don't lose weight or, or I don't process my emotions in a way, it doesn't mean I can't trust myself anymore. Like trust is a given and I'm going to be there to trust myself. And so then what that means is, I talk to myself is different, [00:47:00] and the way that I evaluate what happened is different and it's so much more caring and loving and just knowing that I'm gonna get, they're gonna figure it out.

It's gonna be okay. I think that that's been a big thing. It's just how you talk to yourself in terms of really trusting in yourself.

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Dr. Priyanka Venugopal: I love that. So good. Because so many of us think we have to earn it. We have to prove to ourselves that we can do it. We have to prove to ourselves that we are worthy or valuable enough to do what we're talking about.

And I think what you're saying is like, what if that was just a decision? You can just decide to trust yourself, no evidence needed. Right. And imagine the impact of that. If you could talk to someone that's listening to this podcast and they are considering Unstoppable, they're considering coaching, but maybe they have a thought or a question, they're maybe nervous about being in a group or they're nervous about something.

What would you say to them in their decision about whether Unstoppable may or may not be for them?

Leanne Cusack: I cannot imagine how anybody wouldn't get something outta this. I mean, it's just amazing what happens when I think what the group does is it brings all of this to the forefront of your mind, right? Like how it's so easy to just kind of slip back and not care for yourself.

Like this is a structure that is going to bring yourself to the forefront of your mind. Every week through the weekly calls, every day, you have the availability to get the written coaching in slack, and you learn how to do daily work every day by checking in with yourself. And so there's no way that you couldn't get something outta just giving those thoughts more presence in the front of your mind more every day and every week, and the impact that it'll have. Well, it's shocking. It's really quite amazing. You might be thinking not to do it. I know, even financially, I was like, gosh, I dunno. You know? But it's huge.

Dr. Priyanka Venugopal: I think that's true. And, and again, I feel like this is such an individual decision for that's considering this to make, to really take it through the lens of your own inner wisdom. Like listening to your own inner wisdom. It is an investment and it's not just a financial investment. I'm asking my clients to invest their time to, to put themselves on their calendar, to block an hour a week, to show up for 10 minutes a day to really invest in themselves.

And so it is a serious decision. And also to me, I think the results that you create are so serious. They're so worth it. Your goals matter. And I think that my intention with this group is giving your desires the significance that they deserve. And to not just brush them aside anymore.

Right. And like, just kind of go on by, let our life just pass us by to lean in. And then take it through that lens of your own inner wisdom about whether or not this group is for you. And don't let a flutter of nervousness hold you back.

Leanne Cusack: Because you do know deep down you really just do.

Dr. Priyanka Venugopal: I love it. Leanne, thank you so much for coming on the podcast and sharing your story and really sharing.

I feel like a lot of what high achievers are thinking what women are thinking. I think telling these stories is just so valuable so that people get kind of an inside look into the journey of what happens when you come into



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Unstoppable and the explorations that you have and all the results that you create. I just, I love it, and I appreciate you so much for coming on.

Leanne Cusack: My pleasure. Back at you.

Dr. Priyanka Venugopal: In less than two weeks, I am hosting my brand new webinar. Do Less Work, Lose More Weight is Happening on Sunday, September 17th at 12:00 PM Eastern, 9:00 AM Pacific. You can grab your seat for free over at [theunstoppablenombrain.com/webinar](https://theunstoppablenombrain.com/webinar).

You are going to want to attend this webinar if you have ever felt like weight loss has seemed like a struggle, too much time, effort, energy, and bandwidth is going into you trying to lose weight. And I'm guessing if this is what you have felt like it is not sustainable, we are going to be overcoming all these obstacles for you.

On the webinar, you're going to learn how to lose the weight you want in half the time, with half the effort and half the mental bandwidth. Grab your seat over at [theunstoppablenombrain.com/webinar](https://theunstoppablenombrain.com/webinar), and right after this webinar, enrollment for the un. Stoppable group is going to be opening.

This is my six month intimate small group coaching program for high achieving working moms who want to lose weight without a calculator and hit their body goals. Now, spots are going to be limited and capped, so I highly encourage you to schedule your sales Call with me on day one when doors open right after the webinar.

Plus I have a special bonus for you when you're registered for the Do Less Work, Lose More Weight Webinar. When you're registered for the webinar, you qualify for a special bonus, one-on-one strategy call with me if you book your sales call and join the group within 48 hours of doors opening. So make sure you're registered.

This webinar is truly going to blow your minds. You can grab your seat over at [theunstoppablenombrain.com/webinar](https://theunstoppablenombrain.com/webinar). I cannot wait to see you there. Thanks for listening to *the Unstoppable Mom Brain Podcast*. It's been an honor spending this time with you and your brilliant brain. If you want more resources or information from the show, head on over to [theunstoppablenombrain.com](https://theunstoppablenombrain.com).