

Ep #93: Why I Quit Medicine



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podcast

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with
DR. PRIYANKA VENUGOPAL

Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Priyanka Venugopal

Ep #93: Why I Quit Medicine

Hey, this is Dr. Priyanka Venugopal and you're listening to the Unstoppable Mom Brain Podcast. Today I am bringing you back an episode that I aired last year around why I left medicine. Why did I leave practicing as an OBGYN? Who truly loved being an OBGYN. I did not leave the field of medicine because of burnout, which is I think a unique story for so many physicians who are leaving medicine because they are burning out. And I know that there are so many new, amazing listeners. And so I wanted to reintroduce myself into this episode, which was aired last year with my story, with my background around how I became a coach for high achievers. How did I even get into weight loss and why I left? the practice of medicine. I hope you all enjoy.

I have been waiting to record this podcast for a long time, and I feel like this is the perfect time to release it. Today's the one year anniversary of my podcast launching. And to be completely honest, part of the reason that I launched this podcast is really tied to my decision to leave medicine, to leave practicing as an OBGYN.

So if you're new to the podcast or if you've been with me for this whole past year, I'm so grateful that you're here and I thought that this would be a great opportunity for me to share why I left medicine and really what led me to this moment in time where I am talking about celebrating the one year anniversary of this podcast.

So today's episode is going to be a little bit of a story time where I share my journey into medicine, how I even became a physician, and then really, and very importantly, the decision that I made to leave medicine, which happened about two years ago. I think that career changes can be really hard, specifically if you have invested many years into training like I did.

I like to think of it as a lot of blood, sweat, and tears went into my practice to become an OB/Gyn. We're gonna talk about that on this episode. So also, I want you to know that this episode is being released today on Tuesday, April 18th, and it is officially the one year anniversary of the launch of this podcast.

So my heart is bursting a little bit with pride, and to be honest, this labor of love has been something that I'm going to share with you in this episode. But like it has been something that I just wanted my voice, my perspective as someone who is a working mom who lost weight, but really has changed a lot of her life.

I wanted that voice in the universe to connect with working moms or high achievers like you that are listening to this podcast, that feel inspired to know that there is more possible. If you have gained insight in this podcast and you want to celebrate with me. I would love, love, love it for you to join the celebration giveaway that I'm having.

Today's the last day to enter. You can just take 30 seconds of your time and your time is incredibly valuable. But if you can take 30 seconds to leave a rating and review of the show, you can just pause right here to go do that on your favorite podcast platform. Leave a rating and review of the show and then take a screenshot and share it with us over at theunstoppablenombrain.com/celebrate.

And that's it. You'll be entered too. And really what this does when you leave a rating or review of the show, it makes this podcast more discoverable, which to me is again, the best way that I want to celebrate this podcast is to get this message in the ears of more women, more working moms. And yeah, I would absolutely love it if you did that.

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I'll be announcing the winner very shortly. The winner is going to win a pair of Apple AirPods, which I just think is so fitting for a podcast to have a pair of Apple AirPods. That you get to win. If you join this podcast, giveaway the celebration giveaway. I greatly appreciate that you're here. I love you all so much, and please take 30 seconds to leave a rating review and let's get into today's episode.

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. Ready? Let's get to it.

So let me just start out by saying, I never wanted to be a physician as a kid. I was not one of those six year olds who dressed up as doctor and had pretend patients lined up like the stuffed animals on a couch. Like I was never one of those kids. My earliest memory really, of my youngest age is like when I was five or six, I wanted to just do well at things.

I think maybe this is coming for a lot of high achievers, but I really, my earliest memories of me and my youth, I really wanted to do well in school, like when I was really little. Being doing well in school came very easily to me and honestly, I soaked up the accolades, like the praise, you know, I loved the nods of approval from my parents.

You know, those like worksheets, like the teacher would keep putting little gold stars on your worksheets. Yeah, I lived for that stuff, like nods of approval or you know, getting called on. I'm like teachers pet all the way, that was me. And I would say really in those youngest years when I was probably five or six, which is when I can remember these memories from.

That was, I think when I really learned that I would feel proud when I had these external sources of validation. And I think this is normal. It's a very common pattern for so many kids, for so many [00:05:00] adults really, that had this perspective as children, and it's taught to us. It's nothing that's unique to you.

I think it's taught to us, usually in our family of origin, definitely in school and society that gets passed down from generation to generation. And that was me. Little Priyanka was the hard worker. Who wanted to please all the people, and I thought that my avenue to feeling good about myself, to feeling proud and accomplishment, to feeling good in general was through these external sources of validation, getting an A, getting the gold sticker, getting the nod of approval.

And I think that, you know, at a really young age, I do remember probably like a little bit older than that when I was like, oh, I wanna be a teacher. I wanna be an actress. My parents at the time, I think, you know, in their efforts to really support my future, they planted a seed in my mind that having a professional degree is what would set me up for success.

So that meant like, go be a lawyer or a doctor or an engineer, really someone that goes through graduate school and earns, you know, some specific skills that would help me have a quote unquote competitive edge in my

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life. And I think that, you know, competitive edge means when you have skills that cannot be hired out, that cannot be, I mean, nowadays, like there's AI there's like so many things that are like overtaking industries, but I think the dream of any parent is they want to know that their child is going to be taken care of.

And I think sometimes it comes in the form of, is my child going to make money? Are they going to be safe and secure as they get older? And my parents, you know, I think that was kind of what drove them to push me and not push me in a way that was very forceful. To be honest, I was very fortunate to have parents that were not like that, but really solidly plant, the seed of a professional degree is kind of just the standard.

That's what we're going to do. There's really no thoughts around it and I didn't really explore much. I think a lot about my youngest years. I didn't explore much around anything else that I might want to do. I didn't have

any other thoughts other than like I could be a teacher, an actress, and then I turned into a doctor, physician, doctor, physician, lawyer, engineer, someone that went to grad school.

And I think that was around the time, especially in high school and college, that I started taking a lot of science classes. I don't think that being a lawyer was really ever anything that entered my, I don't know why, why it was that medicine drew me. But because of that seed being planted at a really young age, I started taking a lot more science classes.

I took honors science classes when I could, AP science classes in high school and you know, tried to take more advanced science classes to set me up for college and med school. This was like, if you really think about this, like how often as children we are trying to line up our lifetime career at the age of like 13 and 14.

It's really bananas how much we do this. We think we have to set our whole life up and make decisions at this young, young age, but this is not unique to this country. I think that lots of countries, lots of cultures have this, but that's what I did. And to be brutally honest, if I really think back on my life and where I was at the time, I was not the best at science.

Like I love science now as an adult. I love looking at data and research, and again, a lot, I have had to go through many trials and a lot of failure to get to this point. But I can see science now as this is the opportunity of growth. I can look at data now with a researcher's mindset, but when I was a child, science did not come easily to me, and yet I kept putting myself in these rooms with in honors classes and honors and AP science classes simply because I thought it would be my avenue to get into medical school and science and math was hard for me.

I was not one of those kids. I shared this often, but I was definitely not one of those kids that just got the easy A, like easy as came to me when I was in elementary school. But as I got older, easy A's did not come to me. I had to hustle and work hard. The A was not guaranteed. I got plenty of B's even after hustling and working hard, but I hustled and I don't think that I ever considered an alternative.

I just knew I had to hustle. I had to work hard. I had to be the kid that got the gold stars that got through, that got through college, got into medical school and it was really, I think in my youngest years, that was a lot of

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what I remember. I really remember just working hard. I don't even have, it's so crazy, like when I think back, I had probably many, many amazing other experiences, but crazily enough, I don't remember them very well.

I don't remember trips and vacations and like laughter with my friends from college. I don't remember much. I mean, I remember some, but I don't remember so many light experiences. What I really remember is feeling on edge and hustling. Honestly, that's kind of my memory, and it got time at the end of college.

Where I had to decide whether I was going to apply to medical school and I wasn't fully decided. I knew that that was probably where I was going to go, but I didn't decide fully. So I decided to take a couple of years, I moved to the Washington DC area where I started working at the NIH, the National Institutes of Health.

I thought maybe I'll do research, maybe like, you know, that's grad school. Maybe I could do that. And it was very quick. I found out very quickly while working in a lab, I respect everyone that is a scientist researcher. I was like, this is absolutely not for me. And so that was kind of like my process of elimination, to be honest, is how I decided on med school.

Like it wasn't something that I felt deeply inspired to do. I didn't, I was not one of those people that was like, I wanna become a physician to save the world. That was not me. It was really a process of elimination. I never felt intrigue, like the law never intrigued me. To me, science and research was like, that sounds boring.

So I guess it's medicine. And we, I'm just being totally honest. That's how I ended up in medical school. Let me tell you, medical school was really, really tough for me. We moved to California at the time. My husband got a job out in California, so that's where I went to medical school. And I just remember, part of the reason I think medical school felt also particularly hard is because I wasn't super drawn to becoming a physician.

Like what I was just sharing. But the best thing happened for me. So in the third year of medical school, this is when medical students go out and they do clinical rotations or clerkships. So they rotate around at different hospitals in different fields of medicine. So you'll see medical students, you might see medical students if you ever go to a hospital or to a physician's office, they might have medical students doing rotations. And so, if you hear my daughter in the background, she's in the background. That's because I'm just taping this live. You can watch the video of me, you can hear them in the background. I apologize if you hear her voice.

But anyways, back to my story. So clinical clerkship and rotations in family medicine and in the emergency room, surgery and psychiatry, like each field of medicine, you have to go and do a rotation. And I got very, very lucky because one of my very early on rotations was in OB/Gyn, obstetrics and gynecology.

And I have to tell you. This is just the universe shining down on me. But on day one, something very special happened. I just felt this like inner knowing light up. Now, this inner knowing has been silent my whole life. I never was drawn to any field of anything. I didn't feel super passionate about anything.

But day one of my OB/Gyn rotation, if you can see me on camera, I'm like gesturing with my hands. I was just like, this field of medicine has everything that I want. It is exactly what I want to do. I was just in love on day one. It was an incredibly hard and challenging rotation. But it had number one, women's health.

I don't think I realized it at the time, but I think I've always been drawn to serving women and women's health. I realize this now after the fact, but serving women is something that I think I just always wanted to do. I think

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that there's something just so special about serving women, and so women's health, of course, is the center for being an OB/Gyn.

Then patient care, I think OB/Gyns are uniquely seeing patients in the long arc. So they see you for surgery, they see you for delivering your babies, but they also see you week after week, year after year for your annual visits in preventative care. So for me, like, I mean, I can go on and on about how I found this unicorn field in medicine.

For any OB/Gyns that are listening, you probably felt something similar like I found the unicorn field for me . It felt like it just had everything that I loved. There was some emergency, there was some acute care, there was some preventative care, there was relationships, it was everything. And I remember I called my husband, it was like the first week that I called my husband, cuz we were a long distance at the time we were married.

But my rotation was in Southern California. We lived in Northern California. And I was like, listen, this is it. I wanna be an OB/Gyn, I wanna apply for residency in OB/Gyn. And he was like, seriously? Of all the fields after everything. Like that's what you wanna do. And I think that this was because he had this perspective of like, you know, when you think about an OB/Gyn, they are working really hard.

They're on call at night, they have weekends and all of like, I wasn't even thinking about that. I was like, this is it. And my husband who is just so sweet. And so, I mean, one day we're gonna do an episode with my husband. I wanna have him come on the podcast. I don't tell him often enough how grateful I am to him, but that moment I still remember he said to me, I don't remember you being this passionate about anything.

He'd known me at this point. We'd been married, we'd been married for a few years, but we had been dating since like 2003 or 2004. So like he'd known me for many years and he was like, I have not heard you be this passionate about anything. Like, yeah, you have to do it. Kudos to him. If he's listening, shout out to you for really supporting me in that moment.

And let me tell you, we did it. It was one of the hardest experiences for me to go through, the experience of applying to OB/Gyn residency and board exams and getting through was one of the hardest experiences of my life, but, It was also one of the best. And I think that if you have gone through those hard moments, those hard periods of your life, you have this camaraderie with your fellow people.

So you've already met Ruth. If you listened to my podcast, we did a podcast episode together. She's one of my best friends to this day. And honestly, what we did together, it was one of the hardest experiences, not just the hours we worked. But the skills that we had to learn together to become a physician, really it was a very special experience.

It was hard and crazy, but it was also very special. And I feel really tied to physicians that have to go through something like that. I feel so tied to my fellow residents, even though I haven't seen them in so long. But it's something that really was a shared experience despite how hard it was. Let me tell you, there was a lot of sweat and tears, some blood.

You're an OB/Gyn, there's lots of blood. So blood, sweat, and tears went into this process and I came out the other side of four years of training and became an attending. So I became a board certified OB/Gyn attending and came out the other side after years. If you really think back on the years and years of hustle, and I did it.

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And I think that there was a moment that I remember in my attending life where I looked back and I saw that I had really been putting a lot of my life on hold. And this is gonna be a sharp pivot, but it's gonna make sense in just a moment. But I realized that for many years, particularly medical school and residency, I had been putting my life on hold.

And slowly over those years, I crept up on the scale. At this point in my attending life, I'd been an attending now for a few. I had my daughter, so I had my second daughter, and the scale tipped 200 pounds. And I've shared on this podcast before, that did not happen overnight. When I got married, right before medical school, I weighed just under 140.

So I gained 60 pounds over 10 years. And it didn't happen overnight. But what happened was I allowed phases of my life. I allowed the hustle. I allowed really this like living on the edge, constantly overworking to push me down, to push parts of myself down. And I very naturally went to food to cope with a lot of my emotions, to treat myself every time I, you know, did a good job to distract myself from boredom and stress.

So not surprisingly, I mean, the weight gain happened alongside because I didn't have any other tools and I remember that there was a moment that I've shared on this podcast before I was driving to work 200 pounds, and I remember just like, what? Like what is happening? You know, I have this good on paper life where I have a very supportive husband, as you've heard.

I have these two kids who are incredibly cute. They drive me crazy, but they're cute. I have a really supportive practice. I'm working with partners that I really respect, patients that I love. But like this weight thing is a real problem. I feel so heavy. I feel uncomfortable in this one body. I have this one body, and I feel so heavy.

I like living, this is meant to be the prime of my life. This is the time. I mean, I've been hustling and working my whole life for this moment, and it just feels like what is happening? Like, no, this is not, I don't wanna live like this anymore. And I think that that was the moment I think that things just happened to come together, which is when I discovered coaching on a podcast just like this.

A podcast just like this that you're listening to right now. I discovered coaching and here's what happened. It was really the beginning for me to shift every little piece of my life, and it didn't happen all at once. I think that that's, again, something that a lot of us high achievers want, wanna change everything at once.

We want the results. We wanted the results yesterday. But if I'm being honest, it happened slowly. It happened little by little piece, but I basically showed up and I got coached, and yes, I joined a group to get coached on weight loss and I started losing weight. But the first real thing that I got coached on was my mom life.

Seriously, that was it. I started losing weight, which was amazing, but what really happened is I started to feel more calm and more confident as a mom and that shifted my whole family, the paradigm, the energetics of my family, the way that I started showing up as a mom, and then of course as a wife. It shifted really a lot in my family, and I'm going to be getting into a lot more actual granular detail.

I'm gonna share my exact story about this in a few weeks. I'm gonna be doing an episode on the lessons I learned from my son, because I think that he plays a pivotal role in me changing as a human and changing as a mom. So grateful to him, but I don't wanna sidetrack. On this episode in that story. So what I wanna tell you though is that I got coached on my mom brain.

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I got coached as a mom, and I started to notice, I went from feeling on the edge constantly, like nitpicking at my son, nitpicking, just like at things in my life, at people in my life, wanting things to change, to finally feeling more calm around him as a mom. And the best piece of this that I think was the breath of fresh air, I didn't know that I needed.

He is a human. I mean, he was only like three and a half or four at the time. He didn't have to change for me to change, he didn't have to change at all for me to feel more calm and confident as his mom, which was the best news. But I wanna tell you, I'm the first to say that coaching is what opened the doors for me to do this.

But I showed up to the coaching. I want to be the first one for anyone that creates results and any of my clients. I want us to always take ownership over the results that we are creating. I showed. I was open and I was willing and I was ready. And that is how I started creating change. And definitely along the way, more confidence.

And what's crazy is as I started to feel more calm and confident as a mom, I just started to feel more calm and confident in general because I have one brain, I'm one human. So I started to feel more common, confident as a wife, as a physician, just as a human in general. I started to speak up more in meetings and I started to voice my opinions more.

I stopped second guessing myself so much, which is so interesting. I never thought of myself as someone that did second guess myself. I never thought of myself as someone that lacked confidence. Like if you met me before coaching, I don't think that you would've thought like, oh, Priyanka, you're not a confident person.

That's not true. But there was just a stronger feeling of just self-assurance and uncertainty that I felt after coaching that I think started to pervade my life and what I think happened as a byproduct, and this was intentional, but it also happened as a byproduct, is I stopped needing the external validation to feel good and proud about myself.

So remember that story I was telling you about me being six years old where, you know, I really wanted the A+ and the words of accolades and the gold stars to feel proud and satisfied and good about myself. I started to be able to drop that, and in doing that, and in that journey, that was when The Unstoppable Mom Brain was born.

To be honest, let me backup. This didn't happen on purpose. I always wanna say that The Unstoppable Mom Brain, as a business and as a podcast didn't start because I hadn't agenda to leave medicine. I think that so many physicians do leave medical practice because they're overworked or they're burning out, and absolutely they're leaving medicine for that reason.

But that wasn't my story. I didn't create The Unstoppable Mom Brain as a way out of medicine. I actually just created it because I simply loved coaching, and I remember at the time I loved practicing. Again, I loved my patients and I really respected my partners. I loved the field, but I started to experience a type of freedom and agency that I didn't know was possible for me before coaching.

I think that what I really wanted was to start to put my voice and my perspective out in the world, which is when I was like, wait a second. In the day of the internet and in, you know, what we're doing now, maybe it's

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totally possible for me to put my voice and my perspective out in the world. I don't need permission from anyone to do that.

What if I decided to do that? And honestly, I got certified as a coach and alongside me getting certified as a coach or very shortly after. Created The Unstoppable Mom Brain specifically to put my voice and perspective out in the world. And here's what happened. When I started to work, my initial intention was I'm gonna work with a few clients and help other working moms really create what I created for myself, which was more calm, more lightness, more freedom in all these areas of my life.

But this is what happened in my work with my clients. I got to see firsthand that I was having a ripple effect as their coach. In a way that was just outpacing what I could do as an OB/Gyn. So now let me be honest. As an OB/Gyn, of course, I know that I had an incredible impact. But the truth of it is, is that my work as an OB/Gyn also had a lot of parameters and confinement.

I had to see patients in very specific slots, and I could spend a certain amount with each patient, and it was dictated by a schedule, and there were so many things I would want to cover with each patient, but I had such a short amount of time. I think this is a big problem. A serious problem with medicine is we want to see our patients as these whole humans, but we also have to hit specific criteria to take care of their physical wellbeing.

You know, yes, I wanted to address their physical exam, but like what about low libido and weight gain and fatigue and relationships, like all the things that touch on women's lives, right? That was one of the things that drew me to becoming an OB/Gyn to begin with, and I realized that there was a part of me like this inner knowing that really wanted to help working moms improve all of those things.

I wanted women to have better in all of those areas, and I think what happened as a coach, as I started practicing as a coach, I started working with some of my clients, even though it was through the lens of weight loss, what we really started to uncover what my clients uncovered as did I, was the only reason we ever go to food.

The only reason we ever eat when we're not hungry. Is it because of these other areas of our life, right? This is like your thoughts about your time, your task list, your partner, your relationships, your kids. Seriously. Those are the reasons, the thoughts you're having about your working mom life and all the things in it are the reason you ever eat when you're not hungry.

So weight loss happened to be like the conduit, the way in to help working moms feel better about [00:25:00] every area of their life, which is why a lot of what I share in this podcast and a lot of what I like to talk about is to lose weight. You have to learn how to feel better in these other areas of your life, right?

That's why, that's what we coach on and I think what happens when you get coached on weight loss is these other things come to the surface. So if I, if we coach like, Hey, like I wonder why I overate this weekend. I wonder why I gained that pound. If we really coach on that, we uncover all of the reasons underneath that drove you to eat when you weren't hungry.

And so here's what I started to notice. There were two things that I started to notice as a coach that started to plant this idea in my mind of like, maybe I want to do this full time. Number one absolutely was my personal creative freedom that I didn't have as a physician. As a physician, again, as I was sharing, and I'm sure that

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there are physicians out there that have a lot more creative freedom or maybe a lot more freedom in their life because of the way they're practicing.

But in the world that I was practicing as an OB/Gyn, really having the entrepreneurial freedom, the creative freedom, to have a business in the way that I wanted, work the way I wanted and put my voice and perspective out in the way that I wanted, was incredibly important to me that I didn't even know was something that I cared about until I started doing this.

Number two was the impact that I saw that coaching had for working moms. I mean, I was my own first example. I got to see firsthand the lifetime impact of that. And again, I'm gonna be sharing about this in a few weeks, but me getting coached on my personal mom life, it changed the trajectory of my whole life.

Like not just my life, my kids' life, which changed the trajectory of my whole family. I think it changes generations right. When we start to shift our brains, shift our mindsets and shift how we show up in the world, it changes everything. That's generational. So, you know, I think that it's very important to see the gravity of that.

And I started to see my clients that I was working with change their marriages. They changed their relationship with their children. They had this ripple effect. And for me, I just felt so deeply gratified by that and I decided at that moment, I wanted to be a part of that movement for working moms. I wanted to be a part of like creating a corner on the internet, creating a corner in the world where working moms, where women can stop living on the edge, where they can stop feeling heavy and hustling all the time, where instead they can learn how to feel calm and light, and confident about their bodies, about the scale, but really about all these other pieces in their life that they have worked so hard for.

I think for me, when I saw that, it was incredibly life changing, and so that's when that moment came for me about two years ago when I really started to see that, which is when I made the decision to leave medicine. Now I wanna tell you that this decision was both simple and also it wasn't easy. It wasn't easy.

Lemme tell you why it wasn't easy, because I was reflecting as I was thinking about the decision. Number one, I deeply respected my partners and I loved what I did, so I wasn't leaving medicine like I was sharing. I didn't leave medicine because I hated it. I was willing to leave medicine because I loved something else more.

I think that's such an important distinction. Sometimes I think especially women doing this, we think we have to hate something or reject something to choose something else. But that's not true. It's possible that you can leave something that you love because you want something else more. And that's something that we can give ourselves permission to do simply because we have agency.

I think this was like a light bulb moment and I was like, wait a second. I don't have to hate my job to leave it. I can love my job actually and very much respect it and admire all the pieces about it. And also I love this other thing more. And so let me tell you what I reflected on the piece that wasn't easy for me was when I really thought about all of the things that I had put into becoming a physician. I thought about, especially in a surgical subspecialty, the training that I had to go through, especially to pass board exams. When I think back, I remember the blood, sweat, and tears. There was literally blood, sweat, and tears to get to this point in my life.

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And I really did reflect back on sleepless nights and all of the weekends on call away from my babies when they were newly born. I thought about all of the missed date nights where I would be studying and my husband who's not in medicine, he would like to go out and explore San Francisco. I thought about all the times as a newlywed where I wasn't hanging out with him and I was just studying instead.

You know, I, not just those specific examples, but I thought about how much of my life, how many years I spent feeling stressed and anxious about passing exams and getting the next A and the next gold star. And there was a part of my brain that thought like, seriously Priyanka, you went through all of that and you're going to throw it away.

Like that was the thought. You're gonna throw that all away to become a coach. Were you crazy? Like there was definitely a voice in my mind that thought that, and I'm sure people in my life, like in my real life were like, seriously? You're thinking of leaving medicine to become a coach. Like what are you talking about?

I'm sure, I'm sure they did. I mean, my parents for sure must have had that thought. They did, and they did express it to me. And I wanna tell you, here's what I realized, that yes, I had all of those thoughts, like, really, you're going to throw it all away? That was a thought I had, but I wanna tell you what made it simple.

I realized that the real truth is I wasn't throwing anything away and I wasn't giving anything up. And what I mean by that is all of those years since I was six, that the hard worker in me, the shooting her hand up, the hustling through medical school and residency, the girl that went through all the stress and the heaviness and the missed date nights, all of those lived experiences made me who I am today.

It's what brought me to this moment in time and wouldn't be possible to throw it all away because it made me who I am. It's like literally woven into the texture of who I am as a human and how I show up, and I think realizing that there's no way to take the physician's heart in me out. There's no way to take, you know, the parts of me that drew me to becoming an OB/Gyn physician.

There's no way to throw that part away or to give that up. I realized that those were pieces of me that I could fold into my identity forever. I think that that brought a lot of simplicity and calm to my decision. And it also helped me see that I could be grateful. I know that this is maybe a stretch, especially if this is new to a lot of these concepts are new to you, but I could be grateful to those experiences in medical school and residency to have brought me to this point because I am fairly certain, I can't say without a doubt because I don't have a crystal ball to go back in time or a time machine.

But all of those experiences made me gain 60 pounds. Me, nitpicking at my son, me being irritable with my husband, me feeling stressed and on edge and heavy. All of those things are what actually led me to be open to coaching to begin with. I had to go through those experiences to be open to coaching, and it's hard to say what would've been.

I think it's kind of one of those things where if I had not had any of those struggles, then maybe I would never have been open to coaching. So I want to just say, I didn't have any regrets about having gone through those hardships. I didn't have any regrets, I can't believe I went through medical school and the struggles of residency because those years led me to this moment, and it led me to that moment where I was going to get to make this decision.

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And I think that it's important because so many times I think again, women especially do this, high achievers especially do this. We think about the road not traveled. Like what if, you know, it was such a waste to have done all of that when like I could have just been a coach without investing in medical school.

All that money spent, all the time spent. The grass might have been greener. But we don't know that. And I think it's so important because this brings up the concept of sunk cost fallacy. It's like the what ifs. If you stay, it forces you to stay. Let me just take a moment to just define sunk cost fallacy because I think it's an important reason why people stay in decisions that they're not happy with or that prevent them from pursuing bigger opportunity.

So sunk cost fallacy is defined as the phenomenon where a person is reluctant to abandon a strategy or a course of action because they have already invested heavily in it. Even when it is clear that abandonment would be more beneficial, this is the perfect example, right? So I did feel reluctant to leave medicine because I was like, listen, you've spent so much money to go through medical school and so much time to get through residency.

But I also saw that and I realized that I didn't want to make my whole life's all of my life decisions from that place. I didn't wanna make it with a possibility of fear or regret. I wanted to make it with a feeling of calm and trust, and I wanna tell you exactly what I thought that made this actually a very simple decision.

I told myself, yes, I don't have a crystal ball. I don't know what I am going to do as an entrepreneur. How is Unstoppable going to do? I actually have no idea. I cannot predict what's going to happen, but I do know myself. And actually I can trust myself. The one thing I can do 100% of the time is to make a decision that I can trust myself.

I don't need any evidence because I know me and I know that I am capable of figuring things out. So what if I didn't need to know the exact map of the future, my exact business plan for next year, whether Unstoppable is going to do well or not. What if I didn't know any of that. But instead, what if I could simply drop into the thought that I'm capable of figuring it out?

I know myself, and I think I can trust myself with that. And so I think what that led me to do, it allowed me to sink into calming my nervous system down, which is why it made the decision simple. I was able to tell myself, listen, if at some future point I miss practicing medicine, I would figure it out. I would figure out a way to go back.

If I forgot skills, then I trusted I would figure out how to learn them again. If I fell flat on my face in this business, I trusted that I would have my own back through. I think that simply that I could trust myself to make a decision without knowing the outcome is what actually created calm around this decision.

So it wasn't always easy, but it was incredibly simple, and I wanted to also just paint the full picture. This was not a decision and a plan that was full of just rainbows and daisies and unicorns. I had many moments of sadness, honestly, like after that decision after I left, this was now a little over two years ago that I left practicing medicine.

I did have many moments of sadness, not regret. I didn't regret my decision, but many moments of like, Ooh, like what sad, like was it the right decision? Like was it okay? Like, are we okay? Like, I did feel it because I

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was missing the parts of my life that I loved. I mean, if you've ever had a baby or if you're an OB/Gyn on either side, delivering a baby is really special and I missed that.

There were pieces of that that I missed and I've always enjoyed surgery and being in the OR. I missed the technicalities of that. I missed getting in the OR and performing surgery and seeing the immediate outcome of that so I did have those thoughts many, many times that question like, did I make the right decision?

Was this the right decision? And I simply had the thought because I missed pieces of being an OB/Gyn. But here's what I reminded myself of time and time again. It was that I trusted myself. I trust myself. If I really miss it, if I want more than what I'm doing now, I can always go back. I trust that I'll find a way to figure it out because I know myself and I think that that practice again and again and again where I made the decision, when I reminded myself, I trust myself here, it's okay. I started to develop confidence in myself in a way that I had never, ever had before, even as a physician. So as a physician, I felt very confident in my skills as an OB/Gyn, I felt very confident as a physician, but I didn't always feel confident as a human.

Let me just say that again. I felt confident as a physician and as my practice as a physician, but as a human, I didn't feel confident. Remember I was, some of that was so used to the external sources of validation. I needed things in my life to be going well, to feel good, and this decision, me leaving medicine and me becoming an entrepreneur, and especially the first year out where I was like in moments of doubt, in moments of uncertainty, and I practiced trusting myself and having my own back that is how my confidence grew as a human.

Honestly, that's what is bringing me to you here right now. It's when I decided it was exactly a year ago today that I was ready to share my voice, my perspective, and really my flavor of coaching to reach more humans. This podcast was specifically launched a year ago. This was when I was a year out of practicing medicine, where I felt so much steadier and grounded in who I was as a coach, what I wanted to share with the world, what I wanted in terms of a movement for working moms.

I decided that I wanted any human, any working mom that ever came into contact with my orbit in the Unstoppable universe. I wanted anyone to know that it is possible to stop living on the edge. To stop feeling heavy in your body and in your life to stop hustling and hustling and hustling to feel better. And if you're open and willing and ready, it's possible to feel calm and light and confident.

I think that I am my own first example, and then my clients who work with me get to just be shining examples of that. And I also wanna say that being an entrepreneur, like making the switch from practicing medicine to being an entrepreneur was not easy by a long shot. I say it time and time again. I, in many ways, I work harder now as an entrepreneur than I did as a physician because I'm always thinking about my clients, about my audience, about the voice that I want to share.

I think about it a lot, and I would say in many ways, I think a lot more about my business than I did when I was a physician, specifically, because I think being an entrepreneur is what I call just living and playing on an open playground with no rules. And as someone who loves rules, the physician in me still loves algorithms and processes.

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This has been a really hard thing for me, but I will say that being a coach and leaving medical practice, while it hasn't been easy, has been super, super important in my personal growth, in my own self-concept as a human. And I love that I get to share that perspective now. I get to share that as an example to working moms.

Not about leaving your job to pursue a different career. That's not the purpose of this. It's to leave something behind, even if you don't hate it, in pursuit of something that you want more. I think that that is incredibly important. And to know that even now in my life as an entrepreneur, even though I'm not practicing medicine, even at my ideal weight, I still experience the good with the bad.

It's always going to be there, but it's a lived experience that I am choosing. I'm choosing it on purpose. So I chose, when I was thinking about my career as a coach, my career as a physician, I decided I wanted to have a career that had more freedom and wider impact, and I could see a very clear journey for me as a coach to be able to offer my voice, and that's how I chose.

But it's not always easy. Even on the side. There are many, many moments of hard, falling flat on my face of many of the hardships that I think will come along with just living our life. I think working moms are always going to have hardships, and that's why I wanted to share the sort of this episode leaving one thing because you hate it to pursue another is one avenue, but what if you can get to neutral.

So you're not running away from something. I think that that is what it is really. Like when I thought about leaving medicine to pursue coaching, I wasn't running away from medicine. I was simply running towards coaching. And I think that that is what has informed how I think about my business, how I think about coaching my clients.

I think it really colors my perspective and I want you to know that it's okay to give yourself permission to change your mind. One of the biggest lessons I have learned in leaving medicine in this decision is that growth is messy. Learning is messy. Being human is messy, and as someone that has really ridden the coattails of A pluses and gold stars and wanting to do things the right way, this has been a particularly hard lesson for me.

But what if you didn't have to decide at the age of six or 10 or 13 what you were going to be and do for your whole entire life? Like what if we were allowed and given permission to change our opinions? To change our decisions? Because we change as humans, we grow and we evolve. I'm not the same kid I was when I was six.

I'm definitely not the same human I was at the age of 16. And if it was okay, if we could give ourselves permission to change our minds, to make pivots and tweaks or even sharp turns and detours along the way, could we trust ourselves to have our own back in the journey. Because I think that sunk cost fallacy is going to hold back so many possible lived experiences.

It definitely would have for me. So if you want to feel more calm and light on the scale, more confident in all the little nooks and crannies of your life, of your working mom life, I want you to know this. You can have it that you do deserve it. You don't have to keep waiting for things to hit, easier for you to claim it.

But you have to work for it. I'm telling you, it is the sweetest work. It's work and it's the sweetest work. It is simple and it's not always easy, but it is worth working for and that is why I do what I do now. It was a special

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episode for me to record and share with all of you because I really wanted to share what really helped bring this podcast into existence.

This was a very key piece of it. Me leaving medicine and becoming a full-time entrepreneur was absolutely a key, key piece of it. I hope you enjoyed this story time, this journey, the story. I hope you feel inspired to reach for the results that you want, knowing that it is possible for you. Absolutely.

When you're willing and ready to challenge your current paradigm, when you're willing to challenge it; I'm telling you it is the absolute best thing ever. I hope that you felt inspired by this story. If this episode resonated with you, if there was something that you took away, I would love to know. I would love to hear from you. Drop me an email over at info@unstoppablemombrain.com and tell me what part of today's story resonated with you the most.

And if you're on Instagram, make sure you're following me. My handle is @TheUnstoppableMomBrain. Drop me a DM, come say hi and let's talk. I hope you guys have an amazing day. Bye. 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 theunstoppablemombrain.com.