

Ep #100: Weight Loss Confidence: Friend or Foe?



The
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Mom Brain
podcast

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with
DR. PRIYANKA VENUGOPAL

Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Priyanka Venugopal

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Hey, this is Dr. Priyanka Venugopal, and you're listening to the Unstoppable Mom Brain Podcast. Weight loss confidence, friend or foe. Last year, I was talking with one of my best friends from Residency, who is, by the way, supremely fit. She can hit so many metrics at the gym, and she has been one of my personal mentors. And she's been guiding me a lot in my own personal fitness journey to get stronger. And I was sharing with her last year how I just didn't feel confident that I could hit this fitness goal that I had. I have shared on the podcast before that I really believe that weight loss and hitting your body goal should be broken up into two phases.

The very first phase is losing the weight you want to lose by dialing in your nutrition, loving the way you eat so that is super clean. So when you do move on to the second phase, which is where I'm at right now, hitting the gym, deciding to build muscle, get stronger, your relationship with nutrition is so well dialed that the changes you do make is so much more powerful. So that's for a separate podcast conversation, but I was sharing with her last year when I turned 40 and I created this goal that I wanted to get stronger. I just didn't feel confident about it. I felt confident with weight loss. because I had done it. I've lost a little over 60 pounds. I know that I can do it because I've done it before. I've now maintained it for years. But this next phase of this journey, I want to be able to do pull ups and push ups and all kinds of crazy things that I really want to take my body to. I just didn't feel confident. It felt really, really far away. And this podcast episode is going to share with you something that she asked me that completely changed around my perspective, around the confidence that I thought I needed to hit my personal fitness goals. And exactly how your desire for weight loss confidence might be getting in the way of you hitting your goals. Before we dive into today's podcast episode, I have to make sure that you know that this Sunday, if you're listening to this podcast in real time, I'm hosting a live webinar on the three proven steps to consistent weight loss results for you this year.

I want these three steps in the hands of any high achieving professional mom that has ever felt frustrated, felt inconsistent, felt annoyed with the scale because you just think that consistent results are out of your reach. What I know now after coaching my clients. For hundreds of hours and having gone through this journey myself to have consistent results on the scale requires equal parts science and equal parts mindset. You do not need more motivation or more willpower to lose the weight you want this year. If you want your weight loss to become something you can maintain with ease, we need to start creating lifestyles that will last a lifetime. That's what we're going to be getting into on this webinar. I want to make sure that you attend. Absolutely attend live. You can grab your seat over at theunstoppablenombrain.com/webinar. I will send you an email with all of the details, including the zoom link and really take the next step to block this time out and come live without further ado, because I know I went off on a tangent. Let's get into today's episode around weight loss confidence. 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. So as I was sharing my concerns with my friend Ruth, I was telling her, I want these results so much. I want my body to feel stronger. I've done the work. I've lost the weight and now I'm ready for this next step, but I just feel like it's so far away. I don't feel confident. And as I was even telling her this, I was reflecting back on the multiple months of last year where I was inconsistent. I shared this on the new year's episode, how I did not hit my fitness goal of 2023. And this is a huge reason why I had so many moments where little moments of doubt, little moments of my goal feeling really far away, little moments of disbelief drove me to procrastinate on taking small daily actions on, on a daily basis. And I was telling her how I really felt that doubt that I was experiencing seep into

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me hitting my personal goal. I was doing a lot of passive consumption and a lot of thinking about the problem, a lot of thinking about the plan, a lot of thinking about the goal without actually taking real action. So as I was basically, you know, just verbally dumping on her all the thoughts that I was having, she asked me one question that just blew my mind and it turned it all around. She asked me, Priyanka, were you confident that you were going to be able to lose 60 pounds before we lost 60 pounds? And yet here we are. Can I tell you, it was such a mind blowing moment for me because even though this has been my own journey, I had forgotten how I didn't feel confident before I lost the weight. And just her asking me this one question allowed me to go on a little bit of an introspective journey. And it's really what inspired this podcast episode. As I backtracked and reflected back to 2018, 2019. When I was at my personal heaviest, I was at 200 pounds. I knew I wanted to lose this weight. I wanted to feel more at home in my body. And I did not feel confident. I have reflected on what it was that actually allowed me to show up and lose the weight because I didn't fully believe that I could do it. What changed was I stumbled onto a podcast. Kind of like this. And understanding the role of mindset and coaching with weight loss just struck a chord with me. I knew deep down that this was the solution. That yes, I needed a science backed strategy to lose the weight I wanted, but I had to have Coaching and mindset skills alongside for me to implement consistently. I could see that my coach was confident. I could see that she believed in me. And I saw in that moment, even though I didn't feel fully confident and I didn't fully believe in myself, that I actually had a choice. I could let myself keep making my life's decisions as it came to losing the weight I wanted from a place of uncertainty and fear and doubt and nervousness, which led me to a lot of inconsistent action, a lot of winging the planning and the execution and absolutely giving up when it felt hard. So I totally had that choice that I could keep on making life decisions around weight loss from a place of uncertainty, fear, and doubt, or I could choose something a little bit different. What happened for me in that moment subconsciously, because I wanted to lose the weight so much, and I could see how much my coach believed in me, I decided to make this decision from a place of courage. I did not know that I was doing this at the time. I'm only reflecting on this based on the conversation I was having with my good friend, but it's really led me to think about the difference between confidence and courage.

I think that high achievers, and I know because I am one of them love feeling confident, confident, feels really good, confident, feels powerful. It feels very in the bag because we feel confident in other corners of our life. Maybe you felt confident as a student in school, in the workplace. We believe that that's what's creating a lot of our success at work or maybe our success at home, it's been a fuel that has created a lot of excellence. So it makes a lot of sense that high achievers might be avoiding the areas of their life that they don't feel confident in. When I reflect back over the 10 years that I gained a little over 60 pounds between 2008 and 2018, I did a lot of avoiding and hiding from the number on the scale. I knew in the background that I was gaining weight, my clothes were getting just a little bit tighter. I had to go up a scrub size. My pants felt a little bit snug, but rather than stepping on the scale and taking needle moving action because I felt doubt and fear and uncertainty, I hid. I also just want to take an extra moment to normalize why our primitive brain will reflexively always do this. The most primitive subconscious parts of us don't want to expend any extra energy. Remember my podcast episode from a few weeks ago where I talked about convenient, compelling, and convincing stories that our brain will create when we're not aware of it, to keep our status quo in that moment, back multiple years ago, when I weighed a little over 200 pounds, I didn't feel confidence when it came to losing the weight I wanted to lose.

I didn't know for sure that I could do it. I had seeds and moments of disbelief and doubt. And in that moment for me to actually practice confidence and take action would have required an expenditure of some energy. So it makes a lot of sense when we're not aware of our convenient, compelling, and convincing stories that our brain will kick up a lot of reason to not take action. And at the same time, it is so important to see and really

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we can reflect back into an inventory. Your three Cs story will keep you at your current weight because you will find yourself pausing action. You will find yourself procrastinating in little and small ways. You'll find yourself winging it in little moments. You'll find yourself micro quitting every single time it feels hard. So this podcast episode is truly an invitation and an opportunity to share with you that you don't actually have to feel positive, think great thoughts, or feel total confidence to lose the weight you want to lose. And in fact, what if the real work was to practice making decisions and following through on them when you don't feel confident?

I can hear you asking, Priyanka, exactly how do I do this? It happens when you practice courage. Now, I'm going to warn you, courage does not always feel so good. In fact, it can feel a little bit scary. And it's important to note when you're feeling courage, nothing is going wrong. I really love the way that author Dan Sullivan talks about courage and confidence like this because it really resonated with me and my own personal journey to lose a little over 60 pounds. I felt very little confidence in my ability to lose the weight I wanted to lose, but I did feel courage and it turns out that was actually all I needed to hit my goal. Dan Sullivan talks about rather than relying or hoping or wishing to feel confident before you hit your goal, instead, imagine simply feeling committed to your desired body goal and then practice feeling courage. So you start taking action. What he describes in this process, as you implement and iterate, you will start to grow your capabilities. And here's what happens as you iterate from a place of courage and you start taking action and you build your capabilities, you start getting results. You started losing the weight you want to lose simply because you're actually taking action. And the happy byproduct of this is you start creating confidence. The warning label on this is that it won't always feel good. This is the hugest misconception that so many of us are under is that we believe we have to feel good to take action and I want to help you separate the two. The way you feel about your goal, the way that you feel about yourself is coming because of a set of thoughts you have around you hitting your goal.

It makes perfect sense. Before you hit your goal that maybe you don't feel confident, maybe you feel some fear, some doubt, some uncertainty, and it's that moment that you want to start practicing courage to take needle moving action. And at the same time, it's so important to see that you can actually take action and make decisions, even if you don't feel total confidence flash forward six months from now. And imagine that you have hit a goal for weight loss and think and reverse engineer. Let's reflect back to what was the decision that you started making today to absolutely get you there. I can tell you without a shadow of a doubt that allowing uncertainty, fear and doubt drive your decision making is going to keep your results waiting. As opposed to what we're talking about on this podcast episode is deciding that it's possible to take action. Even when you have uncertainty, simply by practicing courage. The funnest part about this is you start to grow emotional resilience and your capacity to feel uncomfortable. You might be asking me, Priyanka, I don't want to feel uncomfortable. I don't want to feel more uncomfortable. That's not what I'm talking about. What I'm talking about is actually expanding your ability to feel uncomfortable. All humans, no matter where you are, you're going to feel a range of emotions. You're going to feel confident sometimes and doubt sometimes happy and sad, right? So when we allow ourselves to practice the skill and it's truly a muscle to feel uncomfortable emotions and still take forward action towards our goal, we improve emotional resilience. And I want you to think about this almost like a value bank as you practice emotional resilience and taking action. When you feel uncomfortable, you're simply depositing little golden nuggets into your value bank. The most fun piece of doing this exercise. And truly I want you to think about this as a little game, a little experiment to go on when you practice feeling courage, taking action, allowing the discomfort of your doubt and uncertainty to not stop you. And you grow that emotional resilience. You start creating more results and best yet, you start to prove to yourself that in fact, you never needed confidence to begin with. This hasn't just been my personal experience, though. I can see how much it has been a part of my journey, both in weight loss and even in my professional life.

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But this is exactly what I see happening with my clients in the *Unstoppable* group. No client coming into the group feels 100 percent confident when they join. But they can see my confidence in the process and my unwavering belief in them. And so they practiced courage in that moment. Most of my clients, before they ever came to work with me, the *Unstoppable* group, haven't actually invested in just themselves seriously. What I've seen across the board with professional working moms, we are very used to investing in education. We're very used to investing in our children, maybe in our home, in life experiences and vacations and amazing concert tickets. But when it comes to just us, we have hesitated in investing. So it makes perfect sense that you have a flutter of nervousness when you're considering investing in yourself and this goal. But here's the common thread that I have also seen with the clients that I have worked with. They all felt a desire that this was a goal that they wanted to prioritize. And simply honoring that desire that they had to lose the weight now and prioritize his goal drove them to take courageous action. I can tell you when you show up in the group from that place, your results are guaranteed.

I love that my client Diana was actually sharing on the podcast a little while ago that she lost the weight that she wanted to lose. She hit maintenance. And the reason that she actually started feeling confident in maintenance was because she made so many mistakes along the way. This is something that is really unique to the *Unstoppable* process is the process that I take my clients through to teach them how to handle mistakes and random off plan moments powerfully. I help my clients not hide from the data or from that random imperfect moment that they had over the weekend. And instead I take them through a process that teaches them how to evaluate their results really with an objective lens, get coached on what actually came up and then make specific tweaks to how they're going to show up in the following week. After coaching clients now for hundreds of hours, the common trend I see around success in weight loss and maintenance is this piece is really understanding that the key to consistent results is knowing how to have your own back to show up consistently. Even when you have random off plan moments, confidence is not just about your weight loss goal, just on its own. That's fairly fragile. If you gain a pound or lose a pound, it all of a sudden impacts your confidence or your lack of confidence. In my opinion, confidence. Is being in the messy implementation of your weight loss strategy and handling mistakes and proving to yourself that you can in fact trust yourself to get back to your strategy to create consistent results without quitting on the goals that matter to you. To me, that is real confidence, and I believe that that's how you're going to maintain the weight you lose for a lifetime. I don't want you hoping that you never gain a pound back. What I think is a way more valuable skill is to expect and anticipate you might gain a pound or five back. It's not a problem. You have the mindset skills necessary to quickly turn the ship around to get back on track. And it's what creates a lifestyle that will last a lifetime, which you learn how to do in spades in the *Unstoppable* group. You've heard me say this before, but weight loss coaching is actually life coaching. It's mindset coaching on whatever gets in the way of consistent implementation.

In the *Unstoppable* group, you get a fat burning action plan on day one. You clear up any confusion around how to eat, what to eat, when to eat on day one. And then we have six months together where you get into the messy implementation while living your real life as a busy professional mom. In the group, we end up coaching around frustrations at work, disconnection with your partner, worry about your kid. We coach on all of the life obstacles and life stresses that ever get in the way of you consistently implementing your fat burning action plan. Why do we do this? Because the only reason you ever have inconsistent results on the scale is because you needed a break from your weight loss strategy. It's really hard to see this on your own, which is why working with a coach to show you your blind spots, to show you where and how you're distracting from a

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real life stress is so priceless. Most diets out there, and I have tried a lot of them, don't cover this, which is why in my experience, most diets don't last and you end up on the rollercoaster again and again and again. I know without a shadow of a doubt that if you identify as a professional working mom who wants to lose weight, you feel the desire to prioritize this goal. This is the group for you. One of the best parts about this group, in addition to the strategy that you get and a very clear step by step process that I take you through is you're in the company of like minded women. Women who identify as professional working moms with high achieving tendencies that all have this growth goal. One of the things that I did not do for the longest time is I did not think about how to build in support into my strategy. So I'm someone that would have a plan on paper and then another plan on paper and then another plan on paper and I would have these amazing plans on paper. But the part of the strategy that was missing from me was the support structure for me to implement my plan for me to really uncover my blind spots for me to figure out why was it that I didn't execute on this? What got in the way? What emotion was I trying to avoid? What part of my life felt so big that I thought I needed to take a break from my strategy? And one of the best parts about being in an intimate small group like the *Unstoppable* group is you get to learn from the brains of other women like you. Women from every industry are getting coached on their work life, their mom, life, their weight loss, their obstacles, and their challenges. in a way that will up level the quality of your thinking. I cannot tell you how often I will hear a client tell me, I had no idea I even needed that coaching. If you just change the time and the place, that was exactly what I needed to hear. I have really curated this group so that it is the best mix of strategy and accountability where you will really feel seen and heard in the group. And also at the same time, learn from the wisdom of everyone else. So this podcast episode truly is an invitation to catch your desire to feel confident before you have results in hand.

And just know when it comes to losing the weight you want, if you don't feel confident, it's okay and perfectly normal. And dare I say expected instead of waiting for confidence. to drive you to take consistent action. Expect that you will feel doubt and uncertainty and nervous and the goal might feel far away. I want you to borrow my belief in you and my confidence in the process. When you have a strategy that works and mindset skills that will drive consistent implementation, your goal is just done. So I encourage you to practice feeling courage today. Start taking decisive action today so that you start moving the needle. You don't have to feel good every single time you make a decision, but you can completely catch that desire that your body is having to do this work and to hit this goal. I hope you all enjoyed today's podcast conversation. And are willing to go on the journey to let go of confidence and instead practice courage.

I hope you guys all have an amazing rest of the week and I cannot wait to see you on Sunday live for my webinar. The three proven steps to consistent weight loss results. Grab your seat over at theunstoppablenombrain.com/webinar and come live. I have seen the difference. I have poured through results that I have created for myself. Whenever I sign up for a training and I tell myself I'll get to it later, the results. I know when you attend live, and this is the feedback I've gotten from past webinars, there's so much clarity that is created on this webinar. If you've ever felt confusion around, I'm doing it all, or I'm not able to be consistent, or my motivation just kind of waxes and wanes, don't worry, I have got your back on this webinar. We just solve that together. And the best part about coming live, not only is it more fun, in my experience, but also your unique questions, your actual obstacles, you get to share them with me. Your cameras will all be off But the Q&A box will be having a party in there You can share your specific circumstances and I will stay on to answer anything that comes up for you and right after the webinar if this work is calling to you if everything we do together on this podcast is just resonating with you then I will be inviting you to join the This is my intimate six month small group coaching program for high achieving professional moms who want to lose weight this year with simple science back strategies, and also learn the mindset skills for consistent implementation is truly so much fun. And it is an intimate small group. So spots are limited. Make sure you're

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ready to join us on day one when doors open on Sunday. And I cannot wait to see you inside. If this is calling to you, I have some amazing, amazing bonuses. only if you're signed up for the webinar. So don't miss out on that opportunity. Sign up today. Don't wait for tomorrow. And I cannot wait to see your name pop up in the webinar. I'll see you guys on Sunday. Have an amazing week. 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.