

3 Counterintuitive Weight Loss Truths Moms Need To Understand



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With Your Host

Natalie Bacon

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Welcome to Mom On Purpose, where it's all about helping moms overcome challenges and live their best lives. My hope is by being here, you are more inspired to become the mom you were made to be. I'm Natalie, your host, a wife, boy mom, dog mama, Chicagoan and former lawyer turned professionally certified coach. If you're here to grow, I can help. Let's go.

Hello, my beautiful friends. How we doing today? Feeling a little bit on fire, so here we go. I created an Instagram post over @mom.onpurpose and it got a lot of saves. And I talked about the three counterintuitive weight loss truths that I really believe moms need to understand who want to lose weight. And I thought, I want to create this in long form because I see that it's resonating. So if you found it over there and you want more of an explanation or this is your first time hearing it, this is what we're going to talk about today.

I did a little bit of research since obviously this is going to be longer than one minute, unlike the, the reel. And I found out that for US women ages 40 through 59, 47.4% meet the clinical definition of obesity. That is wild to me. And this is not simply, you know, women who would like to lose 10, 20 or 30 pounds. So it's close to half of middle-aged women meeting the threshold of obesity while living in this culture that we are so blessed with where information about exercise and nutrition and fitness and our health is abundant. And that is a beautiful thing. But the problem isn't a lack of information. You know what to do already. But simultaneously, nearly half of women aren't where they want to be with their weight. And I actually think this has so much more to do with the brain. The primitive brain is wired for survival.

It's wired to seek pleasure and avoid pain. So at the end of a long day when we're feeling stressed about our job, our life, the mental load, we reach for, you know, sweeter, more carb-heavy snacks. We pour ourselves a glass of wine. We turn on the TV, we scroll, we engage in activities that feel so pleasurable. We eat and drink foods that feel so pleasurable because we are seeking something that feels good because the stress, the overwhelm, the tension, the negative emotion doesn't feel good. Your brain, you're on default, will not tolerate that. It will seek pleasure. And so as a

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coach and as someone who is now helping moms lose weight, I think it's so important to understand and for me to help you understand that it's not that you don't know what to do. Like we all know what to do in so many different areas of our lives, and yet we're still not doing it.

And when you really understand that that's because of the primitive brain, then it actually is easier because you can have more compassion for yourself. You can really see why it feels less frustrating for you because you understand what's going on. It's not that you don't know what to do, it's that you have a primitive brain who really likes pleasure. And when life feels hard or when you're fighting with your spouse and you're feeling disconnected or worried or when work feels very stressful or when you are just, you know, like so exhausted at the end of the day after being with your kids, all of that emotional discomfort, your brain does not like. And it says, "I need some pleasure to take the edge off, right? I need a glass of wine. I need some sweets. I need some extra whatever, bread." And then before we know it, we are in this cycle of losing and gaining weight, of just perpetuating the weight that we have been at, and then thinking, you know, erroneously that it has something to do with who we are.

Like, well, I guess this is just my lot in life. Like I can so relate to this. When, before I ever had kids and before I ever lost weight, I was about 25 pounds heavier than I wanted to be. And I just thought, "Well, this is just genetics. You know, this is just more of my mom's body. This is just the weight I'm going to be at." I had so many limiting beliefs. I just did not think that it was possible for me. I identified as thicker. I thought, you know, I'm just not a naturally thin person. Or I would think things like, "This is just my set point. This is just where my body falls at and lands at." Like years later, obviously, you know, getting pregnant with my kids, losing the weight and doing that three times over and being where I am now, weighing less now than I did then is so crazy to me.

And I share that with you because I think sometimes we can think like, "Well, that can work for other people, but not for me." And it's just not true. It's an entire identity shift and transformation. Now if you know me, my weight loss approach is very strategic and you implement it by following

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steps, the identity piece of it will shift with you as you do the work. So that's just what is on my mind as I am thinking more deeply in ways that, you know, hopefully are more helpful to you. I was really just dumbfounded at how many women are struggling with weight. And I was thinking back to like myself, pre-kids, when I was about 25 or so pounds heavier than I would have wanted to be. And I was just thinking about like what I was thinking then and how different that is from how I identify and what I think and how I feel about myself and my body and food and clothes and all of the things.

And then I was also thinking about, you know, after having my third son being the biggest I had ever been and just feeling so off and nothing fit and trying to like hide my body. And it wasn't something that was always top of mind, but it was like this low grade, sense of dissatisfaction with my weight and my body and where I was at physically. And as you all know, I had to figure out how to lose more weight doing less. And so this isn't designed to be an episode on that, but I wanted to start off talking about this because I think it's so important to just understand where I'm coming from so you know that, you know, I was not just the naturally thin girl. I was not just the one who, you know, got pregnant and then the weight just fell off.

And I think that matters because, I can be an example of these tools and of this work as well as obviously my clients, but for you to know that it was something that I had to do intentionally, I think is just important. And I think, you know, coming back to the, the main point of what I want to talk with you here about today, the three counterintuitive truths, I think that what really allowed me to come up with the lose more with less method and what allowed me to just be more successful with it was not anything in my circumstances, definitely not genetics, definitely like nothing that, that I would have that you don't have. Instead though, I focused on one thing. I took an essentialist approach to weight loss. And here is why. It is because of these counterintuitive weight loss truths. So let's dive into them and then I want to talk about them in more detail.

Number one is that working out is irrelevant to weight loss. Did you know this? Work out because you want to feel better, work out because you enjoy

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it, work out because you have fitness goals or you want to get stronger. Those are amazing reasons to work out. But when you work out because you want to lose weight, you are working on two goals now, because you're working on a fitness goal and you gotta go into a calorie deficit. And sometimes they can compete. Now, the, what I'm not saying is that you can't work out and lose weight. Of course you can. What I'm talking about is when you work out intentionally for the purpose of losing weight. Now you have created two goals.

Second counterintuitive truth is that you can optimize for nutrition and eat healthy foods and still not lose weight. Did you know this? I think a lot of people find me and really, feel a sigh of relief and get excited to work with me because it's so much simpler than what they've been doing. And this is because of this second truth here, which is working on your nutrition and eating healthier has amazing benefits. But a natural result of that is actually not weight loss. So you can optimize for nutrition and eat healthy foods and not lose any weight. And you know this, my friend, this is not news to you because you've done it. It might be, feel validating though, because a lot of my clients come to me and they're like, you know, I always thought I was doing something wrong or it was just so much work, it was unsustainable. What's actually happening is you're turning a nutrition goal into a weight loss goal. Weight loss is just about a calorie deficit.

And what happens with optimizing for nutrition and eating healthier foods, which of course is a worthwhile goal in and of itself standing alone, but when you do it again with weight loss, which has to be a calorie deficit, now you have another goal. So if you're just working on nutrition and eating healthier foods, you can do that and end up eating the same or more. Often we eat more because it's not as tasty as the french fries or the cake or the cookies. And in so doing, we end up maintaining or even gaining weight and are less satisfied because again, it's not going to give you that same satisfaction as, you know, eating the chips and the carbs and, uh, you know, the pizza. So when you optimize for nutrition and eat healthy foods, it's its own goal in and of itself. When you add in a calorie deficit, which is what weight loss directly is, now you have two goals.

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Now, what do most high achieving moms, successful women, what do we do? We do all three at once. So this is the third counterintuitive truth. When you use exercise, nutrition, and a calorie deficit to lose weight, you now have three goals, not one. Are you hearing this, my friend? After doing so much personal development and inner work for years, I mean, over a decade, I know that achieving like one transformation is so much harder than we think. Zero to one is so difficult. Not because, doing the actual thing is challenging, but because we have to override our primitive brain, the part that wants to slow down, take breaks, quit, the part that wants to seek pleasure and avoid pain, that part that wants to just stay up late and, you know, watch a little bit of TV and reality shows instead of going to bed early, right?

We know better, but we don't do better. And it's not because of a lack of information, it's because of the primitive brain. On top of that, life. Life, my friend. If you were in that age of, of kids and, you know, I gave that stat from 40 to 59, I would say that's most of you here, right? I tried to get information or research on 30s as well. I know some of you are a little bit younger than me, but the information kind of didn't land that way. It was like either 20 to 40 basically or 39 or 40 to 59. So I don't have that specific information, but most of us listening are in the, you know, 30s, 40s, and 50s. And in that time of life, that is a lot of family, that is a lot of work, that is a lot of kids and mental load.

And, you know, you're doing all of the things. All of them are amazing and they're things that you've always wanted. And when you add on top of that a goal, one goal, okay, that is plenty to focus on. Your brain has to just focus on that to get a result while life is living. When you add in three goals at once, when you say, "I'm going to get in shape. I'm going to get healthier. I'm going to lose weight." And then you go and you try to start exercising. And at the same time, you start to overhaul your eating habits or count macros and you focus on nutrition. And then you realize, "Oh yeah, well, I also have to be going into a calorie deficit for this to actually work." Now you're doing three goals at once, three. It is so much more challenging. So my approach to goal setting is essentialism.

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Take one goal at a time and then you kind of create this success snowball. So have at it, you know, go ham, go wild with your health goals. I recommend doing it one at a time. This is how I do it. This is how I've been teaching goal setting for years. I find that I am so much more successful and then that success breeds more confidence because I see outcomes that, I once thought I couldn't create. And then once you create those outcomes, it's easy to have thoughts that empower you to keep going. It is so much harder to manage your brain around years and decades of failures. You can absolutely do it, right? I have done that before too, right? Those of you who have been around for a while and even if you've heard me talk about it on the podcast where I, you know, spent years working on dating and spent a lot of money investing in a dating coach.

I think I just talked about that actually last week on the podcast. And, you know, it was, it was money well spent and it was my journey. So it was supposed to take decades apparently. And also, it was very long. And I, I just want to offer, not to say that goals shouldn't take that long, but like there are people who can achieve what you want in a so much shorter of a timeframe. And you should pay attention to that, okay? Because sometimes we think because we've had so many failures that that means that we can't have that thing and so we drag it out even longer. Instead of just looking at what other people are doing, like if I would have just, you know, at 28 years old or 25 years old, looked at what happily married people with families did to create that, and I, if I would have just stopped dating the guys who I was dating then and completely changed at 25 instead of 35, I would have saved a decade, right?

Now, I'm not saying I should have done it that way. I truly believe that our journeys are meant for us. And also bringing it back to the present and weight loss. If there is a goal that you want to achieve, don't think that it has to take longer or that you have to do more or that it has to be more challenging. Look for the person who can show you how to get bigger and more results by doing less, okay? They have the secrets. And I think I've talked about this before where, you know, I saw someone on, online on social media say like, "Why are we always looking for an easier way out or

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the easier way to do something?" And I was like, "She does not have three small children for sure." Like I am not mad at her approach.

I am not you know, nothing against that. However, I just know that she doesn't have three kids and that's okay. But also, I'm speaking to you because if and your version of this doesn't have to be three small kids. I know though that if you are someone who has a lot going on in your life, and most high achieving women do, regardless of if you have kids or, you know, if they're older or whatever, caring for aging parents, that comes up a lot with clients I coach. So when life is lifing and you have careers and all of the things that we manage in our lives is just high achieving women, when that is our life, then adding in a goal on top of that, that you deeply want and desire is important because you deeply want it and desire.

And also, if there's a shortcut, if it can be easier, if it's actually not that you need more information, but you just need to shift the way that you're doing something and that you need to focus on one goal instead of three, then like let's do that, right? Let's make it easier. And I'm just giving you three kind of as the stereotypical things that we focus on for our health, right? It's like exercising and fitness and the nutrition and then the calorie deficit. But really, right? If I'm, if I'm getting really real with the high achieving women who I'm used to coaching, it's like we're not just focusing on three. There's like hormone health and gut health and cycle, right? And aligning up to that. And then there's focusing on your sleep and your steps. And, you know, there could be a list of 10 different things that you want to focus on for your health.

And I want to just encourage you to take the approach that your goal's job is not to entertain you. Like, think about that for a minute, right? You want to achieve a goal. And I think that if you simplify it and you take an essentialist approach and you just focus on one goal at a time, it's not that sexy. It's not that fun to just talk about, oh yeah, I'm just working on my weight loss goal by going into a calorie deficit, versus kind of the status bump that we get when we're like, oh yeah, I'm going to this fitness class and I do this three times a week and I go to Pilates and I, you know, have you tried this hormone supplement or what about this sleep, routine or whatever it is,

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right? We get this sort of a status bump and again, like we feel like we are more in alignment when we're working on a lot of health and wellness things at once.

And like I kind of like that too, but it's a little bit indulgent and it's just like pleasurable, right? And so I just like to cut through all of that for you because you can spend a lot of time, a lot of time counting steps, tracking protein, going to your strength training three days a week, reading and learning about, you know, menopause and perimenopause and hormones, tracking your cycle, like, optimizing for nutrition, making sure you're, you know, getting your fiber in. You could do all of that and not lose weight at all, at all, right? You might even gain weight, just not because those things make you gain weight, but because they're irrelevant. Weight loss is about a calorie deficit. And so my intention with this episode is to help you just like be more laser focused with the outcomes that you want to create.

Now, if you're listening to this and you're like, yeah, I'm not on a weight loss journey right now and, you know, I'm also doing like 10, 15 different health things right now, but you like that and you're not expecting anything to be, you know, different in terms of a specific goal in the next, let's say like year, then keep doing those things. It's not like doing those things is bad or wrong. It's just that when we do those things and we feel very productive doing them, but the scale isn't moving and we want the scale to move, it can feel very, very frustrating. It can feel illogical. It's like, I'm working on this goal. Maybe it just hasn't happened yet. Maybe it can't happen for someone like me. Maybe I'm just going to feel a little bit, you know, bigger than I want to feel forever because it can't work out for me.

And then we make it mean something about ourselves and our identity and it's just one big misunderstanding because all along we're focusing on the wrong thing. So focus on the goal that you want to achieve. If you want the number on the scale to go down, the most direct path to that is a calorie deficit. My lose more with less method is where I show you how to go into a calorie deficit without counting calories. This is the high achieving woman's dream because not only do, you know, in my opinion, is it something that's going to get you results more quickly than some other methods, but it's

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really not about the speed as much as it is the sustainability because we're going to take what you already eat. There's not specific foods that you need to be eating. We take what you eat, you're going to eat less, you're going to use the scale as data to anchor to, and you'll learn how to do that in my programs.

And then you will lose weight consistently, permanently, my friend. And I teach you the skill of maintenance inside At Your Goal Weight where you will never wake up one day and just be five, 10, 15, 20 pounds up. That cannot happen if you learn the skill of maintenance. Most people do not understand that. They only learn the skill of, you know, whatever modality it is that they learn to lose weight. So if you learn to lose weight following a nutrition plan, then you think, okay, that's what is required for me to always lose and maintain weight. And it conflates maintenance with weight loss. And those are two separate goals and two separate skills. And I'm kind of obsessed. I know I'm very biased, but I'm kind of obsessed with the maintenance module Inside At Your Goal Weight because I teach it as a very straightforward, specific step that you do every single day to weigh yourself, to anchor to that number, to make sure that you stay the weight that you want to be at.

And if you go up a little bit or down a little bit, then you know exactly what to do. And so it's a skill set. Anyways, very passionate about this work. Never in a million years did I think I would be here. Obviously would've taken a ton of photos on my journey and videos and documented it much better. But I always like to say it happened how it was supposed to happen. And it has been so fun for me to work with so many new faces and women in this community who want to lose weight using a different approach that really can work within how they already prefer to eat. So if you would like to learn more about working with me for weight loss, my signature weight loss program is At Your Goal Weight. You can go over to momonpurpose.com/goal. I also have created a challenge that by the time this airs should be out, if you go on over to momonpurpose.com/challenge, that is, something that you can sign up for just to get a taste of working with me for weight loss.

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It's a 10-day challenge where I help you lose the next few pounds, and that'll really give you a sense as to whether you want to invest in at your goal weight and do the entire program to reach your weight loss goal. So if you're on the fence or you're thinking, you know, I just want help with the next few pounds and I'd love to do a 10-day challenge for weight loss or you want to learn more about it, momonpurpose.com/challenge. I would love, love, love to see you inside. Take care.