

Support for Obesity Patients

By Ava J. Zebrick, MSHCM

6/1/2022

My Patient Story



- Family history of obesity and overweight since childhood
- Parents both healthcare professionals
- Felt responsible and like I was hurting those who cared for me
- Weight continued to increase, regardless of early interventions
- Comorbidities:
 - hypertension,
 - high cholesterol,
 - prediabetes
 - clinical depression
 - polycystic ovarian syndrome
- Hit my “rock bottom” after May 2013
- Hit barriers to care

Why I'm here

Finding Purpose from Passion

by Ava Zebrick

OAC Member Ava Zebrick turned her personal journey with weight into a career of improving healthcare for individuals affected by excess weight and obesity — and the OAC served as a great source of motivation along the way.

My Before

By the spring of May 2013, I had finally reached my breaking point. As my orthopedist went over my x-ray results with me, he explained that kneeling for 20 minutes over the weekend had moved my kneecaps out of place.

Luxating patella, or dislocated kneecaps, was added to my growing list of obesity-related conditions — alongside hypertension, prediabetes, polycystic ovarian syndrome, clinical depression and chronic fatigue. I was told that if the physical therapy I was prescribed did not effectively treat my knees, I would need surgery.



Ava Zebrick found passion and inspiration at the 3rd Annual Your Weight Matters National Convention in 2014.

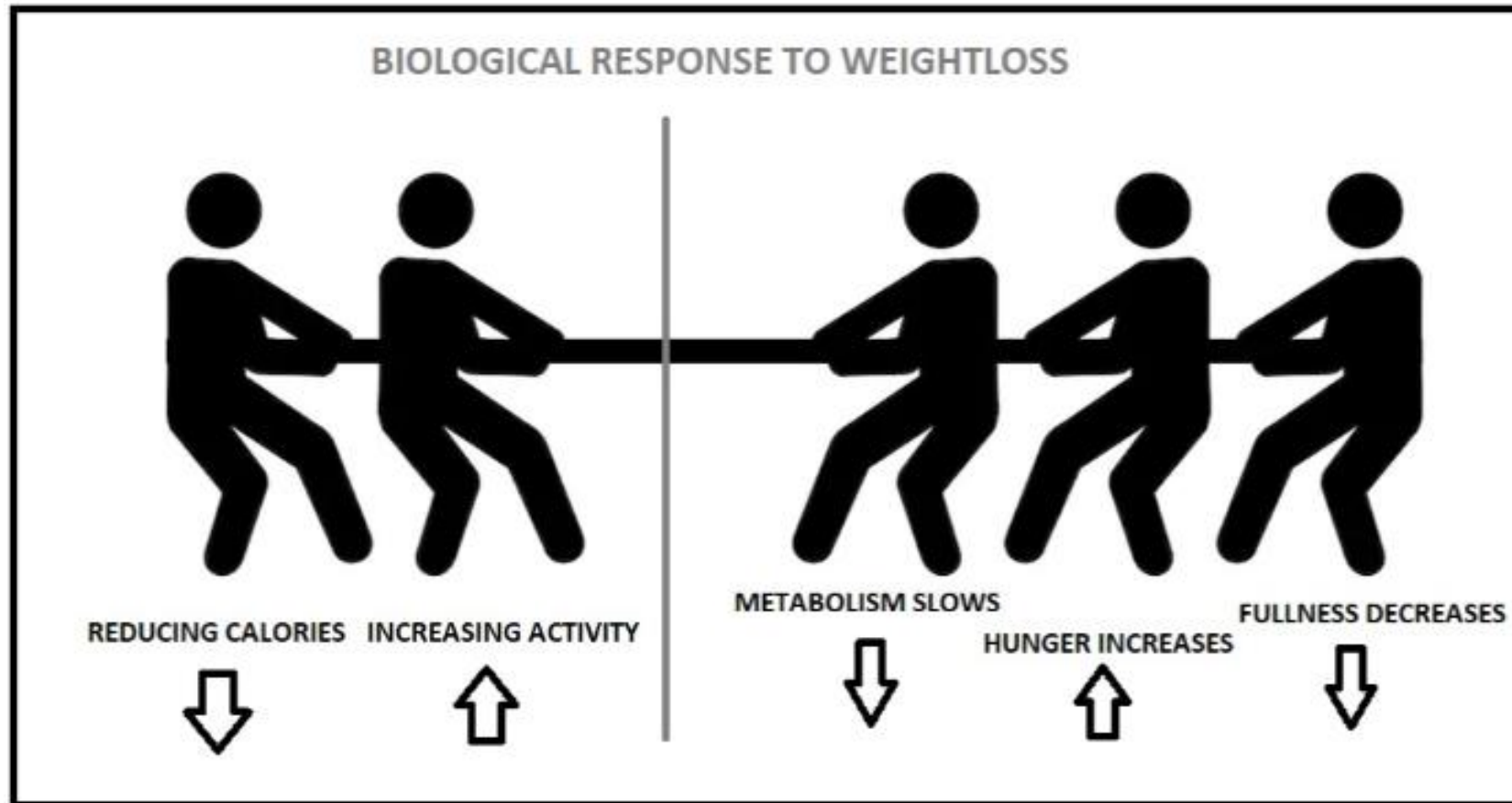


Start with “Who” and “What”
What is obesity?

What is Obesity & Severe Obesity?

Obesity is a treatable disease that is a worldwide health concern associated with having an excess amount of body fat. It is caused by genetic and environmental factors and can be difficult to control through dieting alone. Obesity is diagnosed by a healthcare provider and is classified as having a body mass index (BMI) of 30 or greater. Nearly 40 percent of Americans have obesity.

Obesity Tug-of-war



Changing the dialogue

Self-Talk <u>Without</u> Understanding <i>What</i> Obesity Is	<u>With</u> the Knowledge & Understanding
I am obese.	I am a person who is affected by obesity.
It is my fault. I did this to myself.	Obesity is a complex disease with genetic, environmental, and behavioral causes.
My weight is solely my responsibility.	Obesity is a chronic <u>disease with biological processes</u> that make it <u>resistant to treatment</u> and that <i>contribute to relapse</i> .
Weight loss or gain is determined by choices and willpower. If I fail to make enough changes and control my weight, it is my personal failure.	My weight matters for my health, and I need help from healthcare professionals who understand the disease of obesity in order to treat it and help me manage my weight.
I know how to lose weight. I have done it before. This time I didn't do the right things, and I didn't do enough. I knew better, and I should feel ashamed.	Obesity is complex, everybody's body is different, and every person is complicated. Managing weight is not simple, and it's difficult. The more information, support, and "tools in the toolbox" I have, the better.

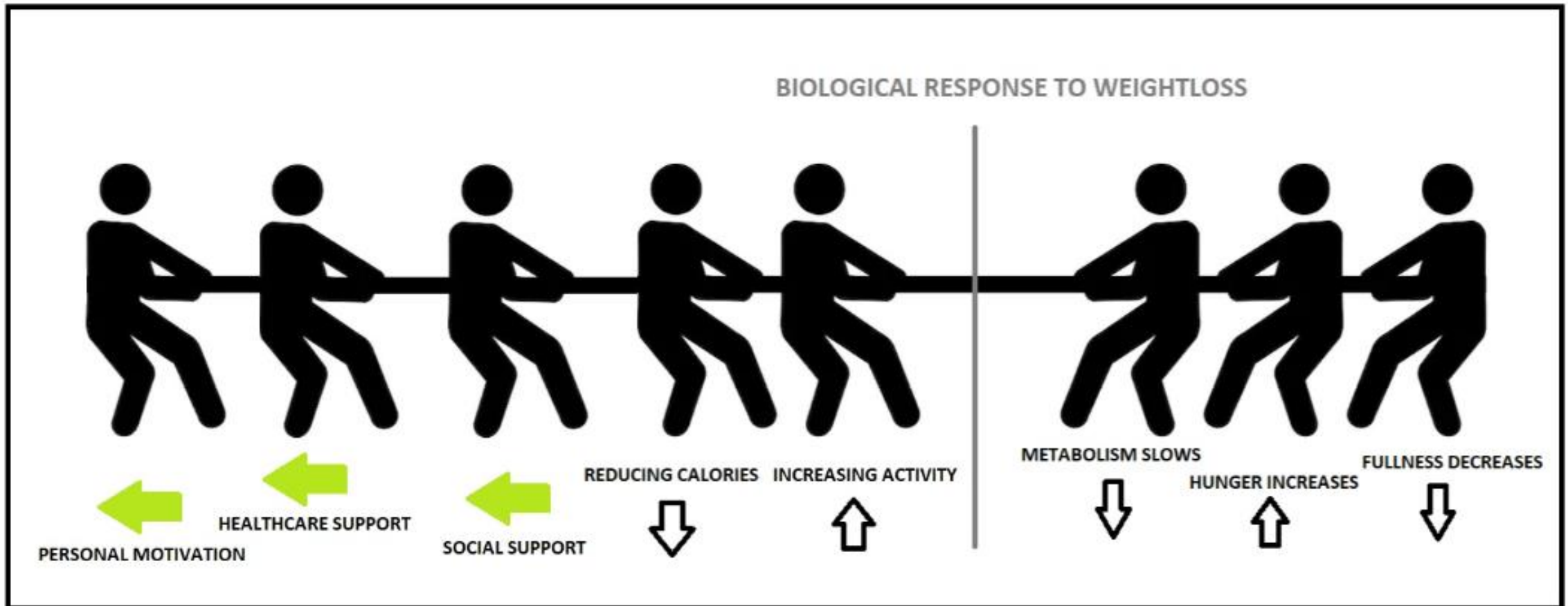
Everything Changed



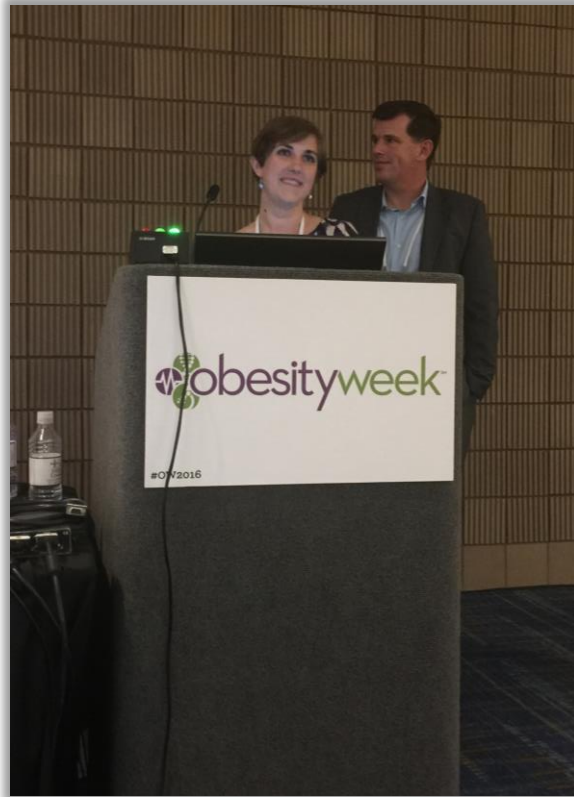
Obesity Tug-of-war

As patients, when we understand obesity, we are more likely to:

- Feel relief from internalized bias
- Reach out for resources and support
- Engage and partner with our healthcare team



Advocacy and the Treat and Reduce Obesity Act



Healthcare Support



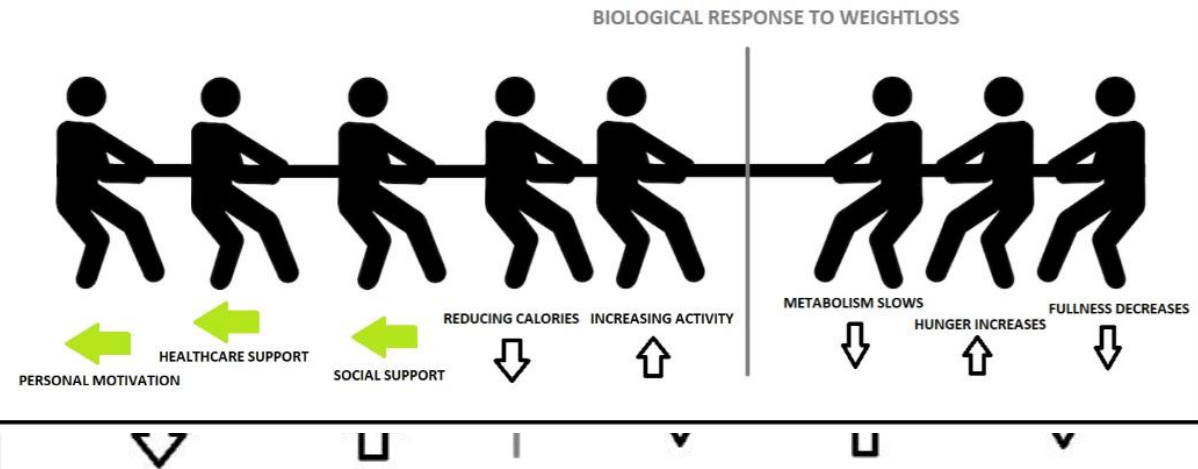
- **Intensive Behavioral Therapy** for obesity by professionals who understand the disease and are appropriately trained
- **Covered visits** with Board Certified Obesity Medicine Specialists (MDs)
- Coverage for FDA approved **anti-obesity pharmacotherapy**
- **Affordable and comprehensive metabolic surgery program** per guidelines of the American Medical Association (AMA), American Board of Obesity Medicine (ABOM), and American Society for Metabolic and Bariatric Surgery (ASMBS)
 - Not limited to 1 lifetime procedure
 - No conditional half-year waiting period
 - No requirement of “successful” weight loss prior to approval

Employer Sponsored Social Support

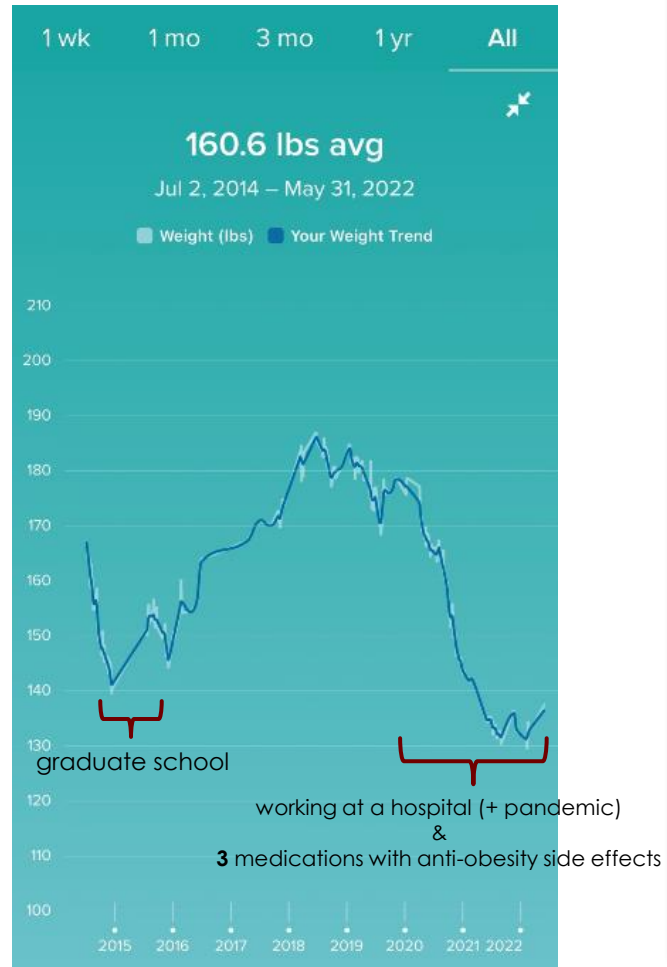


- Education about weight bias in the workplace
- Corporate Wellness*
 - Specialist led support groups
 - Peer led support groups

BIOLOGICAL RESPONSE TO WEIGHTLOSS



Tug-of-War



- I had a **durable surgical procedure** and have successfully kept off over 100lbs for over 8 years. Nearly all comorbidities in remission.
- I have successfully “**made health my job**”
- I **have the understanding and knowledge** of obesity as a disease
- I try and more easily can **keep informed** on the latest innovation in obesity research
- **Still, my weight has never been stable, and I regained up to about 50lbs**
- **Because of my personal medical history** with prediabetes, chronic migraines, and mental illness, **I am prescribed medications that are also in formulas of FDA approved anti-obesity medications**
 - I do not have access to anti-obesity medication, but I am able to get treatment in roundabout ways because of other conditions
- **My husband does not have these other conditions that I do. Not medically managed.**

Going forward

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