

# Dr. Krista Scott-Dixon Interview

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## SPEAKERS

Michael Nelson, Dr. Krista Scott-Dixon

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Michael Nelson 00:00

Welcome back to the flex the diet podcast. I'm your host, Dr. Mike T. Nelson. Today on the program, we've got my good friend, Dr. Krista Scott Dixon from Precision nutrition. We have a wonderful chat. We'll have more about her in just a sec. And the program today is brought to you by the physiologic flexibility certification. If you want to increase your ability to recover in record time, be more robust and resilient and just generally harder to kill. Check it out, go to [physiologicflexibility.com](https://www.physiologicflexibility.com). The four main areas we cover are the homeostatic regulators, these are things your body has to hold constant. But yet you can still adapt in those areas. And my bias is and there's a lot of data to support this, that that'll just make you a more resilient, badass human being. So the first area is temperature. We talk all about sauna and cold immersion much more also did a deep dive on the effects of cold water immersion and hypertrophy. Is it really going to destroy all of your gains? Secondary is pH. And this could be everything from breathing techniques to doing really crazy stuff, intervals on a bike or on the rower or sprinting if you're good at sprinting. The third area would be fuels, primarily the opposite ends of the spectrum, both blood glucose and a super deep dive into ketones. I think that the ketones are used more as a backup system. Like yeah, doing a ketogenic diet once in a while, I think is a good idea. But again, particulars on what you're trying to do. And then the last area Part four is on oxygen and carbon dioxide, which is how your body is regulating energy. But we know we can do things like a super ventilation method from Wim Hof. Or you could do a breath hold. Those are on two different ends of the spectrum. So go to [physiologicflexibility.com](https://www.physiologicflexibility.com) for all the info. So as I mentioned, today, we were talking to my good friend Dr. Krista Scott Dixon. It's been a while before I've actually seen her in person, so it was great to chat with her. She is currently the director of curriculum at precision nutrition. She is also leading the development of the PN Academy and their certifications. She was very gracious enough to invite me to be one of I think there's only three or four peer reviewers on the last round of the precision nutrition material. So super honored to help out with that. She is author of several books, including why we want eat. I was asked to read that one pretty closely. And the essentials of nutrition coaching for health and fitness and sport textbook, along with many other book chapters, articles and reports. Before she started working with pn, she was a researcher and faculty member at the York University in Toronto. She has now moved out of Toronto, but that's last time where I saw her was in Toronto. And she has more than 20 years in the fitness and health coaching industry. 10 years of university teaching and of course

direction. So on the program today, we kind of get into a little bit of what precision Nutrition has coming up geared more towards recovery and sleep. And we even talk about all aspects of coaching touched on a little bit of mental health, and just had a really fun discussion. So she always has a great wisdom. So sit back and enjoy this flex dye podcast with Dr. Krista Scott Dixon. Hey, welcome back to the flex diet podcast and I'm here with my good friend, Dr. Krista, thank you so much for being on the podcast. I really appreciate it.

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Dr. Krista Scott-Dixon 04:09

Well, I'm honored to be finally invited this is I know,

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it's been a little while. I haven't crashed any dinners of you and the precision nutrition people in Toronto for a while. So I haven't seen anyone for a while due to lockdowns and everything else that's been going on. So it's nice to do these little virtual chat.

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Yeah, well, you know, thanks to the power of technology that the pandemic couldn't have happened at a better time, at least in technological terms of keeping us connected. Right.

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Right. I wish I would have bought stock in zoom so and Pfizer. Yes. Yeah. Who would have It's crazy to think about whether you know, whatever side you're on that people would be cheering for pharmaceutical companies for the most part now compared to just a year ago. And again, I'm not saying they're all bad. I worked for 10 years and medical device industry, but it's just crazy how fast some things can change.

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Yeah, it's it's not the it's not the first thing that comes to mind when you're writing E corporations.

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Yeah. And before we hit record we were talking about even just the goals, I think people have changed, right? You're saying that the six minute ABS thing is kind of on the way out. And, and I always thought when sort of the pandemic for started, I'm hopefully thinking I'm like, Oh, you start looking at what do you know, some of these other risk factors are I'm like, oh, man, this will be a really big wake up call for people to be more interested about actual health parameters. And you'll get requests for health coaching, not just fitness coaching. And I'd be curious to see what you've seen. But what I've seen is, I think I'm still talking to the same

people. And I think they are more interested in health. But the people who probably need more health advice I don't hear from, and maybe that's just the demographic and the little small world that I live in. But I I'm afraid that the people who need the advice the most haven't necessarily done any drastic changes. But I'd be curious on your thoughts.



Yeah, I think that's pretty accurate. And I think a lot of that represents kind of one of the fundamental challenges of behavior change, which is that you can't scare people



in right? Would you think that you would, right, there's a, there's an old book that talks about it, where they had people who had like terminal diagnosis of cancer and heart disease and all this stuff. And at face value, you think, Oh, my God, this book is gonna be about how they all change their life. And the book was a camera, and the title was basically about, even no matter how much you tried to scare people with even the specter of death, and most people didn't change their mind.



Yeah, and I've seen that play out in family members. Yeah, you know, my dad, I think was was sick with a variety of like, preventable lifestyle things for 20 years before he died. And like, I remember having a lot of conversations with him, like dad, okay, you know, maybe this heart attack is the moment when you turn it around and right, you know, and, and he had all kinds of near death experiences, and I was just changed nothing. And I was that was really fascinating, actually. And, you know, one of the things I think it shows us is that, yeah, fear does change people sometimes, but only in a really kind of traumatic way, right? Like, if you come home and your house has been leveled by a hurricane, okay, you got to make some changes, but it's, it's deeply traumatic, but like, just being scared, actually tends to make people hunker down into the familiar and the comfortable and the soothing mechanisms that they already have. And so, like fear actually tends to have the opposite effect in terms of permanently changing us. And I mean, the analogy is something like spanking your kids or something like that people are like, ah, we gotta, you know, discipline people harder. But what happens is, all we do is we just activate the fear centers in the brain and regress into like, you know, primordial organisms just trying to survive. And so we're not able to be cognitively flexible, we're not able to consider new opportunities, we're not able to be creative, because we are freaking out internally. So I think it's just a beautiful illustration of one of the real truths of human change is that you can't scare people, or lecture people or direct them into changing, but I think there's another piece of it, which is people's risk perception. And a friend of mine early in the pandemic said, you know, people are walking around wearing the risk perception on their faces, right? You know, this is before Mass mandates were in place, right? And so you can tell people's level of conscientiousness risk perception, scientific knowledge, whatever, by whether they were wearing a mask or not. And I always thought the differences between Canadians and Americans were really fascinating in this. But so so part of it, I think, is people's perceptions of their own risk. And I think we've all had clients who will come in and say, I'm very healthy, or I eat healthy, or I'm doing everything correctly. But when we drill down into their data, we find that that self perception is really very far from objective reality. So I think that's another piece of the

puzzle. It's that kind of Dunning Kruger effect where many people do not actually realize how much at risk they are, especially if health has been degrading sort of slowly over time. And I find that I find there's a bit of a gender divide here. A lot of men I find, kind of imprint on how they felt when they were like 17 18 19 years old, right? Teenage guy is full of energy, full of vitality, immortal, easily healed, and but they're 40 they're 50, even 60 but they still have this imprint of like, Yeah, I'm hale and hearty, young buck, but they're not. I. So I think there's just lots of pieces to that. But to circle back around to your original point. Yeah, it is. It is really fascinating and a little bit sad in a way, because so many of the factors that really increase people's risk are so preventable. And that's what we struggle with, I think as health coaches all the time.



Yeah. Have you seen more people who need health weight loss advice coming in with health has been their number one concern, or what I've seen, as I mentioned, more fitness people who are already kind of into the fitness thing now are a little bit more steered towards health. I've kind of seen more the latter, I haven't seen a rush of general population of people, at least in the US beating down the doors to the gym yet.



Yeah, I would say the same. And I think what what brings people in now is not, I want to do a champion benchpress or I want to see my abs or like physique, physique. And performance goals are not really bringing people in so much as mental health goals are becoming much, much bigger. And kind of like, general malaise, I would say, I feel like crap, I want to not feel like crap. That's, I think, what's bringing people into the gym now. So I don't I don't even know if people would really conceptualize it as anything specific. In terms of a health or fitness goal. I think it's just like, I feel like crap right now. And I don't want to feel this way. So that's, that is my guess. And I will say, like, I just rejoined my local community gym about a month ago, and I was amazed at how packed it was. Never really was. And I was like, Oh, this is really interesting. I wonder if people have just been craving that physical gym space. And that's bringing people in, I don't know, it's, it's interesting.



Yeah, I've been gone for a while we were in Texas for six weeks. And then we just got back from the Dominican. So I went back to the gym, I only go to the local gym, once a week, I converted my garage to a gym. So it's kind of nice. I don't really need to go anywhere. But once a week, I go there. And I went there yesterday. And yeah, it was pretty packed. I don't know if that's because of the time of the year where students are back home or what's going on. But you know, normally like to one in the afternoon, it's pretty quiet, right? The lunch crowds gone. Other people aren't there, but maybe more people having off or whatever. So be interesting to see if that still continues?



Well, yeah, I think one factor there is that many more people have shifted to remote work. Yes,

I think that's probably a big factor in changing people's experiences of the world. And I think that, like the pandemic good, give a lot of people the opportunity to reconsider their priorities. So now, if you're lucky enough to be a knowledge worker who's able to work at home, you do have a little bit more flexibility in your time. And if you, you know, had time off, or whatever, you were kind of able to think about work and what place it had in your life and your other priorities, like spending time with family or getting outside for a walk with the dog or whatever. So I do think that many more people's time is more flexible, which again, could be leading to more gym attendance among the people that like might already have been inclined to go.



And I'm waiting for and it's probably already happening of the lack of a better word, the zoom creep, of people realizing that, yes, they're working from home, but employers also realizing that they're almost on call more often, because they are virtual, they're not in the office. And with just a couple of lines and people I know, like their workday has sort of expanded. So initially, it was kind of eight, nine hours because I don't have to commute. This is great. I got an 11 hour back. And then now I find you check in with them. And they're like, well, but now I'm working like 10 and a half hours a day like it just seems like work kind of crept in and took away that a little extra time that they've had for a while. And they are more sedentary than they were before. So they're not walking to their car, they're not parking and they're not even walking to the bathroom when they're at work. Like you check in on their step count. They're like, Oh, I'm at like 2000 today like oh my god.



Yeah, absolutely. And I think that brings up the issue of like non exercise Activity Thermogenesis, which I think a lot of people are not aware of, if they're not in the fitness industry, like how much that actually does contribute. And, you know, there's data from things like you know, areas like cities in Europe, which are much more walkable people, more transit, and they bike and they drive less that you know, that alone keeps people lean. There's always that mystery of like, why are people here lean? And why are people here heavier and, and I think meat is a huge contributor to that. And yeah, even just walking into the bathroom, like I think about the time, way back in the dark days when I worked in offices, like sometimes the bathroom would be like, across like the whole cubicle block, right? Oh, yeah. You'd be walking like five miles. Well, you know, depends in which water you drink, like, you know, walking to and from the bus and like walking back and forth the bathroom and like all these little things do add up. And as you say, in terms of the step count, it's actually it can actually be quite significant. So. So yeah, I think a lot of people don't consider the totality of what happens in a day with all of their activities. And so I think many people are discovering, hey, something has to be a little bit different here. And I in the work boundaries thing is a big part of it, too. I think a lot of people like, I mean, you and I've been working remotely for years and have had to really think about how to manage our time and, you know, academic work is very open ended, right? It's a candle handle your own business job to teach a class a few times a week, but that's it, right? Whereas I think now, you know, many more people are working remotely than have done before, and don't have the skills to deal with all of this open ended time as well as the temptations of like, hey, the kitchens right next door, or the TV is across the room kind of thing. People have had to really learn new kinds of skills, in a way.



So yeah, especially being in the environment, if your environments not set up as pro of, oh, like, it used to be the arguments about Oh, someone brought doughnuts into the office and that type of thing, but it was rather infrequent. You know, now you have people at home are like, oh, there's doughnuts in the counter all the time. And they're like right next to them and look at their step count super low. And if you don't even live where you live, or I live in Minnesota. This morning, it was for below Fahrenheit, doesn't like you don't wake up and go, Ooh, boy, I want to go for a run. You know, it's like, ah, do I want to go outside. It can be harder where for work, he had to, you know, just had to go start the car, you had to park the car, you, you kind of had to do all these movements that were sort of baked in to just existing and doing your job. Like I used to tell clients, I'm like, I want you to drink two liters of water a day. And yeah, maybe it was more for fry duration. But I also know that if they drink that much water, they have to get up and move to go to the bathroom. You know, and for some people, that would be a significant difference in their, you know, step count for the day. Rather, people if they didn't drink any water, they were just plastered to their chair like all day until lunch. And then they walked to the cafeteria and sat down again.



Yeah, yeah, absolutely. Even even funny stuff. Like what's the chair you're sitting in at home? Yeah, versus versus at work right. Now, I'm super lucky because I have a treadmill desk. This thing is the bomb, like I can get things I would I think this is just a genius, invention. And it really has kept me sane for the whole thing. And this is the second iteration. My first treadmill desk was an actual treadmill. I bought off Craigslist, and I needed a board to put across the rails. But I didn't have one. I was like, looking around. I was like, What can I use my computer on I was like, oh, a skateboard. So I like like banded the skateboard to the rails and the treadmill computer on it. So the first iteration was a little bit rough. But now I have an actual grown up persons treadmill desk. And this thing is incredible. So for anyone listening, it is a little bit of money, and it does take up a little bit of room. But this thing will save your sanity. I personally believe.



Yeah, that's one thing I wish my wife wasn't too happy when I suggested we put a treadmill at the kitchen table where I work, most of the time that didn't, didn't go over so well. But I do notice in the winter that I mean, I tend to program or robic base stuff in the morning just to get movement. You know, I typically try to go for one walk a day in the morning in the evening. But I also have to then rearrange my schedule around that, right, because I just in my little townhouse, I'm not going to get that many steps, right for most of the time, I have to do a walk of, you know, almost an hour, you know, and that's I understand for people that's like an additional thing out of their day. You know, if they're training that day, on top of it, now you're talking about, you know, two hours in addition to everything else, and the responsibilities and stuff they have going on. And when I was doing my PhD, I remember once I just got a fancy step counter. And I put a little piece of tape over it. So I didn't know like how much, you know, steps I was doing. And I looked at the end of the day, I don't even think I hit 1000 Right. But I didn't go for a walk. I didn't go outside. I didn't leave my townhouse that day. So I was working from home doing my PhD stuff at home, took the watch off when I was training. I'm like, oh my god, this is horrible. But you find all these weird ways to sort of justify it of like, Oh, I got this

much stuff to get done. I can't do anything when I'm you know, walking, but over time I I push the number back up and even with clients I've just realized, like once people start getting below like 5000 steps a day, like most people just don't feel very good. Like you can get by for a couple days. Maybe you can eke out a couple of weeks. But after a while, like pretty much across the board. Like that's one of the questions I asked him like how many steps a day do you get They're like 4000 or something. I'm like, yeah, just go for a walk in the morning just around the block even just anything to bump that up. And you know, most of the time, people feel just dramatically better to



think you're hitting on something really important. And this is a direction I've been going with clients myself, which is to really get them focused on how do you feel like what are the body sensations you're having? What is the somatic experience you're, you're having. And, and that, to me is so much more true than any external measurement, because what happens I find is people get very left brained about it. And they're counting their steps. And they're looking at the the AP, but they have no interoception they have no internal concept of actually what's going on in their bodies. And I have found that shifting their attention much more consistently to okay, what is happening in your body, actually, prompts behavior change so much more than nearly anything else. And so now, you know, as people build that awareness, they can go, Oh, my back hurts, my hip hurts, my knee hurts, I feel crappy. Let me get up and walk around like that starts to become their default choice, once they feel the difference, like, oh, I went for a 10 minute walk. And gosh, I feel so much better. I feel so much mental clarity. So I've been really using that as a strategy, like, how do you feel? How do you feel? How do you feel just over and over because clients can be so cognitive. And if you're dealing with knowledge workers, I mean, that's how they make their money is by thinking. And by not paying attention to their body, like it's not in their interest to pay attention to their body. So shifting that attention back, I think, is really helpful. And then the other piece I found for client work that's really helpful is to have crucial conversations with people around self prioritization, like nevermind, self care, like we're not even actually doing something. From the perspective of like self preservation, can we at least get you doing the bare minimum of keeping this this material substance of your body alive. And for a lot of people, that's a real trip, like, it's really, I don't know what's wrong in our culture, that we cannot prioritize ourselves in some basic way. But a lot of people really, really struggle with it. And I think that's, that's just fascinating that we can't even be like it takes, it takes practice and prompting to even want to do the basics of maintaining our human body. It's just, I don't, I don't know how we went wrong. As a culture, but this is the case.



Yeah, I mean, I haven't went through all that to like, you know, working for yourself, I think you can get by, by for a few years, depending on where you're at. But at some point, you're just gonna burn yourself out. And so took me forever even have like a morning ritual, which I know is like a very polar term now, because you know, we don't have kids. So it's easy for you to spend an hour doing this stuff in the morning, you don't have kids or family and I get other people have other obligations, etc. But my guess is what you're saying is, I think, it comes down to prioritizing yourself, because I work with clients who have kids, they have a family, some work at home, some don't work at home, you know, just kind of comes down to a priority. And no, you probably don't need a three hour am routine, just before you do anything, you

know, but something, right? Whether that's take the dog for a walk, go outside, you know, meditate, just, it doesn't have to be anything super complicated. And then figure out how do you feel like just do that for a couple weeks? Do you feel better or worse, because I think it's easy to dismiss these things as, oh, I don't really need to do that. I just need to work harder. And even on that area, I spent a lot of time thinking just back on what I've done what other clients have done. And at this point, I'm pretty convinced that six hours a day of like high quality output, I think is about Max for most people, I think you can probably go a little bit harder and for periods of time, but like a day in, day out, could you execute this for years on end and still do it. I think like six hours of actual work as kind of the max, I don't know what your thoughts on that are.



Yeah, I agree with that completely. And I think that's the line with people who study cognitive functioning, and you know, human attention and ability to focus, probably between three to six hours depending on the inputs that you're getting, right. And I think like people often decontextualized their attention and ability to work like it should just happen. Well lead to it, right. Like if you've had crappy sleep, if you're not well fed, if all these things are especially the physiological inputs. You know, if you're in a, in a chair, that's uncomfortable, like all of these, all of these things, you will not be able to focus and so really, if you're a knowledge worker, it's very much in your interest to think about how to put these other pieces in place so that you can do your job optimally. So if you want that six hours, which is the outer limit, I would agree with you Yeah,



I think that's a limit. Yeah,



if you want that five hours, like you got to earn it, you have to work for it, and you're you can't just kind of keep popping Adderall and hope for the best espressos should hope for the best. It's not going to, it's not going to work and and, you know, sometimes with those things, you feel like you're producing really well, right? You hit that espresso and you sit down, you're like, I'm amazing. Like, you get that burst of energy. But then what you're actually producing is garbage. Like you're really annoying. It's like, it's like ideas you come up with in your high, right? That seem really terrific. When you're high. You look at your notes later. And you're like, what you what was that? Right? So I think there's a goes back to this difference between percept subjective perception and objectively measured reality. If we were to look at the quality of what you produce, when you are well rested, when you are well nourished and fed, when you are kind of psychically aligned, so to speak with the work that you're doing. When you have a sense of purpose and clarity and direction. It's vastly better than if you're, you know, poorly slept on exercise caffeinated to the hilt, and just frantically hamstringing. But I think that's it's hard for people to, to realize, especially in a context where we, we have this weird idea. It's not weird. I know where it comes from, we have an idea that the 40 hour workweek is a standard. Yeah. And of course, that comes from an industrial revolution model where, Yep, thank God, labor movements, you know, got us down to the 40 hour a week. They negotiated hard for decades to get us down to the 40 hour week, but like 100 years ago, or 150 years ago,

you might have been working 12 hours a day, or 14 hours a day with no weekend and a factory, right? So I think we've come to realize that human functioning is not like a machine, it doesn't work that way. So applying an industrial model, even even thinking about time as the unit of measurement of human labor, is a little bit weird, if you start to think about it, like totally, an hour of childcare is completely different than an hour of like, deep, immersive work is different than an hour of answering email is different than an hour of speaking at a conference like ours are not equivalent. And yet, that's how we measure our work. And that's starting to seem really bizarre to me, especially in the context of health and fitness, where, like, very little of athletic accomplishment, or physical performance is measured in just hours. Do you know



what I'm saying? Oh, yeah. I have a huge disdain for the per hour payment thing to I just, yeah, I don't like it. Because I think it's almost like, what is it like a reverse incentive? Right, I get that. So if you think back to, if you can do a job better, that means you probably have more experience more education, it should take you less time, not more. So you're actually making less money to do a better job. You know, it just the whole thing, I think is just backwards. But that's a lot of, I think leftovers from the industrial culture that's still very present in America. And even like Michael Pollan has talked about, like, even the drugs that we consider legal, like caffeine is legal and highly encouraged. Like, when I worked in the office, like the day the coffee wasn't there, like I thought the whole place is gonna grind to another halt. It was a miserable day, people were cranky and mad. And I mean, it was scary. It was like, oh, it's gonna be like a revolt, you know, but those types of drugs are legal and highly, you know, encouraged, you know, other types of drugs. Not so much, you know, so it's interesting how the culture even has different decisions. And even in fitness, like, you know, high intensity training, like the more high intensity, you can go, that's got to be better, because you're just getting more done in less time. It's like, yeah, there's a time and a place for that. But that's, you know, not the be all end all. It's gonna solve all your issues, either. So



yeah, I think that's a really good point. I've actually thought a lot about this over the years, especially with the pandemic because my own fitness activities shift. And I, you know, now, like, thankfully, I live in Vancouver, BC, which is one of the most honestly beautiful places in the world. Oh, it's amazing. I love to smell. Yeah, there's mountains, there's ocean, and people are very passionate about their environment. So there's a lot of like big swaths of just wilderness that you can go and be in. And I'm 100 meters from the beach, which is Oh, nice, you know, go down everyday and visit the water. So, like, I have been doing way more sort of outdoorsy, low intensity unstructured rambling kinds of things like this morning, I was down on the beach, but it's quite rocky. So I'm scrambling over rocks and climbing over logs and doing this very kind of open ended, non structured moving body and all like three dimensions. kind of stuff. And I think that stuff is so underrated and Michael Eastern his book, The comfort crisis. Yes. I love that book. Oh, it's terrific book and I did an interview with him and I just love chatting with him. But it's kind of the same idea that you know, maybe you're carrying a pack or you're carrying an awkward load and you're moving over uneven terrain. This is so undervalued compared to the highly structured, you know, highly competitive high intensity stuff. But this unstructured, open ended low intensity rambling is much more reflective of, by and large what human beings evolved to do. This is where we would have spent most of our time. So it's just yeah, it's, it's

always been weird to me that that's been so deprioritized because I think that that's actually really what gives you the widest base of your fitness Foundation, in a sense, not my ability to knock out 15 power cleans for time, I don't know, what's gonna get me through.



Yeah, and I've been thinking a lot about that too. And obviously, I'm biased because flextight started, I differentiate between formal exercise versus recreation. You know, formal exercise is something that has a goal you're trying to, you know, get to your goals of, you know, whatever it is, recreation is just like, yeah, just go have fun, like, do new motor movement, go play, go walk, you know, whatever. And, in Back to the culture stuff, like in the US, it seems like recreation is just an afterthought. It's like, oh, the things you do on vacation, where, especially with older clients, and myself, just so like, typical fitness person comes in, you know, not to rip on CrossFit. But maybe they do CrossFit, like five days a week. It's like, Okay, what else do you do? I'm a fitness professional, cool. Like, what do you do to relax? More CrossFit? You know? No, probably not. Right? Do you have any recreation? Do you have any hobbies other than, you know, doing more of the thing that you do all the time? No, that just to me seems like a problem. And then you think about how much of your brain is real estate and your just function is dedicated to doing these amazingly complex motor tasks. And not that Olympic weightlifting is easy, but I just think about hand eye coordination to to hit a ball, like go play tennis, obviously, I do a lot of kiteboarding. So you're trying to interact with the wind on a little board you're trying to balance on and you're dealing with unpredictable things, you know, golf, whatever. Just the amount of brain real estate you have that is dedicated to these very hard tasks that we just sort of throw by the wayside and just kind of take for granted is recreation, I do that shit on vacation?



Yeah, I'll do that. I'll do that two weeks out of the year, that if I if I if I do vacation, because Americans tend not to Write Right. Out of that a 52. And I'll, I'll go go play golf. And because I never play golf, I'll actually just throw my back out. And that'll be the end



of day one.



Because I think I'm 18 That's how it goes. I'm 40. Right?



So if you're male. Yeah. Yeah, you heard the story, the sea slug. So this is not this, this, I have to I think this is true. But it might not be that the sea slug is this little animal that floats around in the ocean and eventually finds a rock and sticks to the rock. And it never leaves its little

rockets where its permanent home is now and then eats its brain, because it doesn't need to move and food just kind of comes by. So I just think of like, how many humans are becoming more like sea slugs than humans, you know, just from the lack of novelty and movement. Right? The more if you look at like a lot of the brain science, we see that obviously training balance, I position head position, you know, entire reception, external reception, like we were talking about all these things that we can do that we just kind of take for granted and still use it or lose it principle that just even gone back and done. Like I have a little balance board here that you know replicates like surfboard. It's not that I think it's gonna have an amazing transfer to my training. But you know, probably just to spend a couple minutes per day like trying to just work on balance for the sake of being human and not a sea slug. In your own house. You don't have to get too crazy, but I just think we'll find more and more benefits to those types of different training stimulus that years ago I would have, I would have laughed at right Oh, someone on a BOSU ball trying to juggle what are you training seals like what are you doing? Now? I'm like they can now for motor development like dual tasking, like all the things going on, you know, just to be a better functioning human, I think like a certain part of your training. And that makes sense to me now.



Yeah, and I think with all the research coming out now about things like embodied cognition, right and embodied learning that learning, like even if you're learning a quote unquote mental skill like math, let's say if you somehow incorporate the body into it, it's so much more profound, so much more sticky. I mean, I think the brain has always had this like, self created bias of like, I'm the most important thing, right? But the really, if we think about mind, like it is distributed through our entire body, and it's our body has been so disparaged as a unit of acquiring knowledge and wisdom and intuition. And, and yet, it is the the unit because you know, so many of our, our deeper ways of knowing the world are deeper, faster, more ancient, more crucial ways of knowing the world are in our body. They are not in our thinking brain, they are not in the stories and narratives that we tell ourselves things like, Is this safe or unsafe, or just weird since like, after years of like, okay, I am not an athletic person. And like, I've never had like a natural athletic gift. I'm not the strongest or the fastest or anything like that. But after years of training, I have noticed my reflexes are astonishingly good. Like, if I knock something off the shelf, I'm just ninja catch it. Right? And that's sort of like that bizarre, like, where does that come from, because I don't train it directly. But that is a body way of knowing about where you are in space and kind of how to navigate yourself around it. And there's emerging evidence, whether it's for again, you know, mental cognitive kinds of tasks like math, or working through kind of emotional stuff, working through trauma. I just did a two day conference with Bessel Vander Kolk, like, you know, awesome, big on like body modalities for trauma. And he's like, he thinks cognitive stuff is just useless for for a lot of them, which I agree with. And he talks about all kinds of body modalities, yoga, dance, theater, even stuff like improv, like moving your body around space and interacting with other people storytelling, like all these things, use our body. And if we disengage our mental activity that occurs in our brain, from everything else, we are like effectively cutting off a huge proportion of our ability to know and experience the world. So it's not just that, like, we're not learning physical abilities, but like we're not, as you said earlier, functioning as humans when races off. So I think, you know, in the next 1020 years, we're going to come to appreciate the role of the body, much more than we do now. And so I think there's kind of a growing consciousness because, again, that the, you know, the second year of the pandemic, people are like, Why do I feel crappy physically, like

they're noticing how stress manifests in their body? So I think there's an emerging awareness of it. I, I don't think we're there yet. I think the thinking bringing mind, disembodied head on a stick model is still pretty pervasive. So but I think it's going in the right direction.



Yeah, I mean, I think of like, even my trauma, and obviously, I'm not a psychologist, but I think there's some a time and a place for, you know, CBT type therapy. And I think there's a time and a place for movement based therapy. And I'm utterly convinced that in the future, it's going to be a combination of both, right? Because if you have some type of traumatic events, the way I explain it to clients is like, so I had a guy who played hockey years ago, and we're doing much a hands on work with them to figure out what's going on, like his knees are getting incredibly painful, like halfway into a squat. And like, this is just weird. So we're doing some stuff. And it's telling me the story, because I position on the right was just just off like he does eyes didn't want to go to the right, he would stand on the right side, you can see him hold his breath, his shoulders would come up, very stress inducing, but very kind of subconscious. Like he couldn't explain what was going on. So we go through this whole history, and he's like, oh, you know, when I was in high school, I was a goalie and I got hit on the right side of my head with with a puck got knocked out. Like, okay, so we did some testing. And sure enough, anything on this side would provoke, you know, kind of a stress response. So we did some movement based stuff to try to activate him in that position based on be activated therapy from dog kill, or dog heal, or RPR. And we're able to get rid of it. But for a split second, when I put them back in that stressful position, he honestly looked like he was probably going to try to kill me. Right? Because his brain is saying, hey, dumbass. Remember the last time we were in this position, we got hit in the head, some really bad should happen to us. So let's not go back there again, because this is not a fun place to be. And so I just think of how many things that people will unconsciously avoid because their brain and their body is just very much survival based. Right? Some really bad stuff happened here like you see in car accidents, etc, especially with eye movements, that they'll just try to spend their whole life avoiding that subconsciously. They'll have like weird injuries like on the right side or just kind of bizarre stuff happening until you figure out what was sort of that root cause of it? Again, that's, to me, it's a mental thing as much as it is a whole body organism thing, because you're, you're just trying to do whatever you can to survive. And that kind of has you sort of imprints on it, especially related to trauma.



Well, and it goes back to what we're talking about the beginning of this conversation, right, right, which is, why don't people change their health behaviors and damage, right, it's exactly the same thing you describe the brain goes, Oh, or the body goes, oh, like we are in a in a dangerous situation here, we better hunker down and brace, right, and go back to whatever protected behaviors we know. And we know there's like a really staggering rate of adverse childhood experiences. So basically, show yeah, do when you're a kid, and that these can, you know, have layers and layers like maybe, you know, one part is a parent and one part of the teacher and one part isn't getting bullied at school, and like, there's infinite ways that your childhood can suck, all of which are mutually reinforcing, right? And, and even if they're not super dramatic, even if they're kind of just banal, they can accumulate and then determined and not determined, but drive and really shape and influence your behaviors and adulthood, in a way in ways that can be really puzzling and confusing. So, you know, because a lot of these might have happened before you had a lot of language or before you had a lot of kind of pre

frontal lobe consciousness. Like, they're not accessible to you, like, you don't know why you're doing things or feeling things or reacting in a certain way. So like, it's very confusing to a lot of clients, like, why don't like why is this happening to me, and, you know, a lot of the work that I do is like, kind of D stigmatizing those reactions and, and responses like, No, this is normal, like this is what brains do, when brains are freaked out. So let's see if we can get you out of it. But it also demonstrates why the coach card us School of coaching is really not useful for a lot of clients, because it just activates that threat response even worse, whereas what they really need is to activate the attachment system through compassion through empathy through secure and safe, supportive relationships. And this a lot of stuff they don't teach you in coaching, right? They they teach you how to how to fight harder, what? A squat, they don't teach you how to offer a safe non judgmental relationship space for clients. Right? Like, that. Just sounds way too woowoo for coaches, I think.



But yeah, I mean, when I got into coaching, like I background was exercise physiology did engineering, I'm like, okay, you know, I understand physics, you know, I got tortured with that shed for my master's like Bahrein, you know, thermal one thermo to heat transfer. And idiot, me goes, Oh, I got all the basics down is going to be easy. And of course, you can imagine what happens, right, your first client, I literally after the second client I had I was like, What am I doing? Like, I should have not been an exercise. As a major, I should have been a psychologist, because none of this shit has anything to do with other than basic exercise. This is Yeah. Yeah. And so I went back and started taking neurobiology classes, because I'm like, okay, so if I can understand the neurology of how the brain works, how is it taking inputs? How is it making meaning? You know, maybe I can try to, you know, figure out something a little bit from there. But again, it's all the things like that. Nobody teaches you. And yes, you need to know, exercise phys you need to know, nutrition, all those things are great to know. But I think thinking that that's only going to be enough, you're gonna be in for a very rude awakening.



Yeah, I think so too. And, you know, we like, sometimes we get pushed back because we have this model of deep health, that precision nutrition, and it's this kind of multi dimensional idea of health and, and part of it includes like the existential dimension. So you can call that spiritual, you can call it philosophical, it's, you know, Soul health, whatever you want to call it. There's the environmental dimension, which is kind of concretely like, what's around you in your physical environment. But it's also like the social environment, the cultural environment, and you know, so we kind of get pushback from people who are like, Well, why don't you just stick to talking about nutrition? Right? Why do you have to go into things like political stuff? And, you know, inequality and social marginalization? And it's like, but that like, I mean, being a marginalized person in the world, however, that is for you. Of course, that's gonna change your body. Yeah, like chronic stressors all day long. It's like Mike, like, how could that not change your body? And how could it not be related so like, all of this stuff is connected, all the all the stuff we've been talking about work, cultures, society, inequality, like all of that stuff, shapes you and it shapes your movements, and it shapes your, you know, levels of stress hormones, and all of that stuff. So it's all relevant and so like the job of a coach is so much more complex than it used to be. It's not just the you know, Billy Bob Thornton, Mr. Woodcock, like yelling, the 1950s gym teacher anymore, you really have to be a fairly layered human being. And professionally. I mean, it's interesting, you talk about people in the fitness industry not having

hobbies, and this is something I've noticed as well. It's like, when you're in the industry, all of your friends are fitness friends, all the things you do things you get together, and you're like, let's power lift right or whatever, right? And, and the danger there is that you do not develop a lot of other dimensions that would allow you to connect with your clients, like you don't know about cultural elements you don't know about, like other hobbies, like it's becomes really challenging for you to connect with other human beings. And I think the danger is that it really further alienates you, from your clients. And from yourself to like, I don't think that anyone can thrive. With just having one singular interest. I just, I don't think that humans are, are constructed that way, I think that we take in a lot of stuff and digest it and weave it together to become more complete. So it doesn't really serve us to kind of only become more specialized. And I'm not arguing that people shouldn't become specialized. I think that it's, it's got to be specialization plus other things as well. And I think, you know, like, you and I are both academics in some way. And I noticed that when I was in academia, academics would marry other academics. Oh, imagine going home to another Demmick. Especially if you're in the same department, like Oh, my God. So I've always thought that, like academics should be prevented from marrying other academics, you should have to marry someone who's like, completely in a different line of work from you, so that you at least get some perspective on the situation. Yeah, there's my social, there's my social, you know, my social dictatorial social policy for the day. Yeah, man should not be in the same job marrying each other.



I agree. And maybe even noticed, academics are almost like fitness professionals, where maybe it's just the way the system is set up that very few of them had hobbies, or if their hobby, it was the thing that they studied. Right, you'll run into a few people who, you know, were endurance athletes, but they study endurance, you know, that's their thing. You know, it was rare that you would find someone who was studying something and their hobby was completely different. Like, if you did that was like the weirdo in the department across the way, you know?



Yeah. And you'd get actively discouraged, like when I was, oh, yeah, absolutely. Like that, like, I would, I would take some shit from hiring committees, like look at you diluting right, your focus with this other stuff, or like, oh, I guess you have a little gym hobby. Like I remember people being proud of their complete lack of other interests.



Oh, totally. That's so. Oh, yeah. Even when I was doing mine, the running joke in the department was that, if you want to any practical question that you'd have to talk to me, because I was like, the only person who was working part time as a trainer. Like other PhDs, they would ask a very, you know, kind of basic exercises, but an applied question. And those people are very intelligent people. They're like, I don't know. I'm like, but you're, you're finishing a PhD in exercise physiology, for crying out loud, but they were looking cardiac impacts of, you know, cancer drugs, or, you know, all these different things. And my advisor used to yell at me, So Cal Dietz was, you know, right around the corner. So I go over him, you know, talk to him on my lunch break once a while, and I've known Kyle, who was a coach there

for like, 12 years. And my advisor would be like, I don't know why you go over and talk to him. And I'm like, Oh, hold on a sec. Like he has to apply basic exercise physiology to athletes, or he loses his job. And it turns out historically, he's been pretty good at it. Like why would I not want to know what he's doing? You know, but it was like a completely another planet of anything that was implied was like this weird area. And eventually I asked my advisor once I said, Hey, like, why do you study exercise? Phys like, cuz you don't give a shit about performance or anything. And he's like, Oh, I just use exercise to push variables around in the body. I was like, weird. But do that those kind of things happen in academia and you're kind of rewarded for it because you get more publications, you stay in your own little area. And it's just so weird coulomb was very narrow world in a lot of ways. Yeah, I



mean, we could go down a rabbit hole talk about how weird academia is always the biggest pyramid scheme like a big multi level marketing yes to recruit people and, and and inculcate them indoctrinate them as we're looking for and and you know, make them believe in the the toxic system and then once they've reached the top, there's so deep in it, they can't see out of it. So yeah, I do think it's And it's, it's a bit of a bummer because I think about all of the smart people that I knew in academia and how my oh yeah, wasted effort there was generating this busy work to get published. But like, yeah, not even publishing things that had any real utility in the world. And I know, that's like a common critique of academia, like you guys are just doing useless things. And, you know, we all know that sometimes you have to do basic research in order to get to applied research, but like, there was really useless shit going on, to feed things into the machine. And it just, it seemed like a real bummer, because I was like, you know, like, there's a lot of smart people here who could be doing a lot of very useful, socially progressing things that could move us all forward, collectively. But here they are hamstringing on this wheel creating useless products that 20 People look at, you know, it just it seemed like such a waste of, of human intellect and, and in the field I was in, which was kind of the socially progressive social justice oriented field at the time, like, these people could have been moving society forward, instead of like stressing out over journal publications, you know, it just, it seemed like kind of a bummer to to waste that energy. In the case of exercise physiology, we could be helping people we could like, again, circling back around at the beginning of the conversation, we could be building a society where people are just naturally, like, we're the society is designed to enable people to be healthy without a ton of effort. And I think about this a lot, like we blame people so much for not doing all of the things that we as wellness professionals do. But I look around. And I'm like, what in society facilitates that, like, right in the environment that facilitates it. I mean, I've traveled all over the US. And often when I travel for conferences and things like that, I'll want to get out and walk around or watch a local grocery store and get some food and whatever. And there's places in the US where you literally cannot walk, like half a mile down the road to the grocery store, like you literally cannot walk places you're trapped. There's no, there's no pedestrianism. And I've always found that like, fascinating and disturbing the built environment expressly prohibits people from being physically active. And so if we want people to engage in these health behaviors, we need to design societies so that it becomes fruitless. Like, I've just, I mean, I can drive I've just kind of given up driving because it's so irritating. I choose places that are much more walkable and bikable. And that kind of stuff. And that's a design choice. So that now if I want to go get groceries, I have to walk. Like I have to use my body. I can't use a car. So the more that we can I think design society so that healthy choices are easier and more convenient and more effortless. And that unhealthy choices are harder and more difficult and annoying, which in my case is driving. You know, I think that shapes people's behavior in ways that do not require people to have more willpower

or more volition. So yeah, to again, bring it back around to our theme at the beginning of this conversation. That for me would be like the ultimate goal to have to have societies we're doing the right thing is just easy.



Yeah. And then you, you hear people blame people of like, Oh, why is that person going to get fast food, I'm like, but to realize that our physiology is almost wired to get fast food, it's like I can go somewhere that's super easy to get to, I can get a lot of calories in a short period of time for less money. That's like efficiency one to one. Like your body is wired for efficiency. It just so happens that our environment now is so catered to how we're wired in our limbic system that unless you've radically changed the environment, I think it's hard to get out of that loop. Right? Because everyone has kind of figured out how to target that part of your hardwired brain. And back in the day, like cutting calories was hard. Like you had to go expend effort, you had to go track down the woolly mammoth, or how many times you want to get stung by bees to get honey, which was very rare. You know, when I was teaching the person, I would tell students I'm like, Okay, here's \$5, who can bring me back the most calories in the shortest amount of time. And you'd be amazed like, in a university setting, it wasn't that hard. We're not an extra grocery store. But you forget sometimes there's many machines here and there and how easy it is to get food. So my latest thing that I've had lately is that I agree 100% with the environment, but I don't think I'm pessimistic thinking it's probably not going to change anytime soon. So that if we can figure out a way of training our prefrontal cortex, our little Professor part of our brain to get used to over Riding our little lizard limbic part that, I think in the short time, that's one of the only ways out, right? So can you do cold water immersion just for the sake of doing something hard, turn the shower to cold, take a walk, take the stairs, like all these little choices that in the short term are beneficial. But they you're thinking into the future of, okay, I'm going to be more beneficial. If I go outside and walk today, even though it's 14 below, my nuts may fall off, it's cold outside, right, you're thinking ahead, you have to think ahead and override the little primordial lizard part of your brain. It's like bro, don't go outside. It's cold, you dumbass. And I think if we do that enough, it'll get not easy, but easier. Because I my fear is that advertisements, social media, environment, corporations, whatever you want to do. And I'm not a big conspiracy person, but they make money when they get better at targeting the limbic part of our brain. So there's an incentive for them to get better and better at it. So we kind of have to figure out a little bit of a workaround to get out of that loop.



Yeah, and I mean, I agree with all that you're saying. And I think that another missing piece is, you know, we can't we don't at this point, have a society that's entirely designed around this. But, you know, another piece of this is our relationships that we have. And I think that often people people take on this fitness wellness project on their own. And we have this narrative of like, oh, it's got to be individual willpower. And you have to have this, you know, kind of self made human being, I don't know, vibe around it. But that's not really how human beings work, we definitely feel and function best when we have when we haven't do things in relationships. And so the more that we can start to make these behaviors, a shared endeavor, the more successful we are. And so, you know, we've had clients enroll in our coaching programs, as a couple, or as friends or as siblings or whatever, coworkers, and so much more often, there's so much more successful. And when I have clients, I'm like, Okay, who needs to know about what you're doing right now. And if they tell their partner, if they tell their kids, if they tell their

friends, there's so much more successful, and if they recruit the friends and the partners and the kids, you know, like, that's when it really starts to work. But if you are trying to do this in a really isolated way, and yeah, sometimes you have to, like sometimes you are gonna be the only weirdo that is doing the health in your social context, right. But over time, you have to find some kind of community, whether that's in person or virtual, to make this work because human beings thrive in relationships, this is how we get healthy, we get healthy and community. So you know, that's, that's a big part of it. So, you know, if you're someone listening, it's off. I mean, I'm a highly independent person, I love individual sports, I love doing things on my own. But at some point, there's got to be at least one other human being in the world. Share this with me in some way. Otherwise, you know, I can't go my entire lifetime. soldiering up the hill, figuratively speaking, and, and literally, alone, right. So the more we can help people build those relationships that reinforce the behaviors, I think the better as well.



Yeah, no, I agree. 100%. I mean, that much as I rub on CrossFit, the things I think they did correct is that they definitely hit it with community. Right? If you would have told me 10 years ago, yeah, there's this thing where it's just gonna be like, old school gyms, just barbells and people doing Olympic lifts and powerlifting. And they're gonna do a lot of crazy met cons, it's going to be usually mostly women. It's going to be in most cities across the US. And even now, across the world, I would have said, You're batshit crazy. There's no way in hell that's ever going to become popular. Oh, I was like, completely wrong. Right. But I think the aspect I got correct was definitely on the community. Because it's, it's not an easy thing to get a group of people together to do hard things like you. I think you have to hit a lot of aspects. Correct. So I think, at least in the US, it appears especially more males that this sort of nude on your own type thing is looked as more like heroic, but almost nobody does that. Right? People hire coaches all the time. And it's a way for social support accountability. Right, just exactly what you said the clients I've seen who are successful is that one of the questions I asked them is, you know, is your family supportive of this? Or, you know, what is the thing that comes back? Well, I want to eat this for dinner, but my kids hate it. And, you know, the ones who have a harder time are people in their immediate social structure words, you know them against their family. It's like, oh, man, that's, that's hard.



Yeah, yeah. It's I don't wanna say it's doomed to fail, but it's a lot harder. Yeah. Yeah, it's so much harder. But yeah, the CrossFit piece is super interesting. And, and I mean, like, I see people now in the gym Like I started training in the 90s, right? And then like you would never see anyone doing Olympic lifts there was always some old



old weirdo in the corner and didn't know what they're doing. But



but like you couldn't find a platform, you couldn't find the right kind of bar. Like, I remember

finally managing the fund at University of Toronto, like the one platform, it was all like the plane. And there was an old like, hardcore gym in the city too. But it was one of those, like, you had to know a guy who knew I like to get in Yeah, to get in. Um, but like, that was like, no one was doing that stuff. And now everywhere I go, people are hip thrusting, people are snatching, people are crying. And I'm just like, This is unlike people who weren't born when I started training are in there just happily cleaning and doing the Olympic lifts like highly technical stuff. And I credit CrossFit for that, because that was one of the, you know, that was your bread and butter. And I think that's amazing that they've been able to kind of create a renaissance cuz that was definitely, especially for women like, yeah, God like to see women doing Olympic lifts. Like, if you're listening, and you're 20, and you're female, and you're a serious lifter, like, just understand that was heard of, Oh, yeah. In that period. It just wasn't done.



Yeah. One quick comment on the social aspect, and we'll talk about the certification you guys have, when I started kiteboarding, I was like, ah, you know, it's just me, I'm, it's kind of a weird, you look at it and looks like a solo sport, because you're all just out there riding by yourself. But then you quickly realize that, Oh, if any ship goes wrong, like, you know, you're going to need the help of other people. Yes, you want to self rescue and, you know, be you know, safety first. But even launching the landing, like other people help you grab your kite, you know, move stuff. So as much as you want to be independent, you're almost forced into this group. And it has this weird thing where the learning curve is very sharp at the beginning. So people would think they can figure it out and like a day or two are just sorely disappointed, probably similar to golf, right? Nobody probably doesn't mean a golf, like within a couple days. So it does this nice thing where it kind of weeds out a lot of the eight holes, because they just think they can do it. And they get their ass handed to them. And everyone at some point gets humbled enough to like, go, Oh, okay. Um, and the longer I've done it, the more I realized I'm like, oh, yeah, I actually enjoy doing something that's kind of solitary, but riding with other people and being in the group, you know, both before and after, which even probably five years ago, I would have said, No, I don't I don't, I don't think so. But the older I've gotten, I think I've been more realizing how important communities of all types, you know, are and I think in my youth, I would have been like, just a solo guy. I can do whatever I want. And yeah, I don't I don't think that's true for most people at all.



Well, yeah, I mean, we certainly learned the value of community during during this pandemic, right? Yeah, seeing what, what isolation does to humans and I mean, if you want to crack a human, yeah, solitary confinement. Yeah, solitary confinement for all all but the most like sociopathic, misanthropic human being was always that like, one guy.



Like, so is always an outlier.



Has to be the most hermetic human on the planet, basically, but But for most human beings, like social isolation will break you. So it's, it's we are we're social species is just how we're wired. So there's no getting around that in a way.



And loneliness is like one of the top I think causes of mortality, I think even now isn't associated. Pretty high. Yeah.



Yeah. So she perceives social isolation, which is really interesting. So So objective, what like, objective isolation is different than perceived social life. You can have people around you but still feel alone, or you don't connect with your partner or you know, you don't connect with your friends or you don't kind of like actually reveal yourself to other people in kind of an emotional way. So yeah, perceived social isolation is the factor. So you can be alone. And a lot of older people love being alone, right? Like, finally they got, they got rid of the spouse, it was like, you know, the kids have moved out and they have no interests. And so a lot of older people love being alone. But it's the perceived social isolation and, and that's highly correlated with emotional skills and emotional intelligence. And having social intelligence, not surprisingly, right. Yeah. So I mean, it really suggests that a lot of what we should also be teaching is social intelligence, social skills, emotional skills, self regulation, that kind of stuff. Because then that allows you to interact with other people more effectively, get your needs met, feel more connected. And like you say, avoid dying for a little while longer.



Yeah, and I have this flashback to my wife and I did a group competition in Finland in 2019. We got invited, we knew the guy who was the promoter of it and good friend of ours was there. And so he's like, I was telling him like, hey, Artyom, like you need a special invite to come to your grip event like this is a world event. You can't just come in And he's like, I run event, I give you special invite you come to Finland and lift for like, Okay, sure. And so we get there and it's, you know, grips for is this very kind of weird, you know, niche sport where you're trying to pick up these little items and stuff. And it was amazing, the event was awesome. But even more amazing was seeing just how autistic and people on the spectrum, like almost all of them were competitors. And it was amazing to see because they all found their little niche. They found other people they can interact with in an environment that was very open, very welcoming, very helpful. Just super cool to see, you know, because on their own, like in their own little community, they're kind of the weirdo that very kind of socially, yeah, the some that are very socially awkward, and some are on the other end of the kind of spectrum where they're, they're so outgoing, that they're still oblivious to any cue, like, at all. Even more hilarious to see. But now, it's just amazing to see that's like, Oh, this is so cool. Like, they found their, you know, a real sense of community with a group that could very well be just kind of on their own, like, you know, just kind of the outcast, too. So, yeah, super cool to see.



Yeah, I think that's a, I think that is a great example. And that's the beauty of the internet as well, like, yes, or what weird little thing you are into, I guarantee there's at least hundreds, if not 1000s, potentially millions. Yes, people that are into it, like whether it's competitive beard growing. Like whatever weird shit you were into. There is a whole team of people that can be your team. And you know, they don't necessarily need to be geographically close. And that's, that's a wonderful thing. So yeah, fill the social bucket, folks, it's, it matters.



Yeah. So tell us more like precision Nutrition has a very cool certificate or certification now on, I guess, for lack of word I've been in, in sort of recovery, and kind of what we talked about with more deep baldness, you know, looking at sleep, I know, you mentioned even heart rate variability, stressors, social groups, that kind of stuff.



Yeah, so I mean, this certification is, I mean, there's been a lot of interest around sleep in the last few years, a lot of really good books coming out about it. And we're starting to see that there's value to sleep specifically, it's not just like a waste of your time to just lie there for eight hours. Actually, very neurologically active process. And there's a lot of stuff that happens in your body. And, and so we started getting interest in this idea of like sleep doing a sleep certification. And then as I started to think about it, I was like, you know, like, it's hard to understand, sleep out of outside of the context of recovery and regeneration and replenishment as like the human organism. Because, for me, I would like to go back to first principles and think about, like biology, right, like, and kind of orient myself there to think about what I'm doing. And I was like, Well, yeah, we need to really understand sleep within the context of recovery and how organisms recover. And so that was kind of like, and I had to argue this case really hard. I didn't, when I when I went to the VA, I was like, Okay, I'll do this for certification. But I have this kind of beautiful mind crazy other vision about making this much more multi dimensional, and thinking about recovery in all aspects of life. And we've got this deep health model, which is like physical health, which I think most people pretty much intuitively grasp but there's mental health, which I kind of make it like mental cognitive health, like how do you process information and learn and solve problems, then there's emotional health, there's social health, the health of your relationships, there's this kind of existential dimension. And then there's environmental health, and, and that's what's around you. And so like, all of these things, have stressors. You could have social stressors, environmental stressors, physical stressors, whatever, you can have recovery in these domains to there's mental recovery, emotional recovery, like social recovery, you know, relationships that are rejuvenating, and replenishing, and kind of, you know, feed your soul, like that person that you hang out with. And after, you just feel so much better. Like as being that's, that's social recovery, right? So I presented this idea of like, you know, this really multi dimensional paradigm. And luckily, they went for it. And so we created this session, that's kind of like, how do you recover, and, and manage stress and all of these different dimensions. And of course, sleep is like the big highlight sleep is like, we call it the recovery rock star, because really, nothing is as good as sleep. But you know, it's kind of situated and all these other, all these other pieces and so, and thread throughout is, if you do the certification, like we asked you to really think about your own sleep, stress management and recovery, and how you can get better at all of these things. Right? What are the what are the trainable skills? What are the

daily behaviors that you could be doing in order to enhance these and I think people, people get really into weird shit. Like, Oh, go sit, ice bath and you know, whatever. Like, that's, I mean, I get it. That's kind of, we've all done it.



Although I want in my garage,



I've decided as a small, middle aged woman who's not very fat, I'm just like, You know what? Screw cold immersions?



I live in Canada too. I mean, come on. Yeah.



My body's just like, No, no. So easily so. But like, I think, you know, we are monks tend to go to like, oh, what's the most extreme? Yeah, what's the most extreme? But that's not reality for most people, right? Most people's lives do not include these kind of extreme modalities or, you know, they would benefit so much more from like, we talked about earlier, kind of basic self prioritizing, prioritizing behaviors. So we kind of offer this full spectrum of like, okay, everything from the most esoteric, elite 1% recovery modality that's supported by evidence to the more foundational like, Hey, could you get 30 more minutes of sleep every day consistently? And if so, what would that look like? How could you accomplish it? What would you need to change in your daily behaviors to make that happen? So the idea is that people emerge from this having a really rich understanding of recovery and sleep and stress management, but also understanding that these are set of skills, and how to teach those skills, how to coach people to achieve those skills. So instead of just telling our clients, okay, you need to sleep more.



Yeah. worst advice ever.



Yeah, like, I mean, I'm it's not untrue. It's just not helpful. It's like, you just need to run faster. You just need to play better. Like, okay, cool. Show me harder. It's



exactly the worst advice ever.



worst advice. So, I mean, I think we really try to equip coaches with a rich understanding of all of the different layers of life that people could be experiencing. And you know, sometimes you need to fix logistical problems, like sometimes clients problems are very beautiful and logistics, like it's just like, it's a simple fix, like, why don't we look at your calendar and book some time, great problem solving. Problems are deeper, like they're there, they're more at the soul level. And as a coach, you need to not be freaked out by that and have at least a sense of like, how can we move this person forward, even if their challenges are somewhat deeper. So that's kind of like the big picture. But definitely sleep fingers very, very large. Because you mean, if you don't know this already, you probably know this as a listener of this podcast, but sleep is a master metabolic regulator, right and, and everything. It's like the, the hub of the wheel, all of the spokes stretch outwards from sleep. So getting your sleep in order is a huge priority. For anyone that wants health and wellness and fitness and performance and sanity. You know, mental performance, like anything, anything you want, is going to come from sleep. So



yeah, that's my my love hate relationship with sleep and coaching over the years has been on the physiology, there's probably probably near the top of like, things you can do that are essential. The hardest part is on the psychology of getting people to sleep more is like the almost the last conversation I want to have with anyone, you know, because yeah, you can do things to enhance the quality, you can do things to change your bedroom, all that kind of stuff. But it almost comes back down to like you were saying an education of value based thing where, okay, I'm going to give up something else in my schedule to prioritize this. And that's a long term decision, I think, right? So I think a lot of times what we've been sold, not you guys, but that, oh, just tell your clients to sleep more, and you'll you'll solve all their problems. I'm like, no, they're just gonna be pissed at you. Because they're gonna be like, Oh, bro, so like, the two hours I spend on Netflix at night are telling me not to do that and just go to bed. We could kind of Yeah, like, why? Well, you'll feel better, you know, to, like, most of us have a massive sleep, to take some like weeks to get out of it to feel better. So I agree with making them much more of a holistic thing and showing people and educating them on. Okay, here's the benefits of it. And here's also all these other things too, that play into it. It's not just as simple as just like yelling at your clients, like, I'll just sleep more, you know,



and understand the needs that people are meeting with activities that aren't sleep, right? Like someone might want that two hours of Netflix because they're an exhausted parent. And it's the only time they have to spend with their spouse or they both flopped down on the couch and eat snacks while they decompress from their day. You know, you need to offer a kind of alternatives to that instead of you can't just take it away. I was thinking about the metaphor of Indiana Jones where he's like replacing the golden idol with a bad like sand, like, you can't just take the golden idol away from people. Right, right and replace it with something else. And so really understanding like, what is driving people's behaviors, I think is, is so important. You can't just say, Oh, stop, stop scrolling social media, well, like maybe that's meeting a need

Well, readily, but to get their need for social connection met, or, or something, right. I mean, I think as trainers and wellness professionals, we often don't realize how poorly equipped people are with relevant skills. Because we have spent a lot of time working on these skills ourselves, we're very growth minded, we may have gotten to therapy, or we have life skills, we think a lot about it. But our clients do not a lot of the time. Or if they do have the skills, because I work with a lot of coaches, they're not deploying them, for whatever reason, you know, a lot of helping professionals will fall on their swords before helping themselves, right. And that's, you know, that that's what makes them beautiful people. They're very service oriented and helping oriented. But, you know, we need to do some work around prioritizing themselves. But so, so the point is really to help coaches, like, identify these things in their clients say, Okay, what, what are the skill gaps here? What does this person need to know? And do in practice? And what are the ambivalences that we're going to be facing here? Like, what is this person going to struggle to relinquish in order to get better sleep? Like, we have to have that that conversation to before we can just tell people like do this, do that, right? It just doesn't. It just doesn't work. But the benefit is that by teaching people the interoception piece, you know, and really trying to get them attending to how much better they do feel when they do get more sleep. That is a very strong motivator. So when people start to get that sleep, and they're like, Oh, hey, I don't feel stupid during every actually works. And yeah, you know, my energy. And, you know, it's, it's not hard to convince people once they're actually doing it, but it's getting them to do it. Obviously, that is, that is the challenge for coaches.



Yeah, I get pushback when I post my sleep once in a while before, like, I would use sleep, like be in bed for nine and a half hours on average at night. And it must be nice to run your own business and not have kids and no animals and like, yeah, it does make it a lot easier. But then they get really mad when I post like a client who's got you know, three kids runs their own business or husband as a job, who is sleeping, you know, nine plus hours a night and has like three dogs, then they get mad. I'm like, Well, this, you know, we've been able to coach this person able to do it, oh, here's another person's been able to do it. Here's another person who's able to do it, and they get really mad. I'm like, I'm not saying you have to help in and change your life. Overall, I'm just showing you that it is possible. It's not easy. Easier for some than others, but it definitely is possible. And then I also forget, sometimes what it's like to go back to being just completely chronically sleep deprived. When I was doing my PhD and taking caffeine power naps in the back of my Jetta. A couple weeks ago, I had a period where like three nights I didn't get very good sleep first night was Okay, second night. Yeah, I could feel it. But I'm like, I'll make it the third day, I felt like dogshit. And I was like, Oh, this is what it feels, I almost forgotten how bad this feels. But if you have nothing to compare it to, you just assume that this is your wife, right? It's the joke I make is that your nervous system is so comparative, that if you come to Minnesota, and it's like four below Fahrenheit, like it is outside, you walk into the townhouse, and it's like 64 degrees Fahrenheit. The god this is amazing. This is super warm. But if you not used to that temperature, and you're kind of hanging out here, by the end of the day, you're like, Damn, it's just kind of cold in here. Right? Because you need that almost immediate comparison of going from, you know, a 70 degree temperamental difference in seconds. And then you can realize that there's a difference, like kind of slowly boiling the frog. If you don't have those big differences, it's hard to think, Oh, this is just the way my life is. Yeah, it might get better. But I've never really felt what better feels like. So I don't really know what I'm trying to get to. Once you get somebody there. Then it's like, oh, this is what this feels like. I find that it's much harder for them to slip back continuously. Because now they have an idea of what how good good can feel. And yeah, they'll have a few slip ups. They fall off the

wagon here and there. But they know what it was like to get back to that position because they were there before. And I feel like a lot of times that's like the struggle of I told clients like if you're on vacation, just sleep as much as you want. I don't care. Hell if you don't even train I'd be happy. If you slept 12 hours a night that would be amazing. Just because hopefully by the end of that week, you'll realize what it feels like to be an actual fully rested human. And then now we can try to implement stuff to get you there because you've had the sensation of oh yes, it does feel a lot better. Okay, got it.



Yeah, I agree with that completely. And I think that you're making such an important point here that I think a lot of trainers and wellness professionals maybe forget, because we work on our stuff, right? So ready pretty well, and we try to drink water and blah, blah, blah. But I think we don't realize how many people are walking around feeling like you say, like, utter dogshit Oh, yeah, kind of their life. And we talked about, like, people sitting at desks for so long. And like, most people, if I have to do that, like if I have to sit at the desk for eight hours a day or something like that, you know, maybe I have, I don't know, a meeting that I have to be at, or some there's some reason I'm traveling Well, in the before times. Yeah, you know, and I would remember, I would do that. And I would think, Oh my god, this is people's job every single day, like I'm doing it for a day, and I hate my life. And I think that we don't realize how shitty many people just walk around feeling all the time. And like you say, just thinking that's normal. And so why would they work towards anything different because this is as good as it's gonna get for them in their minds. And so the more we can reveal that hopeful future to them, the better. So I love that I love the idea of when someone goes on vacation, just saying like, look, I don't care if you train, I don't care what you do, just get to sleep. And then let's see how you feel. Yeah, I think that's the more we can do to give people positive experiences. And then draw their attention towards those experiences, like really shine a spotlight on them and say, hey, look, see, like that's your new baseline, or the new thing that you're striving for? Notice how it feels like, what does that like to have more energy to have more focus? Okay, cool. Now you've got your new North Star. And that's what we're going to navigate towards, rather than, you know, trying to push them away from feeling bad, like pull them towards feeling good in whatever way you can.



Yeah, and last part, and we'll wrap up is that once they have that sensation, it's like the old saying, feeling is believing that they can't talk themselves out of it. Because I think if you've never felt that way, unconsciously, you're like, now this is the best it gets. I don't know if I believe all this other stuff. I haven't felt that I I kind of think this is the best to get. But when they feel like to the next level, and that argument doesn't hold water anymore. Oh, I did. Oh, yeah, that was better. Oh, shit. I guess it is possible. Okay.



Yeah. Yeah, it's, it's profound, really.





And so where can people find out more information about the certification?



Yeah, just head on over to precision, nutrition, calm, that's always a good place to start. And there's a ton of free stuff there. Because we developed a lot of like free things to go with the certification. So there's like a lot of infographics about sleep and resources and around stress and that kind of stuff. So yeah, precision nutrition. COMM would be the place to start. And then from there, you can kind of navigate and find out more about it. So yeah.



Great, and where can people find out more about you and the other project stuff you got coming out?



Well, yeah, I've been go, I've gone back to coaching my own clients again, after a hiatus, which has been kind of fun. And you know, in the interim, I've had the opportunity to like, learn some stuff and think about things differently. And so I'm coaching with somewhat of a different approach, but also testing out some of these new ideas. So I'm working with another coach where we're launching just a little like low friction small six week cohort, just trying out these ideas about things like embodied cognition and stress management and sleep and self regulation. So that's the direction I'm going and so I've got you know, getting the guinea pigs doing things but I think it could lead to something more more developed in terms of really applying the stuff that we talked about in this PN sleep stress management certification you know, it could be really could just kind of a cool sort of lab Real Life Lab. So yeah, that's that's what I've been up to. That'll be launching in the new year so rubbish January I think is kind of a good time for to kind of catch that New Year's resolution energy. But yeah, that's that's what I'm interested in and excited about. We have some some projects we're potentially cooking up a PN that I



still super secret super secret. Yeah.



But I think it'll be a busy 2022 In a good insane growth promoting way



nice and a little six week project if people want more from you what would be the best place to go to



either my facebook or instagram so Instagram is at sumptuous and then Facebook just crystal skeptics and hard to go wrong. There's only one of me so yeah, just search that up and I'll be posting things as they come up Instagrams a good place. I think just because I don't know I've that's sort of the medium that I've settled on, in certain ways. Twitter that I mean, I have a Twitter handle. It's like, I think



Twitter I think is a trash on fire. I haven't been on there for like three years.



I find it it has like the worst features of all the social media media, honestly. So yeah, so Facebook and Instagram are where you'll find me. So just Yeah, Google Krista Scott Dixon and I will appear. Yes. I



love your little graphic on Instagram. That's my favorite always makes me smile. Which one's that little icon that you have for



your picture? A little hat? Yeah. That always makes me smile like, Oh, that's so cool.



Yeah. Cool. Well, thank you so much. I really appreciate all your time today. And thanks again for coming on. It was great to chat with you as always.



Yeah. Likewise, we should do this more often than once every seven years.



Yeah. Something like that. Yeah. Was last time I saw you in Toronto. Yeah, six years ago, something. Will do awesome. Thank you so much. Thank you so much for listening to the podcast, really appreciate it. If you want more information about how to be a robust individual,

more anti fragile, harder to kill, go to [physiologic flexibility.com](http://physiologicflexibility.com). You'll have all the information there on the course I have just on that topic, and you can add yourself to the waitlist. Their big thanks to Krista Scott Dixon for being on the program. We'll have all her links to Instagram, Facebook, her website, so make sure to check her out. Tell her we said hi. Big thanks to her. Always nice to talk to her again. Thank you all for listening to the podcast. Really appreciate it. If you enjoyed this episode, send it to a friend or post it on the old social media and make sure to tag me so I can say thank you. And then also subscribe, leave us a review. All those things help the podcast and help us to get more big time guests and spread lots of great science based health and fitness information. Thank you so much. Talk to you all soon.