

[00:00:00] **Mike T Nelson:** Hey, welcome back to the Flex Diet Podcast. I'm your host, Dr. Mike T. Nelson. On this podcast, we talk about all things to increase performance and strength, more muscle, and improve body composition, all without destroying your health within a flexible framework. And today it is just me. I thought I would pull together and ask me anything.

Haven't done this in a while and I've had a whole bunch of questions over the past couple of months. As a heads up, I kind of did this as a last minute, so I didn't get permission to use anybody's name. So I just removed everybody's name from it just because I didn't have time to make sure I got their permission.

And as always, this podcast is also brought to you by the fine folks over at Tekton Life. You're looking for a ketone Esther. then check them out. So the big difference in the market is ketone esters versus salts. The, you take the ketone molecule and a salt and you bind it to something like, um, sodium or magnesium or some type of ion.

The downside of that approach is if you take too much, you get these ions that build up in your gut and you can't get real high levels because your gut gets really pissed off. The benefit of the ketone esters is they take the molecule and they bind it to something else that allows it to cross the gut and get into the bloodstream.

So in the case of tecton, they use the BHB molecule, which is the ketone itself, and they bind it to glycerol. And this allows it to be uptaken by the gut and get into your bloodstream. The nice part is, you can then use higher concentrations. Because depending upon what effect you were looking for. You might need your blood levels as a rough marker to be a little bit higher, so you might need to consume a few more.

And at the conference I was at this past weekend, got to see Dr. Andy Galpin and Dan Garner. They also work with them as part of a rapid health optimization. They gave a great talk on genetics and blood work. And someone in the crowd, which wasn't me, had a question about exogenous ketones. And Dan mentioned, which I agree with, that he uses them for basically periods of low calories.

And I'll, I have actually a AMA in this very podcast about how I use exogenous ketones and it's very, very similar. So listen to the podcast if you want more information. But if you're looking for a ketone drink that actually tastes pretty good. Side note, most of them on the market do not taste very good if they are using an actual legitimate ketone ester.

But the tecton ones I do actually really enjoy and they actually taste pretty darn good, which is an accomplishment. So check them out. Now we'll put a link down below. I am a scientific advisor to them and a brand ambassador, so I am probably biased in that direction. Um, but you can also use the code Dr.

Mike. To save, I think it's 20%. So, check them out. And then also this is brought to you by my daily newsletter. If you want more great fitness information delivered directly into your inbox, I go to MikeTNelson.com, scroll up to the top. You'll see a little newsletter tab and you'll be able to get onto the free daily newsletter.

I've got all sorts of fun stuff, more information for you there. So without further ado, here is the ask me anything podcast. Question number one. I saw recently via Facebook that you are at a functional neurologist. Can you say more about why you were there and what is the goal of this approach? Yes, that's correct.

I went in to see my good buddy, Dr. Jeremy Schmo at Minnesota Functional Neurology here. It's about an hour away from my place. And I've been seeing him off and on for, man, it's probably been almost over five years now. And the short version is, I don't see real well in 3D. You can imagine that humans have two eyes and they're offset a little bit.

And the image from each one of those eyes is processed by the visual part of the brain, which is actually in the back part of the brain. So those images go to the back part of your brain. And your brain then takes each one of those images because they are offset a tiny bit because of eye position, and it fuses them into a 3D representation of your world.

In my case, my right eye sits up and out about nine degrees more than it should, and I'm, my brain currently has a hard time processing those two images to create a 3D image. And when I was a kid, I used to see in double vision for a period of time. So instead of seeing in double vision, because my brain can't currently process or fuse those two images to create a 3D image, the brain's solution, which is actually a pretty brilliant solution, is to just drop one of the images, and therefore you drop from binocular to monocular.

And when you do this, you don't see in double vision anymore, which is great, because this allows your brain to eliminate a huge portion of confusion. Because if you see in double vision, not only is that highly annoying, you get errors coming into your brain because you can interact with objects. So if I'm seeing two coffee cups on my desk, when I interact and I go to grab one of the

coffee cups, I figure out over time what's the real image and what's the false image.

So it's a way of verifying your environment via the proprioceptive system. Um, however, you have a lot of errors that your brain is creating. So when you drop to monocular, you get rid of all of those errors. Now, the downside is I realized this pretty fast when I was trying to learn how to drive a car. I just thought kids, when they're growing up, some of them are just bad at ball sports and you get hit in the face with balls and that's just the way that it goes, trying to catch a pop fly was basically almost gave me a coronary because I could see the ball coming to me.

But there was a very high likelihood that it was going to hit me in the face. And which is a weird thing because you're looking straight up and all the workarounds my brain would normally have go away. And I knew that the ball was coming, but where exactly it was in time and space, I wasn't really sure.

So to get an idea of what this is like, I tell people just imagine you're walking around all day with one eye closed. This is pretty close to approximation. Now you do get better at this. Your brain figures out all these workarounds from, you know, watching things pass a certain time and trying to predict when they're going to show up, you know, parallaxes, how the light bounces off it, et cetera.

And then the other part I really noticed this is when I did my first bigger jump kiteboarding many years ago, I went up in the air and at the time was probably only five or six feet and immediately realized I had zero idea where I was, how long I was going to be in the air when I was going to come down.

It didn't matter what I looked at, I had no idea of when the impact was coming. So after a while I got better at predicting that by how fast I was going, how hard I sent the kite, etc. Which isn't really the best way to do things. Ideally you want a system to take in real time information and change, quote, on the fly and make those adjustments.

So fast forward, that's the background story of why I was at the functional neurologist And he's been super helpful to kind of clear some of these errors from my proprioceptive system, even the vestibular system, which is kind of like your inner ear imbalance, and then the visual system. Because all three of these systems overlap, and that's what forms your map of your environment around you that you're going to move through.

And if you have an error that's coming from one of these systems, that's going to degrade your body's ability to move through space. because literally the map of the territory is incorrect. If you like trying to drive from here to Chicago, but the directions you got are not really the best directions because your map was really shitty.

In terms of what I would recommend for other people, I've definitely referred a lot of people both to his office and other offices if they have a history of concussion. TBI, traumatic brain injury both acutely and chronically these can alter how your brain is taking in information. And what they do with more of a clinical neurology or functional neurology approach is they can look at eye movements and inputs into your visual system, even your proprioceptive system, kind of where your joints and arms and limbs are in space.

And they can figure out what part of these systems are creating errors to your brain. And then they can train up maybe that system or nearby adjacent systems to reduce the amount of errors that your brain is getting. Therefore, your map of the environment is much, much cleaner. Another analogy I've used to explain it is imagine you've got something in a safe that you're trying to get to.

Let's say inside that safe is just better overall movement. Instead of trying to hammer at the safe or cut through the door or blow it up or use kind of high tension, other things that might be a higher risk. You just need to know what the combination is to get in the safe. That combination could be specific eye movements, head movements, body movements.

And when you figure out what those are best for your body, that allows a better movement and also a better cognitive function. So, yeah, so I would encourage people, if, You have other issues that are kind of related to the nervous system, kind of pathologies or diseases or things you're working with especially if you have a history of concussion or TBI and you still feel like you're just not back to where you were before.

Um, or even in my case, like my overall functions, you know, at this point it's pretty darn good. I don't really have many, I'd say symptoms on a day to day basis. Um, but the other kind of lingering issues I notice is, The overall stress on my system is relatively high, and my thought is because my brain is still running a lot of these workarounds in the background.

So to get a pretty decent HRV score, I actually have to do a fair amount of cardiovascular training, and I have to drop my resting heart rate by measuring it on aura. Like an average overnight resting heart rate into the low 40s 41 42, you

know somewhere in there to get a little bit more of a pickup in this parasympathetic tone to kind of offset a lot of the Sympathetic tone than I have just that rest Yeah, so I'll put a link to his clinic there.

I also did a podcast Dr. Kornfeld out in Denver, Colorado. He does some great stuff out there I've sent numerous people over to his clinic and they've all done really well. So if you're interested, um, yeah, check out those links or you can just hit me up with any questions. Next question. Do you still use intermittent fasting?

If so, what, quote, flavor of intermittent fasting do you use? Yes, I still do intermittent fasting. It's the second intervention in the Flex Diet Certification. So in that whole program. When I ranked the top eight interventions, fasting came out as number two, which is still kind of surprising to me. If you were to pin me down and say you can only pick one method of fasting to use and the goal of someone is more on the body composition side, not necessarily all out performance, I still like the original approach which I stole from Brad Pilon in Eat Stop Eat, like way back in the day.

of taking one day per week and lengthening your period of fasting, ideally up to 19 to 24 hours over that period of time. And by fasting here, yes, you can still consume water and electrolytes. I like using the LMNT or Element from those guys, Rob Wolf, Luis and everyone there. But you wouldn't consume any other calories during that phase.

Um, the other key that I found that I include in the Flex Diet Cert is If you have not done a longer period of fasting for a while, it's probably outside your current capacity. So you want to take some time to lengthen the fast, maybe six day weeks, maybe only doing this one or two times a week to lengthen that period of fasting so that you can do a 19 to 24 hour fast relatively easy.

Yes, you will be hungry. Yes, it'll probably take a little bit of effort to do. But it shouldn't feel like you're absolutely white knuckling your way through the entire thing. And then when you eat a meal, you tend to overeat at that point. So that's a method of fasting I like as quote unquote, what I would use the best.

There are other methods. There are other things that can work well, just depends on the client's goals, what they're trying to do, what their schedule is, et cetera. And most of those I kind of work through on just a, a one off type basis. So. Without knowing any other information, it would be hard to, to give you a better answer on that.

Next question, any negativity for fertility and sauna use? I know you talk a lot about sauna in the PhysFlex certification, so just wondering what information you had on this. The short answer is, I haven't been able to really find too much data in that area. Um, most of the data that I've seen, and again, I am far from an expert in this area.

And this is definitely something you'd want to talk to your physician about. There is a fair amount of published data on the use of hot tubs that can be too warm, that can impact fertility. This is on the male side, I should say. Um, so I would be careful with that. Um, sauna, I haven't found a ton of data.

So I would say talk to your physician. Don't really know, I would say, if I'm guessing, that temperature, in terms of air temperature, is probably not as much issue as it is with water temperature. Water, you're going to have direct conduction, so you're going to transfer a lot more of that heat, which potentially can be an issue.

Having said that, again, talk to your physician, and you may want to abstain from sauna for a period of time. Um, or make sure everything stays cool once you get out. Or probably not push it. That'd be my guess, but I haven't found nearly as much data on that. We do know that hot tubs can be an issue, especially if they are, um, too hot or you're in there for too long, a period of time.

Next question. How is kiteboarding going this summer and any new PRs? Well, so far this summer, it hasn't really gone anywhere. I'm in the process of finishing up the Triphasic 2 book with Coach Kal Dietz, which will be all new methods. I think we're at 14 new methods now. That'll be out this fall, early winter.

So really trying to get that finished up. And then I did sign a contract last year with Human Kinetics to do a book on metabolic flexibility. With my coauthor, Gianna, we submitted the rough drafts about three months ago, just in the process of getting that cleaned up. And that should be out next year is the plan.

I don't have a release date on that yet. Um, so that's been keeping me busy obviously fair amount of travel, other projects, still working part time with rapid one on one clients, FlexDiet Cert the PhysFlex Cert, which will open again this coming fall. And. A couple other things I can't really talk about yet.

So it's been pretty busy. And then I also started getting some tattoo work done. And once that's done, I can't really go in the water, especially a lake, for three to

four weeks after that. But in reality, just due to time constraints, this is probably a good time to get as much of that done as I can. So no PR as a report.

We'll be back down in South Padre, Texas again. Most of November. So the goal there is to hit jumps that are consistently above 20 feet. I think if I can do that, then hitting something around above my PR of 26 is possible. The next big jump is going to be hit one at 30. And I think if I can hit ones in the 20s, like consistently.

You know, on a good day and probably get one in the, in the thirties, somewhere in there. So it'd be 30 feet up. And I do have a little device called the woo device that measures this. It's pretty darn cool. It'll measure, um, how high you go, how long a distance traveled, and even gives you some cool feedback about your speed of takeoff angle of the board, all these things.

So it's kind of cool that you can use data now to directly, um, enhance your performance. And just like lifting, they have it set up now. So I have a Garmin watch and when I land a jump, it'll then tell me how high the jump was, it'll ping my watch and it'll show a little thing on the watch that says, Hey, you did 16 et cetera.

And that's been super, super helpful because just like lifting, even if you're doing aerobic performance or lifting, getting that immediate feedback to kind of calibrate your System as to where you are at, against something that is a real measurement, I find is super, super helpful. Um, and even then on the kiteboarding side, if I start out, I'll go just like I do with people who do sprint training.

Start with like, eh, just hit something at 50%. Or like, when you do warmups for lifting let's go to 60%, 70%, 80%. And knowing what that actually translates to. So if I'm in a. I go out and just do 50 percent effort. Cool. That got me five feet. You know, if I crank that up to 80 percent effort, all right, they got me 17, 18 feet, right?

That gives you an idea of where you're at and how far to push things for the outcome. So nothing new there. Um, like I said, we'll have about 30 days in South Padre to practice. Hopefully the wind will be good. Um, get out sometime then and. Also a big thanks to Kristen for hanging out at our place here watching it while we're gone.

What are you doing for training now? And what does a typical training week look like? What is your current goal that you want to achieve? So right now my

training is still focused on picking up the 175 pound inch dumbbell. So for those who aren't familiar with it, this is a cast dumbbell. So it's all one solid piece.

The handle is about the diameter of a pop can. It's two and three eighths inches. And it's not so much that the load, like 175 pounds for a one handed deadlift. I mean, it's heavy, but it's, I mean, most people listening to this podcast could probably do that with a normal size handle. You just have to pick it up.

The hard part is the handle size and that the rotation is hard to stop. So not only is your hand spread out a lot more, so your fingers have to support a lot more of that load. Your thumb also has to try to stop the rotation of the bell because it's one solid cast piece. It's not on anything that moves.

When you go to pick up even a hundred pound one or I have 135 pound one. Also the hardest part is stopping that rotation of the bell and you'll see people who have not done this before. Even people who are good once you get to a heavy load, the You'll see the dumbbell just wants to rotate right out of your hand.

So that's been the biggest thing to work on with that. I've been working with my coach, Adam Glass has been super, super helpful. We've done a lot of work with straps actually. So using the 175 with straps just to get used to the loading for reps. And then we've done some other ingenious stuff with this, the straps, which I cover in the, the Gonzo Grip Course.

Go And that's been super helpful. Unfortunately, I've been doing a little bit more travel. So it made training a little bit kind of hit or miss in terms of a template, like Mondays, I tend to do upper body stuff. We'll go to the local lifetime gym here. And then for grip stuff during that, I'll do a lot of fat grip work, do some dumbbell bench rest stuff.

I'm still trying to hit the goal of a hundred pound dumbbells for at least five, you know, nice reps. Kind of back to where it was before, so did the 95s for a set of five before I left this week. And then just a lot of other accessory work there. A lot of rowing, a lot of pulling, both vertical, horizontal, some pressing, not too much arm stuff, but just some accessory work there.

Typically, those are longer sessions, you know, like two hours plus if I'm still feeling pretty good. If I'm not feeling good, I'll just, I'll leave a little bit early. Um, Tuesdays when I'm home is more on the grip side. Um, so lately I've been doing the axle with a mixed grip. I've had a little bit of tendinosis in my right forearm.



So I found that the palms up version of that, which is not how I typically do it. If I'm going for a heavy pull on that, I'll typically have my left arm up and my right arm down as a mixed grip. This is using the axle for. Axle deadlifts, and then I've been using them off of a higher block. Um, so I have the wagon wheels, which are, I don't know what it puts it at a pick 14, 16 inch pick, so it's about, you know, three to four inches above what would be normal, um, for me, that is by far my weakest spot deadlifting.

Um, so even though it is from an elevated point, that spot historically is usually a weak point for me. So I've been doing that, but I've been doing them with right arm up, and that's been helping with some of the tendinosis stuff. I did hit 305 for pretty easy single before I left. Um, so it was good. Um, probably go up more from there and then doing some of the heavy inch dumbbell there, different variations with that, using some plate mates to either help with the rotation or counter the rotation.

And that's been super helpful. And then just also a goblet squat using the hundred pound inch, what I call the inch junior. And that's been more tricky than I would have imagined because the dumbbells at the bottom and you have to get all the way down to the bottom of a squat position get it in the goblet spot out in front of you.

Um, and then do reps with that. Oddly enough, it's usually not lower body that's limiting there. It's just the ability of your core to hold it in place. So that's been super helpful. Wednesday is just usually a cardio day at that point. Moderate, what I call cardiac development for 20 to 30 minutes, usually a split between the rower and the bike.

If I'm feeling good, sometimes I'll throw in a 2k on that day. Um, Thursday bench press, a lot of rowing, again, more inch dumbbell work again on that day. Friday, just another cardio day. Depending on my HRV, I might push the intensity up, or I might drop all the way down to even just a zone two session.

Um, And then Saturday is a lower body quad day at the gym. Again, I started doing this in January because I realized with kiteboarding and with snowboarding, I was starting to get a lot of knee pain and yeah, getting better with the kite. So I don't come in really hot on a bunch of landings or trying to land stuff that I shouldn't will definitely help with that, reduce the impact.

But I went to the gym and realized, Hey, maybe I should do some really quad based stuff. So they have, they just got a belt squat machine there, which is awesome, highly underused piece of equipment. And so I would go as deep as I

could on that and push my knees as far out over my toes on a flat shoes and doing the same thing with the hack squat all the way down, more narrow stance, knees as far out over the toes as I could go without any pain.

And I quickly realized that Oh my God, my quads are incredibly weak. Cause most of the stuff I'd be doing would be, you know, front squats, yoke bar squats deadlifts, goblet squats. So I did a lot of posterior chain work, but I didn't do a lot of quad specific stuff, especially using machines. Last time I did any of that was probably like 20 years ago.

Um, even like a single leg, leg press, bringing your leg a little bit down lower and more in front of you. So again, emphasizing the quads. And it's been super helpful. So I've been doing that for almost just coming up on eight months now. And it was pretty humbling to start on the hack squat with literally no weight on it.

Um, not that I'm up to a massive amount of weight now at, I think my best is 80 for what I do six reps the other day on that. Um, but something you can definitely progress that cause if you really, really suck at it, then that means you've got more room to make a progression. And in my case, yeah, I could lift a lot more load if I moved my leg position and only went to parallel, et cetera.

But again, that wasn't my goal wasn't to move as much load. I wanted to train the full range of motion. So if I come down really hard on snowboarding off a jump or kiteboarding, it's a very real thing that my butt could come all the way down to my ankles. So I wanted to make sure I was strong in that range of motion to absorb the force and also to potentially reduce my risk of injury.

So typically these sessions will start off doing. Belt squats as low as I can, and then I'll do isometric stuff for grip. So I'll use like, the fat grips, do some isometric positions there. You can check out a podcast I did from Keith Barr on that. Typically on these days, I'll load collagen beforehand, also 15 grams of collagen, 40 to 60 minutes before lifting can help with soft tissue formation.

Again, that's some research Dr. Keith Barr has done. And that's been pretty good. So belt squats grip isometrics, second one will be full depth pack squats even pausing at the bottom trying to take some of the, basically the stretch component out of it, all the way down, all the way back up, and do some more isometrics there for grip.

Third exercise is one legged, usually doing a hip leg press two legged leg press, and then just accessory stuff, leg extensions, leg curls, some glute extension, et

cetera. Um, that's been pretty good. Um, so usually my two longest sessions by volume will be Monday, upper body, and then the lower body quad stuff on Saturday.

You know, some of those sessions will be over two hours, you know, two hours, 20 minutes, and then Sunday is either zone two or just off mobility, walk around, et cetera. So that's the general template I've been using. A lot of the exercises may change week to week, depending on how I'm feeling, how everything tests.

And that's been pretty good. And then obviously with travel, sometimes that'll get compressed. Um, but I think having a good schedule and just a layout that everything is moving towards your top goals. So in my case, number one goal is to make sure I can perform for kiteboarding, reduce the risk of injury, and number two, but main lifting goal, is picking up the 175 pound inch dumbbell, and then I have other what I call kind of soft goals.

As I mentioned, you know, 100 pound dumbbells for five reps, and I've got some stuff with rows and other things like that. Those aren't definitely the, the main goals, it's just something I want to kind of work towards in the background. Cool! For women who are perimenopause or menopause, do you work with them the same or is there big differences in training, nutrition recovery?

What would you do different? I've got this question from a bunch of people so far, and I do work with women who are older. We're in those categories. I would not say a lot, but usually on average, like my one on one clients, like 70 percent of them are actually women. And within that, I'd say a third are in that, that category.

Okay. And the short answer is no, I don't really do anything different. Again, this is not to say that there aren't real changes that are occurring. Obviously there are. A lot of times I will try to make sure they're doing some type of follow up with their physician. If they want to do hormone replacement therapy or not, obviously they need to talk to their physician on that.

So, but other than that, I don't really do anything different. Now, the caveat to that is everything I do from the one on one space is all customized. We use heart rate variability. We use a lot of tests, a lot of metrics even blood work to try to figure out what's actually going on. So within that framework, everything is still going to be customized to that person in terms of calories, stress level, aerobic training, et cetera.

And what I found is that there's generally some kind of lower hanging fruit that you can definitely get pickups in with that. Um, usually to people, these are kind of the, what I call unconscious things. They didn't know were actually things they needed to work on. You can find these via different testing, HRV, blood work, et cetera.

And so far it's, it's been pretty good. There is a bunch more data I know coming with women in that area. We definitely do not have enough research in that area. We definitely need more research in that area, 100%. Um, I know a bunch of labs that are working on specific things in that area, but I would say right now in terms of should you do X type of training or only do this type of nutrition if you're say a menopausal female, I'm not convinced that we've got good enough data to make those kind of blanket recommendations.

When I look at the clients I've worked with, I can't really figure out any huge patterns there. The only two I would say is their stress levels tend to be higher, which could be from all sorts of reasons. They tend to not realize how high their stress levels are. Their aerobic system tends to be on the lower side.

Again, most of them don't realize that either, which again is super, super common. And. Yeah, I would say third, a lot of them are probably too hypo caloric. Their calories are probably too low for what they're trying to achieve. Um, so those things I have noticed just as a general trend. This goes back to the top of the program.

How do you use exogenous ketones? Yeah. So like I was talking about, I got to talk to Dr. Dan, Dr. Andy Yelpen, Dan Garner about this. They did a great talk in Dallas, Texas over the weekend, which was amazing. And someone asked him about exogenous ketones, especially ketone esters. And Dan mentioned that he really likes them for periods of low calories.

So if someone is really getting more aggressive with fat loss, yes, you need to be in a caloric deficit. That's just pure physics. So I don't know why people still argue about that. How you get in that caloric deficit is much more up for debate. Um, but he said he really likes them because they do have kind of an anti hunger effect.

And they can help with lower energy levels and cognition, especially when your calories are lower. And that's exactly what I've noticed too. So if I'm doing a longer fast on a particular day for body comp reasons, um, or it's more of an aggressive day if I'm using like a zigzag approach, or my overall calories are lower, then I find ketones can be super helpful with that.

There is some data showing that ketones themselves do help reduce hunger levels. You're not really consuming that many calories, And when we look at some of the tracer studies on ketones, it does appear that they do go to sometimes the muscle, the cardiac system, and also the brain. So I think cognition, especially under low calories is a huge component for the use of exogenous ketones.

So that would be, I think those are probably the main benefits of that. And then dosing. Dosing, I found that, Some people respond really well to low levels of ketones, like 5, maybe 10 grams. For myself, like 10 grams is a pretty good starting point. So for reference, if you're using tecton ketones, 10 grams is about one can.

Sometimes I will bump that up to two cans, and I find overall like the 20 to 25 gram range, I think is probably best for me. That's been anecdotal talking to other athletes and other people too. Again, there's a pretty wide variation on that. So for reference the Tecton has 10 grams per can.

Obviously I'm biased cause I'm a scientific advisor to Tecton and one of their brand ambassadors. Um, so I have the luxury of being able to play around with these and all sorts of different things. Last thing I will say is I, I do think there might be some CNS effect with them. I've had a few grip days more often than not where.

And just wasn't really feeling it. Initial warmups were not good. Even worked all the way up to a high weight was definitely off of max and a more than one occasion. Now I've consumed 20 grams of ketones and within, you know, 10 to 20 minutes, like my performance went up pretty dramatically again, could be placebo, could be hydration, but I was already consuming a fair amount of fluid, a fair amount of electrolytes.

So. Yeah, I don't know. I think there might be something of a CNS effect. There's very, very little data on that area. Just something anecdotally I've noticed. Um, we do have data showing that they are helpful because the ketones can cross the brain and can be used directly when glucose metabolism is a little bit wonky or under high levels of fatigue.

So, yeah, check them out. We'll put a link down there below, or you can go to Tekton Life, go to brand partners. You'll see my smiley face there. And you can use the code dr mike, d r m i k e to save, I think it's like 20%. Getting close to the end here business question, do you use AI for writing or content creation?

The short answer is not really. I've, I've played around with it a fair amount, I'd say over the past year. I do have some, some scripts and some general stuff that I do teach in the Flex Diet Mentorship. where we go over more business and programming for exercise and other things. And even then, I think it's an okay start if you don't have as much experience writing.

You definitely will still need to edit it, but for people who get really stuck on getting a rough draft, I think it might be useful in that case. For myself, since I've been writing daily for the newsletter since, oh god, coming up on over a decade now, it's It's just infinitely faster for me just to sit down and write an okay rough draft.

It's way harder for me personally right now to even bother to try to use AI to do that. It just, it also just sounds kind of funky and I don't know a way around that. Um, what I have done is on editing to try to get out of editing the same thing all the time. Is I may run it through AI and tell it to do different voices or tones, you know, like, you know, write this in the tone of David Goggins, for example, like, I don't, I don't think I write like David Goggins.

It's not something I would use per se, but then I'll read that through and I'll actually force myself to edit that copy. Now, when I edit it, I'm usually taking out probably 99, 95 percent of it, but it'll cause me to think in different ways. And I will see different phrasing. And I feel like I'll come up with a better phrase by doing that than not doing it.

It's almost like if I were editing somebody else's work at that point. So that's what I've done more recently. And ironically, it's even more work to do that because I have to, I have to do more editing of it because I'm really taking almost all of that out. But I feel like that intermediate step gets me to a better place that if I didn't do that, I probably don't edit it enough to get it to sound how I want it to sound.

So I have used it a fair amount for just really simple graphics creation. You know, the graphics that produces sometimes are good, sometimes they're not. But if I'm just trying to stick something up with, you know, something that I wrote, I will use AI a fair amount for that. I'm not very good at getting the picture out that I want all the time, but it's just so damn fast.

Like I can literally take the finished copy of what I wrote drop it into say like chat GPT four and just literally write, create an image for this. And if it looks halfway decent, I'll just use it. Like I'm, I guess I'm not at a point where I think the image matters all that much versus having to go find a stock photo or get

someone to create something or edit it and do all that other kind of monkey motion.

Um, I haven't used it a lot for technical writing at all. I was talking to Dan Garner actually this weekend about it. And I probably will start to use AI to find more studies and to just give me a overview of new topic areas. Um, I've tried using that in the past and I wasn't overly impressed with it, to be honest.

And I've got so many reps and almost two decades of experience plus of Using PubMed and finding stuff in PubMed pretty darn fast at this point, just because I've done it so much over the years that I still just default to doing that all the time. Um, but I may play around with that in the future to see if it can maybe find some studies and some other things that I would not have found by kind of using my standard ways.

So, I don't know, that might be useful in that. Next question. If you could be gym czar for the day and magically change all the rules that people must follow, what would you change? This is a good question. Especially having traveled more this summer and then actually going to the local gym here twice a week now, which is the most I've gone there.

Usually only go about once a week. Um, my top one would be no cell phones. Yes, I am guilty of this sometimes because I do run music through my cell phone, but I try really hard to put it in a down, downloaded position. So I can just go to airplane mode and I've already got music downloaded that I want to listen to.

Sometimes I just like listening to a Sirius XM. So I listen to liquid metal a lot. So shout out to. Jose there was awesome on there. I sometimes like having the variety and not knowing exactly what's coming up. And that gives me some new music to listen to that I may not listen to otherwise. But a lot of times I'll just turn my phone off and just put it on some download thing.

Most people, it seems like are spending an ungodly amount of time on their phone. And especially when they're just like sitting on a piece of equipment, the gym should have something hooked up where. If you use your cell phone for longer than like 15 seconds, you get zapped or something like that, or it shuts your phone down for a period of time.

And I don't know what it is about the peck deck that people just want to hang out on that thing. Like a, sit there like a stuffed animal. It's like you probably don't need to rest that long between it. Um, yeah, so that's my pet peeve. My

second pet peeve is people just hanging out on a single piece of equipment for an ungodly amount of time.

And they're not even really like recovering per se. They're not breathing hard. They're not doing anything. They're just. Poking away on their phone for like five to ten minutes. So, um, the other one would be in a perfect world, no gloves. I'd say train your bitch mittens and go from there. Yeah, you can use straps on occasion.

I don't think straps are bad. Um, but again, if you're the dude bro walking around the lift, working around the gym, who's using straps for every single exercise and you've got a belt on for even bench press, Yeah, you probably need to do some more specific training. And last one, have some sort of plan and for God's sakes write stuff down.

Like just go to any gym and, I don't, I'm not convinced that all these people on their phones are actually logging it on their phone. Yes, I do use technology for my clients to deliver their client programs and stuff. We use coach catalyst for the flex that cert program. And then I do currently use a true coach, um, for online clients, but even then in a perfect world, if I could have them transfer that to a notebook, just keep a notebook and write that down and transfer it back online.

I get that. That's kind of an inconvenience, but most people I see on cell phones are definitely not entering in their lifts. Have a notebook, write something down for God's sake, follow a decent plan done by a professional. You're not going to be able to remember on your third set of bench press last week.

Did you do six reps or five reps? I just don't think your brain is designed for that. And at first you probably don't need to be that accurate about tracking stuff because you're just going to make good progress. But after you've been doing it for more than, you know, four to six months, or I know a bunch of you listening to this, I've been doing it for frigging decades.

I've been lifting consistently since I was 18, I'll be 50 in a couple of days. So I'm at the point where Yeah. Adding one or two more reps at that volume at that weight is a significant progress. And you can do that week to week. You're going to be making progress and definitely can't remember all of that.

So I'd say get a notebook, write it down. The last one, if I had another one would be, you just see people either not putting forth enough. I'll see, I'll use the word effort or too much effort in the wrong direction. Like you may see. People



trying to bench rest a lot more weight than what they probably should, and they're missing a few lifts.

Most people, I think, are just kinda going through the motions. Yeah, by all means, I do think most of your sets, you know, should look very similar. You should have a priority on, you know, technique. There is no perfect form. But at some point, like, you gotta put forth some effort, if you've been doing this for a while, to see a difference.

Now, again, this doesn't mean you have to go all David Goggins and, you know, max out on every lift and have your face, you know, turn purple and jaw tension, all that kind of stuff. But we should be able to watch your lift and we should be able to see that there's some effort put forth. Now, this could be very controlled and focused effort, which I think is fine.

It doesn't, I'm not so concerned about what the outward appearance is. Um, but I just see too many people just, I'd say not putting forth probably enough focused effort is what I would call it. Yep, those are things I would change. Last question. I saw on your newsletter a while back you did Combo. If I remember you mentioned in your podcast a while back after your Ayahuasca experience also.

I googled Combo and it looks scary. Do you recommend it? So Combo, which is spelled K A M B O, does look kind of scary. The first time I heard about it was probably, man, almost like eight plus years ago now. And, I heard them going through the experience and I'm like, this is batshit crazy. This is, I don't understand this at all.

And so what it is, is you will, the practitioner will burn just a little bit of the top layer of the skin off using what looks like literally a, a slightly burning stick. And it's just a very small piece. So they'll burn a couple of holes in the side of your arm. And then they'll mix up the combo, which is a mixture from a frog.

And they'll insert it directly into the lymphatic system. And so they'll literally put it right into the little area that they scraped off. And the, the sensation when I've done it, it's always been a little bit different. The experiences in Costa Rica were I'd say much more pressure. I felt a lot more pressure kind of building up all the way from the bottom, all the way up to where eventually everything kind of went to the size of a pinhole.

And the really fascinating part is that they will wipe it off and the effects start to reverse almost immediately. Um, so combo is probably traced back to a lot of

some of the similar practices that do ayahuasca. A lot of times you'll find that they do combo at the same point, which is interesting. The origins of it are kind of, who knows exactly how you figured it out, but from the delivery point and first doing something where you don't really have any We'll say fancy technology, pretty darn ingenious.

The fact that you can deliver something directly into the lymphatic system makes it very fast acting. And then you can control the experience by how much the compound you put in, how long you just kinda let it kind of work its way in, and then you can also stop it immediately by, you know, wiping it off.

Obviously, you know, the part that's already gone through the lymphatic system is still working, but it appears to be a very short acting. In terms of research on it, they know that there's multiple peptides that are involved in it. You can find research on that. Outside of that, there isn't really much of any, any research on it really at all.

Um, I know that there's various claims made to help with different diseases. I haven't seen any evaluation of that. Maybe it's helpful. Maybe it's not. We just don't have a whole lot of research on it. So I did it again. This was another, this last weekend, weekend before when we were in Canada for my friend, Jess.

And did it two days in a row. What I noticed is, you know, after the first day, just lack of a better word, which sounds kind of crazy, just being more grounded, definitely a lot more relaxed. I went and took another two hour nap afterwards. Um, some people do kind of purge or throw up during it. I haven't, but yeah, I just noticed that it's much more quieting.

My, my brain tends to be a little bit on the monkey brain side, a little bit too overactive. So just being able to just relax, go for a walk. I just felt like I was more present after it, a similar type of experience the next day. Um, both times I had a lot more pressure and heat. I'd say a lot more on the heat side this time than, than pressure.

Um, so that was different. And yeah, I just hope that someone is doing more research on it. I think there's probably something there. What that is, I don't really know. And like I said, we don't have a lot of research to go on it. Overall it's generally so far been reported to be safe. The only issues that they've seen are.

People drinking too much water can result in hyponatremia, just not providing enough salt, which in my opinion, that should never happen. Um, it's just so

easy to avoid that. Like you have to drink a lot of water to result in hyponatremia, but if you do have frank hyponatremia, you definitely can die. And hyponatremia has resulted in several deaths, not related to combo, but even just different athletes over the past couple of decades.

Um, so. Just be cautious on that. But other than that, like all things, I'm not recommending it, but find if you are going to do it, you know, find a really good practitioner, talk to people who have worked with that practitioner, ask a lot of questions. Again, it's kind of a very unregulated area. I think there are potential for risks like anything.

Um, so just, if you want to go down that path, make sure you do your homework and yeah, that's it. Be careful and hopefully we'll have more research on it in the future. Again, the last part I would say is the only research I've seen is what I've heard from people in the industry is the sometimes pharmaceutical, but a lot of the cosmetic industry is very interested in some of the peptides that are in it.

Um, but that's the only real research I've seen so far. So there you go. And that is the ask me anything episode. If you have any future. Questions you want me to answer here. Please hit me up. If you want more information, make sure to check out the newsletter. Go to [mikecnelson.com](http://mikecnelson.com). Go to the top for newsletter.

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