

Robb: Do you have a sense of deja vu around this?

Nicki: Yes.

Robb: Vu ja de. So we tried to do this one last week?

Nicki: Last week.

Robb: And somehow we screwed it up.

Nicki: I didn't hit the right button, and so it recorded video only with no audio. So we're doing this one again.

Robb: It's always good, re-doubling your efforts.

Nicki: Yeah.

Robb: So how are you, life?

Nicki: No good deed goes unpunished as they say, somebody says.

Robb: As some people say, yes. I don't know who would say that. Man, definitely keep this as small as possible, so it's hard for you to read while we're doing this. Don't make it easy on you.

Nicki: You always blow things up, so it's like a 90-year-old could read it.

Robb: Yeah, and then that way when you're 90 years old, you don't actually need any reading accoutrements to be able to do it. So we should probably get out of the house more often and see other people, but welcome back. Thank you.

Nicki: All right, let's jump into this first question from Patrick. He has a diet question from a blue belt at night, builder during the day. Hi, Robb. I have a question for you about how to best balance the three main things in my life — eating, training, and working. I've gotten sick about a million times in 2018 and had some challenges in maintaining a work-training balance. Every time that I feel healthy and ready to kill it, I immediately begin to over-train. I know this is a sentiment that many share, especially when the overtraining symptoms take a little while to build up and express themselves. My susceptibility to over-training is mainly brought on by my work's early start times.

Nicki: I'm 30 years old and a builder, awake at 5:30, have moderately intense exercise over eight to nine hours during the day, an hour commute home, and then training, BJJ gi and no gi. Sometimes I also try to fit in some striking from 6:00 to 7:30 or to 8:30 if I feel like I can get away with it. However, eating late and needing to sleep around 9:30 to 10:00 is really difficult for me. Metabolism is working too much at night, and it affects my body temperature and heart rate variability. I try to delay breakfast until 9:00 AM to achieve 12-hour window with either Bulletproof or just straight black coffee after wake up.

Nicki: I don't have the option of training during the day unfortunately. Some of the overtraining symptoms I've had have been IBS type, adrenal stress, and then the associated depressive mood when in a slump. Most of this gets fixed up by implementing a less is more approach to training. Also experience some afternoon slumps. What would be a good strategy to fuel all this activity for both energy load

during the day and training at night plus recovery? Also, quick things to note, I'm really low body fat, really high percentage muscle, metabolism chews up all my food quick as and can get hypoglycemic sometimes.

Robb: Well, that was smooth.

Nicki: There's a word missing there.

Robb: So I had a very detailed response last time. This is the problem of screwing up podcasts because you feel like, man, I gave a really good response the first time and I'm not entirely sure if I can pull that together on the second one. But the things that we talked about, definitely you might just need to pick ... Are you doing Jits or not? Not so much Jits or not, but adding in Muay Thai on top of that and then the short sleep, that's just a disaster, man. That is just begging for problems. I would try to dial down the intensity of the training as much as possible, try to get fat and lazy and efficient.

Robb: Your goal in Jiu-Jitsu, in my opinion, should be to get out of shape because you're so lazy and efficient with it. This flies in the face of the way that most people train, most schools' philosophies. People just go, go, go, and make it a very anaerobic intense sport. I try to do the opposite and try to make it relaxed and gentle and weight-centric. So depending on the type of school you go to and the type of game you have, that may be a big change. I would check out Henry Akins Hidden Jiu-Jitsu online stuff, even if you just buy one module. I think he has the Bali course that actually shows him rolling with the students, so you get a bunch of awesome material and then you see him rolling. When you see how lazy and efficient this guy is, but he just absolutely destroys people, it's a pretty good wake up call for what's going into that.

Robb: So you asked about fueling though, you didn't ask about training. But the training piece is really important. The fueling, I would try front loading more of the calories earlier in the day. I would go maybe as much as 50% of your whole day's calories at breakfast and then maybe 30% at lunch and then maybe 20% for dinner. If you could front load even more of that, that would be great. The challenge is that you put ... So here's an example. I forget who I was talking to recently, but they were talking about how to undo hypothermia in people. You get super cold, your body temperature has dropped. Clearly putting them in a warm environment, putting warm clothes on, and all that is effective.

Robb: But if you don't have access to things like that or limited access, one of the best things that you can do is eat and eat as much as you can because it will absolutely raise your body temperature, both from the caloric content of the food entering your system but also just from the physical, chemical breakdown of food will elevate your body temperature. For you to get into deep effective sleep, you need your body temperature to drop. So doing a big meal post-training can be really problematic, but at the same time, any type of fasting and stuff like that can be a challenge. So maybe that 12-hour fast is okay. If that's fitting into your schedule, that's probably fine. But I definitely wouldn't push it much more than that, particularly given how lean you are and the activity level. What else? There was one other thing I want to say we touched on?

Nicki: I think we mentioned taking a cold shower before bed.

Robb: Yes, cold shower and/or this thing called a chilly pad, which is a blanket type thing that you put on your mattress-

Nicki: Like a mattress pad.

Robb: A mattress pad, and it actually has tubes that go down to a little water pump and you can heat or cool it. It's great for marriages because if one person's cold and one person's warm, then you can adjust both sides for that appropriately. But the cold shower, cold room, dark, all that sleep hygiene stuff plus potentially a chilly pad.

Nicki: Well, and Patrick, you also say most of this all gets fixed up by implementing a less is more approach, so it sounds like you have a sense of-

Robb: You know what to do.

Nicki: ... What kicks you over the edge and what doesn't. One thing Robb talks about a lot is just longevity in anything, especially in Jiu-Jitsu. Maybe dialing it back and just taking a little bit of a slower pace might help you get all that you want out of it, but not enter into this over-training state.

Robb: Yes, we'll wrap up there. I was going to try to wax eloquent, but I will neither wax nor be eloquent.

Nicki: All right, our next question is from Kent on the physical sustainability of BJJ. Kent says, "I'm wondering what the long-term implications are of regular BJJ practice. It's always something I've wanted to explore, but it seems like many folks who've practiced consistently for years have developed joint issues, tears, et cetera. Is this simply inevitable? What are your thoughts on the long-term sustainability? I'm not talking about someone who is wanting to seriously compete, but someone like yourself who enjoys the physical nature of the practice. My apologies in advance if you've already answered this question and I missed it, thanks for all you do."

Robb: We did answer it, but it didn't get recorded.

Nicki: No, we answered it four days ago.

Robb: Yeah, and we did a pretty good job on it as I recollect with that. So the short answer is it is not an inevitable thing that you're going to get injured doing Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu, not any more so — and I would suspect probably less so — than soccer or basketball. I forget, the greatest injury rate in the military is pickup basketball or something like that. More people get injured, there's more downtime from pickup basketball in the military than all other military activities or something like that. So Jiu-Jitsu is a contact sport. There is injury potential, but a couple of things with that.

Robb: If you're a knucklehead and you don't tap at the appropriate time, you're going to get hurt. So tap early, tap often. Our coach, John Frankel, makes the case that you've got to love Jiu-Jitsu more than winning. What that means is that you get in and when somebody gets you, that's a repetition. You think about, oh, how did they get that arm bar? How did they get that choke? You start trying to retro-engineer that, what you need to do to be able to intervene early to be able to deal with that. If somebody's going super hard, you either communicate with them to dial it down or you figure out a way of mitigating that stuff.

Nicki: A lot of it is the vibe of your school and your training partners too. If you're in a place where everybody is going for bear and I'm going to tap you by hook or by crook, then

the likelihood of injury is probably higher. If you're in a school where it's like, "Okay, here's my arm. What can I do to get out of this?" and you're okay being in those positions and tapping and not always coming out on top, you're going to learn a lot more. Your likelihood of injury is probably less.

Robb: Some of the big injury points, like joints of the hand, the fingers ... If you do a really grip intensive game, like if you're grabbing sleeves and you're grabbing pants and stuff like that, one, I would make the case that it's a dead end process. You actually don't get as good at Jiu-Jitsu as what you would otherwise get. Two, it really can damage your hands pretty severely.

Nicki: There are people that tape all their fingers up just to train because their hands are so-

Robb: Yeah, people do this as a badge of honor. They go sit down and they spend 30 minutes taping their fucking hands. It's like in my opinion, again, and there's lots of opinion around this, it's not good Jiu-Jitsu. Overhooks, underhooks. Instead of grabbing sleeve, I'm doing more no gi stuff, whether I'm wearing a gi or not. We wear a gi most the time because I'm just comfortable in it, but my gi and no gi game are virtually identical. The only difference is occasionally I choke people with their gi, and somebody tries or does choke me with my gi. Other than that, my gi and no gi games are virtually identical. Then what was ... We had one other piece of this.

Nicki: Oh, just looking at something called Kinstretch.

Robb: Yeah, Kinstretch.

Nicki: The folks who do functional range conditioning, Dr Andreo Spina up in Toronto. Then he has several of his coaches that offer Kinstretch. It's amazing. We haven't experienced something like this before. It's basically strengthening in your end range. So in Jiu-Jitsu, frequently you are in an end range position when you're about to tap, so it's helping to keep those tissues healthy, keeping them strong in their end range, so hopefully your likelihood of injury is significantly less.

Robb: Yeah, I'm glad you remembered that. Then one other thought, and this is going to make some people angry, but the grips are a big deal for injury in Jiu-Jitsu. The other thing that's super catastrophic is the neck and inverted games where people are spinning around, upside down, inverted. I know it's super popular in modern Jiu-Jitsu. There are people that do it really, really well. There are a lot of people that get seriously, seriously broken from it, particularly if you are a little bit of a smaller person and you are weight-bearing under that inverted load. I just think it's super dodgy. It has limited application from a self-defense standpoint. Orthopedically, I think it's a disaster. I know I'm going to get a bunch of people that absolutely hate me on that, but ...

Nicki: Controversy is good.

Robb: Controversy is good apparently, yeah.

Nicki: All right, our next question is from Ally on vitamin D lights. Hi, Robb and Nicki. I've been a follower of yours for years and considered myself paleo, but I would pick and choose. This past May, I decided to buy in 100% and I purchased your keto master class, which changed my life. I've lost 40 pounds, but more important is that for the first time in my life, I am in control of my food. Life changing.

Robb: Pretty cool.

Nicki: Now that I'm on a roll, I'm trying to implement more positive life-changing choices. My question relates to vitamin D synthesis in the cold Connecticut fall and winter. I'm trying to get outside as much as possible, but exposing skin just isn't feasible. I know that sunlight is preferable to supplementing, but how about those happy lights? Do they work? Will a 40 dollar one work or do I need the expensive one? Could you recommend one? If they don't work, what dosage of vitamin D should I aim for from a supplement? Thank you.

Robb: I think when we answered this last time, I tackled the supplement first. I would recommend some sort of ADK supplement, like Carlson's. They have some great drops. Vitamin D causes the body to retain calcium. Vitamin K too tells the body where to put it. You don't want to retain a bunch of calcium and have it end up in your vascular bed. That's bad. So if you're going to supplement, that's a good way to go. The amounts really vary. Some people do one 10,000 or 20,000 IU dose every 20 days or something, some people dose daily. I would just recommend getting a baseline blood value.

Nicki: [crosstalk 00:13:53]

Robb: Yeah, and then dosing appropriate to that. When we recorded this one the first time that morning-

Nicki: We talked about tanning bed, that study that you just read.

Robb: Yeah, tanning bed. Bill Lagakos posted. If you guys don't follow Bill Lagakos, he's an amazing guy. He has a Patreon account, I would check him out. His stuff is so on point, super legit, really in the circadian biology, ketogenic diet scene. He's really on point, so I can't recommend Bill's stuff enough. But he did a breakdown of the study that was really interesting. They put about 20 people through a tanning bed experience and they did a crossover, which was really interesting. One group of people got exposed to bright light that had UV in it that would produce vitamin D and all the opioid release associated with light exposure. The other one was bright light, but no UV. Then they would cross folks over, so that that would figure out here's my experience of A, here's my experience of B. 95% of the people [crosstalk 00:15:00].

Nicki: Then they got to choose to go again.

Robb: Then they got to choose, and 95% of the people chose ...

Nicki: The one with UV.

Robb: The one with UV, which was interesting. The 5% of the people that didn't choose the UV, when they checked them for their response to opiates, they were paradoxical responders to opiates, so they don't really get that happy feeling from sunshine. So maybe all these people were from Seattle or something.

Nicki: They're in Seattle.

Robb: I don't know when they ever feel happy. But I followed up on that, asking Bill, "Hey, man. So all of the literature surrounding tanning beds seems to paint it in a pretty poor light. It's like, 'Oh, increased melanoma risk, increased melanoma risk.'" None of these

things though ask a ... I have never found a study that looked at how long are people in the tanning bed. It's always just kind of like do you do it or do you not do it. For the vast majority of people, when they do tanning, it's like trying to be a leather handbag. They really fucking go for bear on that. So is there a case for doing a one-minute exposure, a two-minute exposure? It is definitely far more intense than the light that we get from the sun, but Bill's thought on this was interesting.

Robb: Again, not medical advice. We're just trying to figure out what the story is with this stuff. But he made the case that there's slowly a backpedaling within the dermatology scene that being out in the sun is safe. They're slowly starting to backpedal on that because it's so crystal clear, that circadian biology is critical. Everything else we have going on, it's just impossible to have good blood glucose status and to sleep normally and to have good body composition if you don't have good circadian biology. Part of good circadian biology is getting some sort of sun on your skin, so some of light on your skin. So he thinks that that's going to backpedal from the sun exposure.

Robb: Then he agreed that he would be hard-pressed to imagine that there shouldn't be a protocol for a very brief one-minute exposure. You do that three times a week for one week and then maybe a two-minute exposure, and maybe you cap it off at three, four minutes. You're not necessarily using it specifically as a tanning implementation, but as a means of producing vitamin D, which can happen very quickly under those circumstances and just circadian entrainment. So the happy lights, the seasonal affective disorder lights can help with circadian entrainment, but that does not produce vitamin D, but there are some desk-mounted units that you can ... I found it on Amazon that same day that I read Bill's paper, that you can get some UV exposure to your chest. You still have to wear the goggles, but you can move it around to get some point UV exposure.

Nicki: Could you make the case ... She's working on implementing more positive life-changing choices. Although getting out in the morning when it's freezing in Connecticut and just having the daylight in her eyes, even if she's bundled up with a scarf and a jacket-

Robb: That's big, that's big.

Nicki: If she sits out there with her coffee, just to get that-

Robb: As long as you can.

Nicki: It might not produce vitamin D, but at least it's helping the circadian entrainment.

Robb: It's helping on circadian entrainment for sure, yeah. Even on an overcast day, it is generally far, far brighter outside than anything we experience inside.

Nicki: Even if you live in a super cold climate, as much as you can, spend some time outside instead of staying bubbled in indoors the whole time.

Robb: Absolutely, yeah.

Nicki: Let's see, our next question is on supplements from China from [Grigor 00:18:50]. I often buy online supplements in bulk, at least one to two pounds as they are way cheaper. I use magnesium citrate, garlic powder, turmeric powder, collagen, and some others. What worries me is that many of them have China as the country of origin, and we know how devastated the environment is in parts of China. Should I be worried by the Chinese

origin? Can magnesium citrate from China be contaminated with something? Shall I choose more expensive stuff but with another origin, like the Americas or Europe? Thanks in advance.

Robb: So I think we had a good answer on this one, but I'm blanking on what it was.

Nicki: I think you said that, yes, you can get lots of dodgy things.

Robb: You definitely can get lots of dodgy things. I think Examine just did a piece on this where they looked at ... Either Examine or someone else. A lot of supplements had a lot of really nasty stuff in it, so I would look at an outfit like Thorn or Source Naturals, Garden of Life-

Nicki: Jaro.

Robb: Jaro, some of these more reputable companies, and go through that because you can get therapeutic dose of lead from some of this stuff. So I think that it would ... I would spend a little more money for a-

Nicki: Especially for something you're taking ... You're taking it daily, so if you don't know what all the little ... Everything that's in it, that could build up pretty quickly.

Robb: Yeah, so I think that I would spend a little extra money on that. Short answer. Short question, short answer.

Nicki: All right. Our last question this week is from Drew on protein and thermal effect. Drew says, "Does powdered protein, specifically whey if that makes a difference, have the same thermal metabolic effect as eating a steak, chicken, pork, eggs, et cetera? I've listened to every single podcast, love it all, thank you for everything you do."

Robb: Cool, thanks. So the short answer is protein powders do not have the same thermic effect as whole protein sources. This is some of the benefit of just eating whole, unprocessed foods. That said, protein has a greater thermic effect than either carbohydrate or fat. But you are not going to get as significant a thermic effect off of protein powder. There's a ton of reasons why we tend to steer people towards whole, unprocessed foods. There's this [inaudible 00:21:10] piece, there's this thermic effect piece. This was really coolly validated when I started hanging out with Tyler and Louise from Ketogains, which they get amazing body composition changes on people. Although they will use shakes occasionally, it's very sparing and they really hold people's feet to the fire to use whole, unprocessed foods because they get generally a better outcome with that. Anything else?

Nicki: Quick and dirty.

Robb: Quick and dirty. It was much longer-

Nicki: For the second time.

Robb: Yeah, the second time was faster, sorry. Sorry, guys. We tried, but hopefully this one was even better.

Nicki: Let's hope that this one recorded.

Robb: Follow me @dasrobbwolf on Instagram. Check out the YouTube page.

Nicki: YouTube channel. To submit a question, go to robbwolf.com on the contact page, and we'll see you next time.

Robb: That's what we've got for this round, yep. Talk to you soon.

Nicki: All right.