

Paleo Solution - 407

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Robb: Six listeners can't be wrong. Another edition of Paleo Solution Podcast. Folks, I love doing this show. It is a ton of fun. I really am honored by the folks that I'm able to interview. I got to talk to a young man today, William Shewfelt. He is the Red Power Ranger for the Nickelodeon show Power Rangers Ninja Steel. This guy was so much fun, really dialed into low carb paleo keto type approaches. He's tried different dietary approaches in the past. Super wired in on the strength and conditioning and just a funny thoughtful amazing young man. Again, I just really enjoyed chatting with him.

We covered a lot of different territory. He actually asked me a number of really interesting questions along the way. It was a two-way interview. We covered everything from strength and conditioning, recovery, the demands of doing an acting job, which you would think would be easy but it's actually incredibly demanding both physically, emotionally, time wise, and very difficult to keep on point with one's performance, doing lines, staying healthy to be able to do an action adventure show. I think you'll enjoy this one. I loved talking to William. Dig in on this. William Shewfelt.

William, how are you doing, man? What's new?

William: I'm doing great. Honestly, it's an honor to talk to you. I've been following you along with so many other paleo keto experts for quite a long time now.

Robb: I'm incredibly honored and that is amazing. I covered some of your background in the intro but definitely flesh out more of who you are and what you're about. You have a really eclectic amazing background. Fill folks in on that.

William: Well, you're definitely making me sound a lot better than my mom might, for example. Let's see. If I go into some of my background, as a kid, I was pretty active mainly academically but also athletically. The hard core Catholic mom always had us involved with the academics, how to get the As and whatnot. We did a lot of spelling bees, essay competitions. That was a lot of what I did growing up.

But I also got involved in martial arts from a young age. I got involved in Shotokan karate and I did that from about when I was five years old to 12. Interestingly enough, that really laid the base for me in terms of working on the

Power Rangers job which came later on. I did that. I was completely obsessed with professional wrestling. That was a big part of my growing up.

After that, I got into track and field. I did a lot of sprints. I also did distance running. The sport that a lot of people don't know about, most people don't even think this is a sport, but from 13 to 18 years old, I was completely obsessed with arm wrestling.

Robb: Yeah? Okay, okay.

William: Competitive arm wrestling. It sounds like you're a little bit more familiar than most people would be. So, competitive arm wrestling. I went to tournaments. I got second place at the California State Championships in my weight division. That was my thing. And then just enough days of waking up with a sore humerus and elbow, I just decided that wasn't for me.

About 18 years old, I went off to college, studied Economics for a good three years and just utterly dissatisfied with every internship I did, every experience I had in that field. I acquired a lot of useful skills but I just couldn't see myself living a life involved in either the financial sector or in economics. I decided to make a very radical crazy life change and literally it was an overnight 180 decided to go for acting.

I set myself a big goal that last year of college. I said I'm going to be out of college soon. I'm going to be thrown out into the real world. I need to make this happen now before I'm out there. I said in one year I want to book the starring role on a major TV show.

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I had no acting experience. I never did a play. I didn't take acting classes. I had no clue what I was doing. Still don't. By the end of that year I had booked the starring role in Power Rangers Ninja Steel which that's the 24th and 25th anniversary seasons on Nickelodeon of the Power Rangers show which had been running since '93 now.

The goal was achieved and it taught me -- well, I applied my athletic beliefs and my weightlifting beliefs to this goal in terms of incremental progress, daily goal setting, working at something. It was an amazing thing to see that come to life and actually work out. And I was glad that I didn't have to end up homeless here in LA.

Robb: Well, had I not met my wife I would be living under a bridge somewhere. You and I, you and me both are similar in that regard. That's amazing. What do you

feel is the greatest challenge? I have been peripheral to some TV and movie making. I've seen it happening and it seems like a grind. It's way more challenging than what I think most people would assume. What are the greatest challenges doing something like a serialized TV program like that?

William: Okay. That's absolutely true. Before the people listening start rolling their eyes and saying, "Yeah, right, that's got to be the easiest job. You walk on set, say a few lines and that's it." I thought the same thing and actually when I was in high school and I'd be flunking calculus tests I would always tell my buddy Kevin, I'd tell him, "Dude, wouldn't be amazing if we were on a Nickelodeon or Disney show? Those kids don't know how good they have it. They just show up, say some stuff and they're good. They have their tutors."

And then crazy enough, when it happens, not at all what I expected. I mean, we are -- well, for one, just getting cast in a TV show, that's a huge challenge all on its own. Constant auditioning, constant getting rejected, getting turned down. Even getting agents is difficult out here, creating any sort of name for yourself. The whole process of getting to the TV show is difficult.

But once you're on the show, I mean, we were working six days a week. We would get picked up usually 5:00 or 6:00 a.m. We have very early call times. You go into makeup, wardrobe, stuff like that. You're on set at 7:00 a.m. You got to be ready with all of your scenes for the day. They might change the order of things so you need to be prepared. You don't have any time to yourself.

If you think, "Okay, I'm not in this scene. I'm going to go back to the trailer and hang out." No, because you're going to get pulled out to go do another fitting. You're going to get pulled out to do a scene that you didn't think was coming up. You pretty much have to -- Lunch breaks, for example. Many times during lunch the stunt team would be like, "Hey, we need to work on this fight scene. Can you finish up eating real quick and let's go work on this?" When you're hoping to take a nap.

It's very non-stop. So, getting picked up at 5:00 or 6:00 a.m., we would wrap often at 6:00 or 7:00 p.m. You go home, learn your lines for the next day, hopefully get a meal in and then just go to sleep. I personally think this was a mistake but I would look at The Rock getting up at 0:00 in the morning, all that kind of stuff, and go train and I'd say if he can do it I can do this.

So, I would get up at 3:00 a.m. every morning and I would get a workout in before I would head to set. My cortisol was probably so screwed up. You have no idea. It was rough on the adrenals. That's the approach I took, making it harder on myself. It was a learning process. It was a learning process.

Robb: Right. This paleo keto low carb, not always the first place that people go if they're performance oriented, which clearly you are in doing your work. How did that get on your radar and how did you take a leap of faith of doing that given that you got to look the part, you got to be able to perform. That's a big gamble. What motivated you to give that a shot?

William: Yes. I actually made the transition during the show. All the way through the first season of Power Ranges, I was a whole foods plant based vegan, the entire time I'm in college. I was so familiar with everything Esselstyn, McDougall, Dr. Michael Greger, every documentary out there, Healthy at 100, Blue Zones. Every book I could get my hands on and learn about plant based diets, I was completely sold out.

You knew within ten seconds of meeting me that I was vegan. It's part of my introduction. I mean, I was sold on this thing. It worked well enough in college. I was able to prepare my own meals. I could eat as often as I had to. But when I was on set and you got catering and you're working crazy hours, it wasn't working for me anymore.

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I just couldn't get the control that I needed to get everything firing perfectly and have all my supplementation going correctly. Finally, my health was just plummeting. I never felt satiated. I had a much higher body fat than I wanted. I could never get that lean ripped look that I was going for. Tons of brain fog. So, it was really tough for me to concentrate. Pretty poor sleep quality as well.

I was doing everything by the book. I was very obsessive about this stuff. In terms of supplementation, I was looking out for all my vitamin B levels, iron, everything. Basically, after getting my butt kicked, and it was just like not feeling well, felt horrible all the time, I knew I had to do something. So, we had a three week hiatus between season one and season two. In that three weeks I said I got to figure this thing out.

And I just threw myself into all of the online, just researching everything I could, YouTube, podcasts, articles, looking into books. and I finally decided, okay, I'm going to go for a keto paleo approach, very, very low carb, heavy in basically whole animal products, lots of muscle meat. I didn't quite do the organ meats back then and I did lots of leafy greens, cruciferous veggies, things like that, some low sugar fruit.

It was unbelievable but it was like within one week I had dropped probably six or seven pounds which, obviously, yes, it's water weight. But I felt fantastic. A lot of people talk about fat adaptation and the keto flu. I don't know if I had a keto flu.

I had a vegan flu, for sure. I honestly felt better immediately. It was really, really powerful and I just continued to learn after that and experiment.

Robb: Man, that was a parallel experience of mine. I was really diligently trying to make this whole food vegan approach work and I had ulcerative colitis, terrible body composition. You couldn't maintain muscle mass, brain fog. And then, I mean, literally, within about 36 hours of ditching grains and legumes and doing meat and veggies, basically, I was like, "Oh my god, I actually feel really good." To the same effect. I didn't really have any of the keto flu or any of that stuff. Over the course of time I found that I benefit from supplementing with some electrolytes specifically sodium and stuff like that, but a very similar experience.

William: Yeah, absolutely. I definitely didn't know early on about looking into electrolytes and magnesium levels, potassium. I was still on board with a lower sodium approach naturally coming from that plant-based perspective. That probably was a huge part of the water loss as well in the beginning. It really was like overnight just feeling incredible. Naturally, I was leaning more towards muscle or red meats.

I know I was getting a fantastic B profile and that was just doing so much better. I honestly after that just started experimenting a lot and I wanted to see how lean I could get. That's where the fun began for me because I always felt fantastic on this approach but it was really when I started experimenting with different protein and fat macro ratios that I found out what worked for me at that time.

I mean, this is something you've talked about as well but there is so much diversity with people that what worked for me I never wholeheartedly recommend it to everybody. I don't think that there is that golden approach that works for everybody. Sure, there's probably a species appropriate diet but I always just do include the grain of salt. This is just for my personal hormonal profile, my genetic, stuff like that.

Robb: Right. Speaking of genetics, have you done any 23andMe DNAfit to see what it suggests around fat mobilization, carb tolerance, all that type of stuff?

William: I haven't done that and I'm very interested in doing that. But up until now I haven't done that. I basically just have the subjective results of how I feel, the way I look. I'm starting to do a little bit more testing. I have a few projects coming up with Dr. John Limansky where we're planning to release some biohacking content. Honestly, I'm starting to get into the testing waters but I haven't done much in that sense.

Robb: Super cool. I mean, it's funny because, for me, it was just confirmation bias. I feel like, oh, this is totally what I wanted to hear. I did my 23andMe and found some

really interesting stuff with that. And in between Rhonda Patrick's interpretation material and then also putting it through the UK company DNAFit, it basically came back that I would probably benefit from a little bit more monounsaturated fat versus saturated fat. But beyond that, my genetics are super well set up for a fat as a fuel, as a primary fuel.

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And the DNAFit was pretty interesting. They've got a carb tolerant versus carb intolerant. I was maxed out on the intolerance. It was like don't even look at anything other than a green vegetable or maybe a blueberry once in a while. It's funny. I've really diligently tried the safe starches and all that type of stuff and I just felt terrible. But if it's me, veggies, a lot of nuts, particularly if I soak them, sprout them, roast them, I thrive on that.

I'd been able to support my old guy Brazilian jiu-jitsu endeavors pretty well doing that. That's cool. Definitely, it's fun to dig into that and the ancestry stuff is really interesting. I've connected with some second cousins and I discovered I have a whole chunk of family in Canada that I didn't even know existed. That's been pretty cool.

William: Well, first of all, I have to rebut that old man jiu-jitsu thing. Actually, I'm going to watch my language. You are pretty beast. I know you're a dangerous man. So, there's that.

Robb: Only in my own mind. Only in my own mind.

William: I'm sure your opponents would beg to differ. I've seen your powerlifting records, incredible stuff. Absolutely incredible stuff. I would really be interested in seeing a few things on that for me. Genetically, at least in terms of ethnicity, my dad is a typical Anglo European background, German heritage. His mother was English. That brings its own set of things. but my mom is -- She's kind of half Arab half Indian and, honestly, her and her family have no clue what they are because they were shipped over to Guyana from the British so they could work on sugar plantations back in the day. It was like indentured labor thing.

They're not sure if they're more Arab, Indian. Growing up, it was a whole lot of white rice and a bunch of beef curry, chicken curry, tons of potatoes. We were very lean. But, obviously, we were athletic. We were young, probably crazy insulin sensitive. And we didn't eat a whole lot of processed junks. You can definitely get away with that stuff for quite a while. I would be interested to see.

One question I would actually have for you is if, for example, I did have increased carb tolerance, is it even worth increasing my carbohydrate levels or am I still able to function optimally without doing that?

Robb: Man, the honest answer is I don't know. Getting in and being a little more nuanced on that would be always how do you look, how do you feel, how do you perform? And so we could really use that as a benchmark. I'm working to have a guy on the show, Professor Michael Rose, and I'd followed his work for years. He's really geeked out on evolutionary biology, aging, and he has made this point for a long time that--

Say like you're northern European ancestry is probably a bit more hunter-gatherer oriented, probably a little bit more low carb oriented but then you actually have some ancestry that you would argue is probably the most well-adapted to an agricultural type diet. You got this kind of interesting mix in that. But what Michael Rose, the case that he makes, is that even if you come from some ancestry that is comparatively well-adapted to agriculture, as you age and you start hitting 30s, 40s, 50s, whatever degree there's benefit or tolerance you start losing that.

And so over the course of time people almost inevitably need to curtail carbohydrate intake as they age and what have you. This is that point, again, which you made. There's no specific singular diet for folks and then also almost -- It's highly likely that it's going to change over the course of one's life and that it will probably, if you want to maintain the optimum health and body composition, it's probably going to shift a little bit more low carb, more classic paleo keto looking. That's the long winded answer to that. That was a really good question and a very poor answer on that.

William: One thing I would ask is: So, as you grow older, naturally, the way your body responds to certain foods is going to change and, of course, according to your circumstances and what's going on in your environment, your gut microbiome. But I'm interested in knowing what would you say, if I could put you on the record with this, what would you say would be the most non-invasive foods, the most highly tolerable foods that can remain a constant over one's lifespan that you rarely see anybody have issues with these?

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Robb: Yeah. I mean, if you just look at allergenic profiles, cross-reactivity with autoimmune conditions, it's animal proteins largely like herbivore, cattle, sheep, goats, seem to be the lowest immunogenic potential. That's a big, big piece. Then when we start layering in fowl and then fish like chicken, turkey -- different types of bird tends to be low in immunogenic profile. On the fish side, it's

interesting because you do see some allergenic responses both on the iodine side and also just on the fish proteins in general.

And then when you start expanding into the plant world, it's things like berries, melons, some types of squash that tend to be the lowest allergenic potentials. Even these things like the cruciferous vegetables, various greens -- and this may be an artifact of like the histamine issues that people have, the salicylate issues that people have. You can make a really strong argument that this is a consequence of changes in the gut microbiome, maybe antibiotic exposure, maybe just being in an overly clean environment as a kid, not being breastfed. There's a zillion different factors there.

But it is interesting that at a core it's like this herbivore based animal protein, it's a remarkable safe spot. And when you look at the folks doing a carnivore diet, they're not typically going there because, hey, man, I want to have the most restrictive socially isolating diet you can imagine. They end up there because they've turned over every other rock and this is literally the one thing that seems to work for them.

Mikhaila Peterson, Jordan Peterson, a host of other folks, Amber O'hearn. That seems to be a safe spot for a lot of folks. And then some of these low glycemic load, berries and melons, maybe a little bit of squash. And each layer that you then expand you've got the potential of toxicants or some products that don't really sit well with the gut microbiome. That would be how I would order that out. And depending on one's genetics, their gut microbiome, and then also just their stress level, how much sun they get. That steer of what is helpful versus harmful either expands or contracts based around all those factors.

William: That's definitely an expert answer. I can tell the more you know about this stuff the less you're able to give, I guess, certain answers.

Robb: Good answers? Simple answers?

William: No. You're talking about this. There's so many variables at play here. But when you talk about a lot of the zero carb, the carnivorous group, honestly, I would class myself with a lot of those folks because pretty much I consistently will retreat back into that carnivorous approach and then start to make some forays back out into let's try some berries, let's try some cruciferous veggies, let's even try a little bit of sweet potato, let's see how we do with that.

And honestly, if I just consistently feel best when I'm really sticking to those animal foods. Now, one of the things I'm interested in is could that lead to long term deficiencies in certain areas? Mineral deficiencies? Potentially vitamin or

nutrient deficiencies? There aren't a whole lot of studies on this but it's really, really interesting to see. I'm still trying to figure out what works best for me.

Robb: Yeah, which is great that you're tinkering. That's the 800 pound gorilla in the room with regards to this carnivorous diet. Are you getting the full nutrient profile particularly like you have some folks that are exclusively focusing on muscle meat and they're not doing a mixture of awful and organs. There is a reality that our metabolism is different when we're more fat fueled versus carb fueled.

To metabolize carbs, we do need a number of B vitamin cofactors. Our need for vitamin C tends to be increased. Is it fair to compare the nutrient needs of somebody who's eating whole grain based diet and they motor along, they do well with it, but they're going to have a certain nutrient profile that they need to be able to metabolize that? Is that comparable to folks eating more of a carnivorous, lower carb more fat based diet?

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My thought there is that a number of things like vitamin C, B vitamins, the needs for those tend to be lower and also the meat based products tend to be quite nutrient dense. You're tending to get good amounts of that type of stuff. If you're able to include some things like some mushrooms or a little bit of cruciferous vegetables, you end up getting a remarkably high amount of nutrients out of those as well as along as it works with your GI system and all that stuff.

We just don't know. I will mention this. The communities that you find online of folks that have settled on this carnivorous diet, there are a lot of people that had been doing it a very long time. And again, this is totally anecdotal. Clearly, it's confirmation bias because I lean more towards this animal-centric model versus this plant-based model or what have you. But I've just not seen people peel out of that scene and they're like, "Oh my god, my thyroid crashed. I had B vitamin deficiencies." The things that we tend to see frequently after the honeymoon phase of a vegan approach, it takes a while to burn through the B vitamins and maybe the vitamin D levels and even essential fatty acids. That's one of the things that make me a little bit more calmer or less nervous about the long term potential there. But you raise a really great point.

William: You heard it here, folks. Robb Wolf supports 100% steak -- No, I'm kidding.

Robb: Exactly, exactly. That's how it will be interpreted.

William: The interesting thing that you were bringing up here that I still find very interesting is can we contend with the fact yet that are we able to subsist solely on the muscle meat? Is that possible? And it seems like there are a bunch of people that are doing that fantastically. Most of the zero carb group doesn't actually seem to do organ meats that I've seen. I always find that really interesting.

Robb: It's fascinating to me. And even just from a palate and variety perspective, I like patty okay but you have to take it in metered doses, but I have a feeling if all that I was eating was steak, some patty would be pretty good once in a while. Yeah, to your point, a lot of these folks are pretty -- they're doing Yorks **[Phonetic]** every day and that's it. That's how they motor along. Time will definitely tell them that. Time will tell whether that is a long term sustainable option.

Even within that, I will be shocked if there's just not some individual genetic, epigenetic gut microbiome differences where some people are super wired in to be able to do that and other people it's going to be an abject disaster for me. I'll be shocked if that's not the case.

William: Yeah. That's where the self-experimentation has to come in. You could answer with that. I feel like my approach currently is really just as an insurance policy. I'll do the olives, avocados, some mushrooms, some berries every now and then. But generally pretty heavy on the red meat and eggs. Naturally, trying to do grass fed, trying to be pasture raised as often as possible. But, yeah, that's what's working for me at the moment.

Robb: It would seem like one of the big benefits of eating lower carb and getting in that fat adapted state is that you're a little more resilient with the inability to eat. You still need to eat but if you have to go six, ten, 12 hours without eating you get hungry but you're not augering into a mountain side wanting to kill someone. So, given your schedule, it seems like that would be really beneficial because, I mean, your schedule is super demanding. You don't know if you're going to get lunch or snacks. Would you say that that's been one of the more helpful features with eating this way?

William: Oh, absolutely. In terms of the flexibility afforded to you by fasting, that's huge. I've seen so many of the people that I work with on set. It's constantly at the craft table downing whatever source of glucose they can find. It's a tough thing. I was definitely that person as well. I definitely take advantage of fasting throughout the day on set. Usually, I'm eating probably two meals a day, two pretty good meals a day.

One would be at home and then the other would be just whatever protein and salad they have on set that day. But it's definitely very, very beneficial.

Obviously, it has some great body composition benefits as well. I like to take advantage of it for that reason.

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Robb: Absolutely, yeah. So, William, the other piece of it or, I guess, another piece of the story is your strength and conditioning that is necessary to maintain your performance, maintain the aesthetics. What does that look like? I think somebody looking at your schedule, they would maybe see that you would do something like a CrossFit type workout because it's really time efficient.

But when I put my strength coach hat on I would think that you would probably need to do some really specific strength work, maybe some lifts and some gymnastics and then do your dedicated skill work so that you aren't tanking yourself and leaving plenty of capacity to actually be able to perform when you're filming. Which part of that story is it? Or is it something in between that?

William: It's a good mix of those. So, a lot of the work goes on with the stunt team. There's not a whole lot that I'm doing outside of what they're teaching us. The martial arts that I've learned isn't necessarily -- it doesn't have great carryover to onscreen fighting. Onscreen fighting is really a dance. It's a choreography and you have a dance partner and you have to execute these things well and to the camera and you don't want to hurt the person you're with.

It's a really interesting thing like cinema fighting. A lot of that is working with the stunt team. Outside of that, the things that I do, it's heavily oriented in a couple of things, one of them being calisthenics. I love calisthenics. I did power lifting for quite a while. It just never quite gave me the physique I was looking for regardless of what my numbers were.

It's weird but it seems for me that when I get into that high rep range, higher volume, doing with the calisthenics, I don't know if it's -- I'm probably speaking out of turn here. It might be sarcoplasmic hypertrophy or a sort of type of hypertrophy you get when you're upping the rep range and the volume but it's just a bit more of a defined look. I've tended to stick with that nowadays, sort of lighter calisthenics movements, doing lots of that. And then on top of that I'm doing, honestly, it's like literally bodybuilding type stuff, your three sets of ten to 12 type stuff on certain body parts that I just want to bring up a little bit, the shoulders and the chest and things like that.

That's basically where I'm at. And then I'll try to throw some cardio in there. I've messed with so many different forms of Tabata and HIIT and slow steady state and pretty much what I'm sticking with now is just a very intuitive approach. If I

feel I can go a little bit harder on a certain day I will. If I feel like it's more of a long slow walk day I will. And I just see how I can fit that into my schedule.

I do feel like there's a lot to be said for being intuitive with this. When I was more structured with my training I'm pretty sure I was working against my body a lot of the time just so I could follow through with my plan. It would back fire on me so many times and I would get super fatigued and super tired. I wouldn't be achieving the results I want. I've definitely learned to respect whatever my body is telling me at the moment.

But that's the approach I'm using. It's crazy. I used to always laugh at people that were doing that sort of bodybuilder hypertrophy approach and lots of cardio. I thought if you weren't doing Wendler 5/3/1 or if you weren't doing strong lifts or something like that you're wasting your time. And now I am what I used to hate.

Robb: Funny how that happens, huh?

William: It says a lot about dogma, I think.

Robb: Yeah.

William: The amount of things in life that I've been certain about and then I've completely changed on them, it's completely like what you talked about where it's like you can't be that certain. You just can't say, "I know. I have all the answers." Because things change over time.

Robb: They do. I mean, I am so -- I get a rashy embarrassment response every time I see one of the Dunning-Kruger memes because I'm like, "Oh my god, that's me." Just like horrified. Ten years ago I was so cocksure about so many things and now I'm like I really don't know. That's awesome. Have you played around at all with heart rate variability monitoring? I mean, it sounds like you are really wired into an intuitive approach to both your diet and the training but have you messed around with that at all?

William: I haven't. I'll tell you honestly. I have done frighteningly little tracking, absolutely no blood work. So, what I'm doing now is basically I'm sort of just following food restrictions and sticking to these certain foods and then listening to my body. The first thing that I've started to implement, if we're talking about tracking, would be -- I'm actually using the level device, and I'm just doing that to see how my body is responding throughout the day, checking breath acetone, stuff like that.

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Robb: Okay, okay. Very cool.

William: Yeah. That's really the first thing I have played with. Literally, for the past year and a half of this whole ketogenic journey for me, I have not peed on one strip. I haven't pricked my finger once. For all I know I might be still burning carbs, who knows, leftover from my vegan days. I'm just getting into it now and that's mainly because I want to be able to quantify these things. There is something to be said for the more structured and quantitative you are, you are eventually able to take your foot off of that and be more intuitive. You get a better sense of how things work.

Robb: Absolutely. A really good friend of mine, a solid strength coach, Dan John, he makes an interesting point which is that if you have a mega structured life you don't want a mega structured diet and exercise program. The flip is that if your life is chaos and you're just adrift then having a super structured diet and lifestyle plan is really complementary. It makes a ton of sense. When you think about your schedule, I mean, your quiet time is hiding in the bathroom and going fiddle for a little while.

William: We've actually done that a few times.

Robb: I do it because I have kids. It's the one place I can lock the door and be gone for a little bit and nobody will bother me. I mean, your life is so structured that trying to be really structured in monitoring all your food and having a super carved in stone exercise program would probably be just enough to make you want to hang yourself. You'd just be like, "Okay, I'm done." It's really interesting. Again, it's confirmation bias because this has been something I've observed over time.

To that heart rate variability piece, what I found with it, it was interesting but I started getting a little neurotic about trying to goose this number this way and that number that way and really at the end of the day it wasn't changing what I did performance wise. It might have been helpful for me in my 20s when I was trying to kill myself. Just no thought about volume or intensity and I would have had an objective element that's like, "No, man, today is a red day. You go to calm down and not burn the candle at both ends."

But it really sounds like you've arrived at that at a pretty intuitive level which then I'm kind of like spend time living and enjoying yourself, not tracking your heart rate variability output.

William: Yeah. This is actually -- we're getting into mindset stuff here. In terms of approaching any goal or lifestyle and when you're looking at sustainability, you can get structure or shackled by too much structure. I have done that so many times. I'm obsessed with goal setting and I really, really enjoy the process of

starting somewhere and throwing yourself into a completely new challenge and achieving something but in the process I found one thing that just doesn't work for me is overly structuring it.

I have to set the objective whatever it happens to be and then I have to allow myself to improvise on the way there and to be a little intuitive about it. There are just so many incredible insights that come when you don't try to plan every step of the way. That doesn't necessarily all apply to what we're talking about here in terms of heart rate variability but I've tried to approach my fitness and my health the same way.

There's a certain outcome I'm looking for and once I'm there I try not to keep burning the candle at both ends, so to speak. I'm looking for certain body composition, certain energy level, mental focus, and also for my food to taste good. If I'm able to cover a lot of those different areas I do say, "Okay, look, you've got this now. Step back a little bit. You don't need to be listening to two hours of podcasts in the gym now. You can start to focus on different goals." Kind of just unshackling myself a little bit from that.

Robb: It makes a ton of sense and so, so wise. When you think about the diminishing returns that we get from things, getting 80% of what you're going to gain from diet, lifestyle, what have you, is pretty easy and it feels really good but then that remaining 10%, to really get to that, you have to become neurotic and you have to give up so much other stuff. I think that's so incredibly wise on your part to see that Pareto 80-20 story. Once you set some bench marks, you get those bench marks, they're challenging but achievable, and then you just set that on autopilot and you only revisit that if there's something going squirly with it and then you can focus on other areas. I think that's brilliant.

[0:40:07]

William: That is a really interesting way of putting it. I love that you're mentioning diminishing returns with that. All of a sudden my failed Econ degree just...

Robb: There is no failed Econ degree so long as people don't work in Economics. They always take the life lessons elsewhere.

William: But that's really interesting. That applies absolutely to any endeavor in life where you're attempting to reach that pinnacle, that pedestal. To get that last 98-99% you are going to have to devote yourself twice as much as you did to get just the 90% results. That's interesting. Is that what you are aiming for? Is that what you want? I think so many people get lost in the journey of achieving a goal that they actually forget what the original goal was in the first place and they become obsessed with this process and eking out every last ounce they can get.

And it's like, wait a minute. Your goal in the first place was just to feel a little bit better, just to drop a couple of pounds. Nobody said you had to do a bodybuilding show. It's interesting, we can get lost in that sometimes and it's good to take a step back and revisit why was I doing this? And is it now taking more away from me than it's offering me?

Robb: Right. Well, it's cool because you have a really pretty unique background in that you've taken stuff, performance, body composition really to the outer edges what humans can do and then you've also found, okay, that's cool but I don't necessarily want to devote my life to that. I want the 80% or 85% that is achievable but is like dead simple to do and then I'm going to go learn a language or be an actor, do this, do that because you have all this other time because you're not neurotically trying to eke out that final couple of percentage points.

William: Exactly. That's exactly my mindset approach to that. There is a period of maybe couple of months or a year or two years where you do have to go too far with these things and then you're able to step back and say, "Okay, I see what worked through that experiment and I'm just going to let that run now and I can start to focus on other objectives." Completely agree. That's a very good appraisal of my neurosis.

Robb: How old are you?

William: 23.

Robb: Oh my god, man. You are so far ahead of the curve. You're doing great. Hats off to you. You've got some stuff seriously wired in. Holy smokes, man.

William: I'm going to be playing that through my head all day and I'm going to try not to get a swell head but I look up to you so much that that means a lot.

Robb: I'm honored, if I've had any tiny amount of influence in helping you to arrive at that spot, because I think it's such a beautiful place to be where you've got the physical, emotional, cognitive capacities to go out and go after things that are challenging and maybe a little dangerous on a variety of levels. But then you can do it. At the same time you can really commit full effort into achieving that stuff. But it also doesn't ultimately define you. It's not a crippling setback if it doesn't work. Yeah, man, you're doing some good stuff. You're doing some very good work.

William: Wow. Thank you, man. I really like what you said about not letting these things define you because a lot of people, as soon as they find something where they achieve a measure of success or they find it interesting, they will completely

attach their identity to it. And a lot of the time I feel like you're so much more than that. There's so many things you can succeed at.

Yes, you're great at this but also great at a number of other things. Man, people, there's so much complexity in every single person. And this is something I'm trying to instill in my little siblings right now who they're just starting to experience what they feel passionate about. It's like, okay, yes, you feel passionate about this. Devote yourself to that. Throw yourself into it. But step back and realize, hey, if at a certain point you want to move away from this, move away from it.

I think that's the scary point. There's actually a little anecdote but there was a time when I was doing the Economics degree and I decided to get an internship at Liberty Mutual. I was doing an insurance internship. A lot of the people there told me -- They would ask me, "Why are you here?" I would say, "Oh, I want to get a job at Liberty Mutual eventually," and I would say what I thought would be a good answer so I didn't get fired.

They would say like, "But why would you want a job here? We came here because it paid good money and it supported us and now we're so many years down the line and it's too late to turn around. We got a family. We can't really take any risks now." A lot of people get stuck in that thing where they're no longer able to extricate themselves from that anymore.

[0:45:04]

It's amazing to have that freedom but I don't knock anybody that is stuck in that doing something that they're not that into because, look, once you got a family that takes precedent. You can't go around just constantly trying to -- I don't know. Maybe I'm wrong. But it's tougher to follow your dreams when you have obligations.

Robb: If Nikki and I had not been able to have kids, we'd probably be living on some permaculture farm in Nicaragua. Not to say that that would be preferable but definitely having kids, there's just this reality of the need for some structure and some home base and safety and all that. I mean, you can definitely get out and be adventurous. But, I mean, it definitely changes things.

I think some of the lessons that folks can take from this is even if you're in a spot where a lot of your life -- Okay, you're in this career. You're obligated to stick it out. But if you can find ways of channeling some energy into some personal enrichment activities, improving your diet, improving your exercise process, it's going to enrich the rest of your life and so you're able to reallocate some

chutzpah for areas that maybe you are more fired up for instead of just letting that one thing grind you down.

William: Yeah. And that's going to give more to all aspects of your life. There's a domino effect with that where if you begin to actually self-invest and put just a little bit of time every single day into something you're passionate about, it's going to carry over to everything. People notice that too. They'll notice you just have a different energy about you when you're pursuing stuff that you're passionate about.

I think that's something that everybody could do though regardless of your career. You can set aside a little bit of time to learn something new every day or to pursue a hobby of yours or a passion. If that grows eventually to the point where you can abandon a lot of other things and really pursue that as a career, that's obviously the idea. I always call that living the dream. At least everybody can include some measure of that in their life.

Robb: Absolutely. That's what jiu-jitsu is for me. In the back of my mind, I'm like, once the kids are out of the house, we might end up in central America and there's going to be this dingy little jiu-jitsu studio that I'll just get some folks together and do a kids program and have my coconut farm and go to town. But that's a back of my head thing to do down the road because I so love it but not remotely in a position to make that my primary thing. It's something that makes all the rest of what I'm doing worthwhile because I enjoy that so much.

William: Yeah. Everything, there are all these little nonlinear steps that are taking you closer to that. They may not seem to directly contribute but they are taking you one step closer to eventually being able to achieve that dream. When you set up this Central American fight club, I would love an invite.

Robb: Easy. We're going to be living in shanty shacks. We'll just grab a chicken coop for you and you'll be living as large as we are. Hey, William, do you do anything else -- Because your recovery is so important, do you do anything like sauna? Do you wear blue blockers? Do you use anything to help set up your sleep and improve your recovery?

William: There are a few things I could do. I'm going to touch on a couple of different things here. Absolutely with the heat and the cold exposure. I do try to throw in sauna towards the end of my sessions when I'm able to and that usually looks like around 20 to 25 minutes. I'll do that. I'm not really sitting in ice baths. I'm just taking cold showers which I doubt it has as impactful effects as doing real cold baths or cryotherapy but I do try to at least take cold showers, if anything for the mental benefit of not being a wuss. I'll do that.

In terms of recovery, I do pay a lot of attention to my omega three profile, the essential fatty acid ratio. I do supplement with some of that Norwegian cod liver oil. At least a couple of times a week I'm doing some grass fed calf liver. That rounds me a little bit in terms of the vitamin A levels, the whole B spectrum. I try to make sure I get that in there a couple of times a week. Usually, a little bit rare, I don't know if cooking it damages any nutrients but just in case I'll do that a bit rare. In terms of sleep you can't get me to wear those orange glasses.

Robb: Too impactful on the dating life, yeah.

William: I don't think my girlfriend would allow it. But for me, honestly, I don't know how my sleep quality is but I'm usually so exhausted by the time I get to bed that I just knock out.

[0:50:02]

I don't have any trouble sleeping through the night. Granted, I am young I am probably able to get away with a little bit more without affecting my hormonal levels and cortisol dysregulation so maybe I'm getting away with less sleep than I should right now and I may have to adjust that in the future but at the moment I'm kind of just knocking out as soon as I go to bed. I don't mess too much with that.

Robb: Man, if it's not broken, don't fix it. That sounds good, yeah.

William: In terms of recovery, that's basically it. Honestly, this diet, oh my gosh, in terms of athletic performance, body composition and recovery, it's like nothing else I've ever seen. The amount of time it would take me to recover from power lifting when I was vegan, my CNS would be shot. My muscles would be sore for days. I wouldn't be getting any sort of hypertrophy benefits to eke out just a little 2.5 pound increase on a lift. I'd be like just busting my butt.

Nowadays, it's like -- I actually just recently got a couple steroid comments on my Instagram pictures and I'm very flattered. The thing is it took me so long to figure out what works for that and now it's almost too good to be true in terms of the recovery and the hypertrophy benefits from a highly carnivorous diet. I love it and I think that that's probably 80% of my recovery right there, just a ton of red meat and eggs.

Robb: Totally makes sense. I have a sneaky suspicion, this kind of evolutionary biology ancestral health approach is going to stand the test of time. That's awesome.

William: I have the sneaky suspicion that what we did for millions of years is a good idea.

Robb: There might be something to it. Antibiotics here and there, probably a good idea. If I dislocate my shoulder I want an emergency medical professional dealing with that. But beyond that, there's a lot to be said from some simple food, some exercise, good community. I really like that you've mentioned the goal setting and the purpose because I think absence that, it's very easy for your life to take on this really monochromatic feel.

There's no excitement. There's no challenge. There's no danger. When you lay out a personal goal you may not meet it. There's been a number of things that I really wanted to do and the thing ended up crashing into a mountain side pretty spectacularly. It takes you down at the knee caps but it was also the occasional winds are super incredible and even the things that have failed I learned enormous amounts from that.

Some of the things that have had go belly up, they've now been -- the skill sets have been parlayed into work with the Chickasaw nation and a couple of other things. Yeah, I mean, I'm just so impressed that you're so wired into that, the goal setting and the balance and this 80-20 type stuff. It's really impressive, man. Long term, what are you wanting to do? Where do you see yourself in ten years? Do you want to run this acting thing for all its worth? Where do you want to go?

William: Oh, man. I get embarrassed a little bit when I think about these things because, well, I do plan to aim big. The main thing that I want to contribute to the world, definitely in the field of health and nutrition because to me that has been such a game changer. If you don't have your health, if you're not operating at your full potential then you are just going through life like one hand tied behind your back.

It's not even fair. Once you got your energy and your health back and vitality, you can just tackle life with so much more vigor and focus. That's absolutely one area that I really want to contribute strongly. To that end, I recently released a Carnivore Shredding program which is sort of my approach to -- it's mainly helping a lot of young people that want to get in shape and they're sick of the whole if it fits your macros, flexible dieting, and counting every single calorie.

Pretty much here is an intuitive guideline and approach to get in great shape without busting your butt too hard. That's one thing I'm doing in that area. But I also like to step away from just body composition and look into what is overall health and how can we create an approach, a set of daily practices that can facilitate better health for pretty much all Americans?

That's pretty much what Dr. Limansky and I are working on right now. We're doing a lot of testing, tracking. We're just in the beginning stages of it. We would like to put out probably a lot of different content but hopefully a book within the

next year or two that covers a broad spectrum approach. We're going to be touching on circadian rhythms and heat and cold exposure and intermittent fasting and different types of training and different steps that people can take. That's where I'm headed with the health and fitness stuff.

[0:54:59]

With acting, I want to be doing that for the rest of my life in some aspect. The things I care about, I love action adventure, I love inspirational films. I always used to love to watch the action films when I was a kid whether it was a movie like Troy or something like that or if it was one of the old Arnold movies. I love that stuff. I watch movies for entertainment so you're never going to be seeing me playing some Daniel Day Lewis cracked out whatever.

I'm not Mr. Method but I do love doing a great action adventure type role. I was super grateful to do a Power Rangers role. That's exactly what I'm into. We've had the chance to meet so many kids with the Make a Wish Foundation, to speak to the fans of the show. It has such a bigger impact than we could have ever realized especially with the young kids.

I love that stuff and that's where I want to head with acting. Naturally, I want to go as big as I can with that. I want to go for the movies. And I would love to put out some great content there. In the long run, just really keep, just working on things that I feel passionate about.

Robb: That's awesome. Amidst that zillion things, I really recommend you do some writing, blogging, create a book, something around your approach to mindset and goal setting and achievement and this comfortable 80-20 balance there. You are really, really out ahead of the curve on that. It is really amazing. When I see people fail, it's because they're not doing the things that you are consistently doing.

As great as all this other stuff is, you've got clearly a natural talent for this kind of mindset goal setting and although being a high achiever also clearly being very resilient with regards to setbacks. You've got something magical going on there. I would pursue that.

William: Wow. Oh, man. I'm going to try to stop blushing here.

Robb: Luckily, it's not a video interview.

William: But thank you so much. One thing that I would just maybe encourage people that are listening to this is we've talked a lot about goal setting and mindset but the thing is, ultimately, to pursue anything that you're passionate about or any

great endeavor or anything that other people deem unrealistic, you are taking a risk. There's a chance of success in that or there's a chance of failure. But even to fail in the pursuit of that is worth doing.

It doesn't matter if you fail and who cares if people laugh at you? Honestly, it's not really going to affect you that much. But to even fail in the pursuit of those things is still worthy. When I speak at schools, high schools, universities, I'll tell them if you pursue a goal and you don't get there 100%, what if you got there 10% or 20%? Or what if you achieve 30% of your goal? You still made incremental progress and now you've learned skills for the future. You can pick yourself back up and go at it with new knowledge.

And maybe you weren't even meant to achieve that goal. Maybe you now have a different perspective and you say, "Oh, thank God that didn't happen. That would have actually been pretty bad for me. Let me re-calibrate and let me go do something else." Ultimately, it's like you have to keep moving forward with these things. You have to set the goals. You have to go for the things you're passionate about and you have to keep moving forward.

And even if you stumble and you fall, a baby doesn't stop trying to walk because it fell down 50 times. If we can just apply that approach until the way we die, I think a lot of us would live lives that when we're on our death bed we can look back and say, "I think I did what I wanted to do in life and I'm pretty happy with the impact I made." Actually, there was no practical advice there.

Robb: I think that was rich with practical advice, probably an amazing spot to wrap this thing up. Before we do wrap up, open invite to come back on the show when you get this book wrapped up. Please remind folks where they can track you down on the interwebs as well as your Carnivore Shredding program. Where do they track you down and then that program down?

William: Awesome. Well, I would love to come back on the show in the future. Currently, you can find me either -- a lot of the content I release is on Instagram. That would be @williamshewfelt. I'm on YouTube at [youtube.com/willshewfelt](https://www.youtube.com/willshewfelt) and thecarnivoreshreddingprogram.com. That's where you can find the Carnivore Shredding program.

I just started to do some consults because a lot of the people that are asking me questions I just can't get through every single question so I started to do some consults on there. I'm offering that in the Carnivore Shredding program. I'm going to be releasing a different program next month that steps back a little bit from just body composition and we could go a bit more into health broader spectrum with that.

[1:00:05]

That is pretty much what I'm up to right now and other places to find me. We actually are -- we've been on this little hiatus right now with airing new episodes. We're going to have new episodes coming out at the end of this month. I think it's August 28th or something, August 25th. My girlfriend is signaling to me. August 25th, so we are going to have actually the 25th anniversary reunion episode.

There are going to be Power Rangers from the Mighty Morphin season back in 1993. They're going to be coming back. A lot of people's favorite Power Rangers from the past. This was a really cool episode to do. I mean, I grew up watching these guys. Just to be on set with them and to go take on a mission and to yell "It's Morphin time" with them, I was definitely living the dream there. That was awesome. So, new episodes coming out later this month on the 25th. I'll be at a few conventions coming up. That's pretty much what I'm up to at this moment.

Robb: Awesome, man. Well, that is so cool. It was so great having you on the show and looking forward to having you on the show here in the future. When we're in the same city at some point, we need to go share some grub and hang out.

William: Absolutely. Robb, you are one of the leaders in this field. You are one of the people that I constantly look for information. You have probably one of the most intelligent approaches to things. You look at really everything. You step back and you really check out everything and you provide so much great information. Thank you for all the work you're doing. I'm going to continue to follow you. I recommend friends to check out your books, your website, all of the content you're putting out. Thank you for the work you do.

Robb: Awesome, man. Thanks. Huge honor. Huge honor. Well, can't wait to chat with you again and definitely meet you in real life. Take care and congratulations on all the success you've had and looking forward to seeing where all this goes.

William: Thank you so much. My mom's not going to hear the end of it actually.

Robb: Awesome. We'll talk to you soon. Take care.

William: All right.

Robb: Bye.

[1:02:08] End of Audio