

Nicki: It's time to make your health an act of rebellion. We're tackling personalized nutrition, metabolic flexibility, resilient aging and answering your diet and lifestyle questions. This is the only show with the bold aim to help 1 million people liberate themselves from the sick care system.

Nicki: You're listening to The Healthy Rebellion Radio. The contents of this show are for entertainment and educational purposes only. Nothing in this podcast should be considered medical advice. Please consult your licensed and credentialed functional medicine practitioner before embarking on any health, dietary, or fitness change.

Nicki: Warning, when Robb gets passionate, he's been known to use the occasional expletive. If foul language is not your thing, if it gets your britches in a bunch, well, there's always Disney+.

Robb: Welcome back friends, neighbors loved ones. Welcome back, wife.

Nicki: Hello. Hello. Welcome back to another episode of The Healthy Rebellion Radio. There's some odd buzzing sound, but I don't think any of you all can hear it.

Robb: Seems to have resolved. Yeah.

Nicki: Seems it came quickly and left just as quickly thankfully. I hope everybody had an enjoyable Thanksgiving for those in the United States that celebrate Thanksgiving. We played a lot of cribbage with some friends and I've been teaching the girls and Sagan has really taken to it. So we've had some throw down cribbage bouts. Well, there's another buzzing sound.

Robb: (Mumbling in the distance)

Nicki: We're having a, what do we call that? Ambient euphonious whales.

Robb: Wow. Wasn't that the name of your dad's band?

Nicki: My dad will get that one. Yeah. My dad was in a band called A Euphonious Whale. Anyway, that's a little bit of a tangent, but I'm trying to think what else do we have that's new and exciting and interesting to share? Your tap cancer out-

Robb: Should be happening next-

Nicki: ... event is happening next Saturday, I believe.

Robb: ... Saturday. Yeah.

Nicki: What would be that December 11th?

Robb: 11th. Yeah.

Nicki: Yeah. Okay. Robb will be doing that, an hour of continuous jujitsu.

Robb: Which will be basically me just laying there and letting people maul me.

Nicki: You might be dying for a while because you've been out for a couple weeks since your back has been bothering you, so-

Robb: That'll be a good time.

Nicki: ... it's liable to be a fun one. Let's see, upcoming in The Healthy Rebellion. We've got our virtual Healthy Rebellion holiday party coming up next Thursday, December 9th. That'll be fun. Some good Zoom time with all of our rebels across all the time zones. We have a seven day cold shower challenge hosted again by our rebel, Ash Higgs. And that's going to start on January 3rd and then our next 30 day Rebel Reset will be kicking off on Friday, January 14th. So lots of stuff coming up within the next couple of weeks.

Robb: Cool.

Nicki: Cool. Do you have a news topic for us today?

Robb: I do have a news topic, in fact. It's New York Times piece, A Heart-Healthy Way to Eat. Aim for an overall healthy dietary pattern, the American Heart Association advises, rather than focusing on, quote, good or bad foods.

Robb: So I have a link to that now. So I have a link to the American Heart Association journal where this piece, the kind of sciencey piece comes from and this, I guess, a brief little snippet out of the New York Times piece. The committee's advice on protein foods published during the climate talks in Glasgow, was well timed. Choosing plant-based proteins over animal sources of protein, not only has health value for consumers, but can help foster a healthier planet.

Robb: Get in there and let's just fix everything. So this came to me from a group that I'm a part of. And probably after this podcast, I will no longer be a part of. It's this low carb research group and a good number of people are in there. How much behind-the-curtain stuff do I want to do?

Nicki: I don't know any of this. So I don't know. I can't give you any advice.

Robb: There have been a few dust-ups in there. I have raised some stinks around, hey, climate change topics are going to get inextricably wrapped into this food conversation and if you want to just write another keto book, that's great, but there's a window, an aperture that's closing here where you won't be able to just say, "Well, this addresses health and we don't really know about the climate change stuff."

Robb: Which has been the position of some of the folks in there, which is bullshit because two people wrote books that addressed a lot of the climate change issues around animal husbandry, myself and Diana Rogers. But some of the prominent members of this group have been basically refused to read the book and-

Nicki: Well, it's politically unpopular to champion meat currently.

Robb: And that's more to the point. So this... Fuck it. I'll just say it. It's Gary Taubes. We had some conversation in which he was, basically, "I don't know if what you've put forward here is accurate." And I said, "Well, have you read the book?" And he said, "No, not really." And I really think that the brass tacks part of this is just that if you start championing things like, "Oh, animal husbandry may in fact..." And for God's sake, yes. Let the best science, the best models take us where we need to go.

Robb: But when you look critically at the claims around climate change and the influence the animal husbandry has on that, it's just massively overblown and regenerative and may actually play a remarkable role in mitigating a lot of climate change issues, not the least

of which is desertification and food insecurity and whatnot because of a decentralized food system.

Robb: But when you champion that topic, you no longer are on the hoity-toity invite list to Berkeley and New York cocktail parties, because now you've stepped into something. Not only are you recommending that animal-centric diets, or animal-inclusive diets are good for health, which is very, very scientifically defensible, but also will get you on various naughty lists.

Robb: But now when people push back and say, "Well, it's terrible for the environment," and as a credible scientist or someone who follows literature, if you push back on that, then now you are a climate change denier. And if you're a climate change denier you're also a racist and a white supremacist and all these other stuff. It's all just gotten completely inextricably wrapped together.

Robb: So I appreciate why some people haven't had the balls to just get in and really look deeply at this stuff. I think a good number of people are just hoping that they can sunset their careers in this space while avoiding this particular thorny topic. But as we've seen with the MIT professor who, he was giving a talk on engineering, but he had, given a commentary on critical race theory, completely separate to this. And it wasn't even...

Robb: I forget exactly. He basically was uninvited from MIT. And this guy is a preeminent scientist, impeccable bonafides in the area that he's in. The commentary that he had was whatever it was, but it was completely separate from it. And he was dis-invited from this process. This is where all this stuff is going, and if you want to conduct low carb research, if you want to conduct animal-inclusive dietary research, your opportunity to do that is closing.

Robb: If you are a big fan of autoimmune paleo, because it has been singularly beneficial in dealing with the challenges that you or the folks that you steward what they face, you're going to find ever more difficult times championing this stuff, and you will be on the pointy end of the stick that you are a climate change denier and all kinds of other horrible stuff.

Robb: So I don't really know what to do about that other than people need to be aware of it and folks need to be brave enough to stand up and talk about this stuff. And again where and when we have good science on this stuff, that's what should direct the whole conversation. And I don't know what else to say. I did throw a link in there to my little piece to the Performance Menu final edition for... I think some folks probably don't know, or a lot of folks don't know.

Nicki: Some people don't know what the Performance Menu is, but, gosh, it was an online magazine that Robb and I started along with our business partner in CrossFit NorCal, Greg Everett, back in 2005, I want to say.

Robb: Yeah.

Nicki: Yeah. So lots of sorted history around that, starting that and whatnot. But Greg has championed that and taken that for, gosh, the last 10 years, at least.

Robb: Well, really, the thing was running for 16 years, I think, total. So, yeah.

Nicki: Right. And I think we were only intimately involved for two or three and then it's been Greg's baby, but he's putting that to bed. And so the final addition, final issue came out today, which is December 1st.

Robb: And it's just interesting. And a lot of people who've gone on to some fair prominence within the health space, either got their starts or had early contributions to the Performance Menu. So it's the little journal they could.

Nicki: For sure. Okay. Let's read our T-shirt review winner for this week. It goes to Dangerous Don. He says, "Sure, I know it's a health and wellness podcast, but it is refreshing to listen to completely honest content. In this day and age, when people have to skirt around issues, the only agenda I see here is to provide listeners with accurate and useful information.

Nicki: I love the organic interactions between Robb and Nicki, and my only complaint with the whole podcast is that I feel like I should be able to buy Robb and Nicki a beer. Keep producing great content." Dangerous Don, if you are ever in the Kalispell, Montana area-

Robb: You can buy us a margarita.

Nicki: You can buy us... Or a cider from the Ciderworks.

Robb: Or a cider.

Nicki: Yeah. Would love that. Thank you for your review, Dangerous Don. Send us an email to hello@robbwolf.com with your T-shirt size and your mailing address and we'll send you a Healthy Rebellion Radio T-shirt. And The Healthy Rebellion Radio is sponsored by our salty AF electrolyte company, LMNT, and given that today is the 1st of December when we're recording this, it's already December. I can't believe it. This year is-

Robb: Holy cat.

Nicki: It's the fastest and the slowest year ever. I don't know or maybe last year-

Robb: I don't know, fully lockdown year was-

Nicki: Yeah. Last year might have won that award.

Robb: And we were contemplating our move and everything, but-

Nicki: Right.

Robb: Yeah.

Nicki: Right. Anyway, do you have any of the following people on your holiday gift giving list, a low carb or keto eater, athlete, spartan racer, BJJ player, runners, bikers, somebody with an active job. Somebody who works outside, does manual labor, any breastfeeding moms, anybody with pots, anyone who loves winter sports, skiing, snowboarding, cross country, et cetera, anyone you know who still drinks commercial sports drinks. Give them something salty this year. LMNT makes a great gift. We've got to convert all those commercial sports drinkers.

Robb: We do.

Nicki: Those sugar-laden colorful-

Robb: Late nights.

Nicki: Colorful red dye number, whatever-

Robb: 38.

Nicki: When you buy three boxes of LMNT, you can get the fourth box free with the value bundle and you can do that at drinklmnt.com/robb. That's drinkL-M-N-T.com/R-O-B-B. Okay, Hubs, are you ready for questions?

Robb: Yes. Nicely done wife.

Nicki: Nicely. Okay. Question number one comes from Jason and it's regarding sleeping and eating on an extremely variable schedule. He says, "Hello, long time listener, first time caller. I've listened to your podcast on adjusting sleeping and eating cycles when changing shifts as many first responders do. However, I'm trying to locate resources and best practices for a more dramatically changing schedule.

Nicki: I work as a locomotive engineer for a Class 1 railroad. Truly I'm looking for actionable things I can spread to what I believe is an underserved industry. My coworkers and I are often under-rested and unprepared, which can lead to poor dietary and lifestyle choices. Our schedule is extremely unpredictable. We may work a night shift, be off for 10 hours and head back in for the afternoon shift, equally as likely to be off long enough to work another night or even the next day.

Nicki: Unfortunately, there's no way to tell ahead of time as we get either two hours or one and a half hour notice before our shift begins. These shifts often end up being 12 hours long. As such, there are multiple times a week where I'm may be up for over 24 hours. In these situations I'm unsure how to even attempt to regulate my eating or trying to sleep when I need to, but I'm not tired.

Nicki: I'm 46 years old, male, 5'11, 210 pounds. I lift four to five times a week often when I'm tired and I try to get some steady state cardio in daily." He says, "A live Q&A would definitely be a great addition to all the work you guys already do. I would like to add that I greatly appreciate all that you do and any advice would be appreciated."

Robb: We did spin up our sleep guide, right?

Nicki: Mm-hmm (affirmative). And we can put a link to that in the show notes. Yes.

Robb: Yeah. And so the sleep guide was something that I generated initially for the folks when we were working with the Chickasaw Nation and gave them a template of that. And then I've tweaked and fiddled it a little bit. And it's, I think, the best accessible resource for how to manage this stuff.

Robb: Man, there's so many variables here because at least with standard first responder work, there's at least a bit of a known element to the schedule. Clearly things can go long, you can get called in for emergencies and whatnot. But this sounds like absolute chaos. And actually, when we consider the known elements of how compromised people are when they're just tired, I'm shocked that there's not more issues with running trains.

Robb: But I assume the risk adjusters have done some sort of noodling on this, but it's... Low carb diets are a pretty good hedge against this because the individuals are almost universally insulin-resistant from the shift work. It doesn't mean you have to be keto, but high carb, low fat is probably not going to work in this scenario.

Robb: Maybe it will for very few people. But the work that we did in Reno, that was one of the only levers left that the first responders could use was the dietary side, because the sleep, the hypervigilant state, all the rest of that, which is baked in the cake, that you could do mitigating strategies.

Robb: Knowing when you're going to sleep and tapering on any type of stimulants, like using stimulants really early in your shift. Man, having a kit to take with you so you can black out rooms. I assume who these folks are on the road a lot and so weird hotels, so how to black out the room in two minutes or less, sleep mask, ear plugs, some Doc Parsley's Sleep Remedy.

Robb: Those are definitely the things that I think are going to be helpful. We mentioned, I think, virtually all that stuff, but you're just going to have to be that much more dynamic and nimble given the variation here. I think the main thing that changes is-

Nicki: Trying to avoid alcohol at all, I mean, because I guess it already disruptive for sleep if you're sleeping on any kind of regular consistent schedule, but with this theoreticism, I think, would be just a big, big no-no. I'm trying to think of what else. And you've always said, the food is the one thing that you...

Nicki: It seems like Jason might have control over here and I'm not sure if it's cafeteria-style eating or if you guys are eating at restaurants or what the situation is, but just by hook or by crook, choosing protein veggies, trying to avoid any of the sugar-laden stuff that I know is-

Robb: Super tempting in those scenarios. Yeah.

Nicki: Super tempting, especially when you're super sleep deprived, but really, really making an effort to avoid those. Anything else?

Robb: I wish I had more, but-

Nicki: We will put a link to that sleep solution guide in the show notes.

Robb: And again, maybe to just consolidate that, the main thing that I see here is there's just even more variability than what standard shift work has. And so everything that you're thinking about with standard shift work, when and how to use stimulant when to start dialing those down so that you can actually sleep when you can sleep, the sleep hygiene piece, when you can sleep, get as good as sleep as you possibly can. Good circadian biology, all that type of stuff. So, yeah.

Nicki: Okay. Question number two is from Cheeny and she wants to know, or he wants to know whether resistance starch is worth the hype. Is it worth the hype or is it back science? I love day-old white rice. So I'm hoping it's got some merit to it.

Robb: Well, here's the deal, whether it's good or bad that day-old white rice is still going to be as tasty either way. The little bit that we've done with monitoring people with CGMs, Continuous Glucose Monitors, some people seem to experience a dramatic decrease in

total glycemic load with like bake potato, cool it overnight in the refrigerator, and then you can eat it the next thing.

Robb: You can even heat it up and it doesn't undo the reticent starch. Same deal with rice. I want to say some things like grits and some things like that also are a little bit similar, but I forget if that's accurate, but some people seem to do a great job with that.

Robb: They respond well or the effects are very pronounced. Other people, it doesn't seem to do much of anything and I'm one of those other people. So if you like it and it tastes good and it's convenient, then I would just say go for it. And hopefully you are one of the folks that get some benefit from it.

Nicki: Okay. Question three. I think this one must have been submitted via Instagram because it's from... There's no vowels in the first word. So I'm thinking it's Wizard Pow, and it's on plant defenses. "Are all plant defense mechanisms antithetical to human health or longevity? I'm thinking in relation to things like turmeric and sulforaphane."

Robb: Yeah. It's funny, I'm definitely in the carnivore-friendly camp. I've seen huge benefit for folks. What percentage of The Healthy Rebellion do you think is eating carnivore or pretty damn close to it?

Nicki: 20%

Robb: I mean like Jack Sibel. There's a lot of people in there.

Nicki: I would-

Robb: 20, 25%.

Nicki: Maybe 20 to 25%. Yeah.

Robb: A non-trivial number of people are eating that way. Most of the folks have found some amount of plant material that they reintroduced, like Tara does a little bit of fermented vegetables and stuff like that. Very selective. It depends person to person, but I think that there's, without a doubt, some folks that for whatever reason, like gut health issues, auto immunity, they're virtually zero plant foods.

Robb: And then there's a whole spectrum from there. One thing that I diverge from the real hardcore carnivore scene is I have no doubt that humans have preferred animal products throughout all of our evolution, and even more recent times when people are given an option to have more plant material, they tend to do that until they become woke and decide that feeding themselves the most nutrient-dense foods possible is a bad idea, but it's, I think, a million things like shoes.

Robb: Most people in developing country would kill to have their kids wear a pair of shoes. And then you only get to a point where you wear skew shoes when you're wealthy enough to be able to say that that's terrible stuff for you. But I mean, humans are super adaptable. We survive across the broadest range of any organism on the planet. I have a friend of mine who's a toxicologist for one of the big evil pharma companies-

Nicki: Big pharma companies.

Robb: ... and I tasked him with this idea of, "Hey, has anybody looked at the evolutionary biology of our toxicology? What things can humans handle and they can't handle?" It's

well understood that chimpanzees can eat things that are so bitter and so caustic that humans would have no hope of eating it.

Robb: There's some Venn diagram overlap of some stuff that both humans and chimps will eat. And then there's a bunch of stuff that chimps can eat that humans can't and it's largely because of toxicology issues. We can't detox a bunch of the stuff that's in there and then I think cows are far, far better than chimps in that regard. And then you think about dogs and their inability to deal with some of the constituents in chocolate and then what's the sweetener-

Nicki: Macadamia nuts.

Robb: So Macadamia nuts-

Nicki: It's-

Robb: A refutation?

Nicki: No, it's... Oh my gosh. I can't believe I'm blanking on this. It-

Robb: Anyway, there's a safer non-nutritive sweetener that will make dogs sick and can kill them. And I think dogs are arguably a bit more carnivorous than humans are. Cats even more so. And so I think that there's a spectrum within a population of what folks can and can't handle that's just at a genetic level.

Robb: I think there's some epigenetic changes that can occur, antibiotic use, gut infections and whatnot that may change what's happening there. Because a lot of these plant constituents too, it's not just the constituents making it in the bloodstream and getting detoxified by the liver. Sometimes the organisms in our gut modify the constituents. Sometimes they make them more toxic. Oftentimes they detoxify them.

Robb: So I think there's just a big spectrum on that. And, fuck, man, I just like having a salad sometimes, but a really raw green salad that's huge doesn't really work for me. It didn't for a long time, but I just kept hammering that stuff down because you're supposed to eat all this.

Robb: So I don't know. I'm kind of wandering now, but I think... I'm not in the completely extreme carnivore camp where it's like avoid every plant material at all costs, unless you're just noticing that you feel like garbage when you eat it. And then by all means adjust things appropriate to that.

Nicki: Okay. Excuse me. All right. It's that time? Don't laugh at me, Robb. It's time for-

Robb: You had one thing to do, lady.

Nicki: It's time for The Healthy Rebellion Radio trivia and our Healthy Rebellion Radio sponsor drink, LMNT, is giving a box of LMNT electrolytes to three lucky winners selected at random who answer the following question correctly.

Robb: I'm trying to distract Nicki so she can't come up with this because she was supposed to do it before.

Nicki: Robb, what is the name of the Christmas movie that the girls like above all others, at least currently?

Robb: I'm not totally sure. Is it the Santa Claus?

Nicki: It is not. That would probably be in number two.

Robb: A Christmas movie. I don't know. What is it?

Nicki: You don't know?

Robb: Have we watched it recently?

Nicki: They have.

Robb: I usually go fetal when the girls watch movies. So I'm not totally sure on this.

Nicki: This one is actually quite good and entertaining and enjoyable to watch annually.

Robb: The Grinch.

Nicki: Nope.

Robb: I don't know. Lay it on me.

Nicki: Home Alone.

Robb: Oh, Home Alone. Okay. I should have known that.

Nicki: Yes. All right. So, that will be our trivia question this week.

Robb: Fuck. That one hurt.

Nicki: To play, go to robbwolf.com/trivia and enter your answer and we'll randomly select three people with the correct answer to win a box of LMNT Electrolytes. The cutoff to answer this week's trivia and be eligible to win is Thursday, December 9th at midnight. Winners will be notified via email and also on Instagram. This is open to residents of the US only.

Robb: We're super professional.

Nicki: We are. We've got it together folks. Got it together. All right. Question four this week is from Jenny on the Omicron variant. She says, "Hi, I'm a masters of public health and this is completely stumping me. Reports on Omicron from the field describe it as a lingering cold with no hospitalizations," and then she links an article.

Nicki: "If that's the case, shouldn't we be happy and not locking down. It was a shift to a less catastrophic influenza that ended the last flu pandemic. We didn't vaccinate flu out of existence. I know that we don't have all the data, but seriously that's just a mantra now. But if the symptoms are basic cold, why is the World Health Organization and Fauci... The last article I read had him making another reference to, quote, the science and I'm seriously going to vomit. Flipping out. So why are the WHO and Fauci flipping out?" That's her question.

Robb: Do you want to? I'm not totally sure where to weight into this. One thing, and Jenny points out very accurately is that the general natural history of an agent like this,

whether it's a bad influenza strain or other types of particularly airborne illnesses like this is that, generally if they do...

Robb: One, if it's super contagious, it will just run through a population and it will run through a population fast enough that there's not actually all that much opportunity for variants to spin off. There's pretty good theory that the vaccination in amidst the pandemic and also interestingly the lockdowns, have provided these-

Nicki: Opportunities.

Robb: ... opportunities for variants to emerge. But the hope and the usual trend is that things become less dangerous with time-

Nicki: Because it's not in the virus's best interest to kill the host before it can spread. So as it gets less-

Robb: It's not even really in the virus's best interest to make the host sick enough that they don't get out and move around.

Nicki: Right. So this is what the virus wants is to have it be so common cold-like.

Robb: Benign.

Nicki: Benign, that it spreads rapidly. Most people don't know they have it so they continue being out and about and circulating and spreading it, and that's the ideal from the evolution of a virus perspective.

Robb: That is winning the lottery in that regards. And there's a bunch of noise being made that we're going to need... Even though the... What was the last one? The Delta variant? I was asking why are there no booster updates with this? And now with this one, which seems a couple of orders of magnitude more benign, there's a bunch of noise that we're going to need-

Nicki: Omicron boosters.

Robb: ... Omicron boosters specific to this, which I find fascinating because variants can spin up fast enough that by the time you've re-weaponized the whole process of developing the Omicron booster, we may be three or four more steps down the road by the time this is spun up. I mean, on the basic safety deal, it just defies all logic.

Robb: And Bari Weiss had a great piece where she had a gentleman who's a master's in public health and he talked about a lot of this stuff. And the guy is very pro-vaccine in general, but very much against mandates. He feels that public health is going to be in absolute shambles by the time this is done.

Robb: And it may be a shambles in which we live in a totalitarian world where maybe today you can go shopping because your vaccine passport says that you've been a good enough person, your social credit score allows you to leave the house and go buy food for yourself and family, or maybe it doesn't. Or maybe we manage, or at least some places manage to skirt that kind of authoritarian hell.

Robb: But then the next huge deal where we need to lean into public health for help, nobody's going to trust anything. I can't even think of an adequate analogy here, and this is much the... This guy got pretty fired up about this-

Nicki: And we can link to that in this if folks want to check that out.

Robb: ... and we can definitely link to that.

Nicki: So if folks want to check that out, it's a good...

Robb: And the flip side of this is that if this Omicron variant is doing what it's doing, this is really good because it's following the natural progression that we would expect, because there's an alternate hypothesis out there people like Geert Vanden Bossche and other folks have put forward that all of the immunizing mid-pandemic, leaky vaccine, the unique feature of only encoding for the spike protein, for the immune response.

Robb: That this sets us up for an opportunity in which the COVID virus would be encouraged to adapt in non... What was the term? It doesn't follow... You remember in the original Peter Daszak communications with Fauci, and he says, "Does not follow evolutionary-"

Nicki: Evolutionary-

Robb: "... expectations," or something to that effect.

Nicki: Right. Something like that. Yep.

Robb: That doesn't follow standard evolutionary expectations because you've created this odd pressure in the way that we are going about doing all this stuff. So we should all say a thank God if this thing is heading in the direction that it looks like Omicron is going. Because the alternative there, which we've seen a couple of different situations of seemingly higher case counts in the vaccinated, really suspiciously high hospitalization, whether it was COVID related or not within vaccinated populations. So we really do need some light at some end of a tunnel with all this.

Nicki: Well, and if back in January, February of 2020, the coronavirus that appeared on the scene was the Omicron variant, there would be nothing to-

Robb: There would be complete nothing source.

Nicki: Yeah. Nobody would care. There wouldn't have been any lockdowns, there wouldn't have been all the mask stuff, there wouldn't have been... Nobody would've rushed to develop vaccines because it's looking that benign. So the fact that some places are re-instituting lockdowns.

Nicki: Santa Cruz, California is mandating masks indoors in your own home. The fact that there's travel bans, you can't fly in and out of South Africa into a lot of countries, for this variant. Had this been the original variant, the last two years would've been completely normal.

Robb: Yeah.

Nicki: So, I don't know.

Robb: I don't know what else. Jenny, I guess your instincts on this, I think, are valid. Clearly other people can't get enough lockdown, can't get enough control of people's lives, can't do enough virtue signaling around all the stuff. And there's just really two worlds that exist around all this, and-

Nicki: And our next question actually will dovetail into this. This is a question from Joe and his question is regarding mass formation and Dr. Mattias Desmet. He says, "Hi, Robb and Nicki, love your work. Thanks for all the excellent content. I came across a few interviews with Dr. Mattias Desmet, who thinks that the response on to COVID can be explained by something called mass formation or mass hypnosis."

Nicki: And then he goes on to, Joe, list several interviews and podcasts that he has been on. "I was first introduced to Dr. Mattias Desmet from Amy Peikoff," who is one of our Healthy Rebellion members and she has a podcast called Don't Let it Go, and-

Robb: And she's high up the food chain within the Parler ecosystem. She's involved with the social platform, Parler. And I think that they were the first people to interview Desmet within this cycle.

Nicki: Yeah. One of them, for sure. So Desmet is a clinical psychology professor at Gent University in Belgium. And so Joe's question, what do we think about this? And I'll include the links that Joe shared, but also Amy's episode, which is the one that I listened to, and it's pretty fascinating.

Nicki: I had never heard of the concept of mass formation or mass hypnosis before watching this. And he makes the case that what we're experiencing we were primed for it. So before mass hypnosis or mass formation can occur, there needs to be four characteristics, and these were all well established before coronavirus came to be in early 2020.

Nicki: So those four characteristics are people feel a lack of a social bond. They're socially isolated. They don't have high connection with others. That's number one. Number two, they feel like their life doesn't have meaning. And I guess before coronavirus, there was a study that's showing over 50% of people felt like their jobs were meaningless. A lot of what he called free-floating anxiety.

Nicki: Normally when you feel anxious, you can attach it to something like, "Okay, I'm anxious because I have to give this big talk next week, or we have this big meeting, or there's something going on and you know that that's why you're feeling anxious, but free-floating anxiety is where you can't connect it to a reason. So you feel anxious, but you have no idea why you're anxious. And so you're searching...

Nicki: Apparently that's one of like the most terrible things to feel, he's explaining, and so people start searching for something that can explain their anxiety. And then the fourth condition that needs to be met for this mass formation to occur is people have lots of frustration and aggression, again, that can't be attributed to a specific cause.

Nicki: And so when a crisis comes along, it allows people to connect their anxiety to something. It's like, "Oh, this is why I'm anxious. There's this COVID and I might die and everybody might die." Those early models out of the Imperial College of London that had those...

Robb: Massive numbers.

Nicki: Just turned out to be so far off the mark, but that's... Even a couple weeks into it, when other models were coming forward saying, "No, those were highly inflated. The odds of that happening are nil." All of the press and media ran with these huge numbers. So people obviously were very afraid of that, but now they have something to connect their anxiety to.

Nicki: Now they can connect to other people. Their life has meaning, because it's like, "Okay, we can fight this virus together. We're all in this together and now they have this social connection that they felt was missing in their lives before and they have something to satisfy their frustration against.

Nicki: So he makes the case that people that these conditions were part of their life, they didn't have social bonds, they didn't have a lot of meaning, they had a lot of anxiety, when a crisis comes along, they now can connect their anxiety to something and they will follow the narrative regardless of how absurd it is. It's become a ritual. Wearing a mask is a ritual. All of these things are now symbolic and it shows that they're a part of the tribe and it's really hard to-

Robb: Walk that back.

Nicki: ... walk that back. Anyway, Amy did a phenomenal interview with him. I've seen his name pop up, gosh, dozens and dozens of times since. He's definitely doing the podcast circuit and has been host... A lot of people have had him on. So I would definitely recommend listening to him. I think his point is very, very interesting. It's also interesting, because he says around 30% of a population will succumb to the mass formation and he describes it like a hypnosis too.

Nicki: So in the beginning when it was, "All these people are going to die," it's like they have blinders on, horse blinders, and that's all they can see. Even if you say, "Oh, but there's going to be all of these other secondary effects that happen, like depression and this other social isolation and other people might die and job loss and poverty and kids aren't going to be getting school lunches because schools are closed so there's going to be more kids starving," the hypnosis piece of it is that people, none of that matters to them. They really don't take that data in at all.

Nicki: They're just blinders on, like a COVID death is the worst thing in the world. So it's interesting. It's like this one-track mind and they can't see outside of it, but apparently 30% of the population can succumb to a mass formation. 30% won't. They'll see right through it and they won't. And the remaining 40% will realize something is wrong, they won't be able to put their finger on it necessarily and they'll just be silent and go along.

Nicki: So the trick is to get to the 40% and try to wake them up, because they already have that feeling in their gut that something's not quite right or this doesn't feel right, but this is what we got to do, and so they just go along. But the way out is to somehow tap into that 40%. Anyway, it's fascinating stuff, again, that was the first exposure to that concept of a mass formation. But I'm definitely seeing more and more people talk about it and it ties back into Jenny's question about the Omicron variant.

Nicki: Why are people freaking out about this? Well, because if this is the thing that gives you meaning to fight this virus, let's fight it forever. Even if the next variant, nobody feels it at all and nobody knows they have it and nobody dies from it, we're still fighting it because it gives us connection, it gives us meaning, we have purpose. So the people for whom they are experiencing this mass formation, they don't want COVID to end, right?

Robb: It's the best life they've had. The meaning connection and us-versus-them. Sebastian Junger talks about this in *Tribe*, where some folks that were in a number of different circumstances, but one that really stuck out to me was the bombing in London during World War II. People remarked after the war that that was the most enjoyable portion of their life. Because even though there was terror and there was a fear of death and all

this stuff, but people pulled together and they had one thing to focus on and one thing to focus against and the rest of their life has been pale by comparison.

Nicki: I'm just... I don't know what that says about humanity, but...

Robb: I don't know and... What's fascinating to me, because I'm just... My bucket of fuck given does not runneth over much anymore. There's a good number of people in the ancestral health space that have just gone head long into this and a bunch of the other, I think initially, well intentioned, but really shortsighted social justicey type stuff.

Robb: One individual early on labeled themselves a COVID accepter. And I think that this was, one, for sure, virtue signaling because this person is a huge narcissist and just a terrible human being. But there was some fringy elements that were like, "Oh, COVID doesn't even exist." There are still people that say that HIV isn't real. And they get into all this arcane virology stuff and Koch's postulate and everything.

Robb: They're fucking nuts and they also don't understand science very well. But there have been a few people that really went head over heels for this stuff. And it's interesting looking at who the people were that lost their fucking minds over this.

Robb: They tend to be narcissists, they tend to be super front facing on 50 different selfie photos of themselves and what they're up to on social media and just on and on and on. And that really seems to... Although there are plenty of shirtless selfie front-facing people that are in the counter camp now that I think about it. But I may be clawing at straws there, but yeah-

Nicki: Yeah. You are channeling that. I would push back on that a little bit.

Robb: So I don't know. I don't know why. It's fascinating to me though, that if it was this general anxiety and a lack of purpose, you would think that folks have this cool gig of selling health online and all the rest of this stuff. By those definitions, it would seem like-

Nicki: I'm going to push back there some too. I mean, you have this cool gig of selling health online and there's lots of things that can contribute to not having perfect mental health.

Robb: Sure. Sure.

Nicki: So I'm going to push back there, but one of the-

Robb: What I'm trying to get to is why. Folks in the ancestral health scene ostensibly already went counter to the standard narrative, although a number of these people, interestingly now have abandoned this ancestral health template because it's elitist or it's racist or it's this, or it's that. So that's interesting in and of itself.

Robb: So now they're feeling guilty about promulgating something that... Somehow they say it's elitist and whatnot. It's available for anybody anywhere to do it because the information is largely free. So I don't really get where any of this is. I'm just trying to figure out how some of the people in this space ended up where they did. What was the deal with that?

Nicki: Well, I guess my point is, is that just because somebody's in... I guess your point, they're in ancestral health, so they're already eating well, maybe... I don't know. I'm tying it back to his anxiety piece because that's step one. You have this anxiety that you can't attach to something in your real world. You don't have a...

Nicki: If a Tiger's chasing you, you're anxious because you've got this thing, right? But if you feel anxious, but you don't know why... And that can afflict anybody, right? It could be childhood stuff, it could be interpersonal relationship stuff. It doesn't matter how well you eat. It doesn't matter, maybe financially there's challenges. Maybe you've got a sick child. I don't know. I feel like there's... Well, although those are specific things that you could attach your anxiety to.

Nicki: So maybe I'm... I don't know. I don't know. He just makes the point that in the years, preceding COVID, the five years running up to COVID, antidepressant use and prescriptions have just been lineally going up like crazy. It's just a hockey stick of the number of people feeling dissatisfied with their lives and taking medication to deal with that. I guess I would say that that spans everybody regardless of profession. I think, that touches-

Robb: A lot of folks.

Nicki: ... a lot of folks, but that underlying thing and not being able to know why you're anxious and just feeling this general malaise, and then just because somebody has an online persona, they might be really fucking lonely in real life, right? Maybe even more so than the average person. They feel the need to do all the selfies because that's where they get their-

Robb: Little dopamine hit.

Nicki: ... little dopamine hit, but maybe they don't have as many meaningful relationships in person, which we know how important is connection. We talk about community in our 30 day resets all the time. Community was one of your pillars of health and-

Robb: Wired to eat.

Nicki: ... wired to eat. And as everything has moved more and more online and digital and social media, yes, it's connection, but it's not really connection.

Robb: It's the junk food of connection.

Nicki: Yeah. So no wonder people feel like what they're doing... I don't know. He sets it up like we've had this perfect storm, all the kindling was stacked just perfectly and it just needed the tiniest spark to light this thing and create this mass formation, which is where we are now, and-

Robb: It's interesting. I still wonder about some folks like Sam Harris. Pieces of this... And again, I think this model is super interesting, but it would be interesting to talk to this guy about some of these other outliers like Sam's a brilliant guy. He's a scientist, but he blue-pilled on this early. And I really think that a lot of that is an outgrowth of the sociopolitical environment that COVID began in.

Robb: Trump was in office and he said hydroxychloroquine, and he said these vaccines will be good. And there was just a reel that was going around the other day of all of these prominent folks from Biden to Harris, on and on, "I would never take this. This stuff needs to be heavily scrutinized," and then-

Nicki: I would never take a rushed vaccine.

Robb: I would never take a rush vaccine.

Nicki: They would have to disclose all of the information on the approval process. I wouldn't take it unless I had all of the data fully transparent. Yeah. And I'm sure people have seen it. It's gone around and around.

Robb: It's just fascinating though.

Nicki: But now that it's-

Robb: The shoe's on the other foot.

Nicki: ... the shoe's on the other foot, it's the best thing since sliced gluten-free bread.

Robb: I don't know. I don't know if we're contributing anything.

Nicki: I don't know. Yeah.

Robb: It's interesting though, I...

Nicki: I think Dr. Mattias Desmet has a really interesting angle on this. I think, Joe, I believe is who asked this question. Again, we'll include the links that he shared, but also Amy Peikoff's episode. I know he's been interviewed and there's written articles and things from Desmet as well. And I just think it's worth reading.

Robb: Considerate.

Nicki: It's an interesting perspective, an interesting angle to kind of view all this from.

Robb: Just to maybe wrap all that stuff up, if what... And you've followed part of this much closer than I have. Let's just throw out there for a minute that the reason why folks are so invested in this is that they now have a sense of purpose, they now have something to focus all their angst and anxiety upon and it's giving their lives meaning. Are these people going to want to walk this thing back? Are they going to want to let the air out of this particular hot air balloon and bring it to earth? And the answer is no.

Nicki: Mm-mm (negative).

Robb: So it's going to be a fight of some form to-

Nicki: It's almost like... I'm going to try to do one of your... You always do really good analogies and I'm going to try this.

Robb: Oh Lord. Oh Lord.

Nicki: Let's see if this works. But it's almost like if there's a sleeping baby holding a stuffed animal that belongs to the older kid and you need to somehow take the stuffed animal out of her arms and slide in a different one. It's like these people need a different thing that gives them purpose, a different thing that gives them connection before they're going to let go of the other one.

Robb: And here's me. I agree. And you know what gets slid in there? Climate change. And then when the climate change binky gets slid out, then it's social justice wokeness, and then it's COVID and then it's climate change, and then it's wokeness. And this is the revolving binky that these folks have right now to be able to focus. Everybody's a racist.

Nicki: All the problems lie elsewhere, and not in any that you can do yourself.

Robb: Yeah.

Nicki: Well, that's depressing.

Robb: This is why I haven't been online a whole lot because I'm like, "Dude, we're fucked."

Nicki: Okay. Then it's-

Robb: Well, it is, but-

Nicki: If it really is 30% and if there really are, and I don't know how accurate these numbers are. He sites tons of research around mass formation from 100 years ago. This is not a new thing. This has happened before. There's lots of people that have written on it. And I haven't done any of that reading, but I'm just sharing little bits of what he talked about. But if these numbers are accurate or even approximately close to accurate, then there's 40% of people that in their gut know that this isn't right or that there's something not going... That this isn't the right path.

Robb: The narrative is not lining up with reality.

Nicki: And so I guess maybe the solution is to really somehow wake those ones up and get them over so then it's a 70/30 thing, not a 30/30/40 thing.

Robb: That's our fight. And now it'll give all of us purpose too. The funny thing though, is I think all the rest of those people had some purpose and had some meaning. And that in some ways is, I think, why the folks on our side of the fence are like, "Hey man, we don't need to do mandates. Let people make a decision." This is the difference here.

Robb: Or like, "You must put a black tile on your social media thing." And it's like, "Well, maybe I agree with some or part, but I don't know that I feel comfortable putting all of it on there." Whereas the folks that actually believe in freedom and individuality and have meaning in their lives, this is the ironic thing, they're not rabid to the point of being religious conversational about this. They're not going to go out and find-

Nicki: Evangelical.

Robb: Yeah. They're not going to do a crusade and put people to the sword to change their mind, because that's antithetical to the basic worldview that these folks have. So I don't know how you do that. I think we mentioned-

Nicki: -I think if that 30% pushes harder and harder for things like mandates and passports and... There are places in the-

Robb: School board meetings that if you push back as a parent about what's going down at the school board thing that you get arrested for it. This is going to have catastrophic blow back and then we will be labeled racist and domestic terrorists and all the rest of it. But I mean, I don't know another way out of it because you either comply and just go along with insanity or you fight and there will be some consequences to that.

Nicki: I thought you were listening to something that was supposed to be-

Robb: Optimistic.

Nicki: ... optimistic and gives some hope the other day.

Robb: It is. It is, but the hope or the optimism that was offered there is that there may be a way to avert this totalitarianism becoming uniform across the planet. You look at like Australia, New Zealand, Canada, that ship has sailed and the only hope that those folks have, although a remarkable number of the people there are like, "No, this is great. Lock it down again. Thank you, sir. May I have another."

Robb: But the main thing that I've seen or my understanding of this is if you can dismantle the vaccine mandate process, specifically the passport, which is basically a social credit score apparatus that can undermine every facet of your life and is being used in a super heavy handed way in China, that that is probably the singular...

Robb: If we were to focus on one spot to push back on, that's it. That is the line that shall not be crossed and that all of us should probably be willing to take some non-trivial personal danger, risk and suffering to-

Nicki: Avoid.

Robb: ... fight that.

Nicki: Yeah. Fight that.

Robb: Yeah. Because once that Rubicon is crossed, it is going to be very difficult to walk it back because it's been institutionalized at that point and institutionalized to the point where you don't even get to show up at the board meeting. You don't even get to show up at the polling booth to vote unless your social credit score is all in order. And I guess we've completely gone to fucking Alex Jones' land, but-

Nicki: But if you are, I think his name is Michael Gunner, one of the leaders in, I think, Northern Australia, if you are anti-vaccine mandate, that makes you anti-vax in general.

Robb: Do you know who this reminds me of?

Nicki: No, I don't.

Robb: Greg Glassman. This was classic Greg Glassman bullshit. Somebody could love CrossFit. Love it. Love it to-

Nicki: -But you don't like medicine-ball cleans, so if you pay CrossFit-

Robb: Yeah. But if you had some, "Hey, I don't know if using a medicine ball to teach clean is really the entry point," you hate CrossFit. And I guess this is... Fuck, I could go on and on with this, but it's interesting seeing where narcissism that I've been in the crosshairs of and the vitriol that comes from that. And it's identical to this.

Robb: It's people who have gained shocking amounts of power in a really brief period of time and they do not want to let that go. And they wrap it all up in the guise of safety and public health. And it's like... Yeah-

Nicki: We can stop there.

Robb: We can stop there. Yeah. Probably everybody else wishes we stopped before. But anyway, appreciate the questions. I do think that it's reached a point where... I mean, if

we're crazy, well, people have easy options. They can quit listening and that's all easy and fine, but for myself, I've been like, "What do I do? What do I do? I'm not really too sure what to do. I'm not sure where to move the needle on this stuff."

Robb: But it's become more clear to me. And other than just saying we can't let these passports become the thing. If people want to get vaccinated by God, let's facilitate that, let's make all that happen, let's help educate them on the risk reward story of different scenarios so that they are as well armed as they can be. Whether you get vaccinated or not, let's try to you healthy and if you don't want to get healthy, let's at least get you some vitamin D and maybe a walk and just set you up for as much success as we can.

Nicki: Lower blood glucose levels, vitamin D levels. These are all things that we know-

Robb: We know will improve outcomes.

Nicki: ... improves outcomes. And of course, beating a dead horse here and singing to the choir, but no mention of this from any global public health leader ever in the last two years.

Robb: But I guess if one is feeling exposed in talking about this, because it's easy to just get mobbed online, but we have a very defensible position here. It's like, "Hey, wherever you are on this story, let's facilitate people understanding what their risk profile is and then do everything we can to improve their outcomes, regardless of what decision they make." Because it's crystal clear that people with good metabolic health respond better to any given vaccine that they're given. So, yeah.

Nicki: All right, folks, we will wrap it up there. Thank you for listening to another episode of The Healthy Rebellion Radio. Be sure to check out our show's sponsor LMNT for all your electrolyte needs all your holiday gift giving needs and there still is some mint chocolate salt left. So you can grab that at drinklmnt.com/robb that's drinkL-M-N-T.com/R-O-B-B. And I hope you all have a fabulous weekend and we'll see you next week.

Robb: Bye everybody. Take care.