

Elizabeth B:

Hello, everybody, and welcome back to the Primal Potential Podcast. I am Elizabeth Benton, and I'm so glad you are back. Honestly, I truthfully have a huge smile on my face because as I started to hit record for this episode, I was just like, "Damn, I am grateful for all of you. I am so grateful to be able to do this, to be able to share my two cents and to be a part of your journey. Honestly, I know we communicate largely through electronic devices and I'm here on this end and you're there on that end, but I really care about you and where you're at and what you need and what I can do to help.

I'm just genuinely happy that you're back for another episode, and if you're new, you're like, "What are you rambling about?" If you're new, welcome. I'm Elizabeth. Great to meet you, but honestly I am just so tremendously beyond words grateful for every single one of you and for being a part of your journey and for your trust and for the relationship that we're building together, so hey.

Anyway, a few days ago, the Winter Fat Loss Fat Track kicked off, and it's always such an interesting time because there's some jitters, there's some nerves, but there's also a tremendous amount of excitement at the beginning, optimism and hope and energy and just lots and lots of enthusiasm at the beginning. For many people, whether in the Fat Loss Fat Track or anything in life, once the novelty wears off, sometimes the energy and the excitement and the enthusiasm wear off, as well. In other cases, because maybe we have tried and not been successful time after time after time, sometimes a new attempt or another attempt isn't met with any energy or enthusiasm at all. It's like, "Here we go again. Here's the hard work. Here's the chore. Is this going to be the time or is it going to be another failure?"

Sometimes when we try and haven't been successful in the past, there's no energy or enthusiasm at all. We're a jaded cynic, and that is a big barrier to change. One of the jobs that I take really, really seriously within the Fat Loss Fast Track is to keep people engaged, to prevent people from giving up on themselves, from drifting, and also to identify perspectives that lead people to drift, to give up, and change them and really replace them with perspectives that keep us excited and enthusiastic. That is one of my biggest jobs. I can't do the work for anybody, but I can be on patrol for crappy perspectives that set people up for disappointment and do everything in my power to turn them around. That's a big part of what I do.

A couple days into our Fat Loss Fast Track, which just started, I recorded a video for my rookies. These are the people who are going through their very, very first 12 weeks with me. What I'm going to do right now, and I don't know how this is going to work from a sound standpoint, but we're going to try. I am going to play for you a little bit of this video message, just to give you a sense of what I was trying to do with my people starting out in the Fat Loss Fast Track. Let's see if I can do this. We're going to try. If the

audio's weird, it ain't no thing, no need to complain. It's cool. It's just a podcast, not worth complaining about. Save your stress for big issues. All right. Let's see if I can do this.

Hey, guys. It's me. I wanted to pop in, and I just realized there's an open suitcase on the floor. Sorry about it. I wanted to pop in and just to remind you that this journey is fun, and I want to challenge you because maybe when you've tried other things, tried to lose weight, tried to get healthy, maybe it felt like a chore or like a burden, but I want you to think about how a kid responds to getting to do something new for them and the open-mindedness they bring where they want to just explore and the excitement that they have. That's really what I want you to bring to this. You're journaling not because you're judging yourself or you're being critical of what you ate or what you didn't eat, you're saying, "I'm doing it right this time. I'm going to figure out what is driving my choices because until I understand that, I can't really change it." Get excited about that because this is going to be great, but it requires that you have a great attitude.

All right. That's just part of the video message that I gave to my Fat Loss Fat Track rookies because enthusiasm matters, perspective matters. In anything you do, how you see it really matters because if we have a crappy attitude, we will naturally look for any and every way to get out of the work, to cut corners, and our effort suffers as our enthusiasm wanes. When we're excited about something, when we have a positive perspective about no matter anything we're doing, we naturally bring more energy and effort to it, and what we get out of it depends on what we put into it, so enthusiasm really matters.

No matter how many times you've tried to change your eating habits or lose weight or get healthy, it doesn't matter. This is new. Bring an open mind. Be excited about your potential and find a way to enjoy the process. It matters. Find a way to be enthusiastic about why you are doing what you are doing. What's in it for you? What is the good in it? What is the great in it? I want you to ask yourself a question. How can I have more of an open mind? How can I be ... Seriously, answer this question. Don't just drive along, "Uh huh, uh huh." I really want, if you have to pause and come back to it later, how can I be more open about this, more curious, more energized or excited? How can I see this more as a good thing? How can I not focus on the fear, worrying about making mistakes? How can I embrace this as a cool experience, learning about myself?

I'm always amazed by how many people are so certain that they know what works and what doesn't work. They have defined this narrow path. "This doesn't work for me. This doesn't work for me. This doesn't work for me. The only way I can get anywhere is if I do this." I'll tell you my perspective, and my perspective is based on my journey, my body, and also coaching hundreds, thousands of people at this point. For me, what I am certain of is that my body is always changing, and what works or doesn't

work is temporary. It always changes, so my goal isn't to follow this rigid, narrow path of what works for Elizabeth. My goal is to pay attention to my body and be excited about learning. I'm not looking to find certainties because I understand that for me the only real certainty about this whole process is change.

The timing is interesting, but I recently was reading a book called Zen Mind Beginners Mind, and for those of you that are interested in the book, I'll link to it in the show notes over at PrimalPotential.com and I'll also warn you it's deep, really deep, weird deep at times, but what I'm going to do today is share a few of the passages that I think are most helpful, pull the really great stuff out of it and I think there's a lot in there for any of us who are looking to improve any area of our lives. I think if you're listening right now, that's probably you. The book begins, the whole premise of the book is that in a beginner's mind there are many possibilities, but in the expert's mind, there are few. In the beginner's mind, there are many possibilities. In the expert's mind, there are few.

It's almost like the more information we accumulate, the fewer options we see, the more narrow our path becomes, and that is a limitation, but if we can keep a beginner's mind, like I just expressed for myself, it's my body's always changing and I'm just here to pay attention and really look for what's working today and what's right today and what's best today, but many of us when it comes to fat loss or fitness or eating habits, we have very few options in our mind because we think we've narrowed the path. I hear things like, "I can't lose weight. I do well for a few days, and then I blow it. If I restrict too much, I'll completely binge," or "Nothing ever works for me. I've tried everything."

I know this isn't easy, but it does matter. I want you to let go of all of that. Seriously, every time you notice those kinds of thoughts that limit you, that narrow your potential options, that narrow your scope, let it go. Instead of seeing all of the impossibilities, all of the limitations, have an open mind. Decide that this day, that this choice, that you are a blank slate. When you do that, you begin to see the potential in each day to learn something about yourself, to make a great choice, to create a new pattern of behavior. We sever that tie between what we've been, what we've done, our past, and what we're capable of today.

I want you to really work hard to stop focusing on all of the exceptions and all of the limitations. Instead, open yourself up with a great attitude of a beginner, of curiosity to all of the possibilities. I know that if you're here, you've probably read a bazillion books on fat loss and a million blog articles and you've tried a trillion things. I know I had, and it left me feeling like I was pretty well versed in fat loss. I had read every book. I knew everything, but none of that matters. None of that matters. What matters is that you pay attention to you, not to accumulating other people's opinions and other people's strategies and other people's rules, that you are paying

attention to your body and understanding and accepting and being great with the fact that you're always a beginner with your body.

I recently learned of food sensitivities I never knew I had. Just a couple of years ago in my 30s, I learned I was sensitive to dairy. Didn't know that before. Why didn't I know? Because I wasn't paying attention, because I was just paying attention to what everybody else said. I'm finding very recently that I might be more efficient and productive and feel better and have more fat loss if I get up a little bit later. I've been a 4:30 AM soldier for years and super proud of it, and I've really argued for the fact that that works for me, that's my answer, but if you're a beginner, you're always saying, "Is it?" as opposed to, "It is. I know." When was the last time I tried 5:30 or 6? How does it make a difference in how I feel and my energy and my hormones? Am I giving myself enough rest?

We can't just assume that because it's not obviously broken that it's what works for us, and the only way you can find those sorts of things is if you acknowledge and accept and really feel grateful for the fact that you're always a beginner with your own body. I am always a beginner with my own body.

Zen Mind Beginner's Mind talks about three things, right practice, right attitude, and right understanding. Right practice, focusing on your body. Right attitude, focusing on your feelings. Right understanding, focusing on your mind and how you process things, how you perceive things. What's really critical about this though is that what is right for you is not set in stone. It changes. When I'm starting with people in the Fat Loss Fast Track, that's one of the biggest things I'm trying to get them to understand because they'll email and they'll say, "Well, what should I do about this or what should I do about that or what, you know, is this right? Is this right? Am I doing it right?"

Fat Loss Fast Track and everything, whether you're in the Fat Loss Fast Track or not, the truth is no matter what anybody else tells you that progress is about finding your answers because if I give you my answers, they might not be yours, and giving you my answers completely ignores the fact that your answers will change. Even if you and I have the right answers right now, what I do also works for you, what works for me also works for you, that won't always be the case, for real. What works for me today might not work for me in a month or in a year, and what worked for me three years ago sure as hell doesn't work for me now, and that's great because we're always a student of ourselves. We're always changing. Our bodies are changing. Our preferences are changing. Our hormones are changing. It's the way it is, and I think when you realize that, you open yourself up, just like the quote says. "The expert's mind has few possibilities. The beginner's has tons."

When you realize that, it's not like, "Oh my God. This is so frustrating. I'll

never have the answers." It's, "There's so many more answers available to me." Do you understand the perspective difference? When I share this with some people, they're like, "So I'll never figure it out." That's not it at all. That's not it at all. It's, "There's so many more answers than you've been assuming." It is not this rigid path you have to walk. It is an evolution. It's understanding that things change so you ask, "What's right for my body today and what can I do about it?" Not, "What's some rule three years ago that helped me lose five pounds?" but "What's really best for my body today and what can I do about it?"

One thing that I realize in terms of asking myself specifically about attitude, when I ask, "What is the right attitude for me today?" I have to understand that that might look different from the right attitude for me yesterday. For example, the right attitude for me today, what feels right based on where I'm at emotionally, what's going on in my day, the right attitude today might be energy and enthusiasm and excitement and I can do anything, but the right attitude for yesterday may have been totally different. It may have just been patience and acceptance. Sit here. Sit with it. Be okay. You don't need to be Superwoman today. You don't need to be strong today. You can just accept what comes and goes today. The right attitude doesn't always look the same. You can have a totally different answer from one day to the next and be right on both days.

When we begin to see progress or we accumulate lots of experience in seeking progress, whether that's trying diet after diet after diet or workout after workout after workout, our perspective has a tendency to become more narrow, and we lose our open mind. We lose that beginner's mind and our options become more limited and we feel stuck. We're less willing to try because we've narrowed our sense of what is possible or what works or what is right. Then we're less willing to get uncomfortable. It's like the more familiar you become with your job, often times the more set in your ways you are. You really think you know what works and what doesn't and that can close you off to newer, better, more efficient ideas. Staying in your comfort zone, whether it works or it doesn't work, it limits your growth and your progress because there might be something that works far better. When we get comfortable, we tend to bring less effort. When something is new and we have more energy in the pursuit of it, we bring more effort.

In Zen Mind Beginner's Mind, they say, "Practice without effort is not true practice. Practice without effort is not true practice." For the beginner, practice needs great effort. If you're always a beginner, you will always be looking to bring great effort. You're always practicing, but you're also understanding that practice without effort is not practice. Ask yourself this question and answer it. What can I do today to practice with more effort? What can I do to bring more energy and more attention to my practice? Always be a beginner.

Another line from Zen Mind Beginner's Mind that really resonates with me

is that if you lose the spirit of repetition your practice will become quite difficult. If you lose the spirit of repetition your practice will become quite difficult. I think we totally get this. Imagine you're playing an instrument and you've stopped practicing. All of a sudden, it's a lot harder when you finally sit down to do it. Remember that easy is earned through consistent practice. If you do not have repetition, if you are not showing up every day to do the work, to ask hard questions, to look at what you could improve in any given day, without repetition, practice becomes quite difficult. Ask yourself and answer. Where do I need more repetition? Where am I feeling like something is hard, and understanding that it likely feels hard because you've lost the spirit of repetition.

I want to share an idea that I shared recently on the all new Daily Motivations Podcast. Have you checked it out yet? It's pretty great. This idea also comes from Zen Mind Beginner's Mind. It is when your practice is greedy that you become discouraged with it. You should be grateful to have a warning signal to show you the weak point in your practice. I know some of you are like, "Huh?" It's when your practice is greedy that you become discouraged with it. Are you expecting too much too fast? As a beginner, you're looking to learn, to build a foundation, to be patient with your practice. You're not expecting to have it all figured out. You're not expecting to reap the rewards before you've put in the time. If you are feeling disappointed, where have you become greedy in your expectations? Are you looking to get more results than the work you have put in? Let the disappointment be a tool for you, a little warning flag that says, "Um, I think my expectations might be exceeding my effort."

They say you can't have a million dollar dream with a minimum wage work ethic. You know what? You can't have a million dollar dream, a million dollar life, a million dollar health, whatever, without million dollar consistency or million dollar effort or million dollar attitude. Take some time to really sit with this. Ask yourself, "Where do I have a narrow mind? Where have I limited my possibilities? Where have I let this jaded attitude of, 'I know. I know,' where have I let that hold me back from powerful lessons or opportunities or trying something different?" Ask yourself, "Am I bringing effort to my practice or am I going through this like it's a chore or a burden and not bringing the best effort? Am I bringing the right attitude to my practice, and what can I do today to bring effort to my practice, to improve my attitude?"

There's one last thing I want to share before we sign off for today, and it's the last thing I'll share from this book, Zen Mind Beginner's Mind. It says, "There is no other way of this life than this way of life. There is no other way of this life than this way of life." Again, I know that's one where people are scratching their head, "What the heck does that mean?" Here's what it means to me, to me personally. There's your best life and there's everything else. There is no gray. There is your best life and there is everything else. Chances are, you've spent a heck of a lot of time exploring

everything else and that is always there for you as an option, but what if you open your mind and say, "I'm going to explore my best life." What would you choose today? How would you go through the day? What can you do about it today? How will you remember to ask yourself those same questions tomorrow?

All right. I'm so glad you guys tuned in. If you haven't yet, please, please, please check out the all new Daily Motivations Podcast. I just launched it, and the reason I launched it is because one of my goals in 2017 is to get you more help for free. All right? That's really what I want to do. I want to make a difference in what you do for yourself. I can't do it for you, but I want to do all I can to empower you to change your life for the better. For the last couple years, I've been providing these daily motivation messages as part of an iPhone app. It was iPhone only, and it wasn't free. It was five bucks a month, and so I decided to ... I'm phasing out that app, and I am doing this for free.

It's currently on iTunes and Stitcher. It is pending approval on Spotify. Hopefully that'll come soon. You can just search Daily Motivations Podcast in iTunes or Stitcher, and what you will see is this blue artwork with coral, pinkish, and my name, Elizabeth Benton, because it is by me, and it is Monday through Friday, and all of the episodes, these daily motivations, these messages of empowerment and encouragement, they're all less than five minutes long. I just wanted to let you know that that is out there.

If you have a second, I never ask you guys to rate and review the Primal Potential Podcast because that's solid, it's a rock, but this one's brand freaking new, and the way that it works in terms of what shows up in search is based on the number of subscribers and ratings and reviews, so I won't say this too much more, but if you do check it out and you enjoy it and you would love to leave a rating and review, that would certainly help me out and mean a lot to me, but more than anything I want you to know I am here for you. I want to help you, and I am excited about what is ahead. Have a great day.