

Elizabeth
Benton:

Hello, everybody, and welcome back to the Primal Potential Podcast. I am Elizabeth Benton and thanks so much for spending a little bit of your time with me today.

We are going to be talking about practice, doing the work instead of thinking about the work or coasting or negotiating with yourself. The reality is, I think, many of us coast. Our effort is negotiable based on our mood and the work we do, the effort we apply is inconsistent at best.

I'll give you an example. I got an email the other day from one of my Fat Loss Fast Track clients. Let's see. I think the email came on a Monday, mid morning, so just barely over 24 hours after our weekly challenge went out. We'll call it 36 hours, like a day and a half after we get the weekly challenge. The email said more or less, "All right. I did that thing and, you know, today is day two but it's not really sticking. What advice do you have for me on how to make this stick?" My response, "Hi, thanks for your email. Practice." Seriously, though, like practice every day. I'm not being like a wise ass at all. It's just practice. That is the one magic bullet. Everybody's looking to find a way around the work.

I got another email, in fact, this just popped in my head. I got another email from somebody, actually, it was a post in one of my Facebook groups for my Master's Club, which is people who have been through several Fat Loss Fast Tracks. It said, "Hey, Elizabeth. What do you think of this powder? Basically, I heard that it helps your body produce ketones without having to be actually on a ketogenic diet." Why do we want shortcuts? There are no shortcuts. The reality is looking for shortcuts is the long way around because this time you spend being drawn in by these promises of shortcuts or an easier way or a hack is time you could have spent doing work that would move you forward. Right?

People will say, "What's wrong with me? I know what to do and I keep telling myself I'm going to do it and I keep messing up." Guys, there is a difference between learning and practicing. Too many people get that confused. They'll say, "I know everything to do but I don't know how to get myself to do it." Practice.

So many times I respond to emails and I get it because I've been there. Gosh, I wish there was somebody who would have said that to me. "Hey, I know you know a lot. I know you think about this a lot. I know you want this really badly, but let's take a seriously hard look at the consistency of your practice and the effort you're bringing into your practice." I say that to people now because I wish someone had said that to me. What does your practice look like? How consistent are you? What does your effort look like? How hard are you trying? Because knowing doesn't get you anywhere. It's what you do with what you know, what you do with information as you learn it.

What are you, listening right now, what are you doing? What does your practice look like? If you want more results, if you want more consistent results, if you want this to be easy or easier, the answer is in your practice. The answer is not

in the podcast or a blog or a coach. The answer is in what you do and the effort you bring to what you do, the consistency of your practice. It's important that we understand practice is learning but learning is not practice. Practice is learning but learning is not practice. You will learn as you practice and that's why practice can be learning, but learning is not practice. It is not a substitute for practice.

There's a great story that I got in an email recently about Joe DiMaggio who is, you know, of course one of the greatest baseball players of all time. I hadn't heard this story before so I'm just going to read you a little clip from this story. As the story goes, a journalist was interviewing DiMaggio at his home and asked him what it felt like to be such a natural hitter. Without saying a word, he took the reporter downstairs. In the shadows of the basement, DiMaggio picked up a bat and began to repeat a series of practice swings. Before each swing, he would call out a particular pitch such a fastball, low and away, or slider, inside, and adjusts his approach accordingly. Once he finished the routine, DiMaggio set the bat down, picked up a piece of chalk and scratched a tally mark on the wall. Then he flicked on the lights to reveal thousands of tally marks covering the basement walls. Supposedly, DiMaggio then looked at the journalist and said, "Don't you ever tell me that I'm a natural hitter again." Guys, it's about the practice.

Like I shared in a recent podcast from that book *Zen Mind Beginner's Mind*, for a beginner, when you're trying to master something you have yet to master, practice always requires effort. The reality is I don't think most of us try very hard. I think we think about it a lot, I think we want it a lot, but that is not the same thing as trying hard with great effort and consistency.

I want to talk about this idea of something called deliberate practice. Not like, "Eh, I want to lose weight. I'm going to try." Deliberate practice. The key here is that you have to know specifically what you want. I think it's a mistake to just have this kind of very vague goal of "I want to lose weight" because on any given day, there are hundreds of things that we could do or not do to achieve that and so there is no real focus to our practice and it's easy to get distracted and it's also easy to do a lot of work and not get anywhere.

Think about it this way. If you say, "I want to be a musician." Well, on any given day, you could think about how you want to be a musician. You could write lyrics. You could listen to music. You could read music history. You could talk to other musicians. You could go to conferences. You could practice the piano or the guitar or the drums or the flute. If you spent a little bit of time every day doing one of those things, you probably wouldn't really get anywhere because there's no focus to your practice. You're not really clear on what you're trying to do and how you plan to do it.

When we aren't seeing improvements or progress, that can really take a toll on our motivation and it's not about necessarily that we aren't trying. It's that we aren't focused. Instead of saying, "I want to be a musician," what if you said, "I

want to learn to play the guitar and for the next month, I'm going to spend 30 minutes each day going through this specific series of tutorial videos and playing on the weekends, I'm going to spend an hour instead of 30 minutes. When I'm in these practice sessions, I'm going to put my phone away, I'm going to turn the TV off." You would make legit progress over 30 days. We have to take that same approach. Instead of like, "I want to lose weight and so today I'm going to drink more water and tomorrow I'm going to take the stairs and I'm going to try to eat more vegetables. No, not the cookie. Not today." That is the same approach as, "I want to be a musician so, you know, like whatever." We have to really focus on this idea of deliberate practice.

What I want you to first think about is what one thing do you want to improve? Move away from this notion of like "I want to lose weight". What one specific behavior or activity or pattern or habit do you want to improve? Please, just pick one. Don't just hear me say this. Actually pick one. Write it down. Maybe you want to improve your afternoon snacking behavior when your energy is low or maybe you need to improve your evening routine or you want to feel better about the choices you make on Saturday nights or maybe you want to journal daily. I don't know what it is for you, but pick just one thing and then ask yourself this next question. How do I need to practice in order to really make progress here? What does that practice look like? That doesn't mean what is the perfect approach because that's like deciding you're going to learn to play the guitar and you're going to begin with Led Zeppelin. No. Based on where you're at now, what does your practice need to look like for this thing you want to achieve?

Maybe your practice is to just have one glass of wine and always stop at one and you want to create as many successful practice sessions as possible with that goal and you need to take it seriously. Maybe your deliberate practice is carbs at night. You are going to practice this until it becomes your new normal no matter what. For 30 days, you're going to go back to episode 195 of the Primal Potential Podcast and make sure you understand and then you're going to journal as you go through the process, learning from yourself as you go. 30 days of deliberate specific practice with effort.

You have to have a purpose, something specific you're trying to achieve or improve and then define what that practice looks like and then do the dang work every day. Otherwise, you're thinking about it and you're spending all of this mental and emotional energy but you're not getting anywhere. It's important to understand that not all practice is created equal like you might spend the same amount of time and energy on this deliberate practice as you where when it was like, "I want to lose weight so today I'm going to eat a little bit less and tomorrow I'm going to move a little bit more and the next day I'm going to whatever." You will get vastly different results even with the same amount of time spent in practice if your practice is focused and deliberate.

You guys know I love my sports analogies so I'll give you another one from an author. Her name is Aubrey Daniels. She says, "Consider the activity of two

basketball players practicing free throws for one hour. Player A shoots 200 practice shots. Player B shoots 50. Player B is retrieving his own balls, dribbling leisurely, taking several breaks to talk to friends. Player A has a colleague who is retrieving the ball after each attempt and the colleague keeps a record of the shots made. If the shot is missed, the colleague records whether the miss was short, long, left, or right and the shooter reviews the results after every ten minutes of practice." They both had one hour of practice but their results, their effort, is very, very different and the outcome will be wildly different even though they've spent the same amount of time in practice. They both practiced for an hour but not the same practice, not the same results because one was very deliberate and focused and the other was not.

The other thing is sometimes let's just call a spade a spade. You're not going to want to do the work. I get it. I don't either. Sometimes there's something better or you're tired or you're emotional but what do you really want? I say this to my clients all the time. Yeah, there are going to be temptations but instead of thinking only about the allure of that temptation, how good it's going to taste or whatever, really think about it, really think hard. What is this thing going to give me that all of a sudden I'm thinking, "Oh, I want that." Really, don't just have that be the end of the thought. Say, "Okay, I really want that but why? What is it going to give me? Is it worth it? Do I want it? What am I giving up? If I say yes to this, what am I saying no to?"

I'll share one last story with you guys before we wrap up. There's a blogger who was talking about one day when an elite coach came into this gym. I'm just going to jump in kind of towards the end of this story. "On this particular day in the gym, there was a coach visiting who had worked with thousands of athletes over his long career including some nationally ranked athletes and Olympians. I had just finished my workout when I asked him, 'What's the difference between the best athletes and everyone else? What do really successful people do that most people don't?' He mentioned some things like genetics and luck and talent, but then he said something I wasn't expecting. At some point, it comes down to who can handle the boredom of training every day and doing the same lifts over and over and over again."

I guess this sums up one of my mantras that you've heard me say a trillion times. Do it anyway, right? Yeah, you might not want to. Yeah, you're tired or you're emotional or those cookies are homemade but you're working for something that you want more, something you have yet to achieve. You've had all those other things before. You've picked the lazy. You've picked the cookie. You've picked the snooze button. You know how that turns out. What you don't know is what is waiting for you when you say, "Yeah, I don't want to and I'm going to do it anyway." Because it's the things you do when you don't feel like it that matter so much more than the things you do when you do feel like it. Those are the defining characteristics of our lives. Identify what you really want. Get clear on what the practice needs to look like. Then do that every day, just that one thing.

Talk to you guys soon. Have a great day.