

Elizabeth B. :

Hello everybody, and welcome back to the Primal Potential podcast. I am Elizabeth Benton, and I'm kind of excited about today's episode because it was inspired by my New England Patriots. Queue the judgement for all you Pat's haters, I'm cool with it. Seriously though, this episode is going to be great. I love, and I've shared this before, but I love learning from other disciplines. I think there are so many parallels that help me get better. Help me take better care of myself. I love reading about investing, and seeing parallels to health, and fitness, and life, and self care. I really like studying history, and philosophy, and sports. You guys know I love my sports analogies, but we're taking that to a whole new level today.

The other night I watched a patriots documentary. It's a couple years old now, and it's called, "Do Your Job." The Pat's are a pretty private team, and you rarely see detailed interviews from the coaching staff. The fact that they did this documentary is kind of a big deal. I don't know how I hadn't watched it up until this point, but I'm pretty Sure I love it. In this documentary called, "Do Your Job," it's basically an inside look into the Pat's organization, and the coaching staff, and how they train, and how they strategize to win.

As I watched it, you guys would totally laugh at me if there was like a camera in my house, and there probably is. I'm sitting there watching this, totally enamored. I look down and I couldn't help but laugh at myself, what a dork I am. I have my journal open in my lap, I've got a cup of tea, and I'm like furiously scribbling notes in my journal from this Patriots documentary. Things that inspired me, things that I could use in my own coaching work, whether that's coaching myself, which is my most important job, or coaching my clients, which I care about too. Things that would make me better, more productive, happier.

Whether or not you're a Patriots fan, and by that I mean whether or not you have good taste. Whether or not you're a football fan or not, I'm going to share with you some of the ideas from this documentary. If you think about it, achieving any goal, any goal. Whether it's a fat loss goal, a fitness goal, a financial goal, it is a lot like sports, and practice, and showing up on game day. One of the guys on the coaching staff in this documentary said, "Winning and losing happens at practice. There are no game day players. You're going to win games, or lose them at practice." Basically, I think that's so true in life. In sports certainly, if you don't have good practice sessions where you are trying, where you are bringing your effort, where you're being strategic, right? Then no matter how pumped up you are on game day, it doesn't matter. Winning and losing happens at practice.

In one of the last episodes of this podcast we talked about that. Deliver at practice, as opposed to just like, "Ah, I want to lose weight. Today I'm going to take the stairs, and tomorrow I'm going to, I don't know, eat less carbs," or whatever. That is like showing up to practice and just doing a shoot around, or passing the ball, or running up and down the field without a real

plan. I loved the parallel between those two messages.

How often do we go to a party, or go on vacation, or go into the weekend, game time. Expecting to make great choices, but we haven't done the work to practice. We don't know what we're trying to achieve, and we haven't gone through the steps, we haven't mastered the fundamentals. We want to win when it matters. We want to accomplish the big wins, we want results. Repeatedly we pass over the little chances to practice. Practice is all about the fundamentals, the basics. We're going to kind of go beyond the Patriots here, and go beyond football too.

I don't know how many of you are familiar with John Wooden. He is a legendary basketball coach. One of the things that's most reported about him, other than his ridiculous winning record, is that he didn't start his players out on the first day of practice with layups, or passing drills. That's not what he considered the fundamentals, although most coaches would feel that way. He would literally teach his players how to properly tie their shoes, right? He would literally teach them how to tie their shoes. Part of it was a message of the small stuff matters, but also a very logical reason on why, right? If you think about a ship going from point A to point B, if it is just one degree off course, it could end up in the totally wrong place even though when you think, "Eh, it's one degree. What difference does it make?" It makes a massive difference over time.

He really felt like the same thing was true with the shoes. Not only do you want to show respect for doing the little things well. It is a philosophy, a way of living. I care about the small stuff. It also, very truly, impacts performance. He would say, "If you don't tie your shoes well, you might get a blister. That's going to impact how you move. It's going to impact both your speed, and your form. You're not going to play as well. You won't make as many shots, you won't get back on defense as quickly. How you tie your shoe impacts your agility, your ability to make quick stops, or turns. It matters." The little disciplines matter. The things you don't think matter, "Ah, it's just this thing," as you grab one Hershey Kiss out of the candy bowl. No, that matters. The little disciplines matter.

There's a philosophy in archery, right? We are all over the place in sports. Equal opportunity here. Archery, they say that everything is aiming. It's about where you place your feet, how you hold the bow, how you breathe as you pull back, and as you release. It all determines the result that you get. I think this is not only true, it's also overlooked. Guys, getting up in the morning instead of hit snooze, that matters. Your posture, matters. How you stand, you cannot deny that you feel better when you are standing up straight, with your shoulders back and your head up, than when you're slumped over.

Even as you sit at your desk or drive in your car, you feel better when are you sitting up straight, your shoulders are back, your head is up. Your

environment matters. Is your car tidy and clean? Your house, how you care for things matters, just like how a ball player ties their shoes matters. How they care for their uniform, it matters. So many coaches have rules about how often you get your haircut. Why? How you care for yourself and the little things dramatically impacts your performance. It just does. These coaches wouldn't teach these principles if they didn't matter.

It is so common for me to tell a client, "Clean your bedroom." Legit, "Clear off your bed." I'll ask a client who's struggling, "Tell me about your room, tell me about your kitchen." I've had so many clients that say, "You know, I've never been somebody who makes my bed. I don't like to have things tucked in." Well, you can untuck it before you go to bed, but your space matters. Going to bed with a clean kitchen at night, it matters. That random choice you make on a Monday morning, it's practice. When you go into Starbucks to get a cup of coffee, it's practice. When you show up at the gym feeling tired or sore, it's practice. When your co-worker offers you a slice of birthday cake, it's practice. You win or lose in your practice.

The choices you make when you're tired, or when you're emotional, guys it matters. After a bad day of work, that's practice. Imagine going to practice day after day and not trying, and then being pissed off that you didn't win. Imagine shooting around with half effort. Checking your phone, goofing off, walking in between plays instead of running, and then expecting to win. No way, right? Imagine not studying your playbook, or not watching film of yourself, and you want to be good at this game? No way, right? You can't expect to win if you aren't showing up to practice.

You know, the other thing that really struck me in watching this documentary. When we see a team in any sport go out and win, that win, that time on the field, it represents a tiny fraction, a tiny fraction of the amount of time and effort that went into creating that outcome. They didn't just show up on the field and win, they practiced hard. They spent hours in drills, mastering the fundamentals. They took care of their bodies outside of practice. They studied film to watch themselves, to plain their moves, to get better. Realistically those of us that aren't winning in our own lives, we're not doing enough of that. We'll think about it, but we don't drill. We don't practice, and very, very, very few of us study ourselves and our performance.

The number one thing I emphasize within my Fat Loss Fast Track groups and my Masters Club, is journaling. Like I tell them, that's not just about putting down on paper what you eat. Yeah, that's a part of it. It's about film study, right? Without the film. How'd you sleep? Are you rested? Are you stressed? Are you hungry as you eat that? Did you enjoy it? How did you feel afterwards? When are you experiencing cravings, and for what? If you want to win you have to practice, you have to prepare. That's where the win comes from.

The win doesn't come from saying, "No," to the cupcake at the party. The win comes from the work you do each day. Day in, and day out. Showing up to practice with your best effort. Paying attention to yourself, and being a student of your behavior so you can improve it. At the beginning of the film, Bill Belichick who's the head coach of the Patriots, he says, "Sometimes we're not as quick to recognize our own mistakes, as we are to recognize somebody else's." Man are we good at identifying what other people are doing wrong, or how they could improve, or what they could do different. Even what they're doing well, what they're doing better than we are. Eyes on your own work. What are you doing well? What do you need to change? What are you doing that isn't working? You need to have a better understanding of you and your behavior, and what drives your choices than anybody else.

One of the coaches said in the film that, "Part of being a good coach is knowing when something needs to change." You are your coach. Do you know when something has to change? One of my Fat Loss Fast Track clients, I think just yesterday, shared in our Facebook group a journaling win. She said, "The breakfast I've been eating for months, even though it's both healthy and fat loss friendly, it's not working for me." She said, "I find that I'm hungry like an hour and a half, two hours later. It's not satisfying my hunger. Even though it's healthy, even though it's fat loss friendly, it's not working."

You've got to know when something needs to change, and to know you've got to pay attention to yourself. Not to somebody else's thoughts, or plans, or ideas, but to you. Your journal is the equivalent of your film study. Just like if you're an athlete, and you go into watch film, and you're on your phone, or you're talking to your buddy next to you, you're not going to get much out of it. Same thing with your journal. What you put into it determines what you'll get out of it, right? We can't go blind into our practice. When we do that, that's just like listening to podcasts, and reading blogs, and doing what somebody else is telling us to do. It's that leader follower model. I'll pick a leader and I'll follow what they say. No, you are your leader, right?

Use your journal to understand your behavior, what drives your decisions. What works for you, and what doesn't. Another one liner from Do Your Job, the documentary that I loved, was when they were training. They were doing conditioning drills, which, you know, kind of suck. Belichick said, "There are no shortcuts to being mentally tough. There are no shortcuts to being in good condition. The way to get where you want to go is to do the work, do it with your best effort and do it consistently, period." Even then, even then you won't always win. When you don't win, you bet your butt you can learn and increase your chances of winning the next time. Stop being dramatic about the things you consider losses, and instead look for the lesson in them.

I recently recorded, you guys know I launched a new podcast called, "The Dailies Motivation Podcast." Please check it out if you haven't already. I recorded one recently based on a Japanese proverb, and this documentary made me think of it. The Japanese proverb says, "After winning the battle, tighten your helmet. After winning the battle tighten your helmet." Don't get cocky. Don't celebrate your weight loss with ice cream. Don't hit that fitness goal and then take a week off the gym, cause you know, you deserve a break. After winning the battle tighten your helmet. Get back to the basics. Study, adjust, practice, try. I really think that's one of the biggest mistakes people make, that they don't live out that proverb. When they experience success, they lose focus and stop trying. They let their effort wane and then poof, those results they worked so hard for are gone.

After winning the battle tighten your helmet. What does that mean for you? What does it mean for you to tighten your helmet? What does that look like? Is it accountability, is it structure? What is it for you? Write it down. If you aren't sure, spend more time journaling so you can find your answers. This next note I made, so freaking smart. One of the coaches said, "Before you learn to win, you have to learn how not to lose. Before you learn to win, you have to learn how not to lose." How are you losing? You, listening right now. Where do you feel like you're falling short? You're not making the choices you want to make. How can you make one improvement there? How can you maybe lose by a smaller margin? How can you close the gap? What does that mean for you?

Maybe it's reducing the number of drinks you have on the weekend, or buying fewer processed foods when you go to the grocery store, or going out to eat less often, or going to the gym more often. You first got to learn how not to lose. There's another football coach, and I don't even know where I heard this from. I don't know if I read a book, or heard a podcast. I think it might have been Nick Saban. I know I've mentioned it before, but one of the things he says about his coaching philosophy is, "We're not looking for a touchdown, we're looking for a first down." We're not looking to score, we're looking to advance, right?

Too often we are looking to score. We want to do this big whole 30, or this HCG diet, or whatever other crazy thing. You just want to advance. A first down, a small victory. Forward progress, move the chains. What is that for you? You don't have to go for the Hail Mary, the fast, the detox, the shakes, the pills. Forward progress, first down, good choice. On every play, how do I move the chains? How do I move forward? How do I get a little bit closer?

Here's a little bit of a perspective shift for you. The change you're trying to make, is not as hard, or as cumbersome, or as time consuming as you are making it out to be. Think about it, you spend many hours of your day sleeping, or talking, or working, or showering, or doing a million other things. The total amount of time in any given day spent actually making the choices that will move you towards where you want to be, towards your

potential. It's not that much time. If we add up the actual number of seconds and minutes of those decisions, maybe it's an hour or two each day. Maybe, that's it. That's it.

One of my good friends briefly played college football. He was telling me something that his coach said to him that has always stuck with him. He was an offensive player. If you think about it, if you're on a football team, and you play offense, you're only playing part of the game, right? When the defense is on the field, you're not. You're already not playing the whole game. If special teams is in, you're not playing.

Even when the offense is on the field, much of that time is in transition, setup, dead time, et cetera. His coach told him that for his position, it was only about in an hour long game, only for him about six minutes that required his full out effort. The rest of it he was either off the field, or in transition while on the field. The same is true of our days guys. These moments matter because there aren't that many of them. Even if you make 25 food decisions in a day, that might be 12 minutes of action, maybe? Maybe. Probably less.

Even if it is 12 minutes, or 20, bring your best effort for those moments that matter. Really, there aren't that many of them. One of the coolest things for me in this documentary, and which is probably the reason I'll watch it over, and over, and over again, was how they went about strategic and creative play calling. Doing things that their opponent wasn't prepared for. Things that would give them a better chance of winning. It made me think, "How can we strategize to win more creatively?" How you can you strategize to win more creatively? I remember working with one of my clients awhile back, and she very routinely had cocktail receptions to go to for her job, and for her charity work that she would do.

She was really struggling with the alcohol in those settings, cause everybody's offering drinks, and everybody's drinking, and you're social, and it's just a very party atmosphere, but she was going to three, four, sometimes more of these things every single week. We had to get creative. I said, "What if you take bottle of Perrier, so sparkling water. Any brand, I'm just using Perrier as an example, and say you pour out maybe a half of cup. You still have this big bottle of Perrier, and you add in a couple of tablespoons of apple cider vinegar, which is fermented, and a lot of people feel like it resembles an alcoholic beverage. Then put in a spring of rosemary, and squeeze in the juice of one lemon. Put it in your fridge overnight so that the rosemary can kind of diffuse in there, and then take it with you.

Honestly, that combination, sparkling water, apple cider vinegar, rosemary, and lemon, is so good. Honestly for a lot of people, myself included, it almost feels like you're drinking alcohol. She started bringing that with her to some of these events, especially the ones she was hosting, and that's

creative play calling, right? Maybe for you it's, "All right, given what's going on in this week and my bandwidth, maybe I need to sleep a little bit later. Maybe I need to get up a little bit earlier. Maybe I need to try and take a nap before I go to this thing on Saturday night, where I know that a lot of my choices tend to be because I'm over tired."

For me, one of my creative play calls recently was trying out Paleo Power Meals. I've done a couple of episodes on them, and I'll link to them in the show notes. I have never done a meal delivery service for a number of reasons. Number one, the cost. Number two, because I felt like you had to belong, and then you're like in the subscription program. I didn't feel like I could always pick the meals I got, or I wanted. You sort of get what they prepare. Paleo Power Meals, you can pick it, and when I looked at the cost I realized it's not just about the money. It's also about making my life easier, and time, and all of these different things. That was a creative play call for me.

I'll also link in the show notes to the coupon code. I am not in anyway compensated to tell you guys about Paleo Power Meals. If you use them, the first time you can save 20% if you use the coupon code, "EB Primal 20." EB Primal 20. EB is my initials, Elizabeth Benton, EB Primal 20. That will save you 20%. The reason I mention that is because that's something that I wasn't willing to consider before because it was outside of the box, and I felt like eating well meant this certain thing, and a budget meant this certain thing. I wasn't willing to think outside of the box. That's been super, super helpful for me.

I'll wrap up with one of the last things that they said in this documentary after they won the Super Bowl. That's right, the Pat's won the Super Bowl. I know it's a couple years ago, we have another shot this year. We're going to do it. This is going to be recorded, so if we don't, you can raze me. It's okay, I can take it. They were standing on the platform with the Lombardi trophy, and everyone was really happy, and excited. Some of the players were hugging Bill Belichick their coach, and thanking him. He looked at them and he said, "It's a players game. It's a player games." Basically like, "You guys won this. You guys won this."

The same thing is true for our health. It is a players game, and you are the player. It is your game. It is up to you to practice. It is up to you to study yourself. It is up to you to train, to master the fundamentals, to show up everyday and do your job. That's what this is all about. I love you guys, I'll talk to you soon. Have a really good day, and do your job.