THE MODEL HEALTH SHOW

EPISODE 1041

Improve your athleticism and performance compilation

With Cory Schlesinger and Mike Guevara

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SHAWN STEVENSON: Welcome to The Model Health Show. What's the point of building muscles if you're not gonna use them? Do you wanna be all go and no show? Our muscles and our fitness can provide massive utility value in the world.

To do all the life stuff, absolutely. You wanna be a one-tripper? All right. The groceries are in the trunk, eight bags, one trip. Or if you're not trained for that, maybe you're not gonna be able to execute on things like that. But that's life stuff. For somebody like myself and many people in my community, we want to use our bodies to express our athletic capacity, to compete, to play, to perform at a high level, and that's what this episode is all about.

In this powerful episode, you're gonna hear from two of the world's leading experts, top-tier coaches for athletic performance. One of these experts actually just received the award for NBA Strength and Conditioning Coach of the Year. We're talking about the National Basketball Association Strength and Conditioning Coach of the Year, the best of the best.

And the other coach that you're gonna hear from is the coach of champions. This guy has trained so many of the, not just NBA champions, but multi-time champions. All right? People like Rajon Rondo, people like Jrue Holiday, who was one of his first clients. He started training with Jrue when he was in high school, and then helping him once he made that jump to the NBA.

Just helped to take his career to another level. So today, if you wanna look good, that's fine, we've got you. But if you wanna perform at your best, if you wanna look good and perform good That's what this is all about. And without further ado, let's get to our first expert in this powerhouse masterclass on high-level athletic performance.

Up first, you're gonna hear from the recently awarded NBA Strength and Conditioning Coach of the Year, Cory Schlesinger. He's a world-class expert in the world of sports performance, and he served as a director of performance for over nine years at the highest level of collegiate athletics, and is now making his mark in a major way in the NBA.

In this powerful segment, he's gonna teach you the power of microdosing exercise. He's gonna talk to you about the critical importance of calisthenics in your training program, and the most important exercises that all athletes need to be doing. Enjoy this first segment from the incredible Cory Schlesinger.

First of all, what is microdosing exercise, and how can we look at adding that in as a strategy for ourselves and also as advanced athletes?

CORY SCHLESINGER: For sure. So microdosing in itself is a concept of just spreading out the stressors, whether it's resistance training, physical ch- or, uh, skill and tactical sessions.

So essentially what we wanna do is, what you see in a typical NBA environment is they lift two times a week. And that sounds good, right? But if we... Those would be considered mega doses, right? So then you have to surf the curve, speed, power, strength, accessory work, all in one session. Well, there is a consequence to that, or there are symptoms that are gonna be related to that, which is DOMS or delayed onset muscle soreness or neural fatigue.

Well, in an 82-game season, it's pretty hard to pinpoint when to do that without affecting the thing that we care about the most, which is in-game performance. So instead of hitting, uh, all those variables or multiple variables in one session, we're gonna spread them out. And so now instead of doing a 30 to 45-minute lift, we're doing 10 to 15-minute lifts.

But what that does is allows us to actually train me with more intent, with more speed, more power, more strength, because you're only tapping one or two exercises, and then you're gonna exhaust it. And within that period of time, I mean, you go to the gym and say, "Hey man, you only got 15 minutes to get your heaviest set of back squats," you're probably not gonna be able to exhaust yourself, but you'll be able to come back the next day and go, "I think I can do that again," or, "I think I can continue to train," opposed to, "Man, my legs are shot.

Man, my body feels sore." So this idea of microdosing is truly just taking all these variables and spreading them out and then, more importantly, intentionally putting them around

practice or around the game so that we're complementing those stressors or complementing those events

SHAWN STEVENSON: Can you give me... We got my son here, my 13-year-old superstar basketball player son.

And, you know, he's working with his AAU team. They've got a couple practices a week, heavy loaded game weekends- Right. ... as you know. Right. Which is, you know, that's debatable if that's even good in the first place, but it is what it is. And if we're looking at an athlete having a couple, l- we'll just say a student athlete- Yeah

even college, right? High school and college, and they're having, we'll just say five practices a week. How would we structure intelligently those, those physical training inputs, right? With lifting, with plyometrics. What would that look like as far as, like, you know they got their practice.

CORY SCHLESINGER: Right.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Where do we place those respective training modalities?

CORY SCHLESINGER: So ideally, when it comes to, let's just say we're doing for general physical qualities. Ideally, I wanna do potentiation before they do their actual practice. 'Cause I want them to have the motor running, if you will. I want them to be the ru- the, the rubber is ready, hit the track, and we're gone. So ideally, we're doing more of our speed and power work pre-practice.

And then post-practice, whatever they have left in the tank, that's when we're going for our eccentrics, our heavier loads, and then obviously some accessory work. 'Cause we'll, then we'll get more of a peripheral fatigue or muscular endurance. And so that's an easy way of structuring it, just from a day-to-day standpoint.

Sprinting, plyometrics, anything from a potentiation standpoint before the event, and then post the event you can hit your heavy isos, your heavy eccentrics, or your accessory work

SHAWN STEVENSON: Got it. Got it. And again, this is something that we could all take and put into our own training, you know, respectively. You know, especially, again, if we're even weekend warrior, you know, and, and just kind of training for our particular thing that maybe we're interested in.

You know, maybe it's basketball, maybe it's tennis, whatever the case might be. Golf.

CORY SCHLESINGER: Yep.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And I think that this real- Does this have a lot of crossover for those kind of sports?

CORY SCHLESINGER: I think 100%. I think in any form or fashion, there's something that could be taken away from it. For example, even if you're playing golf, you still need to do a warmup.

You are rotating your spine at X amount of miles per hour. That's a lot of velocity. Now, people look at golf as an old person's game, or tennis even, but when you see it at the highest level, nah, that... These guys are becoming so physically fit so they can optimize their golf game. So if you're doing all of this input, you better believe you better get ready for some output.

Yeah. There are certain people that come to mind who brought that into it in a major way. Like Tiger Woods obviously comes to mind. 100%. And it was, like, so counterculture to be strength training at that level that he was doing it, and look at the results.

I mean, now it's a whole wave, right? Bruce Lee brought, uh, weights to martial arts super early, and that's where you find it very interesting, where track and field did it, martial arts did it, and then football is...

That's where it started. And now in team sports, basketball, it's becoming a thing. Now cult- or iron is a part of the culture of basketball, which is super cool because that's what we want. I mean, look at these. We're getting 20-year careers now in the NBA. I mean, that's fascinating. You couldn't imagine that years prior.

So just, just think what could have happened with some of these careers that you've seen. Like Allen Iverson, one of my favorite players of all time, thought the weight room was like the f- getting the flu. To a certain degree, he's not wrong. The reason why I say that is because, well, what kind of weight training were they doing?

What was he exposed to before? What I always say is the athlete's always right. They are always right. But you have to find a way to make it work for them, and that's where I think people mess up. They don't have that latitude. They don't have that pliability to make it work for the athlete. Let's just say he hated the weight room.

Well, I think calisthenics are a great place to still get strong. I mean, mountain climbers are some of the most strongest human beings, in my opinion, relatively. You think that would've helped out Allen Iverson? I'm not saying mountain climbing, but that grip strength and those long lever isos, man, I think that would've added maybe another contract at the end of his career.

There's no telling what could've happened. But that's where you always gotta meet the athlete where they're at and what they're willing to do, and then you get what you want, then you lead them to what they need. Yeah. And that's where there's a lot of different modalities to get that done, but I think we get a little shortsighted on our way is the right way.

Reality is, the athlete's way is the right way. That's why they're here. Yeah. So, how do we create a reservoir or a toolbox to pull from so that we can still get that stress response adaptation, but in a way that they're willing to receive it consistently?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Mm.

CORY SCHLESINGER: Let's, since you opened up this door- ...

SHAWN STEVENSON: let's talk about, again, the athlete is always right, how strength could actually take away from your game.

Like, that doesn't sound like those two things can go together, but if you're training a certain way, I would imagine that this could have some effects on your game that you're, you're m- maybe not happy about.

CORY SCHLESINGER: I could not agree more with this statement. Like, this one's huge for me, because there's all these compressive strategies like barbell bench press, barbell squat, barbell deadlift.

We love those lifts, 'cause we like lifting weights, but they are unbelievably compressive. Now, for shorter, you know, uh, positions like for us that we can move those loads, that's why we like them, right? 'Cause we get to m- move load. When you have someone who has a short torso but a femur the length of me, a deadlift is a far pull, right?

A squat is a long way down. Now, I look at it like this. When you watch an athlete train or you expose them to exercises for the first time, if it looks like it's painful or it just doesn't look right, I look at it as you're feeding them a virus. You're feeding them a sickness So then you look at, well, now it's exercise selection.

How do I put them in positions to make it clean so that it actually looks like more vitamins for the body or medicine for the body? So that's where you just elevate a heel. Next thing you know, they're sitting down in a nice squat, vertical torso, knees going over the toes, whatever we're looking for.

This is where I think the rubber hits the road, where you get athletes to buy in. If they feel this compressive force, I don't think they're in, and it's like, "Ah, this just doesn't feel fluid or right," well then, how are you gonna load that over time without having something pop up? Mm. And that's where, you know, lately I probably catch a little flack for this, but machines.

I'm all about machines. Like, the more skilled the athlete is, the more specialized the athlete is, I lean into machines more than anything. 'Cause for me, what do I care about the most? Stress, response, adaptation. Mm. Now, can we argue that a back squat could g- yield you more whatever than a leg press?

Absolutely, but that is for maximally moving weight, not for playing NBA basketball. Mm. 'Cause they already do that through movement, skill efficiency, so that's a whole 'nother world of performance that I'm hoping that we evolve to, but right now we're still stuck in the Stone Age of bigger, faster, stronger.

Yeah, so back to where strength training will actually limit someone is those compressive forces through those shorter ranges of motion just to move heavyweight. Yeah. Well, that's now gonna get them a smaller range of motion, right? So don't get me wrong, that's great for moving maximal load, but if their skill is to allow them to get their appendages, appendages, excuse me, as far away from their body as possible, like a pitcher, and there's a fluidity aspect to execute the skill, like shooting a basketball, maybe these compressive forces aren't exactly good for what they're trying to accomplish.

Mm. So that's where some of these, like, longer length and lo- and, like, uh, calisthenics could actually get us stronger without sacrificing our skill set.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Mm, it makes sense. It makes complete sense. Well, I you know this as a coach, we tend to come in with our thing, right? And this is the way that you do things.

This is the training format, and there are appropriate places for that, you know, especially if you're dealing in, um, you know, uh, volume and you've got, like, a lot of athletes at one time in certain sit-situations, you know. But if y- if we're talking about these high levels, it's gonna be far more per-personalized, and what I hear is you're kind of regressing from these kind of more advanced, maybe even risky type of exercises.

CORY SCHLESINGER: So regression is the key word there, and we're regressing exercises for the most highly skilled athletes in the world. And you would think the exact opposite. You would think progressing. But if I can't get load because of the progression of the exercise, now I'm sacrificing the physiology that I'm trying to get.

Once again, stress, response, adaptation. If I can't get 400 pounds on a guy's back squat- Then I'm probably not moving the needle from a physiology standpoint, because I need that load.

But if I can't get that load because they're limited by their skill of the exercise, then what am I doing it? Then it's more for me.

Mm. My guy's back squatting, my guy's front squatting, my guy's whatever, right? Then that's where the ego comes in. Now, in m- my early career, if you watched our lifts, it looked like a weightlifting hall. And that's how I became kind of known early in my career, was we were snatching, cleaning, jerking, and these were guys that are seven foot tall with seven foot four wing spans, and they were looking very competent.

Which was like, "Oh, man, this guy's a great strength coach." No, I was good at teaching weightlifting exercises. Once I started getting more sophisticated and getting asset, access to technologies and force plates, motion capture, you start realizing, wow, I'm actually, like, turning them into external rotation opposed to internal rotation.

And how they move on the court is the exact opposite of how I'm loading them in the weight room. So maybe I'm actually complement- or conflicting what they actually need. Mm. So I'm actually decreasing their ability to move, to sacrifice, so I can get them more load on an, any given exercise. So that's where machines can allow you so many options, from foot placement to range of motion, and then of course, you're not ever sacrificing load.

And so when we really look at these high-end athletes, they're wired, and that's why they're here, right? They, they might have some biomechanics things that we can clean up, but the reality is, whatever they're doing that got them there- Right ... it's probably working pretty well. So then we just look at their local quality.

So in other words, soleus outputs, leg extension, or their knee, quad, hamstring, adductor, A- ABduction. And we look at those locally, and we go, "Oh, where's the limiting? Where, compared to normative data, where are they weak?" And that's when we go, "Oh, we're gonna go chase that local tissue quality. We're gonna go chase that to make them whole."

Opposed to looking at all these global strategies that we think, "Oh, they're getting better because they're squatting." It's like- Mm ... but if the limiting factor is their soleus output or

their ability, their lower leg strength, well, then where do you think all that stress shielding is happening? It's gonna happen everywhere else, in the hips and the quads.

So that's where we can get pretty micro level with these guys, and that's where regressing these exercises is actually the best thing for higher performance.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah I'm grateful, so grateful that plyometrics are, like, making this huge resurgence right now in sports, but in p- in particular for younger athletes.

But once we get into the level of, say, the NBA, for example, I would imagine... And th- I'm just guessing right now- Yeah, yeah ... based on our conversation so far, that you would probably, because they do so much plyometric-type work in the game, right? You know, just again, just practically, that you wouldn't necessarily do as much a- as far as your training construction for them doing a bunch of plyometrics.

Or are you doing the same amount, or are you doing more?

CORY SCHLESINGER: It's a great question. It's yes and no, and the reason why I say that is because-

SHAWN STEVENSON: And first of all, can you share what plyometrics are?

CORY SCHLESINGER: Oh, absolutely. So plyomet- plyometrics, excuse me, is think of your running, jumping, change of direction. So our ability to hop, skip, jog, and then obviously putting those into more complex patterns with more magnitude, more, uh, variation, and then that's when we get into, like, truly, like, track, track and field, rather.

It's triple jump, broad jump. Or excuse me, triple jump, high jump, and sprinting. So plyometrics is the action of I'm trying to create as much force as humanly possible with my body to get from point A to point B. Now, how do we actually facilitate that? That's to- totally different, like, questions, if you will.

So when I look at an athlete who does plyometrics all day, 'cause that is the sport, I go, they do those kind of plyometrics. And so then we look at the space that they play in. So in a basketball court, we have the court. So then you have 5v5 within that court. So how much plyometrics are we really getting?

We're getting a lot, but we're getting a lot of accelo-decel. And then we look at practice and we go, "Okay, what are they getting out of this?" So they got more space. So yeah, they're getting a lot of accelo-decel, but then they're getting some more higher speed distance. The one thing they're do- not getting is truly foundational plyometrics, from angling, uh, toe bounds, straight-legged scissor bounding, cross-legged scissor bounding, things that you see in a typical track and field setting, where you're seeing from a warmup all the way to high-end, top-end sprinting, 'cause they play in such a small constraint.

So because of that, we don't actually have good sprinters. We have good accel, accel athletes and good decel athletes. And of course, we have our occasional really good vertical athletes. But if you test all the NBA athletes across the board, you would say not all of them are great sprinters, and actually I would argue that not all of them are great jumpers.

They're just really long and really fast, and it looks like they're jumping high, but n- not all of them are actually jumping as high as you think they are. So then when you look at sports like obviously track and field, but like football, those are the guys that have crazy outputs, that they're, like, five foot six, but they're jumping f- 38 inches.

You don't see that too often in the NBA because of just their size alone, and then they play in a small space. Now, when you look at soccer, that's a big field. They got a lot of opportunities to sprint. So they're actually faster than what you would see NBA athletes, but it's because of the nature of the sport.

So in training, so back to yes and no, no in the fact of I can't beat up their joints more. But yes I gotta expose them to the things that are outside of basketball. So in other words, I wanna get the top end sprinting. I want to get outside of 20 meters with these guys because they never get exposure to it.

So if we're looking at the body holistically, now we're getting a lot more glute and ham development because they don't get that in the sport itself because they're doing so much XLD cell. That's why you don't hear too many people, uh, or you hear knees and, and ankles. You don't hear, like, your back. You don't hear hamstrings.

Now, the interesting part is in NBA basketball, you're starting to see more and more hamstrings.

SHAWN STEVENSON: You're right, yeah.

But there's- just happened to Steph Curry

CORY SCHLESINGER: There's a reason for that, in my opinion. There's more space and pace than there's been in the NBA, and now these guys, because they have space and pace, they're creating these torso angles that they're leaning forward, but they're still running 16 miles an hour.

So that's like top-end sprinting, but they're just, their torso angles forward, so they can get leverage to get around athletes. So that's where you're starting to see strain on the hamstring in a different way. Mm. Which is why I think even more so, getting outside and getting to longer distance sprint training in an early off-season program.

Start with tempos, then build out some hollow sprinting. These are things that I think athletes need more exposure to, 'cause they're not getting access to it due to the nature of the sport. For me, everything starts and ends with track and field, in my opinion. Mm. If you are not stealing from track and field, you're gonna be 10 years behind.

So the research is great. I'm really glad we have, you know, validation. But whatever track and field is doing now, that is what's gonna be researched 10 years from now. Mm. So when it comes to the throwing sports, obviously the sprinting sports and the jumping sports, I'm stealing all their warm-ups.

Everything that they're doing, I am stealing, because the rhythm and coordination, one, and then you can always progress and regress that based off of your athlete. So we can add a band. Say we're doing A skips. We can add a band, and that's gonna give you more ground contact time, so that's going to be more force into the ground.

But if I need more speed, then I can obviously do the opposite. I can have something pulling them towards me, and now it's less contact time. So now they're gonna- Mm ... have to neurally go into overdrive. And that's where you got cool technologies like 1080 Sprint or something like, most people know about parachutes, but when you can actually scale it to them, to that kind of micro loads, that's when you can get some really cool adaptations.

And what's cool now is what you're seeing in track and field, they're actually making these, like, trailer shields that a car is towing while the athlete's running in it to create a draft- Mm ... just like you see in NASCAR- Wow ... to allow these athletes to run faster. And that's what the general, the limiting factor is, is- Yeah

being exposed to it. So, overspeed training is de- technically what we're talking about. Yeah. But from, like, a plyometric standpoint, that's also regression if you take it to vertical training. So in other words, if I take a, um, a resistance band, loop it over a pull-up bar, I tug down on it, and now I'm doing jumps, well, that's now allowing me to jump way higher, way faster than I could with my normal body weight.

So this overspeed aspect is really good for de-loading the body and allowing us to be faster. And so this is another example of where I say yes to doing plyometrics and no to doing plyometrics with heavily Uh, plyometric-based sports. So that's where when we're doing learning or we want more co- or less contact time, doing a reverse band jump is really powerful- Mm

for guys that need tendon loading, and then allowing them to actually learn how to a- um, fle- dorsiflex and plantarflex their foot. These guys live, I mean live in ankle braces and taped ankles, so they lose the ability to dorsiflex and plantarflex really fast and rapid. So it's almost

like my, my, my rule of thumb with whatever sport you're working with, you almost train the opposite of what they do in sport.

Mm.

Literally the opposite end of the spectrum, and you're generally gonna help them from a health standpoint.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Are there any exercises, and I know this is tough.

I've been, I've been asking you some pretty tough questions actually- ... but you're just demolishing these things. Are there any ac- exercises that you could say across the board the majority of athletes should be doing?

CORY SCHLESINGER: Sprinting. Sprinting. Sprinting is probably number one in my book, uh, mainly because that is the most potent stimuli you can give to the human body. And then when you regress, because of the ground reaction forces, the harder you sprint, the faster you sprint, you cannot recreate those forces in a weight room.

You just cannot. The amount of force that you can put into a high-speed sprint with one leg is six to eight times body weight. What exercise in the weight room am I doing- Yeah ... that's equating to those forces? None. So when I think about what is going to make me, quote-unquote, "a better athlete," sprinting and regressions or progressions to sprint training.

So as the umbrella, definitely sprinting. Um, then I guess I can go into isometrics. So and I hate to use like a, like a, an umbrella term instead of like a specific exercise, but I would say sprinting, isometrics, and then finding machines that allow me to overload locally and globally, and I know that's gonna be the exact opposite of what most people would say.

Most people would say, "Oh, you need to progress these advanced exercises so that you can look like you're athletic in a weight room," when in reality they need to look athletic on the field. They need to look athletic in the constraints of their sport. And so this is where I'm

hoping the advancement of strength and conditioning gets to, if there is a skill acquisition piece that us practitioners, we understand how to teach skill and movement in a weight room.

There's a progression to do that in sport, because we understand the demands, the physiology, and the physics that go into that. So that's what I want to advance this career to. Mm. If you ask me, I think strength and conditioning should not exist, and I know that sounds wild, but I think coaches really, like strength and conditioning coaches, what's the difference between us and a sport coach learning general physical preparation?

I think if a sports coach just learned general physical preparation, they're probably the most advanced person to work with any given athlete because they understand the full spectrum. And this once again goes back to track and field. What were track and field coaches back in the day? They were the weight coach.

They were the nutrition coach. They were the technical coach. They were the whole thing 'cause they saw it from point A to point B, or point Z, excuse me. So that's where you go, "Wow," like that is understanding the athlete in 3D, and then it goes back to the very first thing we talked about. There's the technical aspect of sport, there's the tactical aspect of sport, and then there's the physical.

And what's the best thing that coaches and athletes can do now, or the best thing they can do for themselves, is learn how all of those interact with each other.

And so you can get an optimal skill session, an optimal weight training session, and then of course an optimal practice, which hopefully leads to better games.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Amazing. Now what about, you mentioned deceleration in the context of basketball. There's a lot of that in, I mean, most sports I can think of. Acceleration, deceleration. Are there any exercises that can help to facilitate, uh, you know, teach our body deceleration?

CORY SCHLESINGER: Absolutely. Um, we'll just assume that we have a pain-free athlete when we're talking about this.

So I like depth drop landings a lot, because that is decel. It's just on the vertical plane, which is the area that we could probably receive that highest stimuli the most. Mm. Then once we start introducing horizontal, right, or linear, that's when it gets fun, right? Because that's where you see the difference between good and great athletes.

Now, good athletes can stop. Great athletes can stop faster. There's a big difference in that, because you have your Luka Dončičs, you have your Nikola Jokićs, you have your James Hardens. Those guys decel better than anyone else on the planet. You don't see them necessarily excelling greater than some of your Anthony Edwards or whatever.

But you see them decel unbel- and they create so much separation based off- Mm ... of that. Right. So there's so many things that go into that. There's joint mechanics. There's stiffness in tendons. There's so many layers that goes into decel training, which goes back to stimuli. So how do I regress that to progress it?

I would say depth drop landings working in the vertical vector. Then you do that from-

SHAWN STEVENSON: Can you describe that?

CORY SCHLESINGER: Oh, yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: What is that?

CORY SCHLESINGER: Sorry about that. So you can get on a plyo box. That's something anywhere between 12 inches to 36 inches. You jump off of it, and then you stick the landing. And so for me, that's once again, like, you know that reverse band thing we talked about earlier, where you jump really high and then let go of the band and then stick the landing?

That is an easier way to, how should I say this? Uh, standardize that. Now, we can do with compliant landings or non-compliant landings, so, or a stiff landing. So if I get on top of a, let's

say a 12-inch box, and my goal is to land, most people would jump, land, and they absorb. So in other words, they bend their knees, and then that's a more compliant landing.

So that means I'm using my muscles to help me land that. Mm-hmm. But if I ask you to do the same thing, but don't let your knees bend when you hit the ground, it's like a shock to the body. Mm. That is a stiff landing. That is what decel is all about. Mm. How stiff can I stop? And that's gonna be the difference between a good stopper or a great stopper, who's a compliant stopper, which takes a lot of time, or a stiff stopper, which takes hardly any time 'cause they barely bend their knee to be able to push back.

And that's where you see that step back. That's where you see... You don't see guys bending their knees a lot on that. When they're doing it, they get that foot so far outside their center of mass that their leg is stiff, and then they bounce back like a pogo. And so that's what's really, really cool about what you can do with these depth drop landings.

Once again, you get on top of a box, scale it from 20, or excuse me, 12 inches to 36 inches, and then you work from a scale of compliant landings, where I land where I'm absorbing as much range of motion as I want, or to stiff landings, where I'm trying to not have any give. And then you go from bilateral to unilateral, and then now I can get out a little bit further and jump off of it laterally.

So now I'm, now I'm getting to the horizontal vector. But that's a great way to scale that decel stuff. And then, of course, once you get to being more sport-like, that's when we can use that band that we were doing for overspeed training. Same idea. Instead of overspeeding you to run faster, I can overspeed you to decel.

So I'm gonna help you accel, which is gonna give you a lot of speed, and then you gotta decel that. So these are ways that you can start progressing from the vertical vector to the horizontal vector, and that's where structure type comes in. And that's where there's only certain things you can train.

Like, I can train all these qualities, and I will get better, but getting two standard deviations better is different, and that's what makes the difference between good, great, and elite. Mm.

When you have elite, that's mom and dad. That's genetics. That's how the bones are structured. That's what makes them special and why they're able to do the things they do.

When you watch Michael Jordan back in the day stop when you watch him move, he is so much lower than anyone else. Everyone else is moving almost like they got a board as a spine. But he's moving in such a different way that people couldn't even comprehend. That's why he's getting travel calls, and he wasn't really having that much success.

But then as he progressed, he was just ... He was ... No one was moving like him. And because he had these shin angles, and that's where we look at the now the most extreme example of it, which is Kyrie Irving. That dude's shins are horizontal when he stops. Like, his shins are so low to the ground, it's like my ankles at the ground.

And that's what allows him to stop better than anyone else on the planet. And so that's a, those are structure types that you just can't train.

Mm.

So once again- Mm ... good, great, sure you can train those. But elite, ah, it's mom and dad.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. This is a valuable life skill, because you never know when you're gonna need to stop.

CORY SCHLESINGER: Oh, man. I couldn't agree more with that.

SHAWN STEVENSON: You know what I mean? Yeah. So this is important for all of us, and we can build this in. E- I love it, even this microdosing idea of, like, you could just sprinkle in little bits of this in your training and being able to ... Now, when you, when you mentioned coming off of that box, you, you mentioned jumping.

So- Are we jumping or are we stepping off of it, or both?

CORY SCHLESINGER: Both. I would say, once again, it's another, like, regression to progression where you just step off so you don't have your center of mass displaced too high, and then when you land, you land compliant or you land stiff. But if I don't have access to a higher box, well, man, I'm already up 12 inches.

Now I can jump up the- Mm-hmm ... 24 inches and then stick that landing. And now that we're on this topic, to progress it even more, now do a jump after that. 'Cause we're talking about landing, now we're talking about plyometrics. Mm-hmm. So that's where we gotta get to, all right, I've absorbed all this energy.

Now I gotta re-release that energy so that I can go somewhere, and that's where I can just jump in place, jump over a hurdle. So many things that you can do. And I think as aging athletes go through their journey, I think they need to get exploited to these intensive plyometrics, and that's where it's a yes and no.

'Cause yes, they do plyometrics in basketball, but they don't do the super intensive plyometrics that you could eventually work to in, like, track and field workouts or into real jump training programs. So that's where you can microdose that, and that's what we tend to do in season, is the further along season we go, you start seeing us do a little bit more intensive plyometric work.

Low volume, but they need to hit that intensity because we get all this cool game data. I mean, we, I see everything that the guys do on the floor with accel-decel jumps, high-speed distance. Like, I see the mileage that they do and the speeds that they do it at. So because of that, I know if they had a quote-unquote light game or not, or if they're within these certain bandwidths.

So then if they're not in those bandwidths, let's say we go through a 10-game spell and one of our athletes is not getting enough outputs that we know they're gonna see in playoff basketball, what a great opportunity to microdose some intensive plyometrics.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Mm-hmm. So smart, man. So smart. What about, I saw a movement that I have not yet

I, I felt, like, a, a kinship with the movement-

CORY SCHLESINGER: Okay ...

SHAWN STEVENSON: that I've not yet done until I, I ... You know, I wanted to talk to you about it today, um, because of course, as I was doing my research and just knowing, and Sima and Mark, it was, like, some kind of a drop lunge-

CORY SCHLESINGER: Yeah

SHAWN STEVENSON: ... that they learned from you as well.

CORY SCHLESINGER: The kettlebell drop lunge. Yeah. So a l- just to explain to the audience, real simple, we all do split squats, right? Slow, up and down. With a kettlebell drop lunge or a dumbbell, whatever you have access to, it's the same idea. The only difference is I'm trying to fall as fast as humanly possible and then stick the landing. And so- And with this, now we have a very high velo eccentric.

We think about eccentrics, we think about really slow. Mm-hmm. Because you're trying to wear out that muscle, right, for hypertrophy. But from a magnitude standpoint, if we add velocity, man, we get a lot of eccentric load. We're just doing it really, really fast. So I can actually technically get more load on an individual from a magnitude standpoint than I could with a 400-pound squat, because they're falling so fast and they have to abruptly stop.

With this drop lunge, so basically we're, we're standing straight and then we're kind of dropping into like a split squat.

Drop into a split squat, and I-

SHAWN STEVENSON: With the weight in your hand.

CORY SCHLESINGER: With the weight in your hand. Right. And then there, there is a skill component to this. Right. So we can scale it to where we start stationary, let's have it in our right hand, and then we drop and split with our left leg in front.

Cool. Stick the landing. But then there's a fluidity. Like, there is this rhythm, it's almost like a dance, where once I get out of the bottom, I pop up and then I need to switch hands. Switch hands, yeah. So now it's got to float in the air. Now I have to time it. Mm-hmm. So it's like athletic lifting, which is what we see in Olympic lifting.

But this is a way scalable version that people pick up immediately if they have a little bit of athletic qualities to them. And I actually done it, especially from Stanford to a little bit in Phoenix, where I was doing it with the team at once. Mm-hmm. Where we're doing partner passing and kettlebell drop lunges because it was that easy to scale.

And so that's where it's not the complexity of Olympic lifting, but you get the magnitude of the catches as if you were doing Olympic lifting. But then it's a little bit more, and I hate to use the word functional, but a little bit more athletic when I can do it in a split stance, when I can do it in locomotion, opposed to, you know, the catch on a clean where it's obviously bilateral.

SHAWN STEVENSON: I want to ask you for everyday people, you know, just everybody who's, who's listening. You know, there are athletes in the audience. There are people who've got kids who are athletes, but we all want to be our best selves. And, you know, that formula is going to be different from time to time, where we are in our life cycle, our life conditions.

But are there anything, are there, are there, are there certain exercises or mindset pieces that you would encourage all of us to implement on a consistent basis? You know, you've reiterated the, the point of sprinting several times. I think that's immensely, immensely valuable, and there's so many different ways we can go about sprinting, by the way.

It doesn't have to be on a track or whatever the case might be, which is, it doesn't really get better than that.

CORY SCHLESINGER: Correct.

SHAWN STEVENSON: But, you know, just being able to get that anabolic input-

Mm-hmm ...

you know, whether this is like a stationary bike, whatever the case might be, s- you know, swimming. There are different ways to get that kind of anabolic high-intensity input.

But are there any other exercises, again, or insights for ev- all of us to take on on a regular basis?

CORY SCHLESINGER: When I think about longevity, I, I do a lot of research on longevity, because to me, that's just the It's the end goal for all of us anyways, but there's a high performance aspect to that. So when I think about longevity, I think about, okay, you probably have to have full range of motion in most activities that you do.

And when I think about people getting older, I go, "Well, they get limited range of motion." Right? All of a sudden it's hard to sit down on that couch, or you hear the grunts getting out of the car, so you're like, "Okay, check. That's limited." Then you go the next, which is strength. So then all of a sudden you see grip strength being limited, right?

"I used to do the things like this. I used to carry this over there, and now that's, that's a little bit harder." So it's like, okay, so now I got range of motion and I got grip strength. And then the reason why I keep going back to speed is, yeah, I used to sprint, but then just one day I just stopped sprinting, and then 20 years later they're like, "Yeah, I haven't, I haven't sprint-sprinted.

When's the la- Jumped? When's the last time I've done any of those activities?" So when I think about, I think we can go about fiber typing and all these other things that go with the decaying of a human being, well, how do I prolong that decay? And sprinting is probably a good one, right? 'Cause now that's speed.

Um, grip strength, picking up heavy shit, probably another good one. So like a two arm hang is probably one of my favorite tests to see do you have good relative strength, and how long can you hold a two arm hang? Most human beings, in my opinion, should be able to hang off of a pull-up bar with one arm for 45 seconds.

I think that's a pretty good standard for most humans to be able to do. Most humans cannot even come close to that, and I go, "Well, that, from an overhead strength standpoint and a relative being able to handle my own body weight, ah, that makes sense." And then from a mobility standpoint or a range of motion, uh, put your butt on the ground, and can you get up off the ground without using your hands?

And most people cannot do that. Most people have to put a hand down. They have to put the second hand down. They have to use their knee to do this. And then I go, those are the three things that I'm constantly trying to ov- to delay as long as I possibly can. And I think about my mother, and I think about all my older family members and friends, and I think these are the things they cannot do.

And one of the greatest strength coaches of all time, his name's Al Vermil. He was the bull strength coach during the Jordan era, right? Now, Tim Grover was training Jordan, but somebody had to be training all those other dudes, and Al Vermil is world-renowned. Like, he is on my Mount Rushmore of strength coaches.

And that dude was still sprinting probably five years ago, and he's like 86 now. Mm. Something like that, and he was still sprinting every day.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Amazing. '

CORY SCHLESINGER: Cause he's like, "That's the last thing to go."

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. "

CORY SCHLESINGER: So if I'm losing my ability to sprint, I'm probably frail." I was like, that makes a lot of sense from a bone density standpoint, from a tendon and tendon health standpoint.

The longer we can do fast things the better.

SHAWN STEVENSON: All right, I hope that you enjoyed that first segment. We've got so much more in store for you. Next up, you're gonna hear from Coach Mike Guevara, better known as Coach Mike G. And he's a world leading performance coach, speaker, and he's well established for transforming high-level athletes through science-based training and elite level mentorship.

He has a background as a former NCAA wide receiver himself, along with a degree in kinesiology. In this segment, you're gonna discover the incredible power of utilizing isometrics. Coach Mike G changed my life with his education around isometrics, and I think he's gonna do the same for you as well. He's gonna share why so many world-class athletes are now training barefoot more often.

Plus, he's gonna tell you about the importance of jump diversity. Like, what the heck does that mean? He's gonna talk about specific types of jumping progressions and regressions that everyone can utilize. And if you're gonna be really doing what you wanna do long term, let alone outside of the sport that you might wanna play, but just in life, jumping is a skill that you never wanna lose.

So this is absolutely filled to the brim with insights. Let's dive into this next segment with the incredible Coach Mike G.

MIKE GUEVARA: Isometrics, to define what the word basically means, is tension or load with zero joint m- motion or zero joint action. So it's literally holds. Isometrics are holds. And the problem with isometrics is they're not sexy.

They're boring. They're... It's, it's almost a, a, a jab to the ego if, if you care, right? Because ego is all about, you know, what you value, right? But if you care about if someone is looking at

you, people may look at you and say, "You're not doing anything. You're literally not moving." But if I g- put you on a wall and make you do a single l- single leg wall sit for 45 seconds, which is a good amount of time, I guarantee if you've never done that before, you're either going to slide down and stop or be shaking like a leaf, which I'm sure you've experienced.

Yeah. And I think the reason why isometrics are so valuable is they're safe. So anybody-

SHAWN STEVENSON: Hmm ...

MIKE GUEVARA: that is functional enough to walk into the gym can do an isometric. That's from the age of five years old all the way to 95. If you are able to walk into the gym, I can guarantee you can do an isometric hold. And the most quintessential iso that I think we all can relate to is the wall sit It, it was basically, um, discipline for whenever we messed up in gym class, if gym class even exists anymore.

But anytime you messed up in gym class or any time you d- made a mistake on, in practice, "All right, everybody get on the wall. Let's do a wall sit." And basically, you're sitting in a 90-degree angle at your knee and hip, and it's a major quad load with no joint action. And the reason why this is very beneficial is it's been known to mitigate pain.

So let's say that you walk into the gym with sore knees, for whatever reason. It could be the game you just played. It could be maybe you had a heavy squat day. It could be because you were sitting from a long flight. Whatever the case is, your knees are cranky. For some reason, when you do a 45-second wall sit for three to four sets, that pain goes away, which means what?

Now your training session is more productive.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Mm.

MIKE GUEVARA: Now you're not worried about moving through ranges of motion with knee pain. You're confident, you're able to load up, and you're able to train hard. So as a basketball

player, coach, performance coach, or just anyone who exists in movement space, this is a valuable tool to literally remove pain from a situation.

So that's why ... That's, that's a huge reason of why I stand by iso's. And then also, there's a lot of research being done. Shout out to, um, Keith Barr, Dr. Keith Barr out of UC Davis. He's put forth a lot of science-backed objective data that says that if you do isometrics, you can repair tendon. And in the space of basketball and in the, the, the, the, the world of hoops, anyone that's ever played a season, you- your knees are not happy.

Your Achilles tendon, which we see a lot of ruptures, ruptures from, you know, now we can start to reinforce the collagen network within these tendons that are gonna make you more robust and perhaps take away the risk of injury. Nothing is foolproof. Nothing is guaranteed to not ... or to prevent you from getting hurt, but we're trying to do as much as we can to make you as robust as possible.

So that's why isos, which is heavy in the, the GBG Hoops app, is such a huge presence in our exercise library.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. Fire. Fire. I could reiterate on- ... you know, not being sexy because- Mm-hmm ... what I was doing, what I still do, by the way, um, was a rear, rear foot elevated jumps, right? Yeah. So I'm, like, doing jumps with rotation, with the deceleration- Yeah

all these other things that are more explosive- Mm-hmm ... because I just feel athletic- Athletic ... you know? And these inputs, I see how they translate.

MIKE GUEVARA: Yes.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And so with that being said, doing that rear foot elevated split squat iso- Mm-hmm ... that I learned from you- Right? And having that input and seeing, for example, like, my, my son, the first time he did it, he was, he was shaking.

Shaking like a- Because you don't think- ... leaf in the fall ... it's gonna be that difficult, but- No ... as you just mentioned, this is getting these inputs-

CORY SCHLESINGER: Yes ...

SHAWN STEVENSON: um, without this kind of, like, focus specifically on the muscle's capability to do stuff. Correct. We're getting inputs for the tendons- Yep ... and the ligaments, and this is, it's safe.

That's the thing, too. Safe. It's safe and it's f- anybody can do it at some level. There are many people I'm sure can't even do a rear foot elevated split squat, but they can do an iso. They can hold onto something-

MIKE GUEVARA: Yes, sir ...

SHAWN STEVENSON: and just be able to hold position and get so much benefit.

MIKE GUEVARA: So much benefit, and you, you, you, you took the words out of my, my brain is, is, um, it's, it's extremely safe and effective.

So, you know, just the culture of, of training, whether you're a parent or if it, you're training yourself as an adult, you wanna pick up heavy weight. That's just the culture of what it is and, and that's starting to change because the functionality of movement and, and living in the, the gym is becoming more how does it adapt to what I need or do is starting to take the forefront.

But nonetheless, we wanna lift heavy. It feels innately good. As a man, I pick up heavy things still, but Why do I wanna put that same mindset on a nine-year-old kid, a 12-year-old kid? How about this? An 18-year-old rookie in the NBA who can't hold a rear foot elevated isometric for n- one minute. They can't.

Why am I gonna load this pattern? So it's just ripping down all the ego and, and, and, and really trying to get people to understand, like, look, this- we're not professional weightlifters.

We're not ... If you're competing in, in some sort of strongman competition, or this is what your sport is, to look good, different.

I'm not talking to you. You do need to lift these weights and, and, and, and, you know, be strategic about it. But if you're an athlete, if you're an adult that wants to be more a- active with their children, not have back pain when you go to pick your kid up every, every time they're crawling into a mess or whatever it is, this is for you.

Because it's easy, it's safe, and it works.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. All right. So my personal testimony from my 14-year-old son, who's a serious hooper, uh, after two weeks of training and following the workouts that you put together for us-

MIKE GUEVARA: Yes, sir ...

SHAWN STEVENSON: hi- the words that came out of his mouth were, "I just feel more bouncy," right? "I just feel more bouncy," which is, like, gold- Man

for a hooper- Man ... to feel like that. You know? And he credits you. He's just like, "You know, I've been..." And also, of course, you gave him some advice with- Sure ... you know, getting the, the protein intake, which he's done, like, 95% of the time. Wow. Man, the compliance has been amazing- Wow ... because of who you are and your communication style, man.

Okay. It's just, it's just been really special to see. Yeah, it's really great. And one of the other things that I noticed immediately on the app was that you had a lot of your athletes, and we're talking, we got some championship-

MIKE GUEVARA: Mm-hmm ...

SHAWN STEVENSON: athletes on here, Ra- Rajon Rondo-

MIKE GUEVARA: Yes, sir ...

SHAWN STEVENSON: and they're training barefoot.

MIKE GUEVARA: Yes, sir.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Can you talk about why you have your athletes training barefoot?

MIKE GUEVARA: I, I love to give flowers to people who deserve the credit because y- you know, I'm not here by myself. Every, there's been so many hands on me that have molded me and influenced me, including my wife. I just wanna ma- take this time.

She's right here behind the camera. Shout out,

SHAWN STEVENSON: yeah.

MIKE GUEVARA: Her name is Hadiya Turner. She's amazing. She's the brains and everything behind GB Jubes. But, um, the gentleman that has introduced me to the barefoot ideology, his name is Scott Mitchell. Scott Mitchell is basically my mentor when I started 15 to 18 years ago, and, uh, he no longer is in the coaching space no more.

He's actually a teacher. You know, he, he traded in his whistle for, you know, a little bit more of what s- speaks to him, which is teaching kids, and I respect that so much 'cause I love teaching kids. Shout out to Brayden, too, for being 95% compliant, and, uh, he's the one that had the five-finger -style shoes way back when.

And to the average 25, 26-year-old, you're like-

SHAWN STEVENSON: What are those?

MIKE GUEVARA: What are those? And, you know, I'm, I'm a Jordan guy. I, I love Jordans. I never had enough money to buy them when I was younger, and now I got a little paper, so I'm gonna, you know, I'm gonna wear some Jordans in the g- training space. And it's just like, you know, you vibe with your athletes too.

Like, they see what's on your feet and now it's a conversation and you're, you're cool. But he's the one that put me on to the sensory richness of your pal- the palms of your hands and the bottoms of your feet, and how we can lose that sense of proprioception, which is another word of just being able to know where you're at in space in real time, which has a huge effect on athleticism, on balance, on stability, on the ability to prevent injury, injurious movements from happening, 'cause we have such awareness of the floor and where we're at in space, right?

Well, if you don't create those connections on a daily basis, they start to go away. If you don't use it, you lose it. So being barefoot was just another way for me to add a little bit of an edge to my training. And I would explain it the same way to you guys. It's like, look, you're closer to the floor.

You're more connected to the floor. You know where your foot is in space. It's gonna help you with your balance, your stability, your ability to load different areas of the feet. Your feet are gonna be stronger. Your whole body will be stronger. I guarantee it'll translate to everything that you feel. And then also, foot pressure.

It's not talked about a lot. Like, where is the load in my foot? Is it in my heel, my midfoot, my forefoot, my toes? And the four regions of the foot, it'll drastically change where the force goes up the chain. Why aren't we talking about this?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Hmm. Right.

MIKE GUEVARA: If I put you in the rearfoot elevated iso but have you forefoot loaded, your ankle complex will now take stress.

If I have you heel loaded, and no- region is better than the other, but if I have you heel loaded, you will be more glute loaded. See what I'm saying? So, like, I think that that nuance alone in itself is very valuable to the training space- Right ... the training practice, so that you know where you're at on the foot.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah.

MIKE GUEVARA: So, that's kinda where that came from. Scott Mitchell is the one that introduced that to me, influenced me in a huge and major, uh, way. And, you know, when I played college football, we were in weightlifting shoes with a small heel lift, not even thinking about where my foot is in space, not even thinking about where anything is in space, just pick the damn weight up.

But obviously, as we get more, um, understanding of, like, what training is, what, what purpose does training do for, for me as an athlete, as a human, that's, that's really where the value is. So yeah, that's how I came to be-

SHAWN STEVENSON: Incredible ...

MIKE GUEVARA: in the barefoot

SHAWN STEVENSON: space. Incredible. Again, just ahead of the curve. Your access- Mm-hmm

and, you know, our, the bottoms of our feet, man, hundreds of thousands of nerve endings just- Hundreds of thousands ... there to pick up data-

MIKE GUEVARA: That's it ...

SHAWN STEVENSON: about our movement- Yeah ... and ground contact. Yeah. And it just makes you think, like, what if KD was training barefoot back in the day? Facts. What if Kobe was training barefoot back in the day?

MIKE GUEVARA: Which he is now. Yeah. I just want y'all to know that.

SHAWN STEVENSON: I, I saw LeBron had the five-finger, uh- Yep ... to- uh, shoes on, too, and he's notorious for having the worst feet, you know? Right. But it's just, again, it's a, it's a cultural shift. And, you know, we, we, we will never know about the past, but we can see- Mm-hmm

moving into the future-

MIKE GUEVARA: Mm-hmm ...

SHAWN STEVENSON: getting athletes to have basically that data not being muted from the ground contact.

MIKE GUEVARA: That's such a good way to put it.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Right? Having that, having that access and that data to be able to ... Again, when your foot hits the ground, it's sending data to what, what your knee's doing, your ankle, your back.

The list goes on and on, and it's muted by the shoes that we're wearing. Yes, sir. And so, what if we start to train that? And over time, and I don't know if you've had this experience as well, but, like, wearing, um, you know, zero drop shoes or- Mm-hmm ... the five-digit shoes- Mm-hmm ... I start to really experience my feet differently when I put other shoes on.

MIKE GUEVARA: Can I please ex- t- talk about that? My feet are growing. It's, a- a- and it's not a literal gain in, you know- length or whatever, but it's literally like because my feet are expanding and I'm, I'm receiving force all the time in these wide toe box, five-digit types of footwear, my feet expand and now size 10 don't fit no more.

I have to go up to 10 and a half.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Incredible. That's-

MIKE GUEVARA: The, and 'cause my tissue is adapting. Yeah. Like, my foot is adapting. Right.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Exactly.

MIKE GUEVARA: Everything is adapting to- Yeah ... like the forces I'm applying through this footwear.

SHAWN STEVENSON: What if the whole time, like, your genes were expecting you to do this?

MIKE GUEVARA: Bro. And then- I'm not supposed to be 5'8".

What are you talking... You know what I mean? Like, that's real, that's a real idea that comes up. You know what I mean?

SHAWN STEVENSON: So. So powerful.

MIKE GUEVARA: So powerful.

All right. I've got a really quick compliment for Coach Mike G's message on training with more foot activation. Your foot has 26 bones, 33 joints, 19 muscles, 107 ligaments, and each foot has over 200,000 nerve endings, and it's all there for collecting data to determine your movement.

Now, as you well know, our modern footwear has essentially muted or disrupted thousands of these data signals that would be transmitted normally up through the kinetic chain to inform movement. And so what are we seeing? Epidemic levels of hip dysfunction, knee dysfunction, back issues, neck issues that can all be related to things that are happening downstream with our contact with the ground.

So yes, in our training, let's add in some opportunity to where we can get our shoes off and do stuff. But as you know, that's not always something that is viable, and having some shoes that actually have that zero drop, that have the individual toe boxes to really simulate this foot activation in the very best way, that's the key.

And so now how can we do this, make this functional, and make it look good, too? This is where Peluva steps into the game. Peluvas have a wide toe box with science-backed five toe functionality, plus they make fitness and foot health look good. They've got styles for everything that you would wanna do, cross training, playing your sports on the court, hiking, and even getting out on the golf course.

They've got styles for that as well. And right now, when you go to peluva.com/model, you're going to get 10% off store wide. That's P-E-L-U-V-A.com/model. Use the code model at

checkout for 10% off Rehab and prehab those feet. Utilize the powerful intelligence that our feet have to inform our whole body movement.

Head over to peluva.com/model for 10% off. Now back to the show. Wow. So again- We, we live and we learn. But, you know, just again, going to the app and seeing, yeah, we've got different, um, ways of training, training structures, different exercises.

Yeah. You know, athletes have shoes on and some things other times, and it's just kinda taking the opportunity to train barefoot.

Mm.

SHAWN STEVENSON: How would you advise somebody to start to implement- Yeah ... some barefoot training? 'Cause we don't wanna go zero to, to hero overnight, I would imagine.

MIKE GUEVARA: Yeah. So sometimes, you know, we get really excited when we see the LeBron post or we see the Mike G post, and we wanna just jump straight into that. Well, again, what is a sneaker?

What is a shoe, a basketball shoe, a weightlifting shoe? It's a, it's a buffer of force between your foot and whatever activity that you're doing. You know, if you try to run in bare feet, you immediately adopt a different gait. Because if you try to run heel-toe without shoes, there's gonna be a lot of disruption in the system.

You're not ... It's not gonna feel good at all, nor efficient, and your brain innately knows that. You're gonna be more forefoot dominant. Well, being more forefoot dominant means that your feet, your Achilles, all the muscles in the lower leg have to be ready for that repetitive five to eight times body weight that you're putting onto it with every step of your run.

So in short, in a, in a simpler way of putting it is, if you're going to take away the buffer that a normal sneaker would give you, you have to be very cognizant of how you create the new load into your foot with the barefoot training or the, um, five-digit footwear training or the, or the zero drop training.

Because now you don't have that cushion. You don't have that s- that, that really comfortable buffer that absorbs force from when you play basketball, from when you jump, from when you run, sprint, whatever activity it is. So wearing the sneakers-

SHAWN STEVENSON: Which can mask inefficient movement.

MIKE GUEVARA: Correct. Amongst other things, right?

Uh, the, the thing about athletes is they, they compensate, and they're really good at that. So getting out of the shoe and being barefoot or in these minimal- minimalist footwear, we have to be very cognizant of how we introduce load. And even simply walking five minutes a day on a treadmill is a really good way to introduce those new loads or forces Closed chain exercise.

Basically, in other, in other words, when your feet are connected to the ground and you perform an exercise, squat, Romanian deadlift, r- rear foot elevated split squat. You get the picture. Squat to press. Your feet are supported by the floor. Maybe that's a safer way to introduce this type of footwear because there's no impact.

There's no impact load, and the impact load is what causes the danger zone. That's when tissue starts to get a little bit overworked and overstressed, and then you, you know, you, you have a strain or a sprain of some sort. So I think closed chain lifting or exercise is totally okay, but when you start to in- incorporate impact, that's when we have to be very, very wary of it and aware that, hey, let's do five minutes of walking this week every day.

Let's improve that to 10 minutes the second week. Let's maybe start to do a walk jog the third week, and then kinda go based off of how you feel, and then grade it out accordingly.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Amazing. Amazing. So with this being said, this is just what humans were doing, all right, prior to this innovation with these, you know, with the very, um, especially, like, the thicker, more, like- Mm

maximalist shoes- Yeah ... that we have now. But the world is different, so we gotta keep that in context, too. The environment. Yeah. Yeah. Right? So we're concrete and hardwood floors-

MIKE GUEVARA: Sure ...

SHAWN STEVENSON: are very different than grass and just kinda na- natural environments.

MIKE GUEVARA: Sure.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And so, you know, one of the things ... So number one, q- super quick sidebar question.

Would doing isometrics- Mm ... barefoot be, like, a very easy on-ramp, for example?

MIKE GUEVARA: Very much so. Yeah. Because again, if, if I'm doing an isometric, usually my feet will be connected to a stable surface, sta- stable environment, which means that there's no impact load. So I definitely think if you're navigating the gym and you're training and you're not doing any jumping, running, hopping, skipping, walking, or, uh, long duration walking 'cause you gotta walk from station to station, then I think you're in a good space.

I think this is a very safe space to be in to train barefoot. Now, some of the people who are against this minimalist footwear are gonna say, "Well If your foot is operating in a way that's unhealthy for the kinetic chain going up, for instance, if you have over-pronating feet, and now you're taking your shoes away that kinda give you a little bit of arch support, now you're just feeding a problem.

That's a whole nother conversation, and I don't know how to qualify who, you know, from a vast general standpoint, who should be able to step into this footwear or not, or this world. But from a very global perspective, all right, your feet are somewhat normal, whatever that even means. Closed chain isometric work I think is a really good way to start, because now you're gonna start to understand foot pressure and feel foot pressure.

Where, where is my body weight at?

SHAWN STEVENSON: That's one of the things that you, in, in some of his workouts, was specifically ... When you mentioned foot dysfunction, right? Mm. Where it's like it's turning in or- Yeah ... whatever the case might be. Train your feet.

MIKE GUEVARA: Yeah.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Right? Yeah. So you have some exercises. Like, there's one where we have that s- the small ball, and we're pushing down with the big toe.

Correct. Isometric. Yeah. Can you talk about that one a little bit?

MIKE GUEVARA: Yeah, so just to set it up so you guys can see at home in your, in your mind's eye Imagine you're barefoot and you have perhaps the density of a tennis ball or maybe even a little bit more forgiving, a little bit more squishy. Um, and basically you place that tennis ball underneath.

You're standing on two feet, you place on one side the tennis ball underneath the big toe. So now think about the big toe being bent back. So there's a little bit of a stretch perhaps in your big toe joint or maybe even in, in, even, uh, underneath the bottom of the foot because your bent toe is kind of being bent backwards or extended, is how we would call it in the training space.

But then I ask you to press and smash the ball with the big toe. So what are we doing? We're lengthening the tissue responsible for extending the big toe, and we're contracting at length. And what that does is it's an isometric because it's a no movement action, but there's still tension, and that strengthens all of the tissue required to create the big toe smash at length.

And the beauty behind that is you could potentially lift your arch, you can definitely strengthen the big toe flexion motion, and there's a lot of science that says that it, the best jumpers in the world have s- really strong big toes. A lot of people don't know that. Hmm. And we don't innately, we don't particularly train big toe.

There's no big toe day. Um, and I know that those jumpers don't train their big toe, you know? But through the landscape of their lifestyle, maybe they were barefoot a lot. Maybe they played outside a lot barefoot. Maybe they played basketball a lot barefoot.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Maybe how they compensated in their jumping too.

MIKE GUEVARA: Maybe how they compensated. For some reason, their big toes are really strong and they jump really high. So that's like an easy You know, bar. Like, here. You wanna jump higher? Get your big toe strong. It's in the science. And that's a really easy way to, uh, visualize how to do so. Just get a squishy ball, maybe a tennis ball, put it underneath your big toe, bend it back, and then press down for 45 seconds.

Big toe smash.

Amazing. Oh, it's so good. All right. So one of the things that I've done outside of isometrics barefoot is proactively, and this was just a little while ago, but now I'm just doing it more consistently, is doing a little bit of jumping. Like, basically jump rope-

Sure ...

SHAWN STEVENSON: uh, barefoot, but, like, on a soft surface.

Okay. So whether this is grass, outside, dirt, grass, or, like, on a carpet. But just getting that input. And it's so, it was so, the first time I did it, it was so, like, it just felt kinda wrong, but then it quickly felt like this is so right. Yeah. It just ... I don't know. I can't explain it. Yeah. It's just g- taking your shoes off and being able to train and get these inputs-

MIKE GUEVARA: 100%

SHAWN STEVENSON: s- stuff just starts turning on.

MIKE GUEVARA: Yep.

SHAWN STEVENSON: You know? And so I've been doing that, but ... And it's, and that's something that anybody can do. Just kinda, again, qualify yourself, make sure that you're comfortable, and then you can do that kinda thing- Mm-hmm ... on a, a forgiving surface. Mm-hmm. Just a little bit of hopping up and down.

MIKE GUEVARA: Mm-hmm.

SHAWN STEVENSON: But a, a, a regression potentially, but then it's like a galactical progression might be, uh, a trampoline.

MIKE GUEVARA: Yes.

SHAWN STEVENSON: What do you think about, like, a mini trampoline?

MIKE GUEVARA: Yeah. So let me just speak on jump rope. Jump rope is Probably one of the most underrated things that you can do- That's right ... for athleticism.

And I don't know why it's not championed as such, because it's, it's, it's easy, it's cheap. Like, a jump rope is not expensive. Might ma- I mean, it's one of these actions that you can focus something, uh, focus your mind on something else, so, like, it kinda makes the time go by quicker. You can put a cool Model Health Show podcast on featuring Mike G, um and just get your jumps in.

But as it relates to just life, not just sport, not just athlete, um, especially, like, our older population. I don't even know, like, what would be qualified as such, but, like, as we get older, we stop running, we stop sprinting, we stop jumping. And something as safe as a jump rope, which is, you know, maximum three to seven inches off the ground, which is not a lot of force or load, but helps you so much with being elastic.

And elastic just basically means the ability to create force quickly. How does that imply to my livelihood as an older person? Maybe I trip and fall on a, on a curb, but I'm able to catch myself 'cause I have that elasticity to, to move quick and respond, and my brain's used to, like, gravity perturbation or, or center of mass perturbation, and then boom. I'm able. I'm aware.

You know, all this plays a, a, a, a, a huge role into fall prevention.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Mm-hmm.

MIKE GUEVARA: So, you know, I just would challenge people out there, just keep jump roping, keep jumping, keep, keep doing these, these fundamental things that we did throughout our childhood years into teenage, and then for some reason, you know, life hits us in the face and we stop doing these things, but they're so important.

And you don't even need a jump rope. You can put your hands on your hips akimbo style and act like there's a jump rope coming underneath you on a yoga mat. That's too hard? Double up your yoga mat. You know what I'm saying? Like, for the fact that you do it barefoot is very impressive, 'cause missing is a, is a, is a lesson.

But if you don't wanna, you know, hit yourself, put your hands on your hips and jump around for a minute. You know, what about the idea that- The lymphatic drainage that happens from the rebounding. And, and for those who don't know what that is, you have a lymph system that's basically like the waste management part of your, your body.

It, it clears you all of the bad stuff, but there's no true circulation to it. The only thing that gets it to drain and move is movement and rebounding, which segues perfectly into the, the, the trampoline. So the trampoline is beautiful because I think it's, I think you're right about, like, the spectrum of, like, it could be baseline, but it also can be very, very high level because there, there are the, like, like imagine Jane Fonda back in the '70s, the mini trampoline fitness class that she would have, and there's, like, a handlebar there, and she's running her whole class.

But what a lot of people don't realize is that it's very low impact, even though you're jumping, and your muscles have to produce a lot of energy to create and absorb force So what does that do? That keeps you extremely healthy in your joints based off the fact that there's not a lot of joint load, but your muscles are getting a great stimuli, your heart obviously is getting a great stimuli, and then once again, the lymphatic drainage.

And I don't- can't quote like the year or the actual study, but NASA has deemed five minutes of trampoline rebounding a day is one of the most healthiest things you can do for fitness.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Hmm.

MIKE GUEVARA: And ever since I heard that, I've used a mini trampoline in our training with NBA athletes on a weekly basis. Um, true story, I'm helping Fred VanVleet rehabilitate his, uh, ACL.

He ruptured his ACL in September. We use the tramp- mini trampoline as a force reintroduction tool to help him gain running gait.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah.

MIKE GUEVARA: So it's just another, you know, way to get from point A to point B even with a high-level athlete rehabbing an injury.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Amazing. Amazing. For sure. And I would imagine, too, his, his brain, his nervous system is just, like it, it's gonna be like, "Oh, this is okay for you to do."

MIKE GUEVARA: Facts.

SHAWN STEVENSON: You know, you can start to get this input and then that can translate to more comfortability.

MIKE GUEVARA: When you run.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah. '

MIKE GUEVARA: Cause I'm scared to run right now. It hurts. Yeah. Like, ah, I don't know if I can do it. But I get on this trampoline, I got a handlebar or something to h- support my balance with, so it's not, it's not a balance drill, and now I'm getting these inputs at the joint angles of running gait over and over and over and as long as I want.

Again, that can b- be a huge confidence builder, not- let alone just tissue alone, you know?

SHAWN STEVENSON: Amazing. Just thinking about the action of jumping on a trampoline, you know, I think about the times we went to these trampoline parks- Mm ... and, you know, I'm playing basketball with my sons or, you know, just kinda growing up, if somebo- if by chance somebody had a trampoline-

MIKE GUEVARA: Oh, man

SHAWN STEVENSON: like one of the friends, like it's the most epic thing.

MIKE GUEVARA: Epic.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And so it's getting me thinking about the value of fun being in your workouts. So is that something that you are intentional about with the athletes that you're training?

MIKE GUEVARA: I think the idea of play is such a important component of training, especially when you're working with athletes, because that's what they do.

They play. I mean, if you think about it in its bare, you know, components of what sport is, it's play. It's a child's pastime. And why don't we use that as a supercharged moment to get people in the right frame of mind to challenge themselves in what's about to happen? For instance, if you walk into my gym, Mr.

Model Health, and I can read your body language. Like, as we get good at training, we s- get really good at reading body language, too, because it matters. And your body language is Not the same. It's a little tight. You're a little less talkative. You're less, a little less smiley. Clearly something has happened in your day that makes you not who you normally are.

Well, immediately I can do one of two things. We can talk about it, which, mm, I try not to do that as much unless that's what they want. Or B, I can totally remove you from the mental space that you came in with, and that's through play. That's through game, gamification. So

competition, um, drills that involve as less risk as possible, 'cause, you know, we use a lot of gamification during warmups.

Catching games, tag games, small-sided games, things that require you to leave the space that you came in with is a really good way to set the mind frame to train hard. Because if we don't change your mindset from what you just came from, that training session may not be as effective as you had wanted it to be.

And I think that that's why you show up. You show up because you wanna walk out feeling way better than when you walked in, and that's my mission every time I work with someone is, hey, you feel amazing, and you feel like you've accomplished something, and you feel like you got better. So we use games to do that.

We use movement games and movement challenges to, to, to create that mind frame.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Thank you so much for tuning into this episode today. I hope that you got a lot of value out of this. If you did, share it out. Share it with an athlete. Share it with an aspiring athlete. Share it with somebody that you want to inspire to be more active because, as you heard, there are so many different progressions and regressions that we all can utilize to perform better in our day-to-day lives and, of course, in the sports and the play that we want to engage in.

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Tag him as well. Share the love. I appreciate you so much. We've got some epic master classes and world-leading experts coming your way very, very soon, so make sure to stay tuned. Take care, have an amazing day, and I'll talk with you soon.