

THE MODEL HEALTH SHOW

EPISODE 615

Use These Exercise Tips To Get Fit Fast (Even If You Have A Busy Schedule!)

With Guest Kelsey Heenan

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SHAWN STEVENSON: Welcome to The Model Health Show. This is fitness and nutrition expert, Shawn Stevenson, and I'm so grateful for you tuning in to me today. We are finally having a fitness revolution right now, where we're changing the association between exercise and the real results that it has in our lives. Because in society right now, we tend to have tunnel vision when it comes exercise, we attribute exercise to being about outward transformation. It's one of the beliefs rattling around in the average person's mind thinking that working out is going to create more outward fitness or "getting in shape."

Now obviously, by exercising, we could transform our body composition, we could transform our outward appearance, yes, but that's only one side effect of exercise. To take a step back and have a meta-perspective about exercise and what it really does for the human body, for the human psyche is really the place that we're at today. For example, a randomized control trial published in the archives of Internal Medicine found that resistance training promotes cognitive and functional brain plasticity, literally creating changes and adaptations in the human brain via doing something that we would perceive to be this physical exertion through resistance training. Getting ourselves physically stronger, literally makes our brains stronger in many different ways. Also, exercise is showing up in cognitive skills tests, in test taking, in reading comprehension.

The list goes on and on and on. We've done masterclass episodes on the mind muscle connection, which we'll put for you in the show notes. Now, being that this is true, that this marriage between exercise and just being about fitness or the outward expression of fitness is finally changing to something much more holistic. Today, we really want to zoom in on what are some of the best practices when we're looking towards getting in shape, what are some of the best practices with exercise to not just to transform our body composition. Yes, let's tap into that, but also keep in mind as we go through this episode today with our special guest who's an absolute expert in this field, what are the other benefits that we're going to be extracting by utilizing some of the tactics that we're going to learn about today? Now, before we get to our special guest and the metabolic and cognitive benefits that we can extract from exercise, I want to share a little bit of a nutrition piece, and we're talking about cognitive performance. One of the most storied beverages in human history is green tea, but there's a specific form of green tea that's getting a lot more attention today. Matcha green tea is particularly rich in an amino acid called L-theanine.

Now, L-theanine is able to gracefully waltz its way across the blood-brain barrier and improve the activity of the neurotransmitter called GABA. What does this mean? Well, essentially, this is going to help to reduce anxiety and help us to feel more centered and relaxed. Now L-

theanine works to improve focus as well, which can be a valuable asset today, of course. And this was published in the peer-reviewed journal, Brain Topography. The researchers observed that L-theanine intake increases the frequency of our alpha brain waves, and our alpha brain waves are indicating reduced stress, enhanced focus, and even increasing our levels of creativity, it's getting into that alpha state. It's really associated with being in low.

Now, the research has noted that two to three cups per day was noted to carry the greatest brain benefits, but it really boils down to the quality as with so much today, because even with green tea, specifically Matcha green tea, you really want to make sure that we're sourcing our tea from companies that are doing things the right way. Because it's one of the most contaminated industries. If we're talking about teas with microplastics and molds and synthetic toxicants. So, we want to make sure that we're getting our teas from companies that are going above and beyond with quality. And I get my Matcha green tea from Pique Life, and they have the first Matcha that is quadruple toxin-screened, not just double, not triple, quadruple toxin-screened or purity.

No added anything, no preservatives, no artificial sweeteners, nothing like that. Just the most high-quality Matcha green tea that you're going to find. It's actually shaded 35% longer for extra L-theanine and it's crafted by a Japanese tea master, and there are only about 15 in the entire world. So it's something really, really special, and you get access to it, go to piquelife.com/model. That's P-I-Q-U-E L-I-F-E.com/model. You get 10% off store wide, this is exclusive with The Model Health Show, this is the first time that Pique has done anything like this to provide a 10% off store wide, and so it's really special. I love their Pu'er tea as well, their ginger tea, so many great teas. And again, they're doing things the right way. Head over there. Check 'em out, piquelife.com/model for 10% off. Now, let's get to the Apple Podcast review of the week.

ITUNES REVIEW: Another five star review titled “knowledge truths experts” by endstudios.com, “since I've been listening to Shawn's podcast five plus years, I've felt more educated and able to be more of an advocate on my own health. He provides experts to share their truths, knowledge and all while Shawn shows his concern and passion for people. Thank you for all the hard work you do, and God bless you all. Your knowledge and info shared has been priceless to us all. My back pain was also how I first found you, wanted to know how you healed.”

SHAWN STEVENSON: That's so wonderful. Thank you so much for taking the time to leave that incredible message over on Apple Podcast. I truly do appreciate it. And if you get to do so, please pop over to Apple Podcasts and leave a review for The Model Health Show. It means so very much. And on that note, let's get to our special guest and topic of the day. Our guest today is the one and only Kelsey Heenan, and she's a certified functional strength coach and a certified nutrition coach as well who's helped thousands of clients in a one-on-one, in group

context, but also has worked with some of the top celebrities, professional athletes, Olympians, the list goes on and on, to help them reach their goals as well. Her insights are incredibly diverse, and her heart is as big as the room. And this is a really important episode because we're looking at what are some of the very specific tactics that we can implement to help to transform our bodies, but also bigger than that. It's not just impacting our bodies; it's also impacting our minds. Carry this conversation with the amazing Kelsey Heenan. Kelsey is back here on The Model Health Show. And actually, you're in our new studio, so welcome.

KELSEY HEENAN: Thank you so much. It's so fun to be back. And your studio is beautiful.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Thank you so much. You're beautifying the space even more. Alright, so when people think about you, they think about fitness, they think about creativity, and I wanted to talk to you about that specifically today, because obviously we're in a place where a lot more folks are interested in getting in shape, which is a wonderful thing. But there can also be a lot of misconceptions, there can be a lot of time-wasting trying figure out that right thing. So, I want to ask you first and foremost, if somebody is wanting to lose excess fat and they've only got a limited amount of time, we'll just say 20, 30 minutes a day, what type of exercises would you have them start off with to get some of the results that they're looking for?

KELSEY HEENAN: The first thing that I think about is what is going to help someone get out of bed or get off the couch and just move? I think sometimes that's the first barrier, is allowing people the opportunity to be able to just move their bodies more. Sometimes it's figuring out what that motivation looks like, and if dancing is fun for you and that's what motivates you, then that's going to be better than doing nothing. So, I think that's always the first thing that I think about, what's going to excite a person enough to be able to be consistent with that? And then if we're kind of getting a little bit more technical, if you're in the routines, but you want something a little bit more effective, something that I like to think about is interval training for 20 to 30 minutes, that's a great way to get a ton of bang for buck when time is the limiting factor.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Okay, I love this. I didn't know that was going to be your answer, to start off with the most obvious thing that's not so obvious, unfortunately, which is the best form of exercise is the exercise you'll actually do. So, reaching for that thing that you're attracted to, whether it's like... I just went to Tom Bilyeu's house, and they got a ping pong table right there, I'm just like, such a vibe.

KELSEY HEENAN: Totally.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And that's active, that's... But we tend to put that in a different compartment in our mind. Maybe we love to roller skate, or you are a hooper as well, so that's

another thing. If you enjoy doing that, go do that. Shoot around, have fun. And you also mentioned, with that being said, the highest leverage thing is likely going to be interval training. So, can you break that down a little bit, describe what a workout would look like, what is interval training?

KELSEY HEENAN: Yeah. So, there are a lot of different ways that you can do interval training. If you are a more untrained person, you haven't been moving a lot, even just walking at intervals can be beneficial. So, if you think about going from mailbox to mailbox, maybe picking up the speed a little bit, there's research that shows that that can be beneficial in itself if you're fairly untrained. But then you could also, at any fitness level, incorporate some sort of body weight exercise or add in dumbbells and have a period of time where you're doing work and then follow it with a period of rest. There's lots of different ways that you can program it, but it's a great way to be able to improve your cardio, get in some muscular endurance and it can just be fun because you get so much work done in a short amount of time, and then you can go on with the rest of your life.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, and you really had to put your metabolic money where your mouth is the last couple of years really. You moved here to LA in 2020, of all the times to move here, when everything is shut down. And we were talking about this before the show. Why would we do that? 'cause I moved here in 2019, and I was working on my book pretty much the entire time, and I got the book turned in, everything shut down. And there's definitely a thread of optimism there, of course, but you were working out at your place a lot of the time. So, can you give an example of an interval training workout that you would do at home?

KELSEY HEENAN: Yeah, I have trained out of my home for a lot of my life, and it's a great way that is accessible for people all over the world. So it really depends on a person's fitness level, but you could do a one to two work to rest ratio for someone who isn't as trained, let's say 20 seconds of work followed by 40 seconds of rest, and then repeat. If someone has a little bit of a higher fitness level, you could do one to one, like 30 seconds on, 30 seconds off, or if you're a little bit more advanced, a two-to-one work to rest for 40 seconds on, 20 seconds off. So really, there are so many different ways that you can do it and get a lot of benefit. And what I like to do is be able to program these workouts for people at any fitness level, and you can dial it up, dial it down depending on where you're at based on the type of exercise that you're choosing to do, the intensity that you're doing it. I think sometimes people get intimidated with HIIT or interval training in general, because they think that you have to go all out passing out on the floor during your intervals. And while you can do that, you also could go at a more moderate speed and still see benefit from it.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Got it. Alright, let's give an example work out, what would be... In that interval, we'll just say we're doing a 20, 40 split, so 20 seconds of exercise followed by 40

seconds of rest. What exercises would we do, you just say again, we've got 20 minutes to do a workout.

KELSEY HEENAN: So, if we have 20 minutes and you're doing it a couple of days a week, I'm going to program a full body work out for most people, because that way they'll be able to get a little bit of everything sprinkled throughout the week. So, if on Wednesday they had planned to have a workout, but they have to take the kids to their game and they miss it, then they still got a little bit in the day before. So, I'll typically program something for each kind of body part or just general type of movement pattern. So, like a squat variation, so either an air squat or a squat jump, a Bulgarian split squat, something like that. I love push-ups, so that's one of my go-to upper body exercises, chest, shoulders, core, all those things. If you have weights to do different moves, I like to do something like a rowing movement in there as well, a lateral movement, like a lateral lunge. So, I would probably do one of each of those, and you could repeat it three to five times.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Got it. So, we do 20 seconds of a squat, and then rest for the 40, then we do the 20 seconds of a push-up, and then 40 seconds rest, then 20 seconds of a row, if we have some dumbbells, then rest and then repeat that cycle.

KELSEY HEENAN: Exactly.

SHAWN STEVENSON: I like that. Yeah.

KELSEY HEENAN: Yeah, and there are so many different ways that you can do it. But that's a simple thing. I think that sometimes it can be easy to want to do the fancy new move that you're seeing on social media, and that can be great for an entertainment factor. But when I'm looking at creating a program for someone, I want it to feel accessible and have foundational movements that will really help them move the needle in their fitness, to help them feel stronger, to move them towards their goals. And those foundational movements are tried and true. And so, I tend to go back to those as I'm building my workouts and then also sprinkle in some of the more fun, exciting things that will keep them coming back and entertained in that way.

SHAWN STEVENSON: I love that, because this is exactly what I want to talk to about. Because with social media being such an integrated part of our lives today, we can really get pulled in by these cool, exciting variations and different types of exercises. So, I wanted to ask you if you could talk a little bit about consistency when it comes to our exercise program, should we be changing things up like every workout if we are really wanting to see the best results?

KELSEY HEENAN: I don't think so. I think, yes, it's great to have those fun and entertaining things, if that is what gets you up and out of bed. But if you're really trying to make progress in your fitness and work towards a goal, it's important to have a progressive plan and stick with it. I repeat workouts all the time, and I have my clients repeat workouts all the time because it's a great way that you can measure your progress. So, let's take push-ups, for example, if I'm doing a strength training program or a HIIT program, and you have 30 seconds of push-ups, there are so many different ways that you can evaluate your progress week over a week, if you're doing that same work out. Maybe you started off doing inclined push-ups because you couldn't do a full push-up, maybe then the next week, you start off and you can get five full push-ups in a row, but then you have to go to incline after that.

KELSEY HEENAN: There are so many different ways that you can make progress that way, and it's a cool just way to celebrate without having to only rely on metrics like weight on the scale. I like to think about progress much more holistically than just those kind of data points, it's about how much stronger you get, how much better you feel your energy. Are you sleeping well? Do you feel more confident? A lot of times when you are able to do a workout and you feel better the next time, that just gives you a confidence boost because you feel like you're doing better, and that I think is an undervalued way to evaluate progress.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Absolutely. Yeah, just being able to... All of this is still predicated upon our psychology. So being able to feed ourselves that kind of reward system in our minds with progress is one of those things that really feeds our psychology, helps to anchor in the behavior, I love that. And you mentioned earlier, even I smile when you say you, I really love push-ups. And it's so crazy because this is an exercise have been done for a long time, a very, very long time. But it's really functional. It's one of those things where you're pushing up, whether you realize it or not, whether you're just getting up out of bed or off the floor or closing doors, whatever the case might be, we're constantly doing this action throughout the day, and by doing that, you are reducing the risk of injuring yourself, which is a lot of times when people are getting hurt, especially as they get older, they're doing these random things. It seems random, but they're untrained, they haven't done this movement. And their body is just like their nervous system, all that stuff firing correctly, can get thrown off. So push-ups are super important, but they're also so valuable, they're hitting so much of your musculature. You mentioned earlier that an on-ramp might be an incline push-up. Can you talk about what that is? What would an incline push-up look like?

KELSEY HEENAN: Yeah, so one of my favorite ways to modify it is by putting your hands on a box or a bench because that simulates the full motion of a push-up, you're getting your core engaged more than if you were to just be on the floor and do push-ups from your knees. So, for someone who is pretty untrained, and they haven't done full push-ups before, you could start even on a wall, and that's a great way that takes off a lot of the resistance of your body

weight, but still allows you to keep that full motion. I was working with a client who I just, I adore her. She's so wonderful, and we've been working for a long time on improving her push-ups, and she started off doing wall push-ups, and then she had this staircase that had a very sturdy area that was a pretty high incline still, and so she eventually was able to move to that, and then she was able to move down to a bench and has been doing it there, and then she could eventually do it when she could do it outside.

She lives in Minnesota. But she could do it on a curb level, so it was still a very short incline and then eventually full push-ups. So, it's one of those things that if you stick with it, if you repeat these workouts, if you do these foundational movements often and continue making progress, it's a really cool way to build muscle to get stronger in everyday functional movements. But also, just like you were saying, the psychology of it, being able to accomplish things that you never thought possible is such a powerful thing. And so, for a lot of the women that I work with, I love talking about pull-ups, push-ups, all of those different things that often are a challenge, and it's a great way to just feel more confident.

SHAWN STEVENSON: How do you see that translate into people's lives, because I know you notice that as well as they're getting stronger, how does it change their character?

KELSEY HEENAN: So many ways. It's a really cool thing because it changes everything about... Just how they function. Obviously, they can do things better. So, if you're carrying around a child who is growing and all of sudden, they're 30 pounds, well, that 30-pound deadlift that you just did totally translates into that, or carrying your groceries. So being able to function in everyday life with more confidence is important, but then also I've really noticed a correlation with how people just view themselves and maybe their body fat percentage is the exact same, maybe they don't look any different to the outside, but they carry themselves so different, and they have less thoughts and anxious thoughts about food, they have less self-deprecating thoughts, all those types of things. It all works together, and that's what I love to focus on, if we can be able to really help improve the mindset and also be able to get stronger in the process, all of these things work together. They're not siloed.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, that's so awesome. Because obviously, we have a culture that cognitively, we connect exercise to a certain appearance, it's more about the side effect of exercise, which could be body transformation, lower body fat, all these great things, but these are side effects, and we miss out on all the other benefits and I think that's part of the reason why we have a culture that isn't as consistent with exercise, because it's not looking at the 95% of other stuff besides the physical transformation aspect, the benefits that you get as you mentioned, like just feeling more loving towards oneself, so just having more self-respect, having more confidence, it is definitely one of those things where as we get stronger, we feel more capable in our lives, it translates right over because it's still you doing challenging things.

KELSEY HEENAN: Right. A key thing that you said is respect, because I think there are gaps in thinking and perspectives when people only focus on the aesthetics and they only focus on the number and the scale, and there's also issues that can come up with self-love, body-positivity and things like that where no one's going to love every single aspect of themselves every single day, no one's going to be able to have a personal record in every single workout or see whatever number they're hoping for on the scale single day, so what's kind of that place in the middle where we can achieve the goals that we want to achieve and also care for ourselves in our day-to-day life? The key there is respect. How do I respect my body by taking care of it and doing the things that are going to help me be a healthy, happy person and have great longevity. What are the things that I can do to get out of my head so I'm not constantly thinking about how I look or how others perceive me and being able to meet that in the middle is a really cool and beautiful place to be.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Facts. Facts, earlier you mentioned some great on-ramps for push-ups, which again is a functional movement, important movement, it's so much of our musculature. Let's advance this a little bit because... And I'm just going to throw this out here. If folks are more advanced, I found this movement that... 'cause it's kind of difficult if you don't have some cables or dumbbells to work your triceps, just specifically target your triceps, if you use a wall and instead of pushing the wall away, you actually go down to your fore arms and put your hands on the wall, and push off of your fore arms is really targeting your triceps and if people are watching the video version, which I highly encourage subscribe on YouTube, we'll put up a video of me doing the exercise, so I'll make sure that we'll add that in there, but super challenging and obviously, the lower you go, just like with the push-up, the more challenging it becomes, but that little thing that can kind of kick on as you mentioned, and I think we overlook this is the fact that your core is really working to keep you stable too. So if folks are wanting to target their core, right, get the coveted six-pack have a flat stomach, is it all about to be 100 doing core exercises, is that going to get people where they want to be?

KELSEY HEENAN: That in itself alone won't be the key, and I think that's why a lot of people feel frustrated because they'll come to me and they'll say, I've been doing abs every single day, it's really a focus for me, and I still am not seeing definition. But there are so many different factors that come into play. Certainly, having a strong core will develop the muscles to be able to eventually have those be seen, but it also is important to think about that we can't spot reduce and doing more ab exercises isn't going to lose belly fat specifically, you need to focus on overall fat loss which interval training is a great way to do that, just general gentle movement, just going on walks, hikes, things like that will help with overall fat loss, and nutrition is certainly super important, so if that is... If one of those pieces seems to be missing, that's something to be thinking about.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Alright, you just said going for a walk can help with reducing belly fat, that's like it doesn't really fit in our paradigm, that's the thing. I remember when I was working at a gym, and people would tell me that they're walking to try to lose weight and mentally, I just be like, you're never going to get there, you're going to... It's going to take you so long because it's a longer time to do that thing versus going for a run, it's just more intensive, it seems like you can do less, get more, but there's something really special about walking, that helps our biology.

KELSEY HEENAN: Absolutely, it helps, certainly just in moving in general, but I think also it's not as much impact on your knees and things like that, so it can just be a little bit better for longevity and overall, it's just a great way, like popping some headphones, listen to a podcast, all those things, and it's just a great way to keep your body moving.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, love it, I love that. By the way, I just thought about this too, just going back to that incline reference with the push-ups, when I was working at the university gym, I had a client who was knocking on the door of his 80th birthday. Alright, when we started working together, I think he was maybe 75 at this point, this would be in a couple of years that went by. We had been working together, I started him off because he really, he had taken a fall right before we met, and that's kind of what brought him to me, and so he didn't have a lot of functionality with one of his shoulders. And so not only did we get full mobility back with the shoulders, but him being able to do movements that you wouldn't think somebody of his age bracket would be able to do, so I actually use the Smith machine at the gym for him to do incline push-ups, so we started at a certain level, the Smith machine is like that kind of... It's like a squat rack that's got you kind of controlled in one space, you can unhook it and move it around, and so... But eventually we got it down lower and lower and lower to the degrees, doing push-ups on the floor. Again, which he hadn't done even 10 years prior to meeting me, and so just...

I think that big ingredient is going back to the consistency piece that we talked about earlier, because this is something we worked on every week, we didn't change it up very much as far as his pressing exercises. It was just really working on those push-ups with that said, what is the place or the value for adding in some more creative elements into our workouts, because like right now, especially again, with social media, and I see it out there when I go to the gyms, bands are popping, they got bands going out there, and all of these kind of different types of squats, it's not just the one static movement. Can you talk about that? What about adding in some spice to our workout to keep you fresh?

KELSEY HEENAN: Totally. So, like I said before, foundational movements are super important, but there are lots of different ways that you can load a squat, if you have dumbbells, you could do a front squat, you could do a goblet squat. There are a million different ways that you can

load different movements and make it more challenging, and that also keeps it interesting, so if you think about doing a B-stance where your feet are in a different position, or like I said, with where you're placing the dumbbell. It challenges you in a different way. So there definitely is a benefit to it, we want to keep the general movement patterns consistent over the course of weeks and months to be able to evaluate that progress, but it's a great way to change the load, you can change the reps, you can change the tempo, that you're doing things, these are all great ways that you can have progressive overload, that you can continue to make progress, but it also keeps it interesting, and we need to kind of cater to that difference where we want to choose exercises that are effective, and we also need people to show up, we need people to show up to the workout, so if they're doing the exact same thing every single day, week over week, they're probably going to get bored.

And so we need to figure out how we can bring in a little bit of spice to keep it interesting, to keep it challenging and to help you keep making progress. I like to think about it as, we want to keep people safe. So certainly, some things that you see in social media backflip burpee type stuff, I'm not going to be for Jennifer, mother of three who lives in Iowa and has access to 10-pound dumbbells. We need to understand what we're working with and make things safe, make things accessible and also keep it interesting enough that people will come back.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, so you've got, again, the access that you have and which you teach, you've been in some incredible places, different training facilities, you've had access to some of the most remarkable training equipment and different tools and things like that. Right now, though, I'm curious, what are you into right now? What are two or three of your favorite exercises that are kind of adding that element of inspiration for you right now, or maybe training tools, like what are you really into right now, personally.

KELSEY HEENAN: One of my favorite and least favorite exercises for myself and to program for other people is Bulgarian split squats, so in the trainer world, they'll call it rear-foot elevated split squats, but that is a mouthful, but Bulgarian split squats is kind of a mouthful too, it's basically a one-leg assisted squat where one leg is back on a bench or a box, something like that, and you really focus the weight more on one side, and it's just a great way that helps you improve imbalances, if you find that you're doing a two-legged squat and you may be lean to the right a little bit more or maybe your right leg is a little bit stronger, really isolating that one side at a time is a great way that you can level out those imbalances, and also it's just... It's super challenging, it's a great bang for back exercise where, yes, it's focusing on your legs, but you're also getting a lot of glute activation, it's tough on your core, and I swear by the end, it's one of the best forms of cardio. I'm always so out of breath, if you're using weights that are challenging, it feels hard, so that's definitely a go-to exercise for me, where if I don't have a lot of time and I don't have a ton of equipment, and let's say in a hotel, I'll always make sure that I'm doing that exercise because you just get so much out of it.

SHAWN STEVENSON: As somebody who's already... You have a certain level of fitness that is pretty remarkable. Have you noticed though, when you do something different, even though you're fit, you do a different type of workout, that it just really seems more challenging?

KELSEY HEENAN: Absolutely, that's something that is really important, I think, for people of all fitness levels to hear is that any time you switch it up, it's going to be more challenging, you're going to be probably a little bit more sore. I went to a class with a friend the other day, she loves doing those hot yoga classes where it's kind of a sculpt-type situation, and there were one-pound, two-pound and five-pound dumbbells, and I grabbed the five-pound dumbbells and I was like, yeah, that's fine.

SHAWN STEVENSON: You know who I am.

KELSEY HEENAN: I was so sore the next day because you're doing so many reps with this low amount of weight, and that's something interesting too, is that for hypertrophy, if you're trying to build muscle, there is a wider range than some people think you could do between 8 and 30 reps and still see benefit from it, and so depending on what you have access to, depending on what you enjoy, you can still see benefit from a lot of different things, but don't feel discouraged if it feels hard because something like Bulgarian split squats, it's always hard if you're pushing yourself, it's always going to be challenging, but it's a great way to just, again, build that confidence.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Love it. So, with the Bulgarian split squat, we can put our foot up on like a bench or maybe a chair or something like that?

KELSEY HEENAN: Yes, so I like to put my laces down so the back of my foot is on there, and I want most of my weight to be in that front leg and then drive through that front foot, and it's a great way to really build strength.

SHAWN STEVENSON: I just saw there's this piece of, again, just because of these exercises, the benefits and these things becoming more popular, different designers are creating equipment and things like that, that can add another element, so there's actually this tool at one of the gyms that I go to where it's basically it's a static machine, and you can load the... Put plates on the side, and there's a little mini-pad in the back that you could put your foot up on, so you can basically do... You can do a regular squat by holding the two handles or you can put your back foot up and do a split squat, and they have this design, so you could really put a lot of load on to this particular machine. So yeah, it's cool to see the innovation, but I just want to point back for everybody, it still always comes back to the basics and really getting those foundational pieces down. With that said, I want to ask you, so we've got the split squats, those are some of

your favorites and go-tos right now. What about training equipment? I saw one of your videos, this might have been a little while ago, actually, where you were at on it HQ and you had a saddle, some kind of like a saddle bag or some kind of... It looked like maybe there was water in it or something like that, what was that? And talk about what you were doing.

KELSEY HEENAN: So that was the first time I had tried that. My buddy Eric, who I know that you've talked to him before too, he uses that kind of stuff, and so that was a great example of me kind of being a fish out of water and never trying something, but... What's cool about that, there was water in it, and it kind of looks like you said a saddle, so you're kind of doing different swings and movements with it, so it's a great way to just kind of work on that core stability and kind of get your heart rate up. That's not something that I use in day-to-day life, but I do think it is fun to try different things and just, first of all, have fun, enjoy entertaining different ways and movement, but also just challenge yourself because you never know what your body is capable of so on a day-to-day basis, I keep it really simple. I love body weight workouts, but I do a lot of strength training as well, I love including dumbbells in my interval training as well, and I would say dumbbells are probably my go-to equipment.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Got it.

KELSEY HEENAN: That particular piece of equipment was called the hydro core bag, and it's super cool. I had never used it before, but it's just a great way to challenge yourself in a different way.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, it's one of those things for me, when we're looking at even the movement of water, we're mostly made of water ourselves, and so we're constantly moving water around in a way, but to put it into a medium to where this water is moving while you're moving and it's just like, it's creating this movement of the forces that our muscles are experiencing is really cool, so the hydro-core bag is one of the pieces of equipment that Onnit carries and shout out to everybody at Onnit, amazing people. Amazing world-class facility. Amazing world class human nutrition, their supplements, they're one of the unique companies that puts their stuff through clinical trials to see their efficacy, so their pre-workout is established. Shroom Tech Sport to have around a 10% increase in cardiovascular performance, and they ran this through a clinical trial, placebo-controlled clinical trial, and also, in addition to that, greater performance on reps doing superset like squats and bench breasts, all of these different metrics improved by utilizing Shroom Tech Sport, which is based on real earth-grown nutrients, so it's not like some synthetic whatever created by Joe down at the corner chemistry lab.

SHAWN STEVENSON: So, it's, again, focusing on real food nutrition and also steel maces, steel clubs, I love them. These are some of the tools that person, again, I get excited to use in my

work out because I just want to be able to move around and do some stuff with my mace, to be honest, the typical workout can get a little bit like you got to push yourself to do it, but it's just like if there's something that's exciting about it, it drives you to want to do it more, so by the way, you get 10% off everything that Onnit carries. Head over to onnit.com/model. That's O-N-N-I-T dot com/model. 10% off everything. Definitely check out the hydro core bag, of course, but a huge fan of the steel clubs and steel maces, which you've used those as well.

KELSEY HEENAN: They're amazing.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, so have you kind of mastered during the swing?

KELSEY HEENAN: I wouldn't say I'm a master yet, that's definitely one of the things that I need to work on more, but it's really fun to play with and challenge yourself in different ways. Yeah, I love it. It's cool.

SHAWN STEVENSON: So cool, and also you mentioned great people there to Eric Leija, aka Primal Swoledier, and he's been on the show. It has been a couple of years, but we'll put links to that within the show notes for you guys, but when I was there, I worked with John Wolf and he's just a brilliant guy, brilliant thinker, he's really versed on the steel clubs, so he had me working with that. Again, I'm coming in like, I'm about that life. Just within five minutes doing even the warm-up, I was cooked, and I'm just like, In my mind, I'm just like, I hope he thinks the workout is not going to be that long. But also having that accountability, talk about that when you have somebody that you're training with, or having somebody who's kind of there and coaching you and giving you that extra nudge to bring your A-game.

KELSEY HEENAN: Community accountability are some of the most important elements of staying consistent and it's one of the most fun parts about what I do, I love getting to connect with the people who do our workouts, and it's just really cool to be a part of their lives and see the progress that they make, it's something that is really great because not every day is going to be the best day. No one's ever going to feel motivated 100% of the time, and so that's kind of a myth that needs to continue to be busted, that you just have this intrinsic motivation all the time, it's not going to happen, and if we just rely on that, we're never going to stick to your routine, and that's why community is essential. Having other people that you can come and get encouragement from, that you can be inspired by, and just be there for each other in the great moments when you have these awesome breakthroughs and through the really challenging stuff too, it's an important thing that you don't have to physically be in the room with somebody to experience, it's been really eye-opening and wonderful to have an online community where these people live all over the country, they live all over the world even, and they talk every day, they're good friends, and so it's a really unique and wonderful day and age that we live in, where we can create community just about anywhere.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, absolutely, absolutely. So, would you say that you love working out?

KELSEY HEENAN: I do, I enjoy it, but to an extent. I have lots of interests outside of working out, and there are so many more elements to me that make me who I am, but I do enjoy it. If I don't move at all, I get kind of antsy. It's just something that allows me to feel more confident, feel more creative, just kind of work through anxiety, all those different things, but I also have my limits where I'm like, I just want to sit on the couch today. But yes, overall, I do really enjoy working out.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, thank you for sharing that. That's so wonderful, because again, people would see you and then just like she's just... She must love this, and she just does this all the time, so yes, I feel the same way. I love working out, I love going to the gym, I love it, but there are also times when I do have to pull myself a little bit more than normal to get out and to go do the thing. And those are really... Again, it's about creating that habit, the consistency, the routine, having accountability, and also knowing the difference between needing a rest day versus you just don't want to do the thing, you don't want to challenge yourself today. So today, there's so many different implements that people are using to work on their psychology, not just the physiological change, like doing cold immersion is so popular right now, or sauna, or working out a certain way, so finding creative ways because it's also... It's creating a stronger mental muscle, whence you say When you're challenging yourself, even when you don't feel like doing the thing, but you're pushing yourself to do something that is tough.

KELSEY HEENAN: It's so true. A lot of what I do is help people with behavior change, yes, it's creating workouts that will help them get from A to B to Z, and also a huge piece is just allowing people to understand that some days when you don't feel like doing the full workout that we have planned, okay, give me five minutes. Give me five minutes of movement, we'll see where we feel, but if you just commit to those five minutes, after that, if you're done, then you're done. Mission accomplished. But if then you feel that you can start doing a little bit more, get in a couple of sets. That's great. And to me, that will supersede motivation time and time again, because you're building that habit of making it a part of your life, you don't have to crush every single workout to have it "count". That's sometimes something that we have to work through is, well, I didn't do 60 minutes, or I didn't do... I didn't burn X amount of calories. It's important to think about, okay, but did you do something to help improve your health today? That in itself is going to help carry you through. I'd rather have you do a little bit every day for the rest of your life, than go super hard for two months and then never move your body again.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, this reminds me of some principles from science, physics, but looking at kinetic energy and potential energy and inertia, objects in motion tend to stay in motion. Objects at rest tend to stay at rest. And I notice, for example, when we'll just say maybe

it was a lazy Sunday, you just don't do anything, you lay around all day, it might be a little bit more challenging to get up and to go to the gym the next day, maybe because you just were very inactive, or even if you're just like, towards the end of the day and you've been laying around all day, I'll get up and go for a walk this evening, it makes it a little bit more challenging when your body is just in the state of rest. So I'm a big proponent of doing something like you just said, even five minutes to start the day, and I even did it today. My wife, we meditated, and then I was getting up to go for my daily walk, I always get out and do a five to 10-minute walk every day, she knows that, but when we got up from the meditation, she was like, "Mmm, I can't wait to have my coffee." So, she's like wanting me to go and make her coffee and do a thing.

But she knows what I'm about to do, she knows that I'm going to go for this walk and just getting that energy going, and I can see the difference in myself and in her energy when I come back in that door. It's just something gets turned on, just getting out and getting moving. And not to say that my wife is not absolutely perfect by the way, and she could... I am what I am, I'm her... What is it called at the Starbucks? Barista. Okay.

KELSEY HEENAN: Dennis is my barista too. Yes.

SHAWN STEVENSON: I'm her barista, and your husband is yours.

KELSEY HEENAN: Yes.

SHAWN STEVENSON: As well.

KELSEY HEENAN: He is. He's a fantastic barista. I appreciate that very much.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Is he wearing something cute when he's delivering the coffee?

KELSEY HEENAN: He wears the same thing every day, but he's a minimalist.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Steve Job vibes.

KELSEY HEENAN: Yes, yes, very much so.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Awesome, awesome. Yeah, so again, just having that built-in, baked-in, which the crazy thing is, the vast majority of the time, once you just start moving, like you said, just give yourself, Hey, just five minutes. If you feel like turning in for the day, all good. Same thing, if you... With flossing, for example, maybe just floss one tooth.

KELSEY HEENAN: Yes.

SHAWN STEVENSON: You're going to be like, have a tendency towards let me go ahead and knock out the rest of them once you start the process. So yeah, it's just... It's such great advice. So going back, you mentioned pull-ups being another one of those things that you see people progress on and you see this character change take place. That's another one of those covertive things to be able to do, to jump up, grab that bar, and I saw a video of you, not too long ago, and it showed you at the beginning of your pull-up journey, jumping up and grabbing that bar and really having a difficult time to now it's just like, it looks like you're just breathing. So how did you get from there to where pull-ups were incredibly difficult, if at all, not even really possible, to being able to just jump up and grab the bar and to do pull-ups, not effortless, necessarily but with relative ease. How did you progress?

KELSEY HEENAN: So consistent practice, absolutely. I would have two days a week where I'd really focus on back workouts and really focusing on strengthening my core as well. So, two days a week really dedicating that, but then also a few days a week, just five minutes of practice, and sometimes that's more focused just on hangs and improving my grip strength, sometimes it's just trying to do one full rep, even if I'm failing, just getting in that consistent practice multiple days a week is super important. And then something else really shifted within me where I said to myself internally, I'm going to be able to do this, I'm going to be able to get a pull up because just in my mind, growing up when I was playing sports, all these things, I just thought it was something that I wasn't going to be able to do. I just was never able to do it, and there were so many other areas of sports and fitness that came a lot more naturally to me, so I just kind of focused on those things. For pull-ups, they felt really hard, and so I just kind of didn't really want to dive into that because in my mind, I couldn't do it.

I got really frustrated not being able to do this, and so just in my mind, I said, you know what, I'm going to be able to do this, this is something that I'm going to be able to do. I didn't set a specific date for when I would be able to do it because I knew that it was going to take a lot of hard work. So over the course of a few months, I just had a difference in belief in myself, paired with the hard work, and I had a lot of times... Probably in the video that you saw was when I was first starting to get it, there were lots of videos prior to that that were fails where I could not get even close to getting one, but it paid off because over time I got that first one and something just clicked. Where I was like wow, I actually can do this. And so over time, just continued to keep practicing and doing more reps and more challenging reps, adding some weight, those different types of things, and it just over time, you can do hard things.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, how important is that psychological switch to saying, I'm deciding I'm doing this thing, I'm going to be able to do this, and just making that decision.

KELSEY HEENAN: I think it's essential. The power of the mind is incredible. And mind-muscle connection is totally a thing too, where when you have that belief, it just allows you to push that much harder, and it just gives you a little bit of an extra motivation in a sense to be able to go to that next level. So, I think there's a huge power in belief.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, so awesome. So awesome. So, one of the things that you have been sharing for quite a while now, and even we talked about this the last time you were on, but it's such an important part of the conversation and it's often looked over when we're talking about not just physical health, but our mental health, and it's the relationship that we have with food. Which I don't think we often even put those two words together, food and relationship. If food can be something we do within a relationship, it's one of those things, especially when you first get together, you're eating a lot and you getting... Or it's just like... I'm sorry. [chuckle] I was thinking about Chris Rock, he had this bit where you're coming and you're going. You're getting busy, you're doing it and you're going places when you risk it together, but having food is a big part of our lives and it's a big part of celebrations and first dates, and after the baseball game and holidays and all the things, but it's just also a daily thing that we associate with, and yet we don't cognitively connect our relationship with food. Food and relationships. So, can you talk about why that conversation is so important and how can we start to develop a healthy relationship with food?

KELSEY HEENAN: Yes, it's with food and with exercise too. I think that people have a lot of challenging aspects where they view their body in a certain way, where they view exercise a certain way and they feel defeated by it, and the same thing with food, where we have a Frankenstein of diets that we're trying to piece all together to get whatever result we're hoping for. We're trying to Frankenstein together different workout programs by picking random things on Instagram to try and get whatever result we're trying to achieve, and none of them really seem to help us get there, and sometimes that can cause even more anxiety and frustration. So being able to first of all, when it comes to food, identify what are these preconceived dieting notions that I have that I'm Frankensteining together and by Frankensteining I mean take a piece of all of these different things. I'm going to take a piece of keto; I'm going to take a piece of whatever this is and lump it all together and try to make it work. What are all these different elements that I am clinging to and these beliefs that I have, because when we create awareness around that, it allows us to then say, okay, this maybe works for some people, but this wasn't serving me, this caused me more anxiety, this didn't fit with my lifestyle, this just wasn't a good fit for me, so I'm going to kind of get rid of this and do some different exercises to stop trying to believe these things.

And same thing with workouts too, there are a lot of things where people have a specific amount of time where they believe that they have to work out, otherwise the workout doesn't count. They have a lot of routines where if I'm not burning X amount of calories during my

workout, my workout doesn't count. And then they get down on themselves about that and feel frustrated, and that's kind of when they decide, I'm not going to do this anymore, or they kind of just get unmotivated by it, and so being able to identify what are these preconceived notions that I have about my nutrition, about my fitness, and how can I take a step back to realize these things might be helpful, but they also might not be serving me.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, that's so good. And also, we can have the extreme where we do too much.

KELSEY HEENAN: Yes.

SHAWN STEVENSON: And you know about this as well, intimately, because you would have, which we would describe to be an unhealthy relationship with food for many years. Can you talk about that too?

KELSEY HEENAN: Yes. So, in college I was an athlete and developed anorexia and an over-exercise addiction, so basically at that point, I wasted away really quickly, and in the last episode we kind of dove into that, about how I had to go into treatment and the whole healing process in that. And so, when I work with people and talk with people, I just... I feel so deeply for them, when even if they don't have a clinical eating disorder or exercise bulimia in a sense, if they're not on that clinical aspect, I still feel for them so deeply, 'cause the majority of people have some sort of challenging aspect in their relationship with food and their body, and so how do we navigate that when doctors are taking care of the clinical aspects of it, and then as trainers and health coaches, how can we help support people who just need to work through some of these different behavioral changes and beliefs about themselves, those are... That's the area where I just want to make fitness and nutrition feel accessible and like a breath of fresh air where we can show up and we can put in some work consistently, where we can eat nutritious foods consistently and change our body shape if that's a goal for us, but also just be able to focus on feeling better. Feeling more confident, being able to do things that we never thought we could do.

So being able to marry those two things together is something that I just feel so passionate about because of my own personal experience, but also just after working with so, so many people who have these varying degrees of challenges, and being able to break through those challenges to live a happier, healthier life, it's more than possible. And so, I just never want people to feel stuck with where they're at, because if you feel like you're stuck, it doesn't have to feel that way forever. There are things that you can do to be able to alleviate some of those pain points.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, thank you so much for sharing that. One of the things that you've done is you've helped to point out, and you even shared criticism from people online, you've helped to point out how by us trying to beat ourselves up or beat ourselves into a particular shape to fit into a popular narrative of how we're supposed to look, how we're supposed to be, that really helps to feed a very toxic relationship with food and with exercise and with ourselves. Self-hatred and really the opposite direction of where we want to move, and one of the most important things for us to understand is that we're all different. We're all unique, and being able to cultivate, and if we want to move towards being a better version of us versus this superficial idea of what beauty looks like, what fitness looks like. So how did you confront that, how were you able to confront criticism because you are a front-facing individual, you're out sharing your knowledge, your inspiration, your story, and I know a lot of other people want to be able to do something like that, but they're afraid of the pushback. And so how do you deal with that because the majority of feedback that you get is obviously wonderful because you're wonderful, but that tiny bit of people who are criticizing you, how do you deal with that?

KELSEY HEENAN: It's a process and certain things sting more than others, in a sense, but honestly when it comes to comments about my body shape or anything about how I look, I'm to the point now where I just... I really don't care what other people say behind their screens and keyboards because I know I feel good, I know that I am healthy, I know that I like the way that I look. And so really, that's been a growth process where I am my own worst critic pretty much all the time, but being able to grow through some of those struggles that I had and then getting those external... That external feedback, it was a growing process, but now I'm at the point where comments about my body, truly they don't bother me. It's not easy at first, but the more that you grow in yourself and that confidence, it just becomes easier over time to look at and be like, pfft whatever.

Some of our team members will get emails and see comments in social media threads and they get more upset for me, I'm like, it's fine, it's okay. Because it really says more about what that person is experiencing and that really leads to more empathy for me because I don't want other people to feel negatively about themselves. One of my biggest fears is to make people feel badly about themselves through anything that I'm doing. I want to build people up, and certainly we have to confront realness and stand up for what we believe in, and we're not always going to agree with everybody, but I want to make sure that the things that I put out there build people up.

SHAWN STEVENSON: I love this so much. So, you already... Again, it's being able to shift that psychology because there's a lot of arm chair experts who will be just jumping online just to criticize other people while they do nothing, they have no expertise in the particular thing, they're just spouting off of maybe something they heard or their opinion and whatever the case might be, and it's not really even about you, and even if it is directed towards you, it takes

a certain character trait, which could be considered a character flaw to want to get online or even just be out in the world and f*ck with people and talk negatively about other people and leave negative comments and the like, it's wonderful to be able to share our perspective and to share our opinion and voice things and have conversations, but to just attack somebody who's clear... Especially when they're clearly doing something to try to help other people, whether or not you believe it's the best thing, there's something... I don't want to use the word broken, but there's something that is not connecting psychologically, there's a lack of understanding, a lack of empathy, and things that we can cultivate, and we need to more than everybody.

Again, this is at all-time high, because it's really... It's the kind of a gift and a curse if we're talking about with social media. It's a gift and everybody has a voice now, but everybody has a voice. You know what I mean?

KELSEY HEENAN: Yeah, it's interesting because whether it be specific comments about bodies or types of exercises or types of workouts, some people get really frustrated or angry about certain types of workouts and it's like, look, everyone has different preferences, and also who is this person serving? The people that I'm serving, the vast majority of people are people who don't have a ton of time, I just got a text from one of my people the other day, and she's like, she just got cleared to work out from her doctor after having a baby, and she's like, I literally have 20 minutes before I need to do all the things. And so, I'm like, Okay, here are the things that we do. So someone who is serving the people that I do where it's we have very little time, we don't have a lot of equipment, we want to just get the most bang for our buck, that type of workout and program and experience is going to be very different than someone who is training a D1 athlete who has all of the money in the world to get personal training and very specialized instruction, We need to understand that there are lots of different things that can work and everyone needs something slightly different, but nothing is necessarily invalid as long as people are staying safe, and that's probably one of the most important things.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Absolutely, absolutely. And this is much like even with peer reviewed data, you can find peer reviewed published data in prestigious medical journals that affirm two polar ends of a conversation, or a belief. Specifically, would say diet, it's a whole spectrum, and this set of studies over here will completely make these other studies obsolete and then vice versa. Now, this speaks to, in fitness, there are so many different experts who've seen wonderful results and their approaches can be radically different, this doesn't mean they're a bad person, or that their training is ineffective, what it is, it's effective for the category of people that they're thinking about, but we also can get into this tunnel vision, where we think that our way is the only way. That's part of the problem too. And also, of course, armchair experts might be judging your form on something, you're providing all of this value and clearly you have the results, but they're like, Well, you need to do this differently, you should really be

doing that. If they actually saw some of the most elite people in their respective thing who do said exercise, they'll oftentimes see that they're doing things that wouldn't be conventional, that they would consider to be wrong, that's not proper form.

The human body is so creative and so a range of motion even, that's another big conversation that's happening right now, thanks to folks like you and even folks that are on it, for example, I really think about them, were let's put our bodies into these ranges of motion that you might think are negative, coming from that kind of conventional thought process, but if you look at the results, there's been an increase and there's been an uptick in fill in the blank thing. Maybe it's knee issues or ACL whatever, let's put our bodies in these kind of training in certain positions, so that when we get that stimulus out on the football field, we don't break down. It's thinking differently and being creative.

KELSEY HEENAN: It's so important to stay open-minded and learn from other people, be willing to change your mind when you learn new information that is true and makes sense. I think sometimes, like you said, we can get so tunnel visioned and people will become so black and white vision on things that they can't see the full perspective, and sometimes there are multiple right answers or multiple ways to get from A to Z, and that's okay, you don't have to love every single way, but it doesn't mean that that other person's way is invalid.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, absolutely. Oh my gosh. So awesome, so awesome. You mentioned a few times community, and your community, so where can people get access to this community and also just more access to Kelsey?

KELSEY HEENAN: Yeah, so my husband and I have a company called HIIT BURN, and it's a high intensity interval training burn, it's what it stands for. So, we have an app where we have interval training workouts, and then I also have a community coaching group called Stronger Than Ever. So, we do a mix of strength training with high intensity finishers, and it's just a great way that people can be met where they're at to reach the goals that they have. So, we have weekly calls where I dive in into all of their individual needs and questions, and it's just a great way to feel supported.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Yeah, awesome. So, people get access to this by...

KELSEY HEENAN: So, you can go to hiitburn.com, you can check out all of our HIIT BURN programs. And if you go to hiitburn.com/ste, stands for stronger than ever, you can get access to my coaching.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Perfect, perfect. And where can people follow you?

KELSEY HEENAN: So, my Instagram, my personal Instagram is The Daily Kelsey, and we have a business Instagram, which is just @HIIT BURN as well.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Awesome, HIIT BURN is fire by the way.

KELSEY HEENAN: Thank you.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Thank you so much for coming to hang out with us, so many incredible insights and just coming from somebody who's doing the thing is invaluable, so I really appreciate you.

KELSEY HEENAN: Thanks for having me. I just love having conversations with you. That's great.

SHAWN STEVENSON: Let's go, let's go. Kelsey Heenan everybody. Thank you so much for tuning into the show today, I hope you got a lot of value out of this. It's still about action, it's taking this knowledge and putting it into play for ourselves, I love that powerful insight about just giving yourself five minutes, if it's one of those days where you don't feel like getting up and getting going, just say, Hey, five minutes, I'm just going to go for this walk or I'm just going to do five minutes of exercise, strength training, whatever the case might be. Just show up for yourself and get that momentum going, start that inertia going in the right direction, and you're going to find the vast majority of the time is going to be that first domino that tips over something you're going to be really proud of. So, it's great to have these psychological tools in our back pocket, but also us coming to a place where we're melding and valuing rest and recovery, and I know that she's big on that as well as am I, and so it's being able to challenge ourselves, but also loving ourselves enough to allow our bodies to recover and to show up better and better each and every time.

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