

How to Be a Great Writer, The Best (And Worst) Ab Exercises, Theology, and More

[music]

0:00:12.0 Mike Vacanti: Hello, Jordan.

0:00:12.6 Jordan Syatt: What's going on, Michael? How are you?

0:00:15.0 Mike Vacanti: The book is out. It is live. We launched, and how do you feel?

0:00:19.3 Jordan Syatt: Dude, I feel good, man. I feel really good about it. I feel... I feel like it's hitting the exact market that we wanted it to hit, which is just like the extreme gen-pop population. Like, the ultimate individual who has weight to lose, who wants to get started or has tried to get started many times, but they keep starting and stopping, the traditional yo-yo. It's super basic, simple, easy to read. You and I were talking earlier today, how plenty of people are messaging, being like, "I literally got through it in a day," which is nice because it's not like an overwhelming textbook. It's just, whenever people need a resource, they need a reminder, everything they need is right there. So I'm feeling good about it, man. How do you feel?

0:01:05.1 Mike Vacanti: I feel great, and I'm getting a similar number of that exact same message, which is, "I loved it, and it only took me a day, or a day and a half, or two days to get through." Old clients have reached out and said like, "I felt like I had a really good base from working with you seven years ago, but this was such a good refresher and I remembered things that I had forgotten." Yeah, both on the response to the book, I'm really happy about, and just the having finished it. Not only having finished writing it, but getting through all the editing process, getting it published, and getting it out there to the world, and starting to get feedback, it feels really good.

0:01:48.5 Jordan Syatt: And have finished that chapter of our lives, pun intended.

0:01:51.9 Mike Vacanti: Ha-ha-ha-ha-ha.

0:01:52.9 Jordan Syatt: Oh. [chuckle]

0:01:54.4 Mike Vacanti: This guy is... This guy is... He's a smart one.

0:01:57.2 Jordan Syatt: I was literally waiting for you to finish so I could use that line.

[laughter]

0:02:04.1 Jordan Syatt: Well good, man. Yeah, it's cool to have like a real gen-pop focused book out for the masses now. Like, I don't know, obviously biased, but I feel like it's probably the best, easiest to read for people who just have no idea where to begin.

0:02:21.2 Mike Vacanti: Yeah, and a lot of the family feedback and kinda like, not my immediate family, but people who have never strength-trained properly before, who bought it, read it and are now excited to like, "Okay, I have my calorie numbers. I'm going to do this. I'm excited about my plan." And literally, might be 40, 50, 60, 65 years old and have very minimal experience with these types of things, are eager to jump in. It makes me really happy.

0:02:48.3 Jordan Syatt: Yeah, and people are loving the GaryVee Bean story, which was a fun one to write and 100% true.

0:02:55.6 Mike Vacanti: Beans? Beans.

0:02:56.6 Jordan Syatt: Beans. [laughter]

0:02:56.8 Mike Vacanti: Beans? My goodness. Beans? Beans aren't... We won't go there. No spoilers here.

0:03:05.5 Jordan Syatt: [laughter] What do we got on the docket for today?

0:03:09.9 Mike Vacanti: We got... We can go, we can take this anywhere. We can talk Linkin Park. We can talk... [laughter] We got a Q&A dialed up. I had a random... I literally, we just dropped the book, so I wanted to ask you about that and talk about that, but I was... I just did 50 minutes of cardio. It was supposed to be 45, but I went a little too fast on the way out, so on the way back, that's why I was a couple of minutes late for this podcast. Jordan was patient enough for me here. But I was thinking, I was gonna kick off the podcast by saying, "Jordan, based on your recent experiences and entire lifetime, do you feel... And if so, why do you feel like men in Judaism are so soft?" And we can apply Judaism to the entire West and I was thinking Christianity specifically, when I was on my walk. Why are men so... So we can take this in any direction. That's where I'm..."

0:04:12.9 Jordan Syatt: We can't just say that and then just leave it there, so.

[laughter]

0:04:20.0 Jordan Syatt: Wait, so what were you thinking? You were thinking during your walk like, "Why are Christian men so soft?"

0:04:25.7 Mike Vacanti: I was thinking about why I don't enjoy most of the relationships or interactions I've formed over my lifetime that came from church. That are just like... And basically, just cliché, overly nice, the quote that always comes back to mind is like, "You have to be dangerous to be good. You can't be good if you're weak. A rabbit doesn't hurt anyone or anything, but it's not because the rabbit is moral, it's because the rabbit is incapable of hurting anyone or anything."

0:05:09.1 Jordan Syatt: Right, right.

0:05:10.7 Mike Vacanti: And that's a lot of the vibe that I've gotten, even more recently, I guess, like over the last one, two, three, four years. But also, over the last 10-20 years.

0:05:26.0 Jordan Syatt: Yeah, I think... First, I think it's an important point in terms of just because someone doesn't do anything bad that you see, it doesn't make them good, especially if they're not capable of doing something bad. Rather you have to be capable of doing something bad, but have it in your control that makes you good, which is, I think it's a very overlooked point. And something that I didn't realize until I don't know, four or five years ago. I remember when I first heard that quote, I was like, "Jeez, it makes a lot of sense." If you're not capable of doing that anyway, then you're not good by nature, you're doing good things because that's all you can do whereas having the ability to be dangerous, but have that under your own control, that's making the right choice is what makes you good.

0:06:13.5 Mike Vacanti: Mm-hmm.

0:06:15.4 Jordan Syatt: These are gonna be broad sweeping generalizations overall, but I think especially when it comes to religion and in, I don't know, Christianity, Judaism, 'cause you and I have spoken about it before. I've had some really amazing friends from synagogue who are... They don't work out, they don't lift weights, they don't practice anything to make themselves more stronger, more resilient, more anti-fragile, more dangerous in any way, more able to protect their families. They don't practice that. And I would imagine there are many aspects, but one of them being that I would imagine that many people who are drawn to religion, and not always, but many times people who are drawn to religion are people who are kinder at heart, they have this kind heart, kind soul.

0:07:19.4 Jordan Syatt: Not always, I know we've seen some very dangerous people be drawn to religion, but I think in the... Our world that oftentimes the people we interact with who are very drawn to religion, they are just such kind people and oftentimes now, especially when we go to religious services whether it's Christianity or Judaism or whatever it is, I think a lot of it is based around just being kind. And that's often the interpretation of the religious texts that we see nowadays it's like always be kind, never... It's always more about oftentimes being passive as opposed to being aggressive. And I think that often attracts that type of individual, and it doesn't prompt them to take action or to go to really to build their own strength, build their own resiliency, build their own ability to defend themselves.

0:08:16.2 Jordan Syatt: But ironically, I think if we were to go back in time like hundreds and thousands of years ago, many of the people who were religious were dangerous people, they were stronger, they were more resilient, they did have this ability, but I think the way that these... The times have gone and the way that these texts are interpreted now are done in a way to focus more on passivity and softness and kindness as opposed to the opposite side of it which is equally important. I think it's the pendulum has just swung a little bit too far one way. So yeah, I don't know if that's accurate or not, but that's my thoughts. What do you think about it?

0:09:00.4 Mike Vacanti: I think that a misinterpretation of the religious texts and or specifically cherry-picking parts of the Torah or the Bible that fit the narrative that that individual, a religious leader or anyone wants to teach a lesson they want to teach, because you can find stuff that's like... Like, you could read something to them, those YouTube videos where someone will go up and they'll read a quote and they'll be like, "How awful is this politician?" And then they'll be like, "Yeah, they are awful." And then they'll be like, "Oh, this was actually said by the person on your side, hahaha." That kinda thing.

0:09:38.5 Jordan Syatt: Yeah, exactly, yeah.

0:09:44.0 Mike Vacanti: Like, you could go up to someone and read something from the Bible that sounds preposterous and not tell them where it's from, and they would think that it's like this awful person said this. And it's like, "Oh no, this is actually from Corinthians." You can see that...

0:09:57.8 Jordan Syatt: [chuckle] Yeah.

0:10:00.5 Mike Vacanti: So not only misinterpretation of certain... And by the way, I'm no biblical scholar whatsoever, but misinterpretation and focusing on areas that fit the narrative that that person or that priest or that pastor, whoever wants to push.

0:10:17.8 Jordan Syatt: Yeah, that makes sense. I also feel like it's a very interesting topic because I also wonder how much of it is in response to things like social media, for example. Now because

of social media, we're... We see so much violence and war and terrible things on a daily basis, and a part of me wondered 'cause I guarantee that that impacts... I was just at Shabbat services the other night, and we were obviously talking about the devastating school shooting in Uvalde and that was essentially that school shooting shaped the entire sermon for that, for Shabbat. And I would imagine that the rabbis, the cantors, the priests, whoever was speaking, they were being influenced by current events and current events are often... It's not just that they're current events it's they're the current events that were being shown, right?

0:11:14.9 Jordan Syatt: There are current events that were not being shown that will not shape our ideas or sermons or any of that but because so much of the world's violence and everything is now constantly in our face, and we also live such a blessed lifestyle to not have to face this stuff by ourselves anymore 'cause it wasn't that long ago that we were facing our own perils and dangers every day. Our ancestors 100 years ago had a way harder, more dangerous life than we did for many, many reasons. But I think now because we're so sheltered, especially if we're living in the United States, we're blessed to have all the things that we do have, we're very sheltered, but we see all of this war and crime and killing and murder. So I would imagine that so much of the passages that they're choosing to read and the way that they're choosing to interpret them are specifically done as their way to try and balance it out based on what they're seeing without realizing that, listen, balancing it out doesn't mean just only thinking about being soft, only about...

0:12:20.6 Jordan Syatt: And I don't wanna confuse soft with, I don't even know what word to confuse it with, but it's not just even like... It's not just how you look, it's how you live. Like living soft and...

0:12:28.4 Mike Vacanti: How you act.

0:12:31.3 Jordan Syatt: Yeah. Like, are you taking care of your body? Are you defending yourself or your family if you need to? Are you standing up for what you believe to be right? Are you... As David Goggins, "stay hard," being a hard individual is I think...

0:12:48.4 Mike Vacanti: Physically or mentally or emotionally, it's not just like lift weights and martial arts, it's everything.

0:12:57.7 Jordan Syatt: Yeah, how you act, how you speak, how you live, all this stuff. So I think so much of what we're taught in that religious aspect is often a direct response to what the preachers and our teachers and everything are seeing on social media and maybe what they think we need, but... And I think in some ways we do, but in other ways, we need that yin and yang, we need that balance, it can't just be all this and none of that, and so I would imagine it's a combination of both the type of person that is attracted to religion and also what the sermon or what the people are being taught there as a result of current events as I'm sure other things as well.

0:13:38.4 Mike Vacanti: I completely agree that those sermons and lessons are being shaped based on what we're seeing, and what we're seeing is amplification of danger everywhere, when for basically all of human history, we only saw the danger that was in our immediate family, community, tribe, right around us.

0:14:03.8 Jordan Syatt: Yeah.

0:14:04.8 Mike Vacanti: And that makes the world seem a lot worse than it is, and that's not to say that there isn't a ton of bad and a ton of awful things, but... I don't know, I have had people guilt me into like, "You should be more unhappy or you should feel worse about all the bad things that are going on in the world." And it's like I don't have the capacity... Well, first, I don't have the capacity

as a human to feel that much or even to comprehend all of the evil in the world, and second, if I could, how would that be good for me or those around me if I was just constantly grieving for all of the terrible things that are ever happening.

0:14:48.7 Jordan Syatt: Yeah, you can't. You can't do that. If you knew of all the terrible things happening, we wouldn't be able to function, we would all be in an insane asylum if we saw all of the horrors going on in the world. We would all be absolutely out of our mind, not to mention probably more importantly, which is what you were talking about is, it does nobody good just to grieve all the time. It does no one any good. The best thing you can do is make yourself a better individual because a better individual will impact your community and your society on a positive basis that will hopefully lead to a better society and world it has that huge ripple effect.

0:15:33.0 Jordan Syatt: So being a good person and bettering yourself is really the best thing you can do, and then that will include things like charity and volunteering, that's included in making yourself a better person, but also making yourself a more resilient person, standing up for yourself, lifting weights, being healthy, exercising, sleeping well, keeping your head space in a good place. If you're constantly grieving and sad and just so upset about everything going on in the world, it's very difficult for you to actually function in any meaningful way to society, so no, I don't think that makes sense at all.

0:16:09.5 Mike Vacanti: And the practical way to do that is you need to curate your content intake. If you're just consuming hours and hours a day of Twitter news feed that they're putting together for you, if you have all of your stuff crafted to be... To make you sad and to get you down, and being in that mood and then that state prevents you from being able to take positive action on the meaningful things around you in your life, in your community and in your family, and in your literally day-to-day get shit done, it's gonna make your life a lot worse.

0:16:45.6 Jordan Syatt: Yeah, it is funny, I've had several dinners over the last few weeks with a bunch of friends who go to my synagogue, and they are... Like, the women hang out together, and then the men hang out together, so all the men are... We're all hanging out and the whole time, I'm like, "so do you guys, do you wanna work out, do you wanna lift some weights? Do you wanna do Jujitsu? Do you..." None of them do any... Any of that. I did do a one-on-one coaching session with one of the guys, a really nice guy, I brought him over to my gym and he went through a workout and he loved it, and it was actually really cool to see how he's starting to lift weights more but it is very interesting, you don't see that many or I haven't seen very many especially in my synagogue, 'cause I can't really speak from a Christianity perspective, but from a Judaism perspective, I haven't seen that many religious Jewish people putting much effort into making themselves stronger, and obviously, it's not a blanket statement 'cause I'm one and I know there are others, but by and large, a lot of them are "softer" and they're not as much focused on making themselves into a more resilient person, which when I think of what God wants for humans...

0:18:05.3 Jordan Syatt: Right, and again, not a biblical scholar or a theologian or whatever it is, none of that, but what I think is often like, yes, we're supposed to be kind and we're supposed to be thoughtful, but also self-sufficient and able to take care of others if... Taking care of others doesn't only come in the form of compassion. You can't feed someone with compassion, you can't clothe someone with compassion, you can't protect someone with compassion, so I think you have to have the ability to do both, you have to have both aspects there to really be the best that you possibly could be.

0:18:50.3 Mike Vacanti: Yeah. It's almost like why, it's a motivator to... It's one of the many motivators to continue to do things and build once you have your needs met.

0:18:57.8 Jordan Syatt: Yeah, yeah.

0:19:00.9 Mike Vacanti: It's like, okay, if you... Let's say you... And we kinda talked a little bit about this yesterday, but let's say you worked really hard for many years, grew your business, got into an awesome position, were blessed, and had taken it upon yourself to build to the point where you had enough money and resources so that you and your loved ones were good, it's like, "What's one reason why you should maybe keep pushing rather than just maintain?" It's like, "Well, is it just to get more money? To be rich, to have a \$500 t-shirt?" No. Because when you have more then you can give more away, because then you... Because guess what you can do with money? Clothe people, feed people. Like, I remember thinking about this... We were just talking about Summer 2016, our month and a half together, transitioning, you onto coaching, Gary. I remember from that timeframe thinking about this a lot, like, what is a reason to keep pushing once you have enough and keep growing? It's like, well, there... If you think of life as a race, there are people who get a "headstart," which could mean like elite genetics, which could mean... Could be born with a ton of money... Whatever, there are a lot of like ways you can be...

0:20:11.5 Jordan Syatt: Have two parents in the household, like, you know?

0:20:14.0 Mike Vacanti: Two loving parents who...

0:20:14.6 Jordan Syatt: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

0:20:16.2 Mike Vacanti: Who don't hit you... Like good.

0:20:18.7 Jordan Syatt: Yeah, yeah, having a loving household, like that... Cool. Headstart, boom, going to a good school system...

0:20:22.4 Mike Vacanti: Massive...

0:20:23.4 Jordan Syatt: Boom, headstart, yeah.

0:20:26.5 Mike Vacanti: Massive.

0:20:26.6 Jordan Syatt: Having money, boom, headstart, yeah.

0:20:26.7 Mike Vacanti: But it's like, should you only run hard enough so that you all end up in the same place, or if you have a headstart, and in any capacity or give you... Even if you don't have a headstart, but you just like run an insane first 30 years of your race, what's a reason to keep running? It's like, well keep running for the person who's way far behind for whatever reason. Maybe they made a bad choice at 14 years old, went down the wrong path, tried heroin, like, they're in a real bad spot now in their life. Like, get ahead to help that guy or that girl.

0:20:57.8 Jordan Syatt: Yeah, yeah, that's exactly right.

0:21:00.4 Mike Vacanti: Or the reason that is simply like, no one's ever happy just sitting on... No one who ever worked hard and earned it, is happy just sitting there and coasting forever. Like, humans are happiest when we're pursuing a meaningful goal.

0:21:20.1 Jordan Syatt: Yeah, exactly.

0:21:21.2 Mike Vacanti: Not just being fed grapes on a throne and like...

[chuckle]

0:21:24.2 Jordan Syatt: Yeah. You have to be working toward something, whether it's... Business-related is I think the easiest one, but it's not just one thing, alright? It could be improving your business, improving your work, improving... Being there for your kids, being there for your spouse, being there for your parents, being there for yourself, getting in a gym, taking response. Like, oftentimes, they don't wanna do work, actually, even right now, before this podcast, I was like, I'd rather not, but we gotta do it, right? It's like oftentimes, they don't wanna do work, in the same way that I don't wanna workout, in the same way I don't wanna do a number of things, but you have to do those things, and ironically, once you've done them... Like, once we're done with this podcast, even now, I'm glad we're doing this now, but I didn't wanna do it 20 minutes ago. So it's like, doing the things that have meaning and purpose that do fulfill you, even if you don't wanna be doing them.

0:22:13.2 Mike Vacanti: Man, the Sunday specials are real... This might... We usually record on Thursdays, get uploaded Tuesdays, book launch we're a little behind. The Sunday Special PT podcast might be a real thing, we'll see.

0:22:26.2 Jordan Syatt: The other thing... And not to go back to the biblical stuff, I'm sure some people are like, "Alright, enough with the religion," but, [chuckle] I find it interesting, so, fuck it. When you and I and Pat Flynn were all doing that Bible study at the beginning of COVID, which was one of the coolest experiences. I remember reading in the Bible, 'cause I've always been Old Testament. I haven't really read the New Testament until we all read that together, and I was really taken aback by the part where Jesus was cleaning people's feet. Remember that part?

0:22:58.6 Mike Vacanti: Mm-hmm.

0:22:58.7 Jordan Syatt: Where... Who... Was it his disciples? I forget whose feet he was cleaning, but like...

0:23:05.2 Mike Vacanti: Yup.

0:23:06.5 Jordan Syatt: There are so many powerful messages and interpretations of that, but for me, one of the big ones was like, Jesus is God, right? Like, Father, Son, Holy Spirit, Jesus is God, the all-powerful in every way, and he's getting down on his knees to clean other people's feet. And I think a lot of people might look at that and interpret it as like, Oh, look like, kind, compassion, but I also look at it from the perspective of, This guy is a savage. Like, this is the most powerful person in the world, He could do anything, anything he wants, and with that comes an unbelievable amount of strength and power and courage, like, so many aspects to that. It's not just like... It's not like he's just a weak person... He's choosing to get on his knees to do that. It's a choice that he made. It's not like he's a servant or a slave. Or he's like, I have to do this in order to get fed. He's like, "No, I'm gonna do this because I choose to, even though I don't have to." And I thought like, that really spoke to me about the idea of being a good person, is the choices that you make. It's not based around just what you have to do in order to survive, it's the choices that you make, even when you don't have to.

0:24:28.4 Mike Vacanti: Yeah, it's voluntarily doing that thing.

0:24:31.5 Jordan Syatt: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

0:24:33.6 Mike Vacanti: 100%. That actually reminds me of the leaders lead from the front by example, rather than cracking the whip on... If you think of it in like a corporate structure, right?

You're not just like, pointing and yelling at your employees to do things. It's like, if you're the boss, you should be the first one there, you should be the last one to leave, like, you shouldn't be telling your employee to do anything that you're not willing to do yourself.

0:25:03.3 Jordan Syatt: Yeah, yeah, that's exactly right.

0:25:03.5 Mike Vacanti: Yeah. Man, what if we... That might be a different podcast show entirely, [chuckle] but I would love to hear Pat's response to what you just said at some point.

0:25:16.1 Jordan Syatt: Oh, yeah, yeah. We'll bring him on.

0:25:18.6 Mike Vacanti: That'd be fun. That'd be really fun.

0:25:20.5 Jordan Syatt: And what are we doing now? You wanna go to the Q&A, you wanna talk about something else?

0:25:25.6 Mike Vacanti: My life is so much better in a slight surplus, it is unbelievable, like everyday things are just... My golf game, I'm pretty sure is better, and I think my golf game last summer suffered from fatigue at certain points.

0:25:47.8 Jordan Syatt: Yeah.

0:25:50.8 Mike Vacanti: And, yeah, just so much more energy. You know this, you've been a carb and fiber and calorie fiend with all the cardio and lifting you've done in the last several months, but it's awesome.

0:26:02.9 Jordan Syatt: Dude, eating more is the best. And you're like, this is so obvious, people know that putting that energy into your workouts and everything, and it's just like... It makes such a huge difference. The hard part here though, and this is an interesting discussion is when you have a client who's severely overweight and they need to eat less, right? It's like, it's hard... I think it can be hard for coaches who know how great it feels to eat more, but it's one of those things where if someone has been over-eating for years and years and years, they're going to have to eat less obviously to lose weight, but essentially what they're gonna have to do is, they're gonna have to earn the right to get to a point in which then they can increase their calories and then... And feel better as a result of that, like being in a calorie deficit sucks no matter what, but once someone gets down to a healthy body fat percentage, and then they can increase their calories, then everything changes, but I think so much of what we see now is everyone's like, just eat more, just eat more, and it's like, not everyone needs to fucking eat more.

0:27:05.4 Mike Vacanti: 100%. I'm talking only to people who have a healthy body fat percentage.

0:27:10.9 Jordan Syatt: Yeah.

0:27:12.2 Mike Vacanti: Like that's...

0:27:12.3 Jordan Syatt: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

0:27:13.8 Mike Vacanti: And the good news is on 80-85 year, we'll call it, like average life span, I don't know why I just bumped the numbers up arbitrary maybe because I think that they're gonna increase over our lifetime, science, medicine, etcetera, but someone who's very overweight can get to a healthy body fat percentage in a couple of years, which is a drop in the bucket of a lifetime, and then that's decades of getting to enjoy more calories while continuing to incorporate the strength

training, cardio activity habits that are gonna be... Make it far easier to maintain that progress. But yes, you're right, like some personal trainer barking, or anyone barking like, you shouldn't try to lose fat, more calories, it's better, it's like, well, first, you need to get to a healthy body fat percentage range.

0:28:05.9 Jordan Syatt: Right, or I see people who are severely overweight, just severely saying, "My coach wants me to reverse diet," I'm like, "Dear Lord," I can't stand it, it just... And I know you're about to go the other way on that...

0:28:21.9 Mike Vacanti: No, I'm not, I'm not going the other way by the facial expression, I actually think maybe they just don't know what a reverse diet is, and they're doing some kind of ascending caloric schema.

0:28:31.7 Jordan Syatt: Like in 'Eat It!'.

0:28:34.7 Mike Vacanti: Like in 'Eat It!', we have a chapter on that in 'Eat It!', rapid fat loss, but there's no way that a coach takes a severely obese person, and is like, "Okay, you're eating 3,500 now, which is around your maintenance, and we're gonna take it to 5,000, and that's gonna help you get leaner," like there's no one with the Internet and all of this information, there's no one that thinks that.

0:28:57.7 Jordan Syatt: Bro, you need to spend more time on social media...

0:29:01.3 Mike Vacanti: I'm going to I'm...

0:29:01.4 Jordan Syatt: 'Cause there are people that...

0:29:02.2 Mike Vacanti: Oh guess what? I have some people who are willing to take my... They want the content bet, so there might be... Remember we talked about that on the last podcast.

0:29:09.6 Jordan Syatt: The hundred thousand dollar one? Is that what it was?

0:29:10.7 Mike Vacanti: I don't know, we'll see. I don't think that anyone is actually...

0:29:12.6 Jordan Syatt: People reached actually like, I'll take that bet...

0:29:16.2 Mike Vacanti: Two people, yes.

0:29:17.9 Mike Vacanti: Alright.

0:29:18.4 Mike Vacanti: But more in a joking manner.

0:29:19.4 Jordan Syatt: Did Matt McLeod take that bet, was that Matt?

0:29:21.9 Mike Vacanti: I don't think he did, but he definitely should because I'd love to... I'd love to take a... I don't even... I'm trying to think of what the finance bro stack for 100K is or what the word is, I'm not sure. Stack? Stack might be 10K. Anyway, I don't think there's any humans that think that and you tell me that in fact...

0:29:42.1 Jordan Syatt: No, there are...

0:29:43.5 Mike Vacanti: If you go on any social media, there are.

0:29:44.1 Jordan Syatt: What happens is, when someone's severely overweight, and this coach is... And what they do is, they say, "Oh, you've been under-eating," they're like, "Yeah, I..." And they'll say something like, "I've been eating like 800 calories," and this is someone who's 300 pounds, "Yeah, I've been eating 3... Or 800 calories," and then that coach is like, "Oh, well, that's your problem, that's why you're dieting and you're not losing weight."

0:30:03.2 Mike Vacanti: ISTJ coach for sure. Like okay.

0:30:06.8 Jordan Syatt: No, the ISTJ coach would be like, "Well, no, you're not. Because you weigh 300 pounds."

0:30:12.9 Mike Vacanti: For a substantial amount of my life, I didn't understand that people lied.

0:30:18.2 Jordan Syatt: Okay, but how do you balance that with your knowledge of science?

0:30:22.2 Mike Vacanti: I didn't have enough back then.

0:30:24.3 Jordan Syatt: Oh, got it. Okay, okay.

0:30:25.3 Mike Vacanti: Yeah.

0:30:26.6 Jordan Syatt: Got it. Interesting. Okay.

0:30:26.7 Mike Vacanti: Or just thought like, "Oh man, this is an exception to the rule that this person has a medical condition that I haven't learned about yet, like... Man, you should see your doctor."

0:30:42.9 Jordan Syatt: Got it. Okay. Yeah, so then the person will say, "Yeah, I've been eating 800 calories," or whatever it is, and maybe when they start to diet, they eat 800 calories for a day, or I don't know, a week, whatever it is, and then they obviously rebound and go back, but they're not regularly eating only 800 calories a day and still weighing 300 pounds, but then their coach will be like, "Okay, well, we need to reverse diet, you need to get your metabolism back," and like, your metabolism is fine. You're revved up right now, and it's like, your metabolic furnace is on high heat, you're like those people in the bottom of the Titanic shoveling coal in the fucking fires right now. Like you're good. We need to reduce the calories.

[laughter]

0:31:30.8 Mike Vacanti: I'm with you.

0:31:33.2 Jordan Syatt: Okay, what is the best way to track my calories from vegetables?

0:31:38.1 Mike Vacanti: Track 'em.

[laughter]

0:31:43.3 Jordan Syatt: Do you have your clients track vegetables... Things like onions, or spinach?

0:31:47.1 Mike Vacanti: No.

0:31:49.2 Jordan Syatt: No? Yeah, yeah, me neither.

0:31:49.3 Mike Vacanti: But you gotta make the distinction, right? Corn, potatoes, are they starchy?

0:31:53.8 Jordan Syatt: Peas, yeah.

0:31:54.0 Mike Vacanti: Do they... Is a serving, or two or three like a big helping? Is it gonna be under 10 or 20 or 25 calories? Like all leafy greens? Then, no, there's no need to track it. And I've had clients ask me, and the good news is if they're asking you like, "Hey, do I need to track bell peppers?" They're gonna be making progress. Because they're pretty dialed.

0:32:23.3 Jordan Syatt: Yeah.

0:32:25.6 Mike Vacanti: I don't know where the line is on, tomato? Sure. How many tomatoes are you eating? Some somewhere between, yeah... Well, celery, spinach, arugula, go along this list into, yeah, something more green beans or peas or more like the middle of the road, I guess we'd call it in terms of caloric density all the way to what's the highest calorie vegetable?

0:32:50.0 Jordan Syatt: Potatoes. Probably. Yeah.

0:32:50.9 Mike Vacanti: Yeah, I think potatoes or... Either potatoes or corn. No need to track the super low-calorie stuff.

0:32:57.8 Jordan Syatt: Okay, so here's a question. I'm gonna say what the person wrote. And then I'm gonna change it to I think probably maybe a better question. Someone said, "What are your top resources for coaches writing articles?" And, obviously, the Mentorship is what I would say to that, but I would... I'm gonna change it to what are your best tips for coaches writing articles? What are some good ideas and strategies? If you're gonna start, if you're gonna take our number one piece of advice, start writing long-form content on your website, what are some of your most important things to keep in mind when you're writing a really good article?

0:33:42.3 Mike Vacanti: I think it starts with, or one of the early things is why are you writing this article? And I would imagine the answer is to reach a lot of people and to help a lot of people and hopefully are potentially gain clients or grow my business at some point as a result of this article. And if those are some of your reasons, then you should put more time than you would think into front-end planning, meaning playing around with Google AdWords, spending time where you just for 30 minutes, say go, and have a Word doc open in front of you, and write down every article idea that you can think of, and then test those ideas and play with those titles. We have an SEO course in the mentorship, where we talk about short... Short tail, excuse me, and long-tail terminology but finding keywords and article titles that are about a subject that you want to write about, that you think that the people you want to coach will be interested in. And that's step one, is spend more time on SEO than you would think. There are infinite tips for writing articles. So I'll let you jump in if you want to.

0:35:06.9 Jordan Syatt: Yeah, I think, I'll start with something that's just gonna set expectations properly, is the amount of time it takes to write an article is infinitely longer than the amount of time it takes to write an Instagram post, or a tweet, or... Basically, any other type of content. Even a podcast, a podcast is so easy. A podcast is the easiest, you hop on, you talk, you get off, an article, you have to really, really be prepared to spend at least 15 to 20 hours at least, that's bare minimum on this one piece of content. Starting off with, okay, brainstorming ideas for the article. Here's what I think. I think if you're just starting out, you should make ultimate guides. And what I mean by that

is if you haven't written any articles yet, or even if you have but you don't have these, these should be your first big project is, the, number one, is your "ultimate guide to fat loss." Number two is your "ultimate guide to muscle gain," or if those aren't your specialties, I don't know let's say you're a gut health specialist, "The ultimate guide to gut health." You should make an entire article on that, or you love deadlifting, "The ultimate guide to getting a stronger deadlift." Or, "The ultimate pull-up guide."

0:36:27.2 Mike Vacanti: There's an infinite number of things to make an ultimate guide on. But whatever you really wanna be spending time on and the people you're gonna be working with, make ultimate guides based on what their main goals are. And this is gonna take care of a tremendous amount of work upfront. Because let's say you make an ultimate guide to fat loss, and you talk about fat loss a lot. Basically, every single question that you ever get asked about fat loss should be answered clearly within this article. So anytime someone asks you a question about fat loss, "Hey, read this, Hey, read this, Hey, read this, Hey, read this." There should be calls to action to get on your email list. There should be calls to action to join your online coaching program. There should probably be some client testimonials in there if you have those. But these ultimate guides should be long, they should be super long, unbelievably in-depth. They should be very well written. They should be thousands and thousands of words that answer literally every single question about whatever it is you're trying to do.

0:37:32.0 Jordan Syatt: If you're doing an ultimate guide to pull-ups, you should have videos in there. You should have videos embedded in the article showing different progressions, whatever it is, there's no short... There should be nothing, no stone left unturned in these articles. And these things, they're probably not gonna SEO very well just because ultimate guides are usually about really big topics that so many other people have already done. But you don't need to worry about SEO for these. These are just so that anytime someone has a question, you're not sending them to either an Instagram post or you don't have to spend a ton of time answering that question individually, right there, it's already answered, and you don't have to send them to someone else's website or YouTube channel. You send them to yours. And people are gonna be like, "Holy shit, I can't believe this is for free. This is amazing. I can't believe you gave all of that information away for free." So I think those should be the cornerstone pieces that every single coach has on their website, that you can always link out to.

0:38:29.1 Mike Vacanti: Yeah, plus, you send someone to that, when they ask a fat loss question, you send them to the ultimate guide, they spend a half hour on it, maybe they read your muscle gain ultimate guide too. And, now they've gone deeper on your work, they like your writing style, maybe you get a little bit of your personality in your writing. And then they're jumping around on your site, reading your other content. Whereas if you sent them to a 12 fat loss hacks Instagram caption that you did, they'll read it in two minutes, and the next thing you know, they'll be scrolling in their feed.

0:39:01.3 Jordan Syatt: That's right.

0:39:05.7 Mike Vacanti: Another article writing tip that I like is... Because these are not short like one hour, two-hour of effort, like high output, high frequency types of content, they're 15 to 20 hours on a single article. When that article launches, spend a disproportionate amount of time and effort, distributing the article. Email list, link in bios, story to go read the article. I even used to do a lot of giveaway/ending article with a... Let's see if we can get 10 comments. Get people engaged. I love a giveaway to read it and leave a meaningful comment, just gets you time on page, gets you engagement, gives you comments on a blog, social proof for other people reading it. Spend disproportionate time. Putting it in client guides, putting it in email drip sequences, making sure that you're getting this article out to as many people as possible, not only so that they can read it, but to give that article the best possible chance of reaching page one Google at some point in time.

0:40:19.8 Jordan Syatt: Yeah, yeah. I'll give two more tips for article writing. Number one is, before you publish, you should read the article out loud to yourself. That should be your final piece of editing, and you should be editing it an unbelievable amount of times. Mike and I have spoken about this in the Mentorship, how, if you look at the number of drafts that we have, where we go through, edit, save it, that counts as one draft. And I would have easily 60, 70, 80 drafts of one article before I finally hit publish, just 'cause you're going through and editing it so many times. The final editing process should be you reading it out loud, and not out loud in the sense of reading it very fast like, "Okay, so in this article I'm gonna..." 'Cause if you start to read it out loud, but really, really fast, you're gonna skip over stuff. Read it out loud as though someone... As if you're reading it to someone who has never heard it before. It's the best way I found to catch grammatical mistakes, catch stupid spelling errors, and also to catch when something doesn't sound right. When a sentence just like, it doesn't flow, it doesn't sound right, it needs to be fixed.

0:41:25.0 Jordan Syatt: Reading it out loud will do that for you. So sort of a combination tip in this would be not just reading it out loud, but once you finish the article, wait 24 hours before you hit publish. Finish the article, wait 24 hours, or read it out loud to yourself after 24 hours, then make any edits, and then hit publish. 'Cause every single time that you think it's ready to go, and you just hit publish, you're gonna go back and be like, "Oh shit, I made a mistake. Oh, there's a formatting error, a spelling mistake. I left out an entire section." Whatever it is. So, read it out... Finish it, wait 24 hours, read it out loud, edit it again, and then publish. The other thing is, big blocks of text are bad. Like, a big honking block of text that is just like a word vomit on a page. Imagine if I sent you an email and it's a 2000 word email and it's all one paragraph, there's no spaces, and you're just like, "Oh my God." You can't read it 'cause it's just... It's hard to even go from one line to the next because it's hard to figure out where the next line is.

0:42:32.8 Jordan Syatt: So, you don't want your... The people reading your website to have the same issue. You should have, generally speaking, almost never more than two lines in a row. You should do a line, big space, a line, big space, a couple lines, big space. The more white space on the page, the better, it's easier to read, it's easier to go through without losing your place. It's much, much, much more enjoyable as a reader. So don't have big... You shouldn't be following the paragraph rule from school where you have to have five to seven sentences per paragraph. You could have a one-word paragraph, a one-word paragraph is fine. You're not in school, you're not... You don't have to do ADA format or whatever it is. Just write, and try and make it sound as though when you speak. 'Cause we don't really speak in big paragraphs either. We speak in boom, done. Individual paragraphs, individual sentences. It's quick, easy to read, easy to understand.

0:43:27.2 Jordan Syatt: And I think a lot of the time when people read my writing and they say things like, "Oh, it sounds like how you actually talk." It's not even necessarily because of the writing, but because of the format. It's because of how they're starting and stopping based on how I actually speak. And obviously the writing matters, which is another reason why you should read it out loud, 'cause when you read it loud and you say a word that you would never actually say out loud, then it's gonna sound weird and you should change it to a word that you would actually use. So for example, and this is the example I use all the time, but, very few people ever...

0:43:56.1 Mike Vacanti: Consumes.

0:44:00.2 Jordan Syatt: Yeah. Very few people ever say the...

0:44:00.7 Mike Vacanti: I do.

0:44:00.8 Jordan Syatt: You do, you do. You're...

0:44:01.2 Mike Vacanti: I love the word consumes. [laughter] I'm gonna say it more.

0:44:03.1 Jordan Syatt: Very few people ever actually are talking to their client and be like, "Yeah, I need you to consume more protein." No, "I need you to eat more protein." And you often time only figure that out when you read it out loud, so there are some more article writing tips.

0:44:16.8 Mike Vacanti: Great tips. Write your articles people, this is big. This is not sexy, it's not glamorous, it's not gonna feed your ego by seeing everyone like it or share it, a lot of that's gonna happen on the back end, time on page. But, I haven't written an article in five years, and I still get coaching applications every single week, so if you put in the work to write 30, 40, 50, really good long-form articles on your website over the next couple of years, that could pay huge dividends in the long tail.

0:44:49.7 Jordan Syatt: Yeah. Alright. This, I thought was an interesting question. Someone asked me, Why do you not use a lifting belt? And I thought we can answer that for ourselves, but also for our clients.

0:45:01.7 Mike Vacanti: Cool. Why do I not use a lifting belt? Because I have not barbell back-squatted or barbell deadlifted heavy in a lot of time, and there aren't any other exercises where I would want or need a lifting belt.

0:45:25.7 Jordan Syatt: You're not doing seated shoulder presses with a lifting belt on are you?

0:45:30.8 Mike Vacanti: I'm not doing seated shoulder presses with a lifting... Barbell bench press with lifting belt on. Maybe some pull-ups just for the intra-abdominal pressure.

[laughter]

0:45:42.2 Jordan Syatt: Yeah. But what about your clients? Do you have your clients lift a weight... Lift using a weight belt?

0:45:48.9 Mike Vacanti: More intermediate to advanced clients who are training heavy on a barbell back squat or deadlift and close to their one rep max. Yeah, I have had clients use lifting belts. But for the people I coach, it's definitely not the majority.

0:46:07.0 Jordan Syatt: Yeah, that's exactly right. It's, I don't know, 5%, maybe will use a lifting belt, whereas the vast majority, there's no need. So I used to wear lifting belts when I was a competitive powerlifter, and I was training at or near one rep max, as heavy as possible, just mainly from a safety perspective, more than anything. Now, the lifting belt can actually help increase how much weight you lift, because it provides a sense of external stability, so it gives your back more stability and it provides you with a... It's not just a safety thing, but it can also help increase the amount you lift. Ironically, a lot of the safety benefits go away once you start lifting more because you have the belt on, right? So it's like, oftentimes what I'll tell the people, if they're gonna use a weight belt, it's like, you'll probably be able to lift about 5% to 10% more immediately as soon as... You'll be able to deadlift about 5%, 10% more, depending, as soon as you put the weight belt on, but I don't want you to lift heavier just because you can now, 'cause then that eliminates the safety benefit.

0:47:08.7 Jordan Syatt: Like I see a lot of people hurting themselves when they wear a belt because they're trying to lift more than their body can handle, lift way more than their joints and tendons and ligaments can handle at that point, so just because you can lift more, it doesn't mean

you should. I would actually recommend staying where you were, just to be a little bit safer with it now, 'cause you're still gonna get the strength benefits, you're essentially at 85%, 90% one rep max, so just lift that anyway and get stronger with that weight without adding extra risk.

0:47:33.5 Mike Vacanti: Well, it depends on if you're using the belt for increased safety or if you're using the belt for increased performance.

0:47:40.3 Jordan Syatt: Yeah.

0:47:43.4 Mike Vacanti: Right?

0:47:43.5 Jordan Syatt: Yep.

0:47:43.4 Mike Vacanti: If we're talking to a powerlifter who's gonna be competing like, Yeah, go for it, but if you're putting the belt on because you want them increased stability and you want their reduced risk of injury, then don't put the belt on and increase the weight by 5% to 10% immediately simultaneously.

0:48:00.8 Jordan Syatt: Yeah, that's exactly right. Now, I don't use a weight belt. Now I haven't used one in years, and I've actually been lifting heavy, I even just pulled a... I don't know, about 90% one rep max, pulled 425lbs the other day, and felt great. I didn't use a weight belt mainly because I was... Partly 'cause I'm lazy to get my weight belt out of the back room, but also just because what I'm training for now isn't... Wearing a weight belt isn't conducive to that at all. I think wearing a weight belt is conducive for people who are lifting, consistently lifting at or near one repetition maximum weight, and they need to keep themselves safe. That's really it. For me though, with what I'm doing in jujitsu, it's like I'm just trying to get stronger for jujitsu. So I'm very rarely lifting at that high of an intensity, and I don't want to rely on an external system of support in order to have that level of strength 'cause I won't be wearing that belt in any other situation in my life. So if I was a competitive powerlifter, I would still do it, but I'm not.

0:49:07.7 Jordan Syatt: So I'm not gonna be using that anymore, and none of my clients are either. There are some Inner Circle members who do because they're competing in powerlifting, or they just love getting as strong as possible, which is great, so they lift wearing a belt, which makes sense, but if you're not lifting with the deliberate intent to try and max out... There's a difference between lifting like strength training and heavy lifting and max effort lifting, they're different things, and it's actually funny because if you read the Science and Practice of Strength Training by Vladimir Zatsiorsky, which is, if you want a real great scientific book, coaches, the Science and Practice of Strength Training by Vladimir Zatsiorsky, he even has different terminologies for heavy strength training and maximum weight lifting and then competing weight lifting. The difference between what you lift in the gym versus what you lift on the platform in a competition, he has different terminology for it.

0:50:03.0 Jordan Syatt: It's like, because it's a completely different type of lift mentally, physically, emotionally, from a central nervous system perspective, from a muscular system perspective, it's like things change from when you're in the gym to when you're on the platform or when you're just lifting for strength versus when you're lifting to be maximally strong.

0:50:21.3 Jordan Syatt: And I think a lot of people hear maximally strong and they think, "Oh, I wanna be maximally strong." It's like, No, no, no. You don't understand the risk that comes with that, you don't understand the time investment that comes with that, you don't understand the uncomfortableness that comes with that, like the eyes popping out of your face type of uncomfortable, like this isn't just getting stronger in the gym, this is your sole focus is How do I lift

as much fucking weight as possible for a single repetition? And I'm okay with popping blood vessels in my face, and I'm okay just potentially blowing my hamstring on this lift. It's a different game altogether and that's when it would make sense to wear the weight belt.

0:51:00.4 Mike Vacanti: I love it.

0:51:01.7 Jordan Syatt: Let's see. How many days a week do you target abs?

0:51:07.1 Mike Vacanti: Two.

0:51:08.4 Jordan Syatt: Okay, that's it? That's all we're giving, two?

0:51:13.1 Mike Vacanti: Well, that's the answer.

0:51:13.2 Jordan Syatt: Two. Next question.

[laughter]

0:51:17.3 Mike Vacanti: I, obviously, with any compound exercise and to varying amounts of abdominal recruitment to varying degrees, based on the exercise, but you are getting core strength benefits from non-abdominal isolation movements. I'm throwing in usually six sets of abs per leg day, and I'm hitting legs twice per week, so...

0:51:44.5 Jordan Syatt: What are some of your favorite core exercises?

0:51:47.3 Mike Vacanti: Those hanging knee raises, you know this.

0:51:50.1 Jordan Syatt: Oh yeah. But they don't know this.

0:51:54.6 Mike Vacanti: Yeah, I like a lot... A little Pallof press, I'll work in there. Some plank variations. Cable crunch is a pretty common one.

0:52:06.6 Jordan Syatt: You love cable crunches.

0:52:08.3 Mike Vacanti: I do like cable crunches. I like a Russian twist, but I like to, I like to take the range pretty big so that my abs aren't even under tension at the ends of both ranges, and then sometimes I'll slam the dumbbell off the ground just because... Just to make a little bit of scene. No, not actually.

0:52:26.3 Jordan Syatt: Watching your facial expressions as I was doing the Russian twist video for the book, you were like, "What the fuck!"

0:52:34.3 Mike Vacanti: Part of it was the angle, but yeah, part of it was the range. Look, if you take a real bro, who grabs a 30-pound medicine ball and just does these momentum slams from side to side and real close to the body, and then you take what you did, I'm closer to what you did, but not by much.

0:52:58.4 Jordan Syatt: I remember doing those in high school. I'd take that super big orange medicine ball and do these Russian twists, what I thought were good Russian twists, where I'm just bringing it over to one side and it was really just a hip flexor exercise, just like, my hip flexors were burning by the end of that. It's like my abs didn't really hurt at all, it was just all hip flexor. You like ab rollouts?

0:53:20.3 Mike Vacanti: I need to bring back some ab roll-outs. Yeah, I do really like ab rollouts.

0:53:24.6 Jordan Syatt: Yeah, that's a favorite of mine. That's, I think, a super underrated exercise.

0:53:29.4 Mike Vacanti: You do them with a barbell?

0:53:32.4 Jordan Syatt: I prefer the one with the little wheel, the wheel with the two handles on the end, I think that's my favorite. It's easier to use and it also has more of an instability component to it, whereas the barbell, because it's so wide and long, that's what she said, it's so wide and long, you don't have... It's much more stable, whereas with the wheel, you really have to control yourself down. I mean, I get... I feel... And obviously, soreness isn't an indicator of a good workout, but I get way more sore from the little wheel with the handles on either side than I do from the barbell, and I think it's because you have to control yourself more, that the eccentric has to be more controlled with the little wheel than it is with the barbell, but the barbell is a good progression, I think, when someone gets to a point where they can actually start to roll themselves out. I think it's a good progression for that dynamic movement as opposed to just going straight to the wheel.

0:54:24.7 Mike Vacanti: I need to bring that back into the mix. What was that little ab rollout machine that existed back in the day? Not a machine, but it was almost like a little... It was blue, it had handles and it almost looked like a little tiny vacuum, but when you rolled it out, it wound up tension and then on the eccentric part of the movement...

0:54:50.2 Jordan Syatt: Concentric, on the concentric part.

0:54:51.4 Mike Vacanti: On the concentric part of the movement, excuse me, it helped you come back.

0:54:57.0 Jordan Syatt: I've never seen those. It made it easier coming back?

0:55:00.6 Mike Vacanti: It made it easier coming back.

0:55:03.3 Jordan Syatt: Oh wow. I don't know.

0:55:06.4 Mike Vacanti: CfoPiryx ab roller. That doesn't sound right, but it definitely looks like it.

0:55:11.7 Jordan Syatt: CfoPiryx ab roller.

0:55:14.9 Mike Vacanti: "Abdominal exercise, four-wheel machine," this looks right. I guess it wasn't a brand name, "ab roller for abs workout abdominal exercise."

0:55:25.5 Jordan Syatt: Man, they're really SEOing that, huh? [laughter] "Ab roller for ab workouts abdominal exercise," that is the most SEO-ed title I've ever heard in my life.

[laughter]

0:55:37.6 Mike Vacanti: It worked, got me in the top line of Google Shop. Yeah, it's been a long time since I ab rolled out. What are some of your favorites? Your long-lever plank on the Eat It! Workout book YouTube channel people love.

0:55:51.7 Jordan Syatt: Dude, that's one of my favorite ones. It's an advanced plank progression. It's super difficult. Yeah, any time I get someone who's like, "Oh yeah, planks are too easy." I'm

like, "Alright, keep your elbows where they are, bring your feet two inches back." Boom. They're like, "Oh my God, it hurts." It's like, it's fucking brutal. So I love the long-lever plank, but I just, I am a big plank fan in general. I actually, I think planks are fantastic. Now, they're not... I think people have run into an issue, coaches have run into an issue where all they program is planks. And I think, I remember back in the day, like 2009, 2010, 2011, the dynamic ab movements were really hated on. The whole like, "Abs are made to resist movement, not create movement." Remember that? It was like, "Don't do any type of crunch, don't do any of this, just only resist movement, anti-rotation, anti-extension." And those are great exercises, but your abs do create movement, they absolutely do, and I think they should be trained in other ways as well, especially from a rotational perspective. Rotational core ab exercises are some of my favorite. Like cable core rotations are one of my absolute favorite exercises for core.

0:57:07.0 Mike Vacanti: Love, obviously, hanging leg raises. The issue with hanging leg raises, it's not the leg raise, it's the technique that people use, and most people turn a hanging leg raise into a hip flexor exercise, and they don't actually use their abs. And I think there's... It's actually, if you really think about it, a hanging leg raise and a reverse crunch are basically the same exercise, just one is gonna be hanging and one is lying on the ground, so the hanging leg raise is gonna be more difficult if you're doing it properly. But if you notice, with the reverse crunch your tailbone really tucks underneath you. It's like you're tucked, your back is actually rounded like a turtle shell at the...

0:57:46.3 Mike Vacanti: Top.

0:57:46.4 Jordan Syatt: Start of the movement. Yeah, exactly, at the top of the movement when you're coming all the way down.

0:57:51.8 Mike Vacanti: Yes.

0:57:52.0 Jordan Syatt: At the hanging leg raise, that's what you should be like at the top of the movement. Your back should be round. And I think a lot of people, they try and keep their legs straight and their back straight, and there's a time and a place for that type of exercise, but that's more of a hip flexor exercise, whereas when you actually roll your pelvis underneath you and you round, not arch, you round your back, that makes it an unbelievable ab exercise, and most people who are doing it with weight in between their feet, they're doing it wrong. It's super difficult just with body weight.

0:58:23.0 Mike Vacanti: Well, and that's why I like the knee more than the leg, is because I see a lot of people try to do the move with legs extended, so with their knees locked, and they're only bringing their legs up to the point where... I mean, some... CrossFit made toe to bar more popular, but a lot of people will do that move with very good tempo, very controlled tempo, but they're only bringing their legs to parallel with the ground, and their back is perfectly flat, they're not getting any ab flexion, it is a pure hip flexor exercise. The other thing I like about that is, if you're more advanced, if you're stronger, great, hang on to the bar and rip 'em, but I find that for myself, even especially, I can get way more focus on my abs when I have the straps with the carabiners like we had at Structure back in whatever, a couple of years ago when we had our one week of six days a week work together.

0:59:20.6 Jordan Syatt: You also, with the straps that you can put your arms through, you don't have to rely on your grip strength.

0:59:26.9 Mike Vacanti: Exactly.

0:59:27.0 Jordan Syatt: Which, depending on who's using it, is either a pro or a con. If you're

purely trying to focus just on your core without any other aspect, then it's a pro, but if you're an athlete who needs to improve their grip strength or, I don't know, let's say you're a CrossFit athlete and you need to improve your toes to bar, then it would actually be a con because you need to get... You need to have that ability to practice your grip strength there. But going off the toes to bar, that's one of the things I fucking hate about CrossFit. And there are many things I enjoy about CrossFit, but the toes to bar is the perfect example of an exercise that they're giving every day gen-pop people who need a good ab exercise, and they're just making people exhausted.

1:00:11.0 Jordan Syatt: And most people have overly tight hip flexors as is, and most people do not have the shoulder mobility to hang from a bar like that, and they're having them hang down and use the momentum, and just it's awful technique, and they're not getting any core, there's zero ab engagement at all, it's just, "Throw your legs up to the bar as fast as you can." And you see them swinging, and it's sort of like the butterfly pull-ups or the kipping pull-ups, so much of what they do is based on momentum, which again, if you're a competitor, fantastic, you have to do that for the sport of CrossFit, but if you're an individual looking to get in shape and actually use your muscles properly and reduce your risk of injury, these exercises are just fucking stupid.

1:00:55.0 Mike Vacanti: They're too advanced, and you're doing them in a state where you're already fatigued, like... Yeah.

1:01:02.1 Jordan Syatt: And you're not using the right muscles.

1:01:03.6 Mike Vacanti: Correct.

1:01:03.7 Jordan Syatt: 'Cause what they're doing is, they're not saying, "Hey, let's do a really good set of eight." What they're saying is, is, "Do as many as you can in this time frame," or, "Get to a 100 repetitions," or whatever, these insane amounts of reps in the quickest possible time. When you do that, you're obviously not gonna be using the right technique. That's why there's a big difference between an exercise that you could do, I don't know, like I don't know, you're doing sled pushes, cool, go as far as you can in the least amount of time, fine, you can't really fuck that up, but toes to bar, do as many as you can in the least amount of time? You're not gonna use any abs, you're gonna use momentum, and then you're... Great, you'll get better grip strength, but what was supposed to be an ab exercise is now a momentum exercise and a hip flexor exercise.

1:01:50.3 Mike Vacanti: Great podcast.

1:01:51.7 Jordan Syatt: I knew it. I could tell that you're ready to go. [chuckle]

1:01:55.0 Mike Vacanti: I'm actually not ready to go, I feel like an extrovert, I'm gaining energy throughout this pod. I'll keep talking about abs or we can answer another question, bonus.

1:01:55.6 Jordan Syatt: Bonus. Alright, let's see. Okay, alright, here's a good one I think you'll like. Barbell vs dumbbell bench press.

1:02:16.6 Mike Vacanti: Let's go. I think do both. It depends what your goal is. There's a lot of bravado and ego in a barbell bench press one-rep max, and you're going to get a stronger barbell bench press by barbell bench pressing. So if you have any of that in you, barbell bench press. There's a lot of debate and conversation around which is the better exercise for chest growth, and I believe that that is highly individual based on both anatomy and the technique that you use on both movements. I find that definitely more than half of people feel like they get better chest recruitment and can get a bigger range if they so desire and can safely with their shoulders on a dumbbell bench press. I really like... For me it's which do you enjoy more, and what are your goals, and select the

exercise based on that. They're very similar movements, right? Like if you barbell bench press a little bit more "bodybuilder style", less shoulder blade depression, a little bit smaller of an arch, elbows aren't tucked in as close, you let 'em come out a little bit more, you're going to get more chest recruitment, whereas if you have a massive arch, a big tuck, you're gonna have a lot more lats, you're gonna have more tricep recruitment, but they're both great exercise. I'm a big fan of them both, I program both for most people, I like them both for myself. Yeah, I feel like at this stage in the podcast that's most of the thoughts I have about barbell vs dumbbell bench press.

[laughter]

1:04:12.2 Mike Vacanti: But they're both awesome.

1:04:14.4 Jordan Syatt: Are you tired? Do you feel your energy going?

1:04:17.7 Mike Vacanti: Bro, I just dominate... First of all, I was up early. Got up...

1:04:20.2 Jordan Syatt: Dude I'm just... I'm not...

1:04:20.9 Mike Vacanti: We've been talking for an hour and 10 minutes.

[laughter]

1:04:23.5 Mike Vacanti: I get all defensive. Wanna fight?

[laughter]

1:04:26.8 Jordan Syatt: "Bro, you know I've been up."

1:04:31.5 Mike Vacanti: You know what I think it is?

[laughter]

1:04:32.3 Jordan Syatt: Just an honest question.

[laughter]

1:04:36.4 Mike Vacanti: Yeah, I am. And I have been the entire time, and I think it's probably largely because on days when I don't train, I don't have very much caffeine.

1:04:44.0 Jordan Syatt: Yeah, yeah.

1:04:45.3 Mike Vacanti: And I've been up, up since 6:00 AM.

1:04:49.3 Jordan Syatt: 6:00 AM on a Sunday? Jeez.

1:04:52.3 Mike Vacanti: Yeah, yeah.

1:04:55.6 Jordan Syatt: Jeez. Yeah, yeah. I agree on the barbell vs dumbbell bench press discussion. I think barbell's more fun. It's certainly more fun to track progress with, 'cause you can go increases by these small fractional plates and these two and a halves. It's easier actually to increase weight on the barbell than the dumbbell, because if you're going from... With the barbell, let's say you can do 100 pounds. It's easier to go from 100 to 105 on the barbell than it is to go from 55 to 60

on the dumbbell. It's a much bigger percentage increase when you're using dumbbells versus when you're doing the barbell, and with the single implement, just one barbell, I think it's easier to control as compared to just the two different dumbbells. I think they're both great. I program both of them for myself and for my clients and their circle members. I think it would make sense that from a chest growth perspective, you would have better results with dumbbells compared to barbell. But I think doing both is better than either alone, and I think from a maximal strength perspective, you'd probably have better results with the barbell over the dumbbell.

1:06:11.6 Jordan Syatt: Also the convenience of the barbell over the dumbbell from the perspective of sometimes getting super heavy dumbbells up, like you need a spot once you get to a point in which you're lifting really really heavy dumbbells. So yeah, I think both are better than either alone. And I will say if I have a brand new client, if let's say I'm coaching people in person or online, whatever, I have a brand new client, they've never done barbell bench press before, or they've never done any bench press before, I'll start them off with dumbbell as opposed to barbell. Barbell has way more technique, there's way more to think about, the technique is more advanced, so I will almost always start with dumbbell as a way just to get them to understand proper technique and get the stabilization aspect down so they can learn how to do that before they go to the barbell, but I think getting people to do both is better than either alone.

1:07:05.2 Mike Vacanti: Yeah, the need... The greater need for a spotter on the barbell or a really nice setup that not everyone has and that you're really not gonna be able to set up a barbell bench press with the safeties in a commercial gym unless you're gonna wheel a bench around and take up a rack. That also is something to consider, whether or not you're gonna have someone who can spot you or you feel comfortable asking someone to spot you, or if you're in a gym that has competent spotters.

1:07:37.2 Jordan Syatt: Yeah. Well said. Good pod, bro.

1:07:40.0 Mike Vacanti: Great pod.

1:07:41.9 Jordan Syatt: Great podcast. Thanks for listening. Hope you enjoyed it. If you did, please leave a five-star review, written reviews...

1:07:48.6 Mike Vacanti: Fiver.

[chuckle]

1:07:49.6 Jordan Syatt: Written reviews would be super appreciated, and yeah, that's it. We hope you have a wonderful weekend. I think, not next week but the week after I'll be doing podcasts abroad, so...

1:08:01.5 Mike Vacanti: International podcast tour, Syatt Fitness.

[chuckle]

1:08:07.7 Jordan Syatt: On The Regimen. Have a wonderful day and we'll talk to you soon.

1:08:11.2 Mike Vacanti: Bye, everyone.

[music]