

An Honest Conversation About Negative Self Talk and How to Stop Getting in Your Own Damn Way

[music]

0:00:11.9 Mike Vacanti: Hello, Jordan.

0:00:12.3 Jordan Syatt: What's up, Michael?

0:00:13.3 Mike Vacanti: How you doing?

0:00:14.4 Jordan Syatt: Dude, I'm great, I'm great.

0:00:16.4 Mike Vacanti: I realized something.

0:00:18.7 Jordan Syatt: Oh, okay. Go on.

0:00:20.5 Mike Vacanti: I like people who everyone hates.

0:00:23.5 Jordan Syatt: Okay, do you wanna give a specific name or just general?

0:00:26.6 Mike Vacanti: Well, the one I was thinking of was Jake Paul.

0:00:29.4 Jordan Syatt: Oh, okay.

0:00:30.3 Mike Vacanti: I don't know what it is, but seeing someone, even if I'm completely neutral on the person, and then I see in their comment section, everyone is just lighting them up, for some reason, I mean, unless the person's actually bad, evil, does something that I don't like, but if I'm just neutral on them, that makes me really like them.

0:00:54.7 Jordan Syatt: Why do you think?

0:00:56.1 Mike Vacanti: It just feel so like unwarranted hate. I don't know, I think maybe it's because I disrespect the people in the comment section more than the person in the arena. I'm not exactly sure, but I've noticed it in other areas too. Where I could be neutral on someone, but because the masses hate them, I'm like, "You know what? I actually kind of like him or her."

0:01:20.4 Jordan Syatt: Well, what do you like about Jake Paul?

0:01:23.5 Mike Vacanti: I like that he speaks his mind. I like that he was basically a non-athlete, like a high school athlete, but not an athlete, he was an entertainer who went all in on a sport and really dedicated everything to getting better and has become quite proficient at boxing. And back to the first thing, I mean fantastic marketer, but I don't aspire towards great marketers, but...

0:01:57.9 Jordan Syatt: You just respect his marketing acumen and the lengths he's willing to go to market. He goes... He really, when he goes all in on it, he goes all in.

0:02:08.4 Mike Vacanti: I don't even know if I respect that though, 'cause when he made comments back and forth with Conor, I actually didn't like that, but I don't think that the "negative"

things he's done deserve the mass amounts of hate from people in the stands who are just watching anonymous a lot of the times.

0:02:28.0 Jordan Syatt: What are the negative things he's done?

0:02:31.6 Mike Vacanti: Well, calling Conor's wife a four or whatever. [laughter] Things that are just kind of off the table. And I don't know, I don't actually know. That's the one that came to mind for me, but.

0:02:46.6 Jordan Syatt: Got it.

0:02:47.2 Mike Vacanti: Seeing that negative feedback and for anyone, you asked me to name a name, so that's the first one that came to my mind, but for anyone just like makes me actually root for that person. You know what? I actually, in recent times, have felt this way about Gary to an extent, who you and I both know very deeply and well, to see more online hate really bothers me and, I don't know, it's not really the same, but.

0:03:17.9 Jordan Syatt: Has he been getting more than usual lately?

0:03:24.3 Mike Vacanti: Not on his stuff, no, but I have seen just random YouTube Shorts where the YouTube comments aren't great at all and completely unwarranted and inaccurate and, yeah.

0:03:37.2 Jordan Syatt: That one hits home because we know him, we know Gary, we know who he is, we know his ethos. We know how good of a person he actually is. And so for any...

0:03:47.1 Mike Vacanti: Offline, behind the scenes.

0:03:53.2 Jordan Syatt: Yeah. With Jake... It's funny. I don't have the same thing as you in terms of... I feel like oftentimes, you... Even just then when I said the marketing thing, you went the other, "No, no, even that, no, I don't even like that part." You often go the complete opposite direction of whatever someone will say. In terms of people saying, "Oh, I don't like that person, I don't like that person," it doesn't make me like them. My initial reaction is, thinking about the people who are leaving those comments, it's like, "How do you say you don't like someone that you don't know?" And that's, to me... Unless you've seen them do terrible shit online, that's a different thing. And to be fair, I think any time someone calls out someone else's family members, that's like no go. So for Jake, I didn't even know that he called Conor's wife a four, or maybe I did know that and I just forgot it, but that is very inappropriate for me. So I don't like that, but I think it's... Here's what I think, I also think it's important to remember, I didn't say I don't like Jake. I said I don't like that he did that.

0:05:11.2 Jordan Syatt: I think that's a distinction that people really struggle with is as soon as they see someone do something they don't like, if they don't know the person, their first reaction is, "I don't like that person." But if it's someone that you know personally, it's easier to separate one of their actions from all of their actions, where it's like, "Okay, well, I really like that person, I don't agree with everything they say or do, like this specific action, but I still like that person." So I think people online are just so quick to judge and to hate and to call out, it's just, yeah, it's a mess. And especially when someone like Jake who's unbelievably successful in terms of business, and he's a loud, he's loud, I think it's easy for people to look at someone loud and just immediately say they don't like that person.

0:06:00.3 Mike Vacanti: Yeah, that's a good point actually.

0:06:01.3 Jordan Syatt: And Gary's loud too. Gary's loud in different ways, but anyone who's loud... It's funny, there are threads about me online, and it's just like... And I'm not even that loud, but people like to pick and choose and hate people, it's very interesting that... I don't know. Yeah, it's just interesting.

0:06:22.2 Mike Vacanti: When you get to a certain size, even if you're not loud, even if you're not controversial, you're still gonna have people dislike you.

0:06:28.8 Jordan Syatt: Yeah, no matter what. No matter what. There's also a difference between not liking someone and then going out of your way to trash talk that person publicly. That is another thing that just blows my mind, it's like I couldn't imagine leaving a public comment like— Oh my God, I didn't tell you... Did you see my story? I know you're not on social media. You go on social media like once every twelve months.

0:06:49.4 Mike Vacanti: Dude, no, I did. I did, it was like, "I had to stop watching this when I found out he's a Jew." That right?

0:06:54.0 Jordan Syatt: Yeah, I can't imagine... Take away the anti-Semitism component, take away that, I just couldn't imagine leaving that type of a comment about anyone like, "Oh, I stopped watching this person," or the people who leave the comment like, "I'm un-following this person," like, why are you commenting? [laughter] That to me, it's just, it's very odd. It's very odd that behavioral component that I don't fully understand.

0:07:23.2 Mike Vacanti: Yeah, and I do... I like the option of anonymity, but it definitely promotes more of that type of behavior, like YouTube comments and Twitter specifically.

0:07:40.5 Jordan Syatt: [chuckle] I had to take... I left what I thought was a funny comment in reply to that guy who's saying I had to stop watching when I found out he was Jewish. My initial response was gonna be an emotional, angry response, but I literally was like, "Okay." I got very strategic with it, I was like, "Okay, this is an opportunity for me to reply in a way that would garner respect from people," and so I literally, I took about 15 minutes and sat down and was like, "Okay, what's the best way for me to reply to this that is going to garner respect, also let him know that that comment is inappropriate and you shouldn't do it?" And he actually ended up deleting the comment, which I thought was...

0:08:26.2 Mike Vacanti: Really?

0:08:26.4 Jordan Syatt: Yeah, he deleted it. And I always... My way, I'm not saying this is the right way, but my way is with humor, trying to find humor is, I think, one of the best ways to nullify or mitigate when someone is leaving those types of comments because it's essentially... It's your way of just being like, "Ah, just letting it roll off your shoulder," it didn't roll off my shoulder. I was deeply upset about it, but being able to reply, and I think that's one of the... You know sometimes when you get in an argument with someone and then later you go home and you get in the shower and you're like, "Oh, I should have said this and I should have said that, I should have said this." The cool part about online comments is you have that opportunity to not reply emotionally, not reply, just take 15 minutes and think, "Okay, other people are gonna see this comment, what can I say that's gonna actually lead to a good response? How can I turn this into a positive?" So yeah, that's I think it's an important thing to keep in mind.

0:09:31.8 Mike Vacanti: Dude, I love that. And I'm even more interested in it in real life, meaning not being reactive or emotionally responsive to many different emotions. Anger is a really good one that I think a lot of men specifically can probably relate to. Sloth is another one. You don't have...

Your actions don't have to map to how you feel, you can choose different actions, but you might not have 15 minutes in real life, but you can pause, take a breath, decide how to come back, decide what to say or what not to say, decide the tone of voice that you say it in. And these are things that, as a kid, weren't even on my radar, and only over the years have I started to develop a better ability to separate emotional response from action. And the bigger I can make that gap, the more room I can create for myself, the better my life has become and I don't know how to maximally do that. It's a very present, very like... Not necessarily my strong suit. I know the times I've been meditating have helped and I know that being well-rested and taking training seriously and being in good shape, these are things that help, and then just making it intentional and making it a practice and it's a cliché for a reason. Think before you speak, like, "Oh, maybe that thing we learned in fifth grade, we should all do that."

0:11:05.9 Jordan Syatt: Yeah, yeah, I think with... In a day and age in which everything you say is documented now, whether you realize, or everything is documented, like take the time to think about it, really think about it. And not just think about what the person you're talking to is gonna think, but the people that have a very high probability of seeing it, who are not involved in the discussion.

0:11:34.9 Mike Vacanti: One sec, are you talking about comments online or are you talking about your phone listening to you in conversations in real life?

0:11:44.5 Jordan Syatt: I was talking about comments online, I was not...

0:11:47.2 Mike Vacanti: All right, just making sure we're on the same page.

0:11:47.9 Jordan Syatt: Yeah, I was not thinking about whoever is listening in our phones, whether it's TikTok or everything, which... That's another thing. This might be the conspiracy theorist coming out in me, but a lot of conspiracy theories are coming out to be true, but why are they trying so hard to ban TikTok? It's like every app that we have gets an insane amount of information from us, I can't help but think... I would imagine Facebook or Meta, whatever it's called, and Instagram and all these other platforms have a huge vested interest in trying to remove TikTok, not because of the information they're gathering, but because it's a huge competitor. So if you can get a competitor off the market, well then everyone in the United States who is on TikTok would probably then go to Instagram or another platform. It's like it's... I have to think there's gotta be lobbying going on behind the scenes to politicians...

0:12:51.2 Mike Vacanti: Probably.

0:12:52.3 Jordan Syatt: To say, "Hey, let's push this to get it out, and let's really hammer home the them gathering data," when the amount of data they are... Every company knows everything about us.

0:13:04.2 Mike Vacanti: The devil's advocate argument would be that not these other big social media platforms aren't essentially owned by the Chinese state, would be the other side of that. Guess what? I don't even know what's going on on that front, I didn't even tell you this because for basically four days, I haven't been scrolling at all.

0:13:23.4 Jordan Syatt: That's amazing. Like no social media? No, nothing?

0:13:29.1 Mike Vacanti: I'll pop onto Instagram, which is rare because I basically never do, to check in on people, which is something I'm trying to be intentional about. If you think about the way social media has changed over the last few years and gone from following friends or following

people to the interest graph. So my YouTube Shorts, my Twitter For You, like TikTok, isn't giving you the people you follow, it's giving you stuff you're interested in. And I have found that to be completely worthless and a huge decay in my life, I'm trying to replace that scrolling with reading books, and then at the same time, checking in on human beings, which I find Instagram is the best place to do that.

0:14:08.2 Jordan Syatt: You're checking in to make sure I'm posting for the @personaltrainerpodcast page.

[laughter]

0:14:11.4 Mike Vacanti: And you are. And you're killing it. No, but that even friends like... I don't know, I have friend's wives who post pictures of their kids, it's fun to check in on other people in the fitness industry, people in the mentor... Literally checking in on people that I'm thinking about rather than just mindlessly opening YouTube and consuming an hour of shorts laying in bed at night before I fall asleep, it's like, "No, instead, I'm going to read this fictional book that I really enjoy and that..." I know it sounds insane because it's been four days, but I notice a difference. I wake up in the morning and I don't reach for my phone, while the coffee pot is going, I gotta wait seven minutes, I'm reading Peter Attia's book rather than scrolling on my phone, which is unheard of in a very short amount of time, so I don't know, I think there's something there.

0:15:02.1 Jordan Syatt: Dude, absolutely. Absolutely something there, big time. You're reading Harry Potter right now?

0:15:09.9 Mike Vacanti: Yeah, I'm reading the first Harry Potter. I thought of this Naval quote about not judging what you read and just reading what genuinely interests you, and I have some fiction that I really like on my bookshelf, I was like, "Which of these books, do I actually want to read tonight?" I was like, "I'm grabbing this."

0:15:27.4 Jordan Syatt: Dude, those Harry Potter books are so good.

0:15:29.4 Mike Vacanti: Unbelievable.

0:15:30.0 Jordan Syatt: They're so good. So many life lessons in there, the writing is great.

0:15:34.9 Mike Vacanti: Yep. What should we talk about? Should we dive into Q&A?

0:15:38.9 Jordan Syatt: Yeah, let's do it. Last podcast was more chit-chat. Let's talk about... Let's go and answer some questions from listeners.

0:15:48.8 Mike Vacanti: Let's do it. You wanna fire up... You got a Q&A box? All of my emails are five-paragraph emails, so you know what, this is a great opportunity. If you want your question answered on the podcast, jump on Instagram, @personaltrainerpodcast is our handle, give it a follow, why not, and then just fire over a DM with your question, and we'll start pulling from there.

0:16:15.3 Jordan Syatt: Okay, so I have a question. I'm almost positive, 'cause this person asked on my page, I'm almost positive they're asking this in relation to fitness progress, but let's talk about this in relation to fitness business progress.

0:16:29.5 Mike Vacanti: Okay.

0:16:30.2 Jordan Syatt: Negative self-talk that... This isn't a question, they didn't ask a question.

But they're struggling with negative self-talk that comes with slow progress, which makes me think about what type of slow progress coaches might be having with their business and maybe the negative self-talk that comes with it. Do you have any immediate thoughts? Does that light any bulbs up, any sensors for you about slow progress that coaches might be having, whether it's getting more followers, getting more clients, learning how to be a better coach, learning program design, learning exercise, selection, learning whatever, any type of slow progress?

0:17:12.0 Mike Vacanti: Yeah, I feel like the most common type of slow progress here is in terms of following and business growth, so number of clients, money and following are the types of questions or complaints most commonly voiced. There's a couple of things, one is a mismatch between expectation and reality. So you think you see everyone getting 20 clients within their first month of launching their online business, or even having a six-figure business within a year of launching their business, and you think that's what you should get too. Maybe those are other people in the industry, maybe those are advertisements, maybe they're pre-rolls on YouTube that you see, that isn't how it works for 99.9% of people, both of us included. Re-setting proper expectations for speed of growth for your business is going to make you... Having the right expectation is gonna lead to you not being disappointed.

0:18:10.5 Mike Vacanti: If you know that, "okay, it's gonna take months and months and months of posting before I even potentially have my first client, and that's a cost of doing business, that's a cost of doing this the right way for the long term," then you're not gonna be pissed when you're three months in and you've been posting every day, but you don't have any new clients yet. So resetting that expectation is one. The other one's accountability, where you'll see a lot of like, "Oh, the algorithm..." Basically outsourcing responsibility to anyone or anything other than oneself. Any time I've posted and it doesn't do well, I just assumed that it wasn't good. It's like, "Oh, I better do better next time." And maybe this isn't helpful on the self-talk side of things, but no... Assuming that anything that isn't going well is your own fault, and that you have the power to change that and course correct is an important mindset for continued growth and just for building over time.

0:19:20.1 Jordan Syatt: Yeah, I think you and I have very unique insight, you said it's... Rapid growth is not the case for 99% of people, I think it rolls off the tongue, and we hear that all the time, and I think it's easy for people to be like, "Oh, that's not true," or overlook how accurate that is. I think you and I have very unique insight into this specifically because in the mentorship, we do a challenge every month, every month we do a challenge, and sometimes the challenges are short form content, whether it's Instagram, TikTok, Twitter something like that. It could be a long-form content, YouTube, podcast, it could be getting new clients, doing a launch, seeing how many clients you can get during a launch, it could be how many people you get on your email list, whatever it is, new challenge every month. And we give instructions on how to do that and how you're gonna go after it. And one of the incentive or the incentive of the challenge or one of the incentive aside from growing your business is the winner of that challenge, gets a call with Mike and I.

0:20:18.9 Jordan Syatt: And so we go through these challenges and the result that these people have, and every single time we announce the challenge winner, not sometimes, every time, we always have to preface and say, "Just so you know, the person who won," usually the person who wins the challenge wins by an unbelievable margin, someone will get 2000 new email subscribers, someone will gain 10,000 new Instagram followers, someone will get 150 new coaching consult request, whatever it is something insane. That's just that one person. Every single other person, 99% or 99.9% of the other coaches taking part in the challenges, get 12 email subscribers and get six new followers, and it's not bad, it's just... We always have to say, "This is the winner, and this is what the winner did, but it does not represent what the vast majority of you did."

0:21:35.6 Jordan Syatt: And I think it's such unique insight to have, because this negative self-talk

comes from finding that one person, you find the one person who's just blowing up and doing insane, and then you always compare yourself to them. We can even look at this from famous athletes like they call them The GOAT, the Greatest of All Time, for a reason, as soon as you think of football, often, Tom Brady, you think of basketball, you think Michael Jordan, LeBron James, you think golf, Tiger Woods, whatever it is. You think of the GOATs, the Greatest of All Time, but think about how many professional basketball players whose names you don't even know, how many professional basketball players are in the NBA who you've never heard of, you can literally sit next to them on a bus, on a plane, on a train, and you'd have no clue who they were. You would know who LeBron James is... I don't know the last time I watched a basketball game, but I know who LeBron James is.

0:22:34.0 Jordan Syatt: I don't know the last time I watched any golf thing ever, but I know exactly who Tiger Woods is, but I don't know any other golfers. So even in the elite highest level of all of these things, there's still outliers, there's still the 1%, that's less than 1% of who just absolutely blow up. So it's really, really important to keep in mind that... I'm not gonna say don't compare yourself to those people, 'cause I think comparing yourself to those people in the right way of comparison can actually drive you to do better and motivate you and to see that it's possible. And one of the coolest things about this is, for so many years, people thought a four-minute mile was impossible, they were like "It's physiologically impossible to run a four-minute mile," and then one guy did it, I forget his name, and immediately after this one guy ran the four-minute mile, hundreds of people ran the four-minute mile because they... Oh, it's possible. So the discomfort that I'm feeling or whatever it is, I push through it. Keep going, keep going. They didn't push through discomfort because they thought it was physiologically impossible until one person did it, and then hundreds have done it since. So I'm not gonna say don't compare yourself, I actually don't really like that idea, but it's... Don't be excessively hard on yourself if you're not getting the same results. It's really, really important to be aware of.

0:23:58.1 Mike Vacanti: Yes. Well, and recognize that if you're gonna compare yourself to someone else, you have to compare your life to their life, and you don't know everything about their life, you don't know that that person has wild demons from childhood pushing him or her to work 17 hours a day. But what you said that I really like is compare yourself in the aspirational part of it, like looking up to that, but don't judge yourself for not getting there and understand that survivorship bias makes us only see like the elite of the elite who outlasted everyone else who made it, and your example of the hundreds of people in the NBA who you wouldn't even know them if you're sitting next to them on a plane. I can think of 12 people off the top of my head in the mentorship who they've maybe won one challenge, but they're never blowing people out of the water, they've never signed 20 coaching clients in a single month, they've... But little by little, month over month, year after year, build, build, build, build to the point where they have basically a full roster, and haven't done it with any massive spikes. Chris Gates. Brooks Hurbis. Jeff Pachtman...

0:25:11.5 Jordan Syatt: It's interesting to see, yeah, yeah, keep going.

0:25:13.3 Mike Vacanti: Andy Tate, there are a whole bunch of people where it's been slow and steady, and they've gotten into a place where if you look back two years, it's like, "Wow, I almost don't even recognize where I was then compared to where I am now," but there was never like... There was never this curve.

0:25:33.9 Jordan Syatt: Yeah, and then it's funny because then the new people will come into the mentorship and they'll see someone like Brooks or someone like Jeff or whoever it is, and they'll be like, "Oh my God, these people have a full roster, they're killing it," and they don't realize that, it was just two, three, four years ago that they first joined the mentorship and they had nothing, and

they were thinking that about the other people who are more veterans in the group. The vast majority of people have a slow grinding process before they get to a point in which they achieve a certain level of success. So I know it didn't really address the negative self-talk aspect as much as just like realistic expectations, but I think negative self-talk comes from unrealistic expectations, that's really... And you need to be aware of it. And so when you start noticing you're having negative self-talk, remind yourself, "Okay, who am I comparing myself to, and is this actually serving me? Does it even make sense? Do I even know what's going on behind the scenes, or am I just going based off of either what I'm seeing on social media or what someone told me?"

0:26:39.2 Jordan Syatt: And also, you have to remember, people lie a lot. I've seen a number, and I say number, I mean a large number of people lie about how much money they make, how many clients they have, all of this stuff. I mean, listen, people in the fitness industry lie about using steroids all the time. What makes you think that coaches aren't lying about how many clients they have, or whether or not they've bought followers or they're buying likes or whatever it is, people lie all the time, so. And then just the other aspect, which is just negative self-talk, it just... It doesn't help. That's really the bottom. Like it doesn't help in any way, shape or form, you don't get any benefit from it. And you were talking about how when you would do a post and it didn't do well, you'd just be like, "Yeah, maybe it just sucked," the way that...

0:27:37.7 Jordan Syatt: You know, there's a very common phrase, you're only as good as your... You're only as good as your last setback, and I think in some cases that's true, but in terms of social media I don't think that's true at all. The way that I look at social media is if I have a bad post, or I'm not gonna go that route just yet, instead of saying when I have a bad post what I'll say is the way I look at every post is every post is a test it's a test, it's just I'm taking a quiz. And sometimes I'll get 100%, I did really well. I aced that quiz. Other times I flunked that quiz, I didn't do well, and that's it. It doesn't mean you should delete the post, it doesn't mean that it didn't happen, you should actually leave it up and learn from what you just did, so that you can move forward and try and not make mistakes, the same mistakes that you might have made. And there's a chance that it had nothing to do with you. I've had posts where it got a terrible response and then I reposted that same exact post a year later, and it absolutely went fucking bonkers.

0:28:45.0 Jordan Syatt: Same exact post. So sometimes it has nothing to do with you, it's just the wrong time, wrong place. But either way, you're not as good at... You're not only as good as your last setback when it comes to social media posting at all, that's just another test. It's sort of like, if you have 20 tests or quizzes throughout your semester in school, you could get a zero on one and still probably ace the class, depending on the percentage of however much each test is relative to your grade, but if each test is equal, and you've got 20 tests over the course of a semester, at the end of the year...

0:29:22.0 Mike Vacanti: Brutal, brutal class. Brutal class. Twenty tests in a...

0:29:27.4 Jordan Syatt: Brutal class, you could still do super well.

0:29:28.8 Mike Vacanti: Yeah, yeah, two things. One, when you talk about each post being a test, the purpose of the test in that example is to make something that people engage with. And two, on the subject of self-talk, a practice used by therapists and clinical psychologists is to have... Someone who's struggling with self-talk any time you're negatively, like if you're berating yourself internally, grab a phone, leave a voice memo and talk to yourself as if you're your best friend. It might sound cliché, you may have heard this 500 times, but if you're really struggling with self-talk, do this, and talk to yourself like you are your best friend. What would you say if your best friend made the quote-unquote "mistake" that you just made? You suck, you're a piece of shit, you should quit? Probably not. I mean, I doubt most people would say that to their best friend. Say, "Hey, this wasn't

even that bad," you could maybe improve a little here and here, but you're being really consistent, you'd be much more encouraging and positive than if you're berating yourself, so give that approach a try.

0:30:35.8 Jordan Syatt: I also... Going on that front, I love the self-talk, like leaving yourself a voice memo, having a conversation with yourself, and I love the example that you just gave, the conversation because you didn't say number... You didn't say, "I'm a piece of shit or you're a piece of shit."

0:30:51.6 Mike Vacanti: You're amazing...

0:30:52.8 Jordan Syatt: You also didn't say, "You're the best. You're literally the best." It's like, "No, you're not." So don't talk yourself up in a way that's also horse shit. Like, "Okay, let's actually analyze what I did. To be fair, I only spent 15 minutes on the post. And like how good of a post, how good could it be if it's only 15 minutes? I've heard Jordan and Mike talk about how a lot of posts take three, four, five hours on Instagram, and I only spent 15 minutes objectively. And you know what, maybe it was actually closer to four minutes because the rest of the minutes I was actually just sort of screwing around and having a conversation, I wasn't really focused on it."

0:31:25.0 Jordan Syatt: So, be fully honest and have a real conversation with yourself. I would even maybe think about it... I've always had a best friend, this may be the first time I'll say this 'cause I'm just sort of thinking about it right now, sometimes for your best friend, you really talk them up, just talk them up, talk them up. Maybe if it's like your sibling or a spouse, someone who's like you really need them to be better for the relationship, and thinking about like, "Okay, I can have..." Maybe you have a really amazing best friend, I think like Mike and I, we could have a real honest conversation without trying to talk each other up, like we'd just be blunt about it. But if you are the type of person that's always just gonna talk up to your best friend and not be honest, then think about a sibling or a parent or a spouse, they're like, "Hey, we need to have a real sit down conversation and discuss what's going on here."

0:32:16.5 Mike Vacanti: Or even a client is a good one. Like someone who you really, really, really want to help.

0:32:23.8 Jordan Syatt: Yeah. Be your own client.

0:32:25.0 Mike Vacanti: Yeah, coach yourself. I love it. What else we got?

0:32:30.5 Jordan Syatt: Let's see.

0:32:34.5 Mike Vacanti: I had a concept if you don't have a question right there.

0:32:37.3 Jordan Syatt: Okay, go for it.

0:32:39.0 Mike Vacanti: Biggest things that we got wrong.

0:32:41.9 Jordan Syatt: Dude that's a great one. Why didn't you lead off with that one?

0:32:44.0 Mike Vacanti: I don't know, I just had it buried in my notes.

0:32:47.4 Jordan Syatt: Do you wanna start?

0:32:48.6 Mike Vacanti: I definitely can 'cause I have a few ideas, unless you have, excuse me,

anything jumping to mind?

0:32:53.3 Jordan Syatt: No.

0:32:56.1 Mike Vacanti: One of the biggest things I got wrong, and this one basically everyone got wrong, was the relationship between meal frequency and metabolism.

0:33:03.4 Jordan Syatt: Oh, wow, okay, you're going real like science myth... Okay, cool, yep.

0:33:09.6 Mike Vacanti: I don't... And we can take this all over, we can take it wherever we want to.

0:33:13.4 Jordan Syatt: So expand on that.

0:33:14.8 Mike Vacanti: We used to think that the thermic effect of food, which is a component of metabolism, was driven by how often you eat, and that if you are continually eating, you stoke the metabolic fiber and you burn more calories via the thermic effective of food, basically the calorie expenditure of digestion. And we found out that actually the total amount of food we eat, and somewhat the different types, like protein having a higher thermic effect than carbs and fats, but the total amount of calories we consume is what drives the thermic effect of food not meal frequency. So it doesn't matter if we're having one or two giant meals or six to seven small meals, if the total calories and macro nutrient intake are roughly the same, you're gonna be burning the same number of calories via digestion.

0:34:00.6 Jordan Syatt: To be fair, like... Yeah, you were wrong about that, but that's what you were taught. That's what we were taught in school and everything like... I'm laughing because I'm thinking... I wonder if we're at the point now, if we're aging ourselves in the industry by saying we used to think that because...

0:34:13.5 Mike Vacanti: We look like idiots. [chuckle]

0:34:17.6 Jordan Syatt: I have a strong feeling that a ton of people who listen to this podcast, they learned that as soon as they got into the industry, they were like, "Oh," and they just learned flat out that meal frequency doesn't really dictate metabolic rate, and so I'm picturing a lot of people who listen being like, "This is what we learned from day one."

0:34:41.7 Mike Vacanti: "You guys are idiots."

0:34:44.7 Jordan Syatt: Which is funny because back in the day, that was not what was taught. That's not... At all. Do you have anything from a business perspective, not like a science perspective, like any big mistakes?

0:34:57.6 Mike Vacanti: Jord, you know me, I'm not really a business man, most of my business successes were predicated on...

0:35:01.6 Jordan Syatt: You've just never made any business mistakes, you've just... [laughter] No mistakes.

0:35:09.1 Mike Vacanti: Well, my next two were related to direct abdominal training [laughter] and always trying to maintain too low of a body fat percentage, so. And those are both mistakes, by the way. Anything business-related, man, we just hit business so good and hard in that previous question, I was hoping we could have a little... After consuming all of those micronutrients of

business, I thought maybe we could enjoy some fitness ice cream talk, but...

0:35:46.7 Jordan Syatt: Okay. So it was, what? You said you have core train... Like ab training... And what was the other one?

0:35:50.6 Mike Vacanti: Direct ab training and trying to stay too lean for too long.

0:35:54.7 Jordan Syatt: Oh, that's a good one. I like that one a lot. Let's talk about that one.

0:36:00.4 Mike Vacanti: It's just, one, miserable, two, nobody cares, three, it's so hard to gain muscle when you're trying to maintain a super low body fat percentage, and it's important to remember that this number is gonna be different for everyone, and this look is gonna be different for everyone. You kinda need to go by how you as an individual feel. I can probably maintain slightly lower body fat levels than the average person without experiencing any negative downsides, any downside and energy lows any...

0:36:32.2 Jordan Syatt: Why is that? You're so good at that.

0:36:37.7 Mike Vacanti: I don't know. I actually don't even know if I'm that lean. You know what, you know what I wanna do after reading seven and a half chapters of Outlive, and that book club is still coming eventually, probably two, three episodes from now is get a DEXA, 'cause I'm very curious about my subcutaneous to visceral fat ratio and composition.

0:36:58.6 Jordan Syatt: Dude I bet you're... You think you're Sub-10%?

0:37:01.6 Mike Vacanti: No, absolutely not.

0:37:03.0 Jordan Syatt: Sub-15%?

0:37:08.6 Mike Vacanti: Yeah, yeah. Definitely.

0:37:09.1 Jordan Syatt: Sub-12%?

0:37:11.0 Mike Vacanti: Probably around there. Yeah, I wouldn't be surprised if I'm 12% or 13%, although with the high caffeine fast day yesterday, if I string together too many more of those, I might end up shredded like 2015 again, and watch out if that happens. [laughter] Do you have any thoughts on staying too lean for too long or just any general things you got wrong?

0:37:36.4 Jordan Syatt: Yeah, there's a lot. In terms of staying too lean for too long, I know you haven't had much of an issue with this, but personally, it exacerbates real disordered eating habits in me. And that's why I've stayed away from it for so long. There's a reason why the lowest I'll get is 145, which is probably about 11%-13% body fat in that range. Because I know for a fact as soon as I get lower than that, it's like thinking about food way too much. It consumes, even with all of the knowledge today, it's just like, nope. It's just not worth it. And I tried it a lot and it's just like, cool, no, I'm not. Whereas when I'm literally 147, 148, I don't think about food at all. It's very much like, am I hungry? Am I not hungry? There's something about once I get a certain level lower, it's just... That's what happens. So it is just not worth it for me in any way, shape, or form. Yeah. And the whole people don't really care, da da da da da. I also think, man, something that's so interesting that we're seeing now, sort of maybe aging ourselves again with this discussion, but not aging ourselves in terms of real age, but aging ourselves in terms of time in the industry. You and I were really involved in the industry early on when people would go through massive weight cuts and do all of this crazy shit just for a photo shoot for their fitness content.

0:39:12.8 Jordan Syatt: They would do 16-week insane cuts. But here's the thing, they wouldn't tell anyone about it. They wouldn't tell anyone they were cutting weight. They wouldn't tell anyone that they were going to do a photo shoot. This wasn't public information. All that we would see are super high-quality pictures of this person shredded to bits, men, and women. Just insane, insane leanness. And what they would do is they would bring a whole bunch of different outfits to the photo shoot and they would plan a whole bunch of different scenes and different places to go. So they would have all of this content where they could post it for three, six months, twelve months, whatever it is, and always appear to be that lean. Whereas now not only is that not common practice, it would be seen as fraudulent. It would be... It would be... You'd be looked down on immediately and people even talk about it now.

0:40:21.2 Jordan Syatt: People will say, "Oh, that person's only been posting pictures from when they were on stage in their bodybuilding show. But I haven't seen them do any videos recently and I haven't seen them post anything more recent." People are aware of it. And I think in... Where we are at this point in the industry, if you want to work with everyday people, I actually think you have a better chance of success not being unbelievably shredded to bits and just being open and honest about where you are and what your lifestyle looks like and what your happiest and healthiest physique looks like. I think you have a much better chance of building a great, great business as opposed to constantly trying to be shredded.

0:41:05.9 Mike Vacanti: I actually, this might surprise people. I agree with that. Though I think there's a... There's still a range that your body is still one of your best marketing tools, whether you want it to be or not. But I think that the 5% and maybe unnatural amounts of muscle, real steroid bodybuilder look doesn't appeal to as many general pop potential clients. However, someone who wants to lose weight, build muscle, gets stronger, feel better, is going to relate to you, is gonna respect you more as a coach, is gonna want to work with you more if you're 10%-15% rather than 30%-35%.

0:41:52.2 Jordan Syatt: Yeah. Correct. Yeah. That's no question.

0:41:56.2 Mike Vacanti: But there's a lot of Health at Every Size coaches. And by the way, that's actually an interesting, Atia gets to some of that in the book about metabolic syndrome in people who are... Basically the percentage of obese people who actually have good blood work versus the percentage of non-obese people who have bad blood work, which is pretty interesting. We'll get there.

0:42:22.9 Jordan Syatt: Yeah. I think that's the perfect example of playing to your audience and the Health at Every Size audience is they're not... Not only are they not looking to get super lean, they're often actively looking to go the exact opposite direction. So I think that actually highlights a really good example of if my target audience was 14-23-year-old dudes, then I better be shredded. I just better be shredded to bits if I really wanna target 14-23-year-old dudes because 14-23-year-old dudes, generally speaking, wanna be shredded, mainly because they think that's how they're gonna get girls. Ironically, it will not help them get girls, it will just get other dudes really interested in how they got shredded. Whereas now as I've gotten older, and it's... As I've gotten older and as I've progressed in my life, my target audience has changed, my target client has changed, it's now... And it has been for some time now, but moms and dads and just everyday people who they don't wanna get shredded. They're not interested in it. And I think now people... The average consumer is far more educated now than they were before. Actually, even Peter Attia posted something on his Instagram the other day about it, I thought it was really interesting. He posted a screenshot from a doctor's note.

0:43:57.0 Jordan Syatt: Basically a doctor had... This guy's son was going in to get his blood work done or something, and the doctor's note said, "Hey, this guy's father has done a lot of research on Peter Attia and actually knows a lot about lipid metabolism." And it's like the average consumer knows a lot more now. And I think the average consumer tends to know that they probably don't wanna be lean, unbelievably lean, and shredded all year because there have been enough people talking about how fucking awful it is and they've exposed what it's actually like. So I just... I think unless you are the 0.00001% that is just naturally shredded all the time, it's not worth your health, your sanity, or your business to try and do that. And on the other... On the other end, we're not saying get unbelievably overweight either, but we can sort of ping pong this because then the other question is, and I just got this the other day in my DMs, someone was asking, "Hey, I'm seriously, seriously overweight, but I wanna be a personal trainer because I've already lost a significant amount of weight and I've improved my relationship with food. Is it okay for me to be a personal trainer?" And it's like, absolutely, it's okay.

0:45:11.3 Jordan Syatt: I think it's going to be more difficult for you in the beginning because you still don't "look like you know what you're talking about". But sharing your story, sharing your journey, sharing your progress as you continue to get to your ultimate goal will also build people's trust and build more confidence in yourself. So it's not to say that you can't be a heavier coach, but I would also be very aware. There is a certain point where it's like if your goal is to help people lose weight, it helps a lot for you to look like you know how to do it.

0:45:46.6 Mike Vacanti: Yeah. Whether you actually know how to or not.

0:45:50.8 Jordan Syatt: Yeah.

0:45:52.3 Mike Vacanti: Meaning you can look out of shape and know what to do and be a great coach. But for better or worse, perception matters. Especially in this example.

0:46:03.9 Jordan Syatt: I think about it as a pitching coach. You can have a pitching coach for baseball who knows all of the mechanics and all of... Everything that they need to get their athlete to do. But if then that pitching coach tries to throw a strike down the middle and they throw like a 6-year-old girl, they throw with the same arm, same leg, and they just look so really fucking terrible, it's like no one's gonna be like, okay, well that's the pitching coach I need to hire just because based on what it looks like. They could have an amazing amount of knowledge and actually help you be an amazing pitcher. But if they don't know how to do it, it's a tremendous amount of perception involved.

0:46:42.6 Mike Vacanti: Yeah. A 100%. It's funny you brought that up about the doctor. Remember when I was going to see a cardiologist just wanted a heart checkup back in the fall, and I remember having this consult and being like, yeah, I'm interested in my ApoB, I wanna know my LP(a), I'm listing all these things and I remember talking to you after and you're like, do you think all these doctors are like, "Shit, we got another one who listens to Attia's podcast." [laughter]

0:47:10.3 Jordan Syatt: A 100% they do. Yeah. They're pissed. Especially because they might come back and say something like, "Oh yeah, your LDL's a little bit high." And the person's like, "Well, doesn't that not really matter as much as total ratio?" [laughter]

0:47:23.1 Mike Vacanti: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

0:47:23.6 Jordan Syatt: They have to... 'Cause listen, I think up until very recently, people have taken doctor's words at face value and like, you're the doctor. You're the boss. It is what it is. And now doctors are gonna start getting questioned a little bit and they probably don't like that.

0:47:38.5 Mike Vacanti: There's definitely an element of that. There's also just the way that the system's set up. Insurance covers some things and not other things. And he talks about medicine 2.0 versus medicine 3.0 and basically being reactive in a reactive system like we have now versus focusing more on prevention. And when I went and got this checkup, the nurses, the front desk lady, everyone was blown away. It's like we haven't seen some... A 35-year-old here in I don't even know how long. You just wanna... She's like I... One of the nurses was like, I really commend you. This is awesome that you're interested in this and in doing this, but the thought of like...

0:48:19.6 Mike Vacanti: And Attia talks about colon cancer screenings being a big one, and him thinking that that age should be much earlier than what it is now. And he talks about his personal experience of at 40 years old paying thousands of dollars out of pocket because basically the risk associated with having something at that age and the cost, it made sense, but it's not something that is standard practice in the American healthcare system right now, or I don't know in other countries. But yeah, it's... It'll be interesting to see if and when that shift takes place on a more macro level rather than just... Right now we have a bunch of individuals who are trying to improve and better their own health through cardio and strength training and nutrition and all of these things we know about sleep stress management. But if and when that bleeds into prevention being part of a bigger system.

0:49:11.0 Jordan Syatt: Yeah. Like trying to... As Attia says, and we'll sort of get into that book club, just little bits and pieces we got through it, but trying to... He says fast death awaits for no one and something about slow death, how just it... You're dying for a long time before it gets to a point in which you need the reactive stuff. So it's being aware of it from a very early age or for as early as you possibly can to try and take care of it.

0:49:38.4 Mike Vacanti: Yeah. The atherosclerosis that might end up causing heart attack at age 84 for you could start developing in your 30s and you can do something about that through diet and exercise.

0:49:52.6 Jordan Syatt: Yeah, that's exactly right.

0:49:54.0 Mike Vacanti: Thank you very much for listening. If you made it this far, please leave a five-star review on Spotify or Apple or wherever you're listening. We really appreciate it. Helps the podcast out a lot. Weekly episodes, we're coming every week.

0:50:12.7 Jordan Syatt: Pause. [laughter]

0:50:14.2 Mike Vacanti: Wow.

0:50:17.9 Jordan Syatt: We're retaining.

0:50:19.4 Mike Vacanti: Thank you very much.

0:50:19.5 Jordan Syatt: Every week. [laughter]

0:50:21.2 Mike Vacanti: Have a great day. We'll see you soon.

[music]