

**Primal Endurance and Self Awareness with Brad Kearns  
PMR-135**

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Tony: Hey, Paleo nation. I'm Tony Federico and you're listening to Paleo Magazine Radio, the official podcast of the original Paleo Lifestyle publication.

When I found out that I would be talking to Brad Kearns, former pro triathlete, host of the Primal Blueprint podcast, and co-author of Mark Sisson's new book, "Primal Endurance," I thought we'd be having a straightforward conversation about athletic performance, the mechanics of the cardiorespiratory system, and why chronic cardio is a bad idea. The conversation we actually had was much different, however, and much more interesting in my opinion. We covered a broad scope of subjects and dove deep into the areas of mindset, intuition, and awareness.

Brad has been working alongside Mark Sisson for many years, but he has his own unique and valuable voice within the Paleo primal space. His experience as a professional athlete, a parent, and an educator have given him valuable insights into his own mind and, by extension, the human condition as a whole. I really enjoyed this interview and I think you will too. Over the course of our conversation, Brad and I discuss the art of deciphering media messages about fitness, what we can and can't learn from gurus, why success by conventional standards does not guarantee happiness, the importance of balance and intuition, why improving your endurance doesn't necessarily require struggle and suffering, the fat burning benefits of training below your anaerobic threshold, how to do CrossFit right, and when you should stop, or even skip, a workout, but before we get started I want to take a quick moment to thank the sponsor of today's show, DNX Foods, makers of the DNX bar.

DNX bars deliver complete nutrition without compromises. No more sacrificing taste, convenience, or clean ingredients to get the fuel your body needs. DNX bars are protein rich meal replacements that combine grass fed bison meat with organic super foods, and they're a pleasure to eat. When I talked to DNX founder John Rooney, I asked him how he came up with the idea for DNX bars and his answer is pretty simple.

John: We said let's just envision that you're sitting down and you're eating a meal and what are the staples that you would include in that meal, and then we tried to go beyond that too.

Tony: When you look at the ingredients for DNX bar flavors, like the sweet potato pecan bison bar, you can see the John and his team did exactly what they set out to do, combining grass fed bison, organic sweet potatoes, organic pecans, and Paleo-friendly super foods like goji berries, organic ghee, and sacha inchi seeds, it's a complete meal in a form that's both portable and convenient. Right now you can get \$5 flat rate shipping on any order. Just go to [dnxbar.com](http://dnxbar.com) today to experience optimal nutrition without compromise for yourself.

All right, folks. It's time to check our egos and open our minds. Paleo Magazine Radio starts now.

All right, everybody. Welcome back to Paleo Magazine Radio. I'm here with Brad Kearns, co-author of "Primal Endurance" with Mark Sisson. Brad's also heavily involved in the Primal Blueprint Publishing group putting out some really awesome info. Brad, welcome to the show.

Brad: Thank you Tony. I'm glad to be here. You're doing a great job with your podcast. Podcasts are hot right now. I'm a huge fan myself. I'm cranking these things every morning when I go out and run with my dogs, and I feel like it's a great way to spread the message. It's nice. If we had to write a book about the ensuing 30 minutes or whatever it would be a lot harder than talking, so I'm glad to be talking to you, man.

Tony: What's your favorite podcast to listen to, or favorites, at the moment?

Brad: Oh, gee. Should I answer like Sarah Palin? "I listen to so many of them. They're also good. They're wonderful. It's great."

Tony: Just word soup, man.

Brad: "Can you name a couple?" "Well, um, um, yours, I like."

Tony: Thank you.

Brad: I like Tawnee Prazak's "Endurance Planet." I like "Freakonomics." I sometimes like Joe Rogan and Tim Ferriss, sometimes, some of their guests. You know what I also like is the "Primal Endurance" and "Primal Blueprint" podcast, because I'm trying really hard to be a good host and listening to myself over on a show where ... When you're doing a show, you're doing the show. You're not judging yourself and your performance, but I think it's a good practice to listen and absorb from a listener standpoint, so that's another thing I like to do. Tony Robbins just started a podcast so it's an indication of how popular the medium is, that he would jump into it, so that's interesting.

Sometimes I listen to Spanish language training as a podcast. It's kind of fun, and mixing it up, and there's also once that I really dislike. I'm not going to say any names, but just generally speaking, I think there's this trend in modern culture toward this guru type of positioning or branding and spewing out a lot of very, very questionable life advice and generally it trends toward getting to the finish line and achieving these great things and talking in big, bombastic terminology about yourself and your power and owning your goalsetting process and all this stuff.

I think one thing that we have to be really mindful of in modern life is staying in balance and keeping our priorities straight, and that means getting enough sleep rather than bragging about how little sleep you got and how you can do hacks and tricks and tips for short-circuiting the process of being healthy and fit and balanced, and one thing that came up to me just last week, I got

e-mails from a few friends of mine, actually, separately, about this New York Times article that said one minute of high-intensity exercise is as good or better than 45 minutes of [inaudible 00:06:58] pace, and this concept has been bantered about for a long time. It's nothing new and it's really compelling.

It's a great headline, to think of, hey, [inaudible 00:07:08] your stuff really hard for a minute will give you these fat burning and lean muscle development benefits and cognitive benefits and you'll end up better off on fitness parameters than the control group that went out there and walked and all that, but I think it's a sound bite taken out of context and then you have to look at the value of getting out.

For me I start my day in an empowering proactive manner by taking my dogs out on the trail, and they love it and they live for that morning and they know when it's time to go and they go crazy, and it's such a beautiful ritual to spend the time in nature every single day and I'm motivated by my dogs. I'd probably skip it if I didn't have dogs, I don't know, now and then, but you can't quantify that in terms of my blood lipids and comparing that to one minute of high-intensity, so I think the bigger question here is what makes you feel good, what are things that you value as part of your day, and maybe they're not going to be measured on a balance sheet of increasing your income or doing what not, so I want to put that potshot out there to answer your first question about what podcasts I like, because beware of listening to advice, because Confucius said, "Beware of giving advice. Wise men don't need it and fools won't heed it."

Tony: Nice. I appreciate your very honest and thorough answer to my question. I thought I was just going to get a couple titles of some podcasts, and you just really went there and had a nice meta-analysis of the podcasting space, and I think it's important for people to keep that in mind because it is appealing to follow the guru. It is tempting, I think, to just take their word and their expertise as gospel, but that's a dangerous situation and it's one that we've seen historically that's led people to problems and getting into a bad place when you don't use your own wisdom and your own intuition and your own brain to discover what works for you, and of course other people can offer advice, but ...

Brad: You know the YouTube sensation Casey Neistat, the young filmmaker that puts up a cool video every day and he's got a huge following, I think mostly of young people? One of his videos-

Tony: I must be getting old because I don't know who he is.

Brad: Yeah, yeah. He's interesting because he just produces really clever content. One of them is snowboarding through a snowstorm through the streets of New York City, and he does around the world traveling vignettes on YouTube. He is a very good filmmaker, and one of his films is titled "Nobody Knows Anything," and he's just giving a message to young people to say the

quicker you understand and appreciate that the less time you'll waste trying to adhere to the advice from gurus and career experts, and I remember ...

My career has been really emphasizing writing. I've become a writer and I've enjoyed it for a long time and just stumbled into it. I wasn't formally trained or anything, but I've written a ton of books today, and I remember on occasion going to seminars with a known writer who has credentials who's written a bestseller or whatever and they'll stand up there and whatever advice they're trying to give off, it comes off as pandering because they're so successful and you're not, so they send this message to the audience like, "You're a loser unless you do it my way," and I walked away discouraged and then I realized later you have to be true to yourself and your own strengths and accept your weaknesses and moderate them, but play to your strengths, whatever they are, and that includes following your passions and deciding what career is going to work for you rather than listening to the experts or second-guessing yourself because of messages from society like, "This will never work."

Tony: How do you balance that awareness and, like you mentioned, the video, nobody knows anything, and just having a consciousness about your own thought process and your own thinking and the nature of reality, which is that, you're really just scratching the surface, how do you balance that with being in a position of, I guess I'm not going to say giving advice, but I'm going to maybe say offering strategies and offering advice. How do you, I guess, wrap your mind around those two competing paradigms, I guess you could say?

Brad: Yet, good question, Tony. I've got an answer for you, man.

Tony: Awesome.

Brad: It reminds me of my days as an athlete, a triathlete, and trying to make it on the circuit and training really hard, and this is way back in the late 80s, early 90s, when there wasn't a huge body of information available. There wasn't 25 books you could order. There wasn't even coaches or a lot of resources for the triathletes specifically, so what we did was we were on an information seeking quest and would talk to all kinds of experts in the three different sports.

For example, you'd talk to a running coach, you'd talk to cycling, you'd talk to an experienced cyclist, you'd talk to top swimmers and try to piece together all the various information that you were exposed to, and I was an information hound and I absorbed as much as I possibly could, and I would listen to the lowliest amateur competitor who seemingly wouldn't have anything of value to tell me because he was slower at racing than I was, and that kind of stuff my mind was open. I'd listen to everybody, and then what you have to do is take that all home and see what resonates, and I remember getting coached by a very prominent leading coach of the time and having it be a complete disaster.

Over a short period of time I realized, "Wow, this absolutely doesn't work for me. This is horrible," but it was really a growth experience because I realized that my sense, my basic intuition of how to train my body properly was way, way, way more valuable than listening to one of the world's leading experts, and to be able to own that insight is really great because that's building more and more confidence in yourself and your own voice, especially younger impressionable people who are trying to make a career or make a go of it in sports and getting misled by the forces of culture, and it's really great to step back and say, "Hmm, this doesn't feel right to me," or, "Wow, this feels like I'm called or compelled to do this even though people are telling me don't try it, don't do it, it'll never work."

Tony: How do you check in with yourself, because you mentioned what resonates. How do you know that something resonates? What's the signs or the signals for you, because I think self-knowledge is a tricky thing, and I think we are apt to self-deception, at times, and rationalization, and we can convince ourselves that maybe something is working even when it isn't, so how do you get down to your truth when you're navigating maybe a training program or just really any aspect of life that requires you to make a decision?

Brad: I lack self-awareness, so I can't answer. I'm sorry. What I just said might not even work for me. I don't know. I'm being funny, but it is a really tough question because, like you said, you can get into this frenzy, especially when you go, go, go, Type A, goal oriented, driven person, to think, "This is my calling. This is it. This is great. It's going to work and I'm going to force it to work because I have such a strong will and a strong work ethic," and that's something that right now I'm reflecting on myself, actually. I'm trying to make this transition from a Type A personality to a Type B, because now I hit the age of 50 and it's sort of a milestone where I'm like, I made it this far without ...

I don't drink. I don't drink caffeine. I'm thinking of starting to drink and starting to drink coffee, I don't know, just for fun, for the next 50 years, see what happens, but also take those skills and personality attributes that "worked well" for me to date and revisit those and think, maybe there's things that I could throw away that no longer serve me that maybe served me to a certain point, and in my athletic experience it was like I put my heart and soul into trying to succeed as a professional triathlete, and it was a tremendous amount of time, energy, and heartache and failure and processing really hard life lessons and having these great growth experiences, but when you walk away from such an intense experience there's a lot of things that you need to leave behind in order to be healthy, in order to continue growing as a person and evolving, and one of them is this over competitiveness in your disposition as a person, because it doesn't lead to a balanced life.

I just read an incredibly well-written and deep exposé, practically, on Tiger Woods. It's in ESPN magazine. You can search Google for it. It's very lengthy and it talks about how his life fell apart after the passing of his father

and some of these psychological insights about what was making him click and what was making him go off the deep end and where he stands today as a [inaudible 00:16:50] and confused and all the judgments that the author's making, but it was interesting to read because you realize to be the best in the world at something and to be so dominant under such a high-pressure stage, not all those attributes play well in the enjoyment of daily life and the birds singing outside your balcony and the walk that you take in the morning or the general satisfaction of making a small contribution that nobody notices or is not covered on television, such as being there for your kid at the soccer game or helping your neighbor out or whatever it is that people do that make them feel good inside but they don't get applause for.

Tony:

Yeah, I remember ... I forget what the name of the book was. It was before Malcolm Gladwell's "Outliers." It predated that, and it was getting into some of the same information about this 10,000 hour rule and what it takes to be masterful at something. What does it take to be elite? What does it take to be the best? I think I was listening to it as a book on tape because I had a long commute when I was living in Orlando a few years ago and I have quite a bit of time in the car and I wanted to try to be productive with that time, so I'm listening to this book and it's talking about how there's these different case studies, and one of them was Tiger Woods and how his dad trained him at an early age, so you go through this whole book and you get this feeling of, "Oh, wow. I wish I had been trained from the age of two to swing a golf club," or do whatever, really, because you can apply it to chess or computer programming.

There's numerous examples, but I seem to recall at the end of the book it throws you this curveball and they're like, well, there's potentially a price to pay for this, and it really touched on what you just said, which is, okay, you might be the best in the world at golf, but what are you giving up in order to do that? I think that that's one of the things that I've tried to keep in mind really doing anything, whether it's podcasting or careerwise. It's not necessarily about having the most money. It's not necessarily about having the biggest audience. It's having a really balanced, enjoyable, fulfilling life, and that might be defined by other parameters. That may be defined by other, less clear, metrics, maybe some more subjective ones, so yeah.

That's an important thing to keep in mind, and I think in this particular space, in the Paleo world, maybe health is the thing that's put up on the pedestal, and what is ultimate health mean? Is it eating this perfectly pristine, no cheats, no treats, no deviations diet, or is it having good relationships and enjoying food and being connected to the things that you do, so I think that's a harder thing to get across because it is a little slipperier. It's not a clear-cut prescription, but hopefully that's maybe the direction that we're going as a movement, and I certainly see that idea, that idea of finding out, "Well, what's your balance?" is something that you guys do in the primal world, and just looking through your book, and I do want to tie into the "Primal Endurance" book, you mention things like balance as being some of the key principles, and chilling out, being intuitive, so how do you connect that? How

do you connect these lessons to the work that you did with "Primal Endurance"?

Brad: Oh, yeah. You had me on your podcast to talk about, market my new book, "Primal Endurance." How exciting. So glad to be on the show.

Tony: That thing.

Brad: Yeah, and I guess we could reveal to the listeners, Tony, that, what, a few weeks back we did a nice show and the recording malfunction and you said, "Hey, man. Sorry, my recording malfunctioned," and I said, "No problem, Tony. Guess what? I have an automatic backup recording. When I use Skype, I'll send you the file," and then I sent you the file and it was corrupted so we were like, "Okay, I guess that's an omen," and then we started today.

We said, "You know what? The second one will probably be better," so so far, I've had a great time teeing off with that philosophical discussion, and then yeah, getting back to the book and, of course, very closely tied into what we've been talking about is you have this endurance scene which is so popular nowadays and there's so much energy and excitement with people in comfortable modern life with all the sedentary forces pursuing these wonderfully compelling endurance goals and all the energy is great except for the fact that the prevailing approach is very easily turned into something that's compulsive, [inaudible 00:21:31], and out of balance in certain ways, both spiritually, psychologically, and also physically, with the overstressed patterns of the ill-advised training programs, so we come out of the gate trying to present this big picture idea that this does not have to be a struggle and suffer-fest where whoever tortures themselves the most will be the most successful on the racecourse.

In fact, we make this point emphatically in telling stories about the great athletes of all time in the endurance sports where those who are able to see the light and pursue balance and emphasize rest and recovery rather than just push that gas pedal down all the way succeeded wildly, where people who are just blindly going out there and burning up energy and consuming more energy afterward and then burning up more energy, they get locked in this pattern of chronic exercise and carbohydrate dependency accordingly, so there is a better way, and that's what the book about, is slowing down to go faster is a nice soundbite, which is literally true, and it goes to training your aerobic system. Your fat burning systems become more efficient and that happens at low heart rates, and when you do that properly your slower paced training will translate into faster competitive performance.

Tony: Just to touch on the thing that you mentioned about this whole running community and some of the ethos and some of the practices, the go go go, the excessive food consumption and excessive calorie burning, I think a lot of people see that and they say, "That's not for me," and I think that's a big part of some of the response in the Paleo community, to say, "No, I'm not going to do cardio. I'm going to get out of that chronic cardio state. I'm just

going to maybe [sprint 00:23:30] or I'm just going to do CrossFit water," or whatever the case may be, but I have to say for me personally there's a special kind of benefit, and maybe this ties back to what you were saying before, going on walks with your dog, et cetera, but this past weekend I went out on a trail run.

I was probably out there for about 50 minutes. I'd say I was comfortable in terms of my pace the entire time. I felt great for the rest of the day. Just being out in nature, moving my body for that amount of time, and that might be considered chronic cardio by some people's definitions, but I don't know. It really seemed to work for me, so what do you think about bringing people who identify with the Paleo way of doing things, bringing them into the fold, so to speak, when it comes to endurance activities?

Brad: Simple answer is, when you do endurance activities at a comfortable heart rate it's very health promoting and there's almost nothing you could do better for your health, is to get out there and move for as long periods of time as you have to devote, so your 50-minute cardio session in the morning or your two hour hike on the weekend or whatever you have in you, you can hike the Pacific Crest Trail all summer and go hundreds of miles on a backpacking trip. All those things are wonderful.

The problem, when it becomes chronic and health destructive, is related to the intensity level going a bit too fast to actually create a nourishing, energizing, and fat burning workout, and there's a cutoff point called the maximum aerobic heart rate, and this is the point where maximum aerobic benefits occur with a minimal amount of anaerobic stimulation and minimal stimulation of stress hormones and lactic acid production in the muscles, so when you exceed that maximum aerobic heart rate ... Not maximum heart rate. That's your maximum heart rate. This is the maximum aerobic heart rate. When you exceed that number, and it's relatively low number, it's a very comfortable pace, so when you drift above that, even though it's not super difficult, it's not like you're doing intervals or anaerobic threshold, hard, hard, it's just a little bit too hard and it changes the metabolic effect of the workout so that instead of burning primarily fat, when you exceed maximum aerobic heart rate we talk about the black hole as the heart rate zone where you're not getting the ideal benefits and you're trending toward chronic.

When you get into that black hole what you're doing is you're stimulating a bit of stress hormone production, you're stimulating a bit of lactic acid production in the muscles, and you're teaching your body to become good at burning glucose instead of fat, so in the aftermath of these workouts that are slightly too difficult, again, they're not brutal, they're not knockdown, drag out interval session, they're just a normal general workout, might even feel fine like you're doing a spin class and you get off the bike and you feel buzzed because stress hormones are circulating in your bloodstream and giving you that endorphin rush, but what's happening metabolically is you are increasing your demand for dietary carbohydrate and your craving for dietary carbohydrate in the hours after the workout and you're shutting off fat

burning accordingly because the metabolic effects of a workout are very powerful on your metabolism in general.

When you do a high intensity workout, Dr. Phil Maffetone cites that it can affect your metabolism for 48 hours afterward, up to 72 hours afterward, so if you do a high sugar burning workout and then you do another one two days later and then you do another one two days later because that's your pattern, you will turn into a sugar burner around the clock so you'll have a difficult time managing body fat goals because you'll constantly be craving sugar, eating sugar, producing insulin, and all of the messaging that Paleo people know so well that our health compromising effects of a high carbohydrate diet. Your training patterns will drive that very strongly if you train incorrectly.

Tony: Sorry if anyone out there is listening to this and I'm throwing you under the bus, but there's a new fitness facility, I guess you could say, that's popping up quite widespread as far as their distribution and franchising out in multiple locations, and their central precept is that you want to train really at that almost maximal heart rate zone for as much time as you can for an entire hour, and they offer these hour-long workouts that are split up between rowing, running, and circuits, and the selling point is you're getting this metabolic aftereffect by going in a certain training zone, and you're getting this after burn that's going to burn calories and help you get to your goals, and that sounds kind of like the opposite of what you're saying.

Brad: Yeah, that's a good point to bring up, because what happens is we have this sound bite taken out of context, like that one minute is better than 45 minutes thing, so if you look at exercise physiology and measure the effect of a one-hour high-intensity workout on the body irrespective of any other variables, you're going to get a profound fitness benefit from that because the body likes to be challenged and trained and it will come back stronger from the stress of a one-hour workout, so if you put people in a laboratory going slow or going hard and do a six-week test, the people going hard are probably going to get more fitness gains, but the bigger question is, how does this extremely high stress work out fit into my lifestyle pattern that is probably hectic and stressed and lacking sleep, lacking rest and recovery, lacking stress rest balance? A

Then you have a [inaudible 00:29:36] yourself up for high-risk exercise habits because the one hour at high-intensity is so stressful, and I will talk to the CrossFit community and say primal and Paleo love CrossFit, because it's the caveman workout. It's varied. It's balanced. It develops functional fitness. It uses full body functional sweeping movements instead of isolating yourself in a machine and doing stupid stuff in the gym, so there's so many great benefits to it, but there is a trend I identify where people are so pumped on it that they're going in there four, five, six times a week and conducting a high intensity workout and getting buzzed on those stress hormones and getting on sort of an exercise high that is destined for a crash and burnout pattern because the body does not like to be overstressed without sufficient rest.

If you decide to go do that one-hour workout pattern that you're describing, my recommendation, and this is in line with what's in "Primal Endurance" for endurance athletes, is you do it during certain periods of the year and you do it very infrequently. Let's say you're spending the first few months of the year building an aerobic base and doing all of your workouts at low intensity to get strong and get your connective tissue right and get your oxygen processing and your fat burning right without the interruption of high stress workouts and then you decide in April, "Okay, I'm going to go down and sign up for a few of those badass sessions," you will thrive nicely when you push yourself hard and then give yourself time to recover.

If it's one workout a week is the magic number, or if you're really fit maybe it's two workouts a week and a whole ton of rest and walking and nourishing workouts and peddling the bicycle for 20 minutes at really low heart rate while you're watching TV and that's all you do that day, those are the kind of training patterns that have a high probability of success, and the ones that are high probability of burnout failure are often driven by well-meaning guides who are there to push you and kick your butt.

I went through this with spinning because I worked for that company for a couple years and we were trying to encourage spinning instructors around the world to offer classes that stayed at low heart rate for the whole class, but the thing is, when someone walks into a spinning class with their towel and their water bottle, they want to get their ass kicked and they want to rock out to that music and forget their worries and fears and anxieties in life and just pound those pedals and get off sweaty and buzzed on stress hormones, so that is sort of like chasing a short-term drug high rather than deciding to improve your diet by eating healthy and filling your cupboards with Paleo-approved foods and throwing away the bad stuff.

Tony: Yeah, and I think you really hit the nail on the head. It's more of an exercise as a drug, exercise as a therapy, not necessarily exercise as a piece of my overall self-care toolkit. I certainly, in the fitness world as a personal trainer and group exercise instructor, know how hard it is to get people to work out, I don't want to see easily, but with this focus you allude to in the book, periodized versus consistent exercise programming where you might have a hard workout or maybe one or two hard workouts in the week, during a particular part of the year, even, versus getting your butt absolutely kicked day in and day out.

Brad: Yeah, I appreciate you bringing up that tidbit about consistency, because we use that word so freely as athletes, fitness enthusiasts, saying, "Yeah, my goal is to be more consistent. That's going to be the secret for me. That's going to be the answer. All I need to do is be consistent and then I will succeed with my goals and I can't miss any workouts like I did last time," and honestly, it's complete bullshit, and I'm saying that from the bottom of my heart, having learned the hard way and striving so hard to be consistent during my days as a professional competitor, thinking that was going to get

me the edge over my competition was to just do a little bit more and be a little bit more serious, devoted, disciplined, focused.

All those things, I don't think those are weaknesses in the fitness community, even in the Paleo community, like you mentioned, with the dietary practices. I think the audience here is highly motivated, enthusiastic about health, passionate about health, willing to do what it takes to be healthy, so we might even all be better off by taking a deep breath and exhaling and saying, "Hey, I'm going to give myself a break. I'm going to allow myself to skip workouts when I'm not feeling 100% strong. I'm going to allow myself to curtail the workout right in the middle of it, even at the disappointment of the instructor at the front of the class and saying, 'Hey, I'm out of here, man, because this is my number right now. Twenty-four minutes is all I need today,'" and have that more sensitivity, that more intuitive connection where you're making decisions that are aligned with, for example, your subjective sensation of your energy level, your motivation level, and your health each day.

Your workout difficulty should be aligned with the subjective scores. Let's say 1 through 10 scale I'm feeling a 6 on my energy, a 5 on my a motivation, and a 7 on my health, then you go do a workout that's a 5 or a 6 rather than a 10 because it's Tuesday and you're supposed to meet the gang at the track to do a high-intensity interval session. Same with if you're feeling a 1 or 2 in your energy and motivation. The sign is to pull the plug, man. Go back to sleep and kick back and put your feet up and read a book, and people are reluctant to do that because they've bought into this idea that consistency is the key to success, and I think it comes from, in other areas of life, like if you're trying to get through law school and pass the bar you should probably show up to class every day.

If you want to get a promotion at work you should probably turn in all your expense reports on time and your evaluations and your summaries of the audit that just occurred before [inaudible 00:36:00] otherwise you're a slacker, but in sports and fitness, maybe being a slacker is a really productive formula to become more intuitive, more connected, less consistent, and by doing so getting better and better results because you're not bottoming out from over stress patterns. You're allowing yourself to rest and rejuvenate.

Tony: Yeah, that's such a great message, and I'm just thinking to myself how often I did not follow that intuitive knock where, for example, I was feeling like I was getting sick and I'm like, "Well, I plan on doing sprints today, so by God, I'm going to do sprints," and then I get hit with the flu or whatever the case may be. It's hard for us, anything, to do that, and what I think is, at least in my perspective, playing out is an imposition of our mind and our mental way of dealing with things, which likes linear progressions and it likes consistency and it likes very predictable, straight, dividable paths versus an organic thing, an organic system, our natural body, and it's like if you have a plant and you wanted the plant to grow you don't just dump bags and bags of fertilizer on

the plant and think that you're going to get a tomato in a day versus two months.

It just doesn't work, but because it is our body we kind of crack the whip and we think that we can just force it to do what we want, and that wanting is coming from a place that's very different than what the body is able to do or maybe in its own way wants to do. Do you recommend the subjective check in, like you said, like okay, I'm at a 6, or a 4, 10, or whatever, versus maybe some of these emerging objective measures like heart rate variability and things like that?

Brad: Well, there's a place for technology, maybe not as big a place as people make it. That might mean I'm just an old guy who's bewildered at all this. In the old days there was not even a heart rate monitor and we just felt things out and we did pretty well accordingly, and now you have wattage meters and heart rate monitors and you have the Fitbit thing which I don't even really know what it is, I just hear that word all the time where I think it's telling you how many calories you're burning and how many steps you're taking all day.

These things can be powerful tools if you use them to your advantage, or they can be revealing signs of your obsessive-compulsive personality where you're just tracking all this data like you're a robot rather than a living, breathing human being, so heart rate variability, in particular, I think is really valuable and really cool and I'm a big fan. I've been doing it for two years now straight and it gives a deeper window into the functioning of your autonomic nervous system and your balance between parasympathetic and sympathetic.

Sometimes we can be fooled by the fight or flight hormones that circulate in our bloodstream and make us feel rested, energized, motivated, wonderful, and it's because we are in a high stress pattern of life and we require a little bit of intuitive restraint even though we feel great, so I felt like, especially in my career as a racer, the highest evolution of my decision-making in training came when I applied reasoning to my instincts. Animals have instinct. My dog will chase a squirrel no matter what, even if she's hungry, exhausted, and has a hurt foot.

As humans we have the ability to reason with our instinct and I call that intuition, so what you do is first of all you have to train by how you feel, and you hear that all the time, and if you feel a sore throat you shouldn't exercise and if you feel great you can go hard, but there's another level beyond that, which is that intuitive reflection where you can maybe discern whether you're in a high stress lifestyle pattern and you feel great because your emotions are running wild because you're so angry at what's happening at work and so you're taking it out on the roads and doing a fast 10 miler instead of having a massage and a yoga class. That's the next breakthrough, is to say, "Well, I feel great but I still should back it off anyway."

Tony: Brad, I think that that's a great way to wrap our call today, and maybe for all those listening to this, take 10 deep breaths and find your nearest yoga mat. Glad we got the redo, and hopefully the recorder worked this time around.

Brad: Tony, thanks a lot. I love Paleo Radio and I'm so honored to be a part of your program lineup. I hope people enjoy it, then come over and listen to the "Primal Endurance" podcast and I would love to connect on that level, so glad to be on, man.

Tony: That was Brad Kearns, host of the "Primal Blueprint" podcast and co-author of "Primal Endurance." You can learn more about Brad and all of his Brad adventures by going to his website, [bradkearns.com](http://bradkearns.com). On next week's show we are going to get moving with Mobility WOD creator Kelly Starrett. Here's a preview.

Kelly: I was fitter than all my friends, but in the scheme of things I had such big, big gaping holes in my physical education. I remember even having a conversation with my mom after I was in this. I was like, "Mom, how come I wasn't in gymnastics or dance? Didn't you love me?" and she was like, "What? What are you talking about?" I was like, "I should have been in dance, Mom," and she's like, "You were a big kid. I don't think you would have thrived in gymnastics." I was like, "I was supposed to be a gymnast. I'm a tiny dancer," and all of those things came about as a continuation of this obsession about mechanics personally as a way of understanding performance.

Tony: To find out more about K-Star and how he revolutionized the mobility world you'll have to tune into next week's show, but until then you can check out our full archive of Paleo Magazine Radio episodes on [paleomagonline.com](http://paleomagonline.com). While you're there, be sure to check out some of the great articles we have on the site, like a reason one written by Megan Patiry titled "Posture, Digestion and Dining on the Floor." In the article, Megan brings attention to the movement traditions of India and Asia and how the position of your body before, during, and after a meal can have a significant impact on how well you digest your food. I've been experimenting with this lately and I can tell you that Paleo food tastes a lot better when you enjoy it in a full on Grok squat.

Once again, I'd like to thank the sponsor of today's show, DNX Foods. I'm all out of DNX bars at the moment and will be taking them up on that \$5 flat rate shipping offer. I'd also like to thank you guys and gals, our listeners on this wild Paleo-ish ride. I know I don't stick to the script very often and I appreciate your willingness to go where few Paleo podcast listeners have gone before, which is completely off the rails and into the weeds of this incredible human experience. Paleo Magazine Radio is brought to you by the Paleo Media Group. Our show music features the song "Light It Up" by Morgan Heritage and Jo Mersa Marley. Paleo Magazine Radio is produced by me, and on behalf of everyone at Paleo Magazine, thank you for listening.

