

**Spiritual Exploration, Business Acumen, and Paleo Edibles
with Johg Ananda and Shannon Drake of Jambo Superfoods
PMR #147**

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Tony Federico: Hey Paleo Nation, I'm Tony Federico and you're listening to Paleo Magazine Radio, the official podcast of the original Paleo lifestyle publication. (singing)

Based in northern California Jambo Superfoods has made waves in the paleo community and beyond by bringing the world's first paleo certified cannabis edible to the marijuana marketplace. Earlier this year I interviewed the founders of Jambo, Shannon Puma Drake and Johg Ananda, and we discussed their personal and professional lives. It was an enlightening conversation to be sure. But before we go any further, I'd like to warn anyone who doesn't want hear adults talk about pot, that they might not want to listen to today's show. Alternatively, if you have kids in the car and you'd rather not have that conversation with them, now would be a good time to check out just about any other episode of Paleo Magazine Radio.

If you're still here however, I'm going to assume that you're game to get into this discussion, and because it's a two part interview that spans an entire two hours, I'm going to cut right into the chase. In part one, we're talking to Shannon about her former career as a fashion marketer, later starting her first company, Give Me The Dirt, how she first learned about paleo from a biological anthropology professor, the impact of witnessing her father's battle with lung cancer, overcoming chronic migraines using cannabis recreationally, medically, and as a tool for personal development, resurrecting the wisdom of the ancients, using breath work to master your body, and how she found her inner jungle cat through meditation, visualization, and plant medicine.

We'll have a short intermission and then we'll get right into our second interview with Johg Ananada, where we discuss growing up in Florida, working for his dad's plumbing company, starting a startup, failing and starting again, how he turned an idea into a business in a single weekend, why asking yourself the question can you sell it is more important for an entrepreneur than can you make it. Why Tim Ferris' Four hour week worked, but took more time, money, and energy than Johg ever had imagined, the irony of medical cannabis products that are full of sugar and processed ingredients, and how he's navigating his way through the complex web of marijuana laws and regulations in order to bring value to the lives of his customers, employees, and himself.

But before we get started I want to take a quick moment to thank a brand new sponsor of Paleo Magazine Radio, Healthy Human, makers of the world's healthiest cups, tumblers, and water bottles.

Healthy Human's line of drinking cups was voted 2015 Best New Product by Paleo Magazine readers and I'm sure being BPA free, phthalate free, lead free, and certified paleo friendly helped. But Healthy Human co-founder Natalie Shultz' attention to detail probably didn't hurt either. When she set to work designing the Healthy Human line she

considered every detail, including one frustrating aspect of conventional water bottles.

Natalie Shultz: You would have a different size lid for every water bottle.

Tony Federico: While it'll probably be a lot easier to just do things the way every other bottle manufacturer did, Natalie wasn't willing to accept that.

Natalie Shultz: Every single Stein that we sell the lid is interchangeable.

Tony Federico: Certified paleo friendly and interchangeable lids, two of the many reasons why Healthy Human makes drinking all of your favorite beverages better. You can find Healthy Human products in stores nationwide, as well as on their website, healthyhumanlife.com.

All right Paleo Nation, it's time to, hey Jambo, Jambo, Paleo Magazine Radio starts now. (singing)

Hey everybody. Welcome back to Paleo Magazine Radio. I'm here with Shannon Puma Drake. She's the founder of Give Me The Dirt. It's a line of paleo friendly personal care, some really awesome stuff that I've had the pleasure to try. Shannon, welcome to the show.

Shannon Drake: Thank you. I'm glad to be here.

Tony Federico: Let's go ahead and just kind of get into your story. We're going to air this as a two part episode, because you and your partner, Johg Ananda, are going to be featured back to back, but I really want to just focus on you for this particular episode and all the stuff that you've done. Real quick, for people who aren't familiar, let's just get some common ground here. Give Me The Dirt, could you tell us a little bit about it?

Shannon Drake: Yeah. I started The Dirt as an alternative to all of the better than mainstream but not quite good enough personal care items that I was using a couple of years ago. I've been in the paleo sort of lifestyle for about eight years now. I first learned about it in college from my biological anthropology teacher of all people.

Tony Federico: Oh nice. Well played.

Shannon Drake: Yeah, he was a really cool dude, like blond dreadlocks but wore a suit to class every day, a good little contrast there. But when you start eating super clean and having a really intentional lifestyle, you start to notice not just your food but all the products that you're putting on and around your body, and what are those made out of, because your skin absorbs they say up to 60% of what you put on it, so it's just as nearly as important as what you eat. When I would flip over my products while I was using them, because I don't know about you, but when I take a shower or brush my teeth, I kind of like mindlessly to read.

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Tony Federico: Yeah, reading. That's the reading material, yeah, totally.

Shannon Drake: Yeah, yeah. One day I'm brushing my teeth and I'm reading my "healthy" toothpaste and it had some funky ingredients in it. I felt a little betrayed. They were telling me that this was such a good wholesome product, but it had known inflammatory ingredients in it. So it spurred me to take my hobby of making my own products and turn it into a business.

Tony Federico: Let's talk about some of the things that you currently make with The Dirt. The one that really stands out to me is the tooth powder. I tried some of it and it kind of reminded me flavor-wise, I don't know if you've had those little root beer candies way back in the day. It had that little, I don't know, maybe just something about the spice blend. Anyway, what I'm saying is it tasted really good and it wasn't ... If you think about powder on your teeth, that might seem unpleasant, but it wasn't. Can you talk a little bit about the tooth powder product specifically?

Shannon Drake: Yeah, the tooth powder is kind of what made us famous. You're not the only person to think it tastes like soda. We get a lot of people saying, yeah, it's like chai tea or one person said Coca Cola. I was like, "I don't know if I can use that for advertising for my demographic, but I understand what you're saying. It's really tasty." The tooth powder is great because if you're looking for a clean product it is like the cleanest thing you can find. We use only food grade bentonite clay with really great herbs that are good for your oral health, no sweeteners at all, and no fillers. There's no liquid to make it into a paste. Your saliva naturally makes it into a liquid. It's really efficient. One six month jar lasts six months, just like we say. If you travel a lot it's great because you don't have to take it out to go through TSA, which is a big benefit for all the business entrepreneur types out there.

Tony Federico: Yeah, because otherwise you're left with those little travel size toothpaste, and those are all generally the sodium lauryl sulfate embalming agent kind of toxic junk toothpaste. You mention that the stuff that you put on your body is maybe as important as what you put in your body. I think that that's a point that people don't really absorb, no pun intended, because we at least in the Paleo community are very focused on the ingredient label on our foods, and maybe though, if we're not as fastidious about in reading the ingredients on our body care products, we might be really missing an important part of the equation, especially if you're in a shower and your skin is hot and there's water, it's kind of making the absorption even more efficient. We're putting stuff on our body with the assumption that it's safe. We're putting stuff in our mouths that we know we absorb sublingually in a second. I can say to my mind, great, but sometimes verbally it doesn't work out so well.

We know we're absorbing these compounds but we assume they're safe. I think that that's a big assumption. People might think that the

FDA, as questionable as it is about food, they are actually regulating the food ingredients to a certain extent. But as far as I'm aware, they're not really paying the same kind of attention, if any attention at all, to products that are intended to be used topically. Is that something that you can speak to?

Shannon Drake: Yeah, there is basically zero regulation of cosmetic ingredients in the United States. In Europe they have much more stringent regulations than we do. It's really up to the consumers who inform themselves and read the labels because at least on food you have to some sort of big brother looking over your shoulder where they can't put loads of arsenic in your food. But you can easily put lead in your lipstick to make it more opaque. You can put all kinds of weird chemicals into cosmetics. A lot of these weird chemicals they end up in very visible results, like they might erase your wrinkles or help with sun spots, but what's a side effect of that? The accumulation of these products in addition to just living in very chemically loaded environments, it adds up over a lifetime. There are few things in life that we have complete control over, but what we put on and in our bodies is one of them. I find it to be something that's easily improvable in your life.

Tony Federico: Absolutely. Just to kind of back track a little bit, you mentioned you first were exposed to paleo by your biological anthropology professor, the suited dreadlocked gentleman. Was that something that you were already a little bit primed to kind of pick up on? Because plenty of people hear the message, "Be careful about what you eat. Be mindful of what you put on your body," but it's not really sinking in. Why do you think that sunk into you? What really kind of set the stage for you to even be open to the idea of paleo and what was your lifestyle before?

Shannon Drake: I was definitely primed for it. I'd say my family was very outdoors-y so I always had a really deep connection with nature and the ways of the natural world. But when I was 17 my dad was diagnosed with lung cancer. That was due to many factors but some of them being, he was sprayed with Agent Orange in Vietnam, he smoked and he was a carpenter, so a lot of environmental factors went into causing this cancer in his body which it really opened my eyes to how our environment affects our health. Before I went paleo I ate like mainstream healthy. I had salads every once in a while and I had the brown rice pasta and I shopped at Trade Joes which is a little health food store out in California.

But I as soon as I heard the word paleo diet after being in this biological anthropology class and learning about how the hominids have evolved and how their diet had changed, something in my brain just said that makes sense, that makes a lot of sense. We should look into that. I spent a good two or three months just reading all of the information I could find on it. At the time there wasn't much information. It was very very new back then, eight or nine years ago. It's hard to keep count

now.

Tony Federico: Yeah, maybe Loren Cordain's The Paleo Diet, that might have ... I think that was probably out by then. But there really wasn't a whole lot else unless you're going to some of the deep tracks like S. Boyd Eaton and The Paleolithic Prescription and things like that.

Shannon Drake: Yeah, I was in the deep deep dark corners of the internet trying to find whatever I could find about it. A lot of it I was just researching what we know about hunter gatherer tribes nowadays and also what we know about the bone and tooth structure of earlier hominids and how that has changed as our diet has become softer and more western. All the puzzle pieces just, it just made so much sense to me that I wanted to try it, and I went paleo almost right after that and saw immediate changes in my health. It took like maybe two weeks before I started seeing less acne. I used to have chronic debilitating migraines like the kind of migraines that you go to bed and you take an Excedrin and you wake up at 5:00 in the morning in vomit.

Tony Federico: Oh jeez.

Shannon Drake: Like completely bad migraines. My dad had them too. Once I went paleo it reduced to maybe one every few months. Then when I went hard core paleo I don't ever get headaches anymore. Like unless I go on a roller coaster and tweak my neck like never ever ever get headaches. It completely changed my life. I feel good 99.99% of the time now. It's a 180 from eight years ago.

Tony Federico: So unless you go asking for them basically you're pretty good?

Shannon Drake: Yeah. Unless I get an idea in my head to go try jujitsu for the first time and get knocked in the face a little I'm pretty good.

Tony Federico: Nice. So I won't be seeing you at the jujitsu workshop at Paleo FX this year I imagine.

Shannon Drake: Probably not this year, no.

Tony Federico: You're not the first person to tell me about the migraine thing. I don't know if there's a whole lot of good information as far as what might be modulating that, whether it's a genetic predisposition, you said your dad had it, and what about paleo might be making the difference, but I'm sure inflammation and just overall wellness certainly is a factor. Can you tell me a little bit about your paleo diet, because that's one of the beauties of the paleo approach, is that it really is a template and allows people to customize and tweak and find their own personal paleo path and what really fits their lifestyle and genetics and goals in the best possible way. So what did your initial efforts at paleo look like, and then when you said you went hardcore, what did that look like as well?

Shannon Drake: Well my initial efforts were just trying to eat more real foods, things that I had to prepare myself from the outskirts of the grocery store. I tried not to buy things in boxes, was kind of the first step I went into and cutting back on bread. Cutting out bread it's difficult because it's definitely habitually and chemically addictive. It worked really well for me. I got a lot of great results from that. I generally looked trimmer because I lost a lot of inflammation water weight. My skin, the tone was better. I got a lot of the cosmetic results right away, which is very encouraging. I was my early 20s back then, and I was dating so I was like, "Man, this is great."

Tony Federico: Awesome.

Shannon Drake: It's a big bonus. Did that probably for about five years until I met Johg, my partner. I was kind of a lazy paleo person when I met him. I was working in a corporate job and they had free bagels and free cream cheese and it was very tempting. I was working like 11 hours a day and it was a high paced fashion job. But he owned a health food company that did subscription snack boxes called Healthy Surprise. They had gluten free and vegan snacks at the time. We would just kind of talk about health in general. I asked him, I was like, "Have you ever heard of the paelo diet" and he was like, "No, what is that?" So as I started telling him about it, it kind of reignited my interest in being better at my paleo diet. So we both went hardcore paelo together, because if there's one thing that he's really great at, is sticking to his guns and going 120% at things.

Tony Federico: So you kind of like gave him some ammo and he just ran with it?

Shannon Drake: He ran with it. He's really good at that stuff. If it sounds like a good idea he's like let's, "Do it." I'm like, "Okay."

Tony Federico: All the way.

Shannon Drake: All the way, let's go 140 miles an hour and like with [inaudible 00:17:33]. We went all out. We stopped eating all of the grains and we stopped eating bread. We switched to natural sugar. The results for him were drastic because he had never done it before. He was a very average normal healthy looking guy and ended up losing like 30 pounds of-

Tony Federico: Wow, maybe didn't think he ... Probably didn't think he needed to lose 30 pounds that kind of thing.

Shannon Drake: Exactly. Like when he got on a scale like four months later I looked at him and just asked, "Where did that go? Where did it come from? I didn't even know that was on you. It's remarkable." But in the year since, in the past two years we don't eat sugar anymore. I'll have a little bit of honey and some things if I want. We stopped drinking alcohol which has been one of the best decisions I've ever made.

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Tony Federico: Yeah that one's a tough one.

Shannon Drake: It's like bread, habitually and chemically addictive.

Tony Federico: Yes literally.

Shannon Drake: Man, it's, I feel good every day. There's no recovery hangover days. My organs work great. Luckily in the state California we have other legal ways to do recreational things that are nontoxic.

Tony Federico: I guess initially medical purpose or maybe still medical I guess might be recreational after this Aug ... or this, yeah, I guess in August or November.

Shannon Drake: Yeah, this election cycle.

Tony Federico: Yeah. Just to kind of touch on the alcohol thing, because I don't think we've really discussed it a whole lot on this show, and I'm glad you brought it up, because when I have conversations with clients they're like, "Okay, no bread, all right. Cheese. Okay. Wine. Hell no." Just like as far as sticking points are concerned alcohol is like the last bastion. Well, if I can't drink, then screw it. For you guys what was sort of your relationship to alcohol? Then obviously you can speak to your own experience and when Johg is on the next episode of the show, I'll be able to hit him with this question, but what was your personal sort of experience with it? I guess what was it doing it for you, and then how did you become alcohol free?

Shannon Drake: Yeah. Well, I had a very normal relationship with it. I'd go with my girlfriends to bars. My mom loves wine so we would go wine tasting when she'd come to town. I enjoyed it. I really liked the different notes and flavors. Making products, I kind of have like what's called a super smeller, like I can smell really really well and my sense of taste is really heightened, so I enjoy that process of tasting the craftsmanship of really well made products. But as I got busier with my business and I went out less I naturally just drank less because I wasn't going to bars. I was staying home and answering emails.

At first I went a week without drinking because I was so busy and I noticed, I was like, "Oh man, I haven't really like had any alcohol this week, but I don't really miss it." Then it went two weeks and then three weeks and then a month. Then I thought to myself like, "What if I just don't ever drink again? Am I going to just feel good? Do I just keep feeling better? Is that how it goes?" Because I just felt better and better and better and I never relaxed. I never got into the hangover day.

Now I'm in my early 30s. It's not like a hangover a couple of hours. It was like a hangover a day, a day and a half. I just kind of naturally

stopped drinking after a while. The hardest part of it I think is just the social pressure. Luckily for me my friends are not big peer pressure people. Once I told them I stopped drinking they're like kind of like, "Oh, okay." Like, "You don't even want like on glass of-

Tony Federico: They're not like, they're not forcing drinks into your hand or anything?

Shannon Drake: No, and I made sure the people that I could sense that they felt a little awkward about it, I like to do this thing with people called giving them permission. What that means is I'm just very honest with people and I tell them like, "I don't want you to feel awkward because I'm not drinking," like, "I'm not judging you and you can have a glass of wine if you want to. Don't feel weird about it. I just want to hang out with you." That's what's important to me.

Tony Federico: Well that's nice. Well, thank you Shannon.

Shannon Drake: Yeah. You're welcome.

Tony Federico: I feel like it's already working.

Shannon Drake: Because that's part of the ... The difficult part about changing any part of your life is the people around you, they know you the way you were, and a lot of people feel uncomfortable with change, whether that's because they think that you're going to stop hanging out with them or it makes them reflect on themselves in a way that they're not ready to do. That's usually the resistance point. If you can let go of that for them or give them permission to let go of it, it makes your life a lot easier.

Tony Federico: Sure. Like you said, just maybe acknowledging it and putting it out there as far as not pretending that there isn't like a little bit of a tension perhaps, not positive or negative because I think those are interpretations, but there's something there. I think that there is certainly something to be said for the fact that when you began a process of change or transformation and that involves significant changes in your eating and activities and maybe cessation of certain activities, it does have an effect on our tribe, our friends, our family, and they feel it.

I think that's just such an interesting thing how we can make a personal shift. But that does have an impact. It really does affect other people, and it can inspire them, and it can also make them really uncomfortable, and it can also make people sometimes really angry. It really just runs that whole spectrum. But I like how you take the approach of just kind of addressing it. I'm sure, you don't seem like the kind of person who's hanging out with a bunch of major jerks for lack of better words.

Shannon Drake: Not anymore.

Tony Federico: Not anymore. Well, so maybe you had to make some changes there too.

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That's great. For me personally I think regarding the alcohol thing I'm not 100% alcohol free but I've substantially reduced my intake and I think something that I can maybe put out there as a technique for people is offering to me the designated driver, because then nobody really wants you to drink. If they're all like, "Oh sweet, I got a silver ride home." That's certainly been the DD on many many occasions which is nice for me because I don't like feeling sketched out about how am I going to get home and Uber is sometimes a little more expensive than I want to get into. Then the old club soda of lime is another one. There's certainly techniques around it.

That's awesome. You cut out alcohol. You're feeling great. It definitely seems like there's like levels. It's like when you first go paleo, and like you said, that first sort of initial paleo stage, that was like a level. Then you talking to Johg about the paelo diet inspired you to another level of paleo. Then you cut out the alcohol, boom, and it's like you keep kind of breaking through and achieving like a new normal that's more energized, more functional, more actualized than the previous. What do you kind of feel is like that may be next thing for you? What are you kind of working on now?

Shannon Drake: I've gone full woo. Once ...

Tony Federico: Let's get into it, yeah.

Shannon Drake: Once you get your diet locked in, you get all these chemicals out of your life, you just naturally, you start working out more, you just get naturally more in tune with your body. The human body is this amazing integrated electrical system of sensors. If we're going to break it down, your entire surface of your body is covered in sensors for heat, cold, touch, pressure. You can smell things. You can taste things. You can see millions of colors where these soft squishy filters that run around this world experiencing things.

Tony Federico: Churning through information.

Shannon Drake: Just churning through it. That's the whole kind of point of this game that we're in, is what information are you running into and how you're processing it and what do you feel about it, like how do you feel about it. I think that naturally leads a lot of people, not everyone, into wrestling with their ideas of spirituality and what that means to them. I used to be a hard core atheist like full on Richard Dawkins, like everything is just numbers and formulas and chance. There's nothing to it. But ...

Tony Federico: Just a very kind of materialistic and not materialistic in the sense of like buying lots of stuff at the mall, but it's a material existence that it can be explained through chemistry and the sciences, that type of perspective.

Shannon Drake: Exactly. I don't think there's anything wrong with that. I think we all are
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on our own paths and experiencing this world in the way that we want to. But for me that changed drastically when I changed my diet and also got into the cannabis business and started integrating cannabis into my personal development and yoga practice.

Tony Federico: How does that work for you, because I think we're in a phase right now, we're as a country going through some reconfiguration when it comes to our perspective of cannabis or marijuana or pot or weed or whatever you want to call it. There is two states, three states where it's ... Well, I guess more. You've got Alaska, Colorado, Washington, Oregon, DC, although it's kind of like caught up in regulatory issues, but there's states where it's completely legal for anybody to smoke marijuana. There's states where it's not criminal. There's 20 some states where there's medical exemptions made for people to use it.

In many ways this cannabis culture is coming up more and more in our national dialogue and it's showing people a different sort of cannabis user. It's not just the pot smoker drugged-out lazy stoner kind of thing. We have an opportunity I think to show a different way of relating to this substance that's arguably been with human beings for hundreds if not thousands of years. What is that, for you what was your previous experience with cannabis prior to getting into the cannabis business?

Shannon Drake: Previously I had a very sort of casual relationship with it. It's been medically legal in California since I think 1994 so it's pretty readily available. When I hang out with my friends I went to art school so it was always around. We'd smoke a little weed and hang out but it wasn't something I was very into. It just was another sort of substance like alcohol that I could use when I wanted to.

Tony Federico: So you'd maybe smoke and have some conversations, but it wasn't like you were having transcendental experiences per se?

Shannon Drake: Yeah, exactly. I think a lot of that was I was just not in that place at the time. The thing with different plants and plant medicines is your filter and your experience with things, even with alcohol, it depends on you and your sort of set and setting. It's like when you drink some people become your best friend and some people become violent.

Tony Federico: Totally.

Shannon Drake: Same thing with plants. Some people use marijuana and they become couch-locked and very sort of withdrawn and some people have transcendental experiences. It's different for everyone. We all have our own experience in life. At first for me it was just I would feel a little fuzzy and things would taste better. Don't put a jar of peanut butter in front of me because I'd eat the whole thing. I loved peanut butter. But I went through a long stretch of just not using it due to life happening, nothing really remarkable.

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Tony Federico: And you mentioned you're busy, you're working, doing the corporate thing. There's not a lot of room for it, for couch lock in that environment.

Shannon Drake: No, and I was not only working 10 hours a day in my corporate job, but I was freelancing afterwards in an attempt to quit my corporate job. My drug was work at the time. That was my ...

Tony Federico: Workaholic.

Shannon Drake: I was a workaholic for sure, for sure, for sure. But a part of meeting Johg was he was an avid user of cannabis because he was doing everything in his business from designing the website to doing all the back-end coding. Cannabis is a great tool for doing really monotonous tasks. Something about it just makes your brain okay with repeating tasks so it's great for coding.

Tony Federico: Interesting. You wouldn't think that. You would think that it might lead to more errors, but I guess maybe if it's making it more interesting may be more focused in a way.

Shannon Drake: Yeah it definitely can give you more focus. I actually had read an article that the government was having a hard time hiring engineers because they do drug testing but all the engineers smoke weed, so they were having a hard time hiring people and considering changing their policy. But starting to date him, he kind of reintroduced me to marijuana in a different light than I knew from art school, in a more of a personal development light, in the sense that you can use it as an aide to get certain things done and as a ...

Tony Federico: And when you say to get certain things done, do you mean like what you mentioned like coding kind of like life stuff or like internal stuff?

Shannon Drake: I mean both. But I first was reintroduced to it as a way to get into coding or I was doing a lot of graphic design at the time for the businesses which involves I'm going to move this one letter three pixels to the right, very boring things. It was great for that because you just put on some good tunes which sound even better and you just do the work. That led into the internal spiritual seeking because we would get high, do a ton of work and then go to yoga to try and come back sitting all day long. Cannabis and yoga are best friends.

Tony Federico: I'm surprised there isn't, and maybe this is something that's been done a yoga studio/dispensary.

Shannon Drake: I think that is solely not happening because legally it's a little tricky right now to do so.

Tony Federico: Maybe they could put them next door or something like that ... But that
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seems like that would be a natural fit right here. I wanted to backtrack a little bit and just kind of say something, and I think that this is a significant kind of piece of the conversation. Because our cultural conversation about cannabis and marijuana is highly influenced by the legacy of a 70 plus year drug war. Lots of propaganda, lots of misinformation, the absence of information as a result of restrictions on actual research and scheduling guidelines that make research all but impossible in the United States, there isn't like a cultural wisdom or a cultural tradition that really gives people the tools to be able to integrate those type of substances into their lives and they're sort of left to wander out in the wilderness and figure it out for themselves and see how these teenage kids in catering these substances that they've been told are just purely bad, which there certainly are negative effects to everything, but they don't have any information to go on, so they just kind of figured it out themselves.

I just think if we had some sort of ... I don't know. Where's the shaman I guess is what I'm saying? Where is the wise elder who can help us to navigate these difficult waters of life and also maybe take advantage of some of these helpers and some of these medicines as well?

Shannon Drake: Yeah. Our society has no elders. We've gotten rid of that role and we actually in western society we highlight youth as the ultimate. Being young and sexy is the highest excitement that we could possibly have as humans, and we don't have any sort of respect for this wisdom that comes with age and experience. Without that we have no guides when we get to the edges of our culture, where do we go from there. That's been something that I faced head on in my spiritual practice and going into the cannabis industry.

Part of the reason why we started Jambo Superfoods which is our medical marijuana and CBD oil company out here in California, is we see our duty as not only to make high quality products but to be these sort of elders that give people guidance on how to use these different herbs to make their lives better. We are constantly trying to come up with content and ways that we can spread information about ways to use these different flowers besides the traditional idea of sitting on the couch and eating Doritos. What's the alternative to that? What is the actual traditional use of these plants? Because if you look through human history we've always used these plants to help our community and help ourselves. That's how they have had a relationship with us for thousands of years.

Tony Federico: And this is drawing a strong distinction between use and abuse.

Shannon Drake: Exactly.

Tony Federico: Because I think that we also have a situation where, especially where cannabis is concerned, all use is classified as abuse. If you look at some

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of these UN papers and they talk about there's, however many hundred thousand or million cannabis abusers. They talk about all the people that are in treatment for cannabis. Well it's like it's court mandated. I don't know if they're really checking themselves in because they felt like their video game time was really cutting into their personal health or whatever the case may be. But there's this big difference here between what you're suggesting which is responsible healthy. I mean you're somebody who's not drinking alcohol, eating a paleo diet, doing yoga, and then you're incorporating cannabis into the mix. That's a very different picture than what most people are expecting and it doesn't sound like it's causing you to be an unproductive member of society.

Shannon Drake: I own two businesses that are both very successful. It definitely is not making me unproductive. That's kind of the thing we always laugh about it. Everyone says like, "Oh marijuana makes people lazy," and like, "Well, look at my entire team. They're here all day every day cranking away, making things happen, influencing their community to be better people." I mean look at Joe Rogan. No one is going to say Joe Rogan is lazy and he probably smokes more weed than anyone I know. But there's so many of these people that are now kind of coming out of the closet that are really high functioning people that are avid cannabis users, because like everything in the world you get to choose how you interact with things. Our culture has this unfortunate influence of abusing everything. We abuse TV. We abuse food. We abuse ourselves. It's not a matter of the substance. It's a matter of how you use it.

Tony Federico: Yeah, and it makes me think there's probably more money in abuse. There's probably more money to be made by encouraging people to consume without any sort of consideration for what's truly healthy. You don't see a show like Cribs with a very modest house and a very reasonable lifestyle. It's just Bentleys and mansions. I think there's a lot of encouragement and maybe unconscious even from the part of the businesses, I don't know, to consume, consume, consume without questioning and without consideration for the effects, whether that's food or substances.

Now for you, when you started kind of getting into this experience of I guess you could call it and I think you've referred to it as intentional, like an intentional high or intentional cannabis use, is sort of born on the back of long work hours and then a yoga session afterwards. What was that experience like specifically, because there's plenty of people who've never have done yoga and let alone yoga under the influence of maybe a cannabis edible or something along those lines?

Shannon Drake: Yeah. Well, I would take some of our edibles. We make these delicious little chewy nut and coconut and honey based squares.

Tony Federico: Paleo approved I believe?

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Shannon Drake: They are the first and only paleo certified marijuana edibles. But just take a little amount, maybe like a hair more than I would take if I was trying to get something done. Because the cool thing about yoga is that what the cannabis plant does is it really heightens your connection to your body. When you're doing these motions and these kriyas and these asanas which are the basic workout moves of yoga, it really helps you drop into focusing on the here and now and what your body is doing in a way that takes four or five times longer if you're just doing yoga sober. For me that experience was just overwhelmingly beautiful is the best way to describe it. It takes the edge off of that uncomfortableness you feel when you're pushing your body because you know there's at certain points in which you know what you're doing is getting you to the next level but you have that voice in your head that's like, "Oh, I don't want to do this" or, "This is uncomfortable," or, "I'm bored," whatever it is.

Tony Federico: Holding back, it's kind of like, "Okay, it feels like maybe fear. I don't know."

Shannon Drake: Yeah. It's the resistance. We just have like this geared program in our head of resistance. The cannabis shaves that off a little bit and allows you to focus more on the here and now. As you're moving through these various breath work and body exercises your whole system becomes enlivened with awareness and it's really hard to explain, but I'll do my best, in which you are like for me personally being a very visual person. In my mind's eye I can kind of see into this ethereal energy system that our bodies create. We're running these electrical synapses up and down our bodies as we're doing these motions, and you can really feel the way that changing your breath changes that electrical flow, and it brings this heightened sense of control to your experience. You really can understand how you have extreme control over this machine that you live in. This body that we have is your domain if you choose to master it.

Tony Federico: And maybe starts bringing some questions to mind like if I'm witnessing my body, what am I?

Shannon Drake: Yeah. It definitely will get you to this very zen Buddhist state of what is real, what is reality, like what does this mean, which can be a challenging part of that process.

Tony Federico: Right. No easy answers there. I don't think anyone's figured that one out.

Shannon Drake: No and I actually don't think the point is to figure it out. I think-

Tony Federico: Oh touche.

Shannon Drake: ... the point is to just experience it.

Tony Federico: Get dirty, to do a little call back to your product.

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Shannon Drake: Yeah, [inaudible 00:42:37] in there.

Tony Federico: Let's say somebody is in a state where medical or recreational cannabis is legal and they are, they maybe found some of your products in a dispensary let's say and they wanted to imbibe and take part in some intentional yoga or intentionally high yoga. What do you say to some of the concerns about the difficulty in dosing edibles and some of the criticisms that we've ... And there hasn't been a ton of negative press, but I think some of the negative press around legalization and recreational use has been around edibles specifically. It seems like you hear stories about tourists going to Colorado for example and going to the emergency room because they're freaking out man.

Shannon Drake: Yeah. Well, part of that starts by choosing a product that has responsible dosing. Up until very recently there's been no guidelines around dosing. We saw that as an opportunity at Jambo to make a superior product because we started off in the mainstream health food industry, so we understand serving size. You want to find a product that clearly states how many milligrams are in each piece of it, and you want to make sure that it's lab tested because they can say whatever they want on the labels. Much like cosmetics there's not tons of regulation behind it. You want to find a company that lab tests their milligrams like we do, and then you want to choose a product that's easy to dose. What I mean by that is if you buy a brownie and the brownie says it's 100 milligrams, how are you going to cut that into a 10 milligram square? It's almost impossible.

Tony Federico: Some real knife work is needed.

Shannon Drake: Yeah. And then it's going to crumble and you're not going to know what's going on. If you're the kind of person who wants a really good controlled experience, as controlled as you can get, taking an herb like this, choose a product that's easy to dose. For example, when we made our edibles we wanted to make it so you can choose your dosage and when you cut it it wouldn't crumble. But we found even with that what if our moms ate a little too much. We're like, "Hey, if mom can't dose it correctly, then we need to improve the product."

We came out with these delicious alcohol free breath sprays that are medicated and it's calibrated so each spray is exactly the same amount of cannabis. We have multiple strengths. If you're say a grandmother we have one spray that is one milligram per spray. Now the average human starts to feel the effects of cannabis at six milligrams. You can imagine how microscopic you can get with dosing this product. Or if you're a heavier user we have a spray that's six milligrams a spray. It's up to you, and you know, you can always get to the same spot, because you're literally pulling the trigger into your own mouth and counting, "Okay, I did three sprays. I know that gets me to x, y, z spot. It's perfect for yoga. I'm

going to go to my favorite class and I'm going to try it out."

Tony Federico: So it's calibrated, it's tested. There seems to be some, like you said, questions as far as like a brownie that might be multiple servings in a single brownie, and obviously somebody is going to have a hard time not eating the whole thing. Then with an edible product versus a vaporizer or smoked product, the onset can be a little bit hard for people to wrap their minds around. They might be used to having a drink and feeling it within a few minutes and they might think, "Well, because I'm not feeling this cannabis edible, it's not working, so I should have more."

Shannon Drake: Yeah. So when you have edibles it can take up to two hours for it to affect you. What we have found is the average is between 30 minutes and an hour for most people. Some people are more sensitive and they feel it within 15 minutes, but 30 minutes to an hour tends to be the sweet spot. What I always recommend for people is start small because you can always eat more, you can't eat less.

Tony Federico: There's no way to go back.

Shannon Drake: There's no way, you can't. Even if you could like somehow get it out of your stomach the body just absorbs cannabis so quickly, it loves it. Our body has an endocannabinoid system that covers our entire body. It loves the cannabis molecule so much. You want to start off slow. My preferred way of eating cannabis is actually if I am going to go to my yoga class I want to take 15 milligrams for me. I'll take eight milligrams an hour and a half before my class and then I'll eat a little bit probably about 20 minutes before I go so it creates this really nice smooth arch up into the high state that's a comfortable ride. Instead of going on a roller coaster ride I'm kind of floating up and up draft. You suddenly find yourself in the middle of your down dog smiling because you feel so great. You're like, "Oh yeah. I forgot. I'm like high right now. This is so nice."

Tony Federico: It's not like it hits you like a ton of bricks and then you're in Savasana before the class is halfway over?

Shannon Drake: Yeah, exactly. You want to be smart about it. You're a grown up. You know your own body and take the time to learn yourself. That's the whole point of this crazy experience, is we're just learning ourselves the whole way through. We become more and more tuned with what our own personal experience is. Then once you can nail that, it's not a lot of work. It's three or four times figuring out where your dose is for your chosen activity, and then you know. Then you can get there every time, as long as you stick with the same edible and that's ... When you get to that point that you know what you're doing, it creates a freedom that allows you to dive deeper into yourself and your experience and really allows you to kind of go through that emotional closet and sweep all the cobwebs out and deal with these finer things that make you a more

awesome person.

Tony Federico: Let's talk about that. Obviously you started The Dirt. You're now involved in Jambo Superfoods with the first and only paleo approved cannabis edible. You're having these experiences, going to yoga and opening your metaphysical doors and learning about yourself. How does that feedback into your kind of day to day? I don't want to say mundane because I think that's a false distinction, but how does that feedback into for example your work life, how does that feedback into some of your other relationships? Having this deep inner work and this personal development practice, what does that then do to the other relationships in your life?

Shannon Drake: We could talk about that for hours. I mean when you do these practices and you start really deconstructing and reconstructing yourself and finding your own truth, it gives you an understanding of the human experience that I think creates a lot of acceptance and forgiveness for the world and other people. Now when I interact with people I used to get offended or upset at how people interacted with me, like, "Why aren't they writing me back," or, "Why did they say x, y, and z with that tone?" Now I realize I'm like, "It's not me. It just is." Maybe they're having a bad day. Maybe they stubbed their toe. Maybe they ate something that's affecting how they feel and they don't even realize it. Even if it appears to be that they're angry with me, it doesn't even really matter in a way.

It's just I have this ability now to kind of absorb and let emotions and circumstances pass through me and so that I can remain more centered and more clear of mind and how to react in a way that will actually get the results that I want, instead of reacting in a way that is influenced by the emotions of what's happening in the moment. Does that make sense?

Tony Federico: It sounds like what you're talking about is getting out of reaction and into response. It's taking that information, processing it, and then maybe even transfiguring or transforming that energy. Let's say somebody is kind of coming at you with a negative vibe via email. Instead of just firing off a nasty response like, "All right, I don't know what's going on here. Maybe this dude's had a bad day," having a healthy level of detachment and perspective.

I think the deeper your empathy goes, the more you can really understand other people, even though you don't necessarily agree with them. I think right now, especially with all the political stuff going on, it's like, believe me, I get it. I get why people think and feel the way that they do. I get it. I don't agree with it, but I get it. I think that that's a ... As many people in the world as there can be who have the kind of perspective that you're describing I think we're better off. We can't have too much understanding and empathy. The greater we can wind that circle to include people who don't even have the same beliefs or skin

color or cultural background or whatever that we do, the better we are.

Shannon Drake: Yeah, because I mean when it comes down to it we're all one, it's all the same system. All people are people. All animals are animals. We're all in the same earth and we're kind of part of this massive organism. Much like our body has electrons and neurons and atoms, each species, each type of thing on this planet is a smaller part of this whole system that is planet Earth. If you really want to get down to brass tacks like what does it all matter if you have a different opinion than me, as long as we're all trying to work towards a better goal. That's like the bigger picture.

I might not think that somebody's way of doing something is the best way to get there, but I can understand their point of view, and I can when appropriately add my rational feedback. Because that's another thing you realize, is nobody listens to you if you're arguing with them. Nobody listens to you if they feel like you're telling them what to do. The only time people listen to you is when you speak from this place of your own truth in a non emotional grounded way, that you're not telling them what to think, you're just sharing your experience. That's the only way you can get people to really kind of listen to you. Then it's their choice if they want to say yes or no to you. You have no choice in it. You can't convince anybody of anything. We're all adults. We all have our own stories. You just have to have non attachment to it. All you can do ...

My personal experience is the only thing I know I can do in this world is make myself feel healthier and better and more grounded and live that, and then if that affects the people around me, that's icing on the cake. But we have no influence over other people. We can only work on ourselves. The ninja trick is once you work on yourself, other people are inspired to do the same for them, and that makes real change. It's the highest, it's the best thing we can do, is just work on making ourselves better, more grounded. Once you become at peace with yourself you become at peace with the world, and that's how you enact real term change.

Tony Federico: That's awesome. That's good stuff Shannon. Before we go I want you to have an opportunity to tell us about your middle name. I think Puma certainly has some meaning for you. What is the importance of this animal, this totem?

Shannon Drake: Do you want the real story?

Tony Federico: I do.

Shannon Drake: Okay. I think it was a year or two ago, I was going through the like brambles of personal development and self-discovery and there's this kind of mucky middle ground where your old paradigm doesn't work anymore but you kind of don't know what does work and like who am I

and what is reality and what am I doing with my life. You just, you feel very lost.

Tony Federico: You're in the desert.

Shannon Drake: Yes, you're in the desert, you're between two worlds. It was very easy for me to fall back into this place of being like the scared little girl that I was when my dad was sick. It really brought that up for me. I did a plant medicine journey with a couple of my friends who are really amazing high level shamans and entrepreneurs.

In the midst of this experience, which was incredibly beautiful and healing, I got this vision because I'm a very visual person, I always see things in my mind's eye, even when I make perfumes I can kind of see in my mind what it smells like, a little bit of synesthesia. In my mind's eye I was thinking to myself, "I need to change my default mode network." I needed to change my default programming from this place of falling into this child-like fear into a place of stability and bravery and certainty and I need to know what my core essence is, what am I really trying to do, and if I can kind of channel that power, I feel like I wouldn't fall back to this crutch so bad. In my mind's eye I just got this sense of all these big cats, jaguars and tigers and lions, and jaguars and jaguars and jaguars coming up and this like power and I started ...

I do a lot of Kundalini yoga and a lot of Kundalini yoga is based on breath work. There's like a breath called breath of fire where you breathe really rapidly and then there's other breaths where you breathe slowly or you hold your breath. As I'm becoming one with it, the jaguar energy of the universe, I started doing a breath that I later started to call jaguar breath that is like a stilted inhale, so it's a ... And then you hold it, and then when you exhale it's a very loose faced very deep kind of purring noise so like a ... Part of that I realized, so what I really love about my own personal journey is I have this ability to experience these like spiritual woo things, but also understand how they work functionally and scientifically. I realized that when I would become uncertain in myself I smile, and smiling is kind of my like defuse the situation and makes your face really tight. By doing this jaguar breath I was loosening all of my facial and throat muscles into this state of calm awareness, this sort of calm assertive state.

After this experience of learning the power of the jaguar which is this traditional like very, very powerful, very certain, very sort of grounded spirit, that was kind of the answer to my anxious fear. Jaguar is a hard word to say for people, but puma's not. I adopted that as sort of my middle name, to remind myself to always come from that state of being instead of defaulting into an uncertain child-like state. Because part of my mission with my businesses is to be the elder, to help to people find the sovereignty of themselves. If I can't do that, then how can I help other people do that?

Tony Federico: Right. You've got to find your own inner jaguar before you can help other people find theirs.

Shannon Drake: Exactly. That's kind of the larger message. Start with yourself.

Tony Federico: Awesome. Well, Shannon Jaguar Drake, Shannon J. Drake, Shannon Puma Drake, thank you for sharing that. I think that was a great story. I love how you kind of contextualized it in a couple different ways, and thank you so much for spending a good chunk of your day today with us. I'm sure you've got plenty of stuff going on with your multiple business and everything. I think this was a super fun conversation, and I look forward to seeing how your business grows and transforms and how you continue to put good information and products out into the world.

Shannon Drake: Thank you. Yeah, this is great. I love to do it again some time.

Tony Federico: That was Shannon Puma Drake of Jambo Superfoods. We're going to take a short break but we'll be right back with Johg Ananda. (singing)

All right, everybody welcome back to Paleo Magazine Radio. I'm here with Johg Ananda. He is the co-founder of Jambo Superfoods and the founder of Healthy Surprise. Johg, welcome to the show.

Johg Ananda: Thanks. It's great to be here on your incredible podcast. Thanks for having me.

Tony Federico: Hey, it's a real pleasure man. I was listening and I mentioned off mic just a moment ago that I did a little background research and I found that we've got a couple interesting parallels in our own individual paths. I'm just going to go ahead knock off a couple of them and just kind of put it out there. A fellow south Florida, born and raised person here, University of Florida. I believe you're 34. I think I'm 33, so we might have actually been on campus around the same time. I don't know, there's just not a whole lot of us Floridians who got out there and are working in the paleo and health space. I thought that was pretty cool, that there's some similar stamping grounds at least in the days of our youth.

Johg Ananda: Yeah, most people are going to Florida to die, not to go on paleo podcasts.

Tony Federico: Right. Well, hey, we're shaking things up man. Let's go ahead and just get into it. As far as your own personal health path, obviously you've been involved in companies that have a health focus, Healthy Surprise, a healthy snack delivery service, and then now with Jambo Superfoods, the world's first and only cannabis edible that's paleo approved. Where did all this start for you? Where did your interest in health and fitness began?

Johg Ananda: I think that it goes back to a personal development kick that I got on and wanting to improve myself and become a better, more functional person. Then I realized that the limits of your discipline sort of bumping up against the limits of your physical health, so as I kind of-

Tony Federico: Let me, if you don't mind, could I pause you there for a second. Why did you feel like you needed to make that change, because you mentioned that you were feeling like you needed to make a change, but why? Where you having some relationship issues? Were you having some health issues? What was creating the impetus for a desire to change and go into a difficult and fraught process? I mean, personal development, that's not an easy path. It's a lot easier to stay the same and keep doing the same things if you have that option.

Johg Ananda: Yeah. I mean ease of something isn't really a reason to do it. I know for a lot of people energetically it takes some kind of change in the system to move from one energy level to another, but I don't look at it as really so much of if there was like a problem or a catalyzing break up or something like that. I mean, I'm sure my, times my heart was broken, you usually go get a haircut and, yeah, maybe go to the gym a couple extra times when you kind of go back on the market so to speak. But no, it's really just been my journey as a human and moving through this world and trying to understand myself and find myself and become more functional and kind of pursue my dreams and fulfill my potential. It's been a long journey. My whole life really, but I kind of fell into the business like book personal development ... I mean, there's kind of like this business group of books that are ...

Tony Federico: We're talking like Seven Habits of Highly Effective People and things like that?

Johg Ananda: Yeah, well, the business side would be more of like execution and ... I'm trying to think of the ... They're not coming to me [inaudible 01:04:14] but like well Think and Grow Rich kind of like [inaudible 01:04:18]

Tony Federico: Sure, Good to Great, stuff like that.

Johg Ananda: Yeah, exactly, exactly. Tom Collins and those kind of people. If you start looking at the business stuff it kind of bleeds into the personal development stuff. When I started trying to realize that, oh, America is a capitalist system and to really thrive you have to kind of understand capitalism in a way and you've got to make some money, and I was wanting to learn more about that and figure out what all this means in a balance sheet and sales and starting a business, and as I started reading a lot of those business books, you find that the memes start to repeat over and over again, and there's these kind of underlying principles. Then those principles start butting up against the kind of personal development stuff. The Venn diagrams overlap a lot.

In my journey it's been that kind of, it's been a fractal of that, of learning stuff, having the knowledge kind of lead me into this kind of next sphere and then kind of making that transition from let's say that business learning sphere into the personal development one, and then the personal development one leads to the health one, and then the health one leads to the more spiritual growth. I mean that's kind of, as I look back with a little bit of retrospection that it's been moving through those realms and they kind of feed one into the other.

Tony Federico: So you went through, obviously you went to school at UF. I believe you studied ... Was it building and construction? Yep, I had one of my roommates was in that program, so I'm familiar with it. You were going to go into business working with your father, correct?

Johg Ananda: Yeah, I got recruited out of school to go work for one of the world's largest construction management firms in DC and didn't really like the ... I didn't like DC. I didn't really like the culture too much there, the politics wasn't really my thing, and then really the weather. I was a Florida boy. One winter and I said, "What am I doing with all this snow? Like there's the beaches and there's sun and bikinis." After one year I was like, "DC, it's great for the people here, but I want to do something different." Then I went home back to Boca Raton and started working with my dad.

Tony Federico: And he had a successful or a relatively successful, was it general contracting or what was he doing?

Johg Ananda: It's mostly plumbing. It's still successful right now. It's the largest plumbing service company. It's called Plumbing Experts in south Florida. It's a thriving business. Under his tutelage, which is a great word, I've got to use that whenever I can, I learned a lot about running a business and a lot of being a man and being a boss from him, and I was kind of on a path to take over that company. After six or seven years of working there I really started thinking about what do I, what do I want for me and what do I want my, kind of the arch of the next decade of my life to look at. As we got closer to this kind of succession plan it just became clear to me that I needed to step up and do my own thing and not really be in my father's shadow.

Tony Federico: What did he think about that because he had been building this business. Maybe he had an idea that he was going to pass it on to you, and like you said, you learned a lot from him. What did he think when you said, "Hey, I'm going to go maybe chart my own course." What was the response there?

Johg Ananda: It was, I think it was the best response. It was just the right amount of disappointment as in like, "I thought we were doing this thing where you're going to take over." But then simultaneously my dad's an amazing guy. He's done a lot of cool stuff. He started several businesses and he wants me to be my best, and he totally got it and he

was 100% supportive. I'm really blessed to have someone that was such a great mentor and a true leader for me when I made that transition. We made it pretty smooth and things are going great over there and things are going pretty good over here too.

Tony Federico: Awesome. So you're in Boca at the time, working with your dad. You decided you wanted to strike out on your own, and where did you go from there?

Johg Ananda: Well, I went into my ... I have a 96 Toyota Fortuner and I packed it up with my clothes and I think my computer and a couple other things I thought I would need, and I called a good friend of mine, Justin Zimmerman and I said, "Let's go on a road trip." The plan was to end up in either Boulder or San Francisco because that's where I had thought like the "startup community" was. We took a couple of weeks and just did a long trip and stopped off in Gainesville and Austin, and New Orleans, and Tucson. We kind of hit all the little fun places on the way to Vegas and I ended up in Los Angeles on Halloween, I remember that. It was kind of weird. I drove into the LA during like ... If anyone wants to see something crazy go to Sunset Boulevard on Halloween in Los Angeles. It is a shit show. That was like my welcome to Los Angeles.

Tony Federico: Probably good people watching on any night, but then you add Halloween to the mix and I'm sure that steps it up.

Johg Ananda: Oh man, yeah. You can go there. If you go to West Hollywood, like gay town, the people there are quite something. Then to go on Halloween there's like, I don't know, like 50,000 people are on. They take over the streets and it's like miles and miles and miles of people. Then Los Angeles is, the cool thing about Halloween in Los Angeles is all the special effects and the prosthetics people are here. So everybody, not everybody but you'll see some outfits and you're like, "Man." They just walked off like a movie set. I mean it's incredible.

Then I got to LA and again the plan still was to continue to San Francisco but I fell in love with Santa Monica and I fell in love with this company called the Coloft which is the first tech co-working space in LA. They kind of were the epicenter of the Silicon Beach tech movement which is now a really big thing here in Los Angeles.

Tony Federico: Man, is this a counter to Silicon Valley, Silicon Beach?

Johg Ananda: Yeah, so Silicon Beach is kind of the phrase that has been coined for all of the tech companies here in LA. It's based out of Santa Monica, really is kind of the epicenter and now Venice, Google has a huge campus there, and YouTube is there. Then I thought I was going to end up in San Francisco but I just fell in love with Santa Monica and this really cool co-working space and the place that was there and I kind of rooted in and I thought I would make it up to San Francisco and I still think I

might some day, but for now LA has got her tentacles pretty deep.

Tony Federico: Tell me a little bit about those first maybe few days and few weeks. You're new to the area. You're coming from Boca. You're in Santa Monica in this co-working space. What was that like? What did you do? Did you just put your laptop down and started brainstorming business ideas? How did that actually unfold?

Johg Ananda: Yeah, I had a couple ideas of for some businesses. I actually started with this concept called this is backpacking and it kind of came from when I was younger I did a lot of adventuring. I've been to 32 different countries and I was bouncing all over the world and I had a really cool idea for a concept to kind of help facilitate people go in those kind of trips. I've been on a bunch of them and I knew the pain points and what would kind of like cause some friction to someone who wouldn't pull the trigger and go do something that would change their life so much.

I kind of sat down and I had a rough idea of what this thing was going to be like and I just started working on it. I mean, that's kind of the advice I give to people, whether it's a big project or it's you're building an Excel spreadsheet or you're trying to start a business, is that it can just seem like this giant elephant and you got to eat it and you just got to go one bite at a time. Sometimes you don't really know where to start or what to do, but the key thing is just to start. I mean, I started. I never completed that project. That project actually got sidelined for Healthy Surprise which you imagine that ended up kind of superseding that. But that's okay. I mean that's the nature of life. We're in control. We're just trying to move through all the wonderful happenings.

Tony Federico: Well, and I'm sure that you learn stuff doing that, starting something. Even though you might not have finished it in the way that you did, I'm sure that laid the foundation in terms of some knowledge and experience and kind of practical, putting into practice some of the stuff that you've been reading about in those business books. What do you think you're able to take away from the initial effort, the backpacking outfitter idea and then kind of parlay that into what you did with Healthy Surprise which was the next thing?

Johg Ananda: Yeah, well, well so much. I mean being in that environment at the very like the nascent days of the tech community here in LA, I mean, I really got a really good dose of what that mentality is and the whole raising money and being agile and coming to market quickly. Those lessons were really powerful and they've served me to this day. What was really cool about being in one of these environments, and I highly recommend it if someone's trying to start something as opposed to being, locking yourself in your house, which can be useful too, but what was cool about this place was that I had this idea to make like a web business. If you're starting a web project there's a lot of different facets that you've got to cover, from payments and being able to take money to online marketing

to having a website, I can just go down the line of all these compliance issues.

What was cool about being in this environment of so many other people that were kind of doing something similar, not everybody had the entrepreneur hat on, but there was people that were also developers there or they were marketing experts, and what was cool is that I could be working on this project and then I would hit a wall and I'd be like, "Oh man," like, "I can't figure out how to like get this button to work on my website," and there was like always 20 people there and everybody was kind of like their specialties. So I could be working and then at one in the morning I'd get ... I'd want to work until five in the morning because I was crazy back then, and at one in the morning I'd hit a wall and I'm like, "Okay, well I guess I got to go home now because I can't go any further with this problem," and then I'd be like, "Oh, Ryan," like, "How do you get this button to work?" So there was just like-

Tony Federico: This is somebody in the co-working space you're referring to, right?

Johg Ananda: Yeah, yeah, exactly. There was so much talent there with people that were trying to support each other. That was really cool, to have that talent there and have the motivation and the inspiration of all these other people that were trying to make something happen. That was like one of the big takeaways and then-

Tony Federico: And then those human resources literally.

Johg Ananda: Yeah, exactly, the resources and then the spirit, the attitude of the people that were like we're going to do something. I'm going to start a company here and I'm going to like make it awesome, I'm going to raise some money, and we're going to sell it, and we're going to have an IPO. Just kind of this like anything is possible mentality which I can give a lot of credit. I'd say it's really rooted in the Bay Area culture. They really dream big there. But that was kind of infused into this place that I was. I like to think that I've taken a lot of that with me, kind of going forward and having a big vision. Part of having a big vision is being able to execute on it. Being in that environment with other people that were also having a big vision and trying to execute on it, I think I took a lot of that from that experience.

Tony Federico: I think that says something about who you surround yourself with. I've heard things like you're the sum of or you're the ...

Johg Ananda: The average of your five [crosstalk 01:17:01]

Tony Federico: Exactly, exactly. Kind of being in that atmosphere of possibility, of big thinking. Maybe through osmosis you kind of took some of that on and then went ahead and acted on it and did something. That's the thing. What did you do? What was Healthy Surprise and how did that play out?

Spiritual-Exploration-Business-Acumen-and-Paleo-Edibles-with-Johg-Anan...

Johg Ananda:

Sure. I was working on this adventuring concept called the suitbackpacking.com and I had invested a lot of money and time into it and I started recruiting people to help me launch it. But while I was at the Coloft, they, because it was kind of the center of the hub of the tech community, they would do all these great events there and they would have like the Ruby on Rails developer meet up on Tuesday night which is a great place to find chicks by the way. Just kidding. They would have all these different tech events and they would do ... They had this one event called Startup Weekend. The idea was to try to launch a tech startup in a weekend. I did several of these events. It was really cool because everybody kind of thought was at the place participated and you got to get together with your friends and they tried to build something really cool.

I would highly recommend anybody that is interested in ... Almost anybody should do this, because it demonstrates a lot of concept that you can intellectually know, but then when you experience it you kind of like know it intuitively and at a visceral level, so having like the power of a deadline, really having this kind of like we've got to make this thing by the end of the weekend and having everyone rallied around and having a team and just having this focusing of effort that everyone is just like, "Okay, 72 hours non stop we're going to do this," and just seeing what's possible, because then you can go back to sometimes your other world or job and it just seems like nothing's happening, the day is passing by. That was really cool to just see like what can happen with the right leadership and everybody is crystallized around an idea.

I did a couple of these startup weekends working at like a helper on a project, and while I was doing that, when you go, when you do the event, and anybody can pitch an idea to do this business and then the group votes on which ideas they're going to work on. By the time the third one came around I had an idea for a concept of a curated snack delivery service. This kind of came about because I'd been in LA for about, less than a year, maybe eight, 10 months and I was getting the [inaudible 01:19:41] avocados and a healthy food mentality. I mean I've always had it but was really kind of taking root in LA is that there's an incredible healthy food culture and yoga. It's a very ... The culture here encourages that.

That was kind of like taking a root and really growing in my life, but anybody that spent any time in LA will know that the traffic here is absolutely horrible. I thought if I could have a service that would just go and ... I never really care about the brands or the snacks per se, as much as just the quality. I wanted to have a set of quality standards that if I could say to someone, "Hey, this is," and everybody listening to this show will get it with paleo. I'm kind of ...

Tony Federico: Totally.

Spiritual-Exploration-Business-Acumen-and-Paleo-Edibles-with-Johg-Anan...

Johg Ananda: ... talk to this audience, but it's like, "Hey, I don't really care what the food is. I just want it to be paleo," was kind of like the idea. It wasn't paleo back in 2012 or whenever this was, but that was the idea. I was a little bit ahead of my time in the sense and I was I have these standards and I want someone to kind of just put together a box of all these snacks for me and just deliver it, because what I was doing then was driving all around LA in the traffic and it was just such a waste of time. I had also read this book called the Four Hour Work Week which I'm sure a lot of your listeners are familiar with.

Tony Federico: Love it.

Johg Ananda: And that, yeah, that book was one of the books that really catalyzed me to leave Florida and what I was doing there because I had read this book. I read it I think three or four times and it was like the third or fourth time that I really like felt the confidence like, "Okay," like, "I can do this. Here's a kind of plan of action." That was the idea with both businesses, both the travel company and Healthy Surprise, but I thought Healthy Surprise was like so primed up for it. I thought it would just be a real easy thing to create this website. People would sign up, and we would just mail this box. I thought I could actually be like a part time passive income annuity that I would have in addition to the adventure company.

Tony Federico: Kind of like a lifestyle business, just bringing in some money to kind of fund your other activities?

Johg Ananda: Yeah, totally. I thought it could be kind of like a side project that I could pitch at this startup weekend thing and then maybe it would turn into something and it would happen. I did. I went to my third startup weekend. One of the things that's important in the story is that the startup weekend has like a bunch of kind of like written in and unwritten rules about how it works and how you kind of are scored and you win. I wasn't so interested in winning in the conventional sense of the judges voting for us, but I was interested in actually executing on this idea. I had done some work prior to the event whereas normally people go in and they just kind of like, "Okay, here's my idea, we're going to make an app that like when the dog barks, you get a text message or something," and that's all they bring to the table. I had kind of done some scaffolding work and I knew who I needed on my team. I needed a designer. I needed a developer, et cetera.

Once I kind of my team was selected, I was able to just basically task people right away and get them with a running start. We were able to while again like a couple hundred. No, yeah, maybe like a hundred human work hours on this project which for a lot of time starting I mean that's the hardest point, is just that initial dump of time and energy to get the foundation going. We were able to go from idea selected and everybody was kind of like the team was formed at 8:00 p.m. on Friday

to 11:03 a.m. on Saturday we received our first payment went through, we had our first customer in less than 24 hours. Yeah, it was really cool to do that and have that happen. Then in the end of the event we didn't win from the judges. Actually Ashton Kutcher was one of the judges at this event, was kind of cool looking back. Yeah, so we didn't win-

Tony Federico: [crosstalk 01:23:50] maybe some money if you win, was that kind of the idea?

Johg Ananda: No, I don't think there was money per se, but there was kind of this ... I wouldn't say it was implied but there was investors there and Ashton Kutcher was there. Actually one of the companies that I think won was a company named [Zaarly 01:24:11]. Wow this is like coming back to me. I don't know if they still exist anymore, now that I'm thinking about it this name, but Ashton invested in them. I don't know how much but they raised like a couple million bucks from this event. I mean it wasn't a trivial thing to do this event and be selected. It was kind of cool. We didn't win and that's ... They picked like first, second, and third place. That wasn't one of the things that happened.

But what did happen for Healthy Surprise was that we had a website and we had products. I went and actually went to different snack companies, Whole Foods and whatever and I bought snacks and I bought boxes and we made boxes and we signed up about 30 people over the weekend. We deliver the boxes to them and we had a profitable company at the end of this thing.

We didn't like win in that kind of sense, but in the real world I kind of won because I had this going concern. Then what was interesting about it was that whereas a lot of times you might do something like this and then you'd say, "Oh well, that was fun, moving on with my life," the nature of this business was that everybody signed up for a recurring subscription. It kind of like begged the question how are you going to deliver these people their product next month. It was kind of like this little virus that got inserted in my life, and it was there and I was like, "Okay, startup weekend is over and now is time to go back to this is backpacking and start working on it."

Then the days went by and I was like, "Okay, I got to make another box for these people," and went from 30 customers to 50 to 100, just started, they started growing and it eventually became so big that I had to make a call and I had to say, "Am I going to do Healthy Surprise or am I going to do this other project I've been working on?" I realized that in business you can have an idea of what you think is going to be the best business out there, but really the market decides for you. The graveyards of businesses are filled with people who thought they had the best idea in the world but then there weren't customers for it.

I had to make a decision, do I go with this adventure travel idea which I

think is good but we don't really have any customers going, we were almost ready to launch, or do I go with this crazy snack subscription idea where people are signing up and they're recurring and they liked the product. I thought I would put the other business on hold, kind of on the back burner, and then lean into the snack subscription company healthysurprise.com and then see if it had some legs and if I could get it to go. And if it didn't go, I could always go back to the other project that we were working on. Then as they say the rest is history. Healthy Surprise continued to grow and become successful and then I never made it back to this is backpack.

Tony Federico: Well I guess maybe ... Did you ever follow up and see? Is anybody doing that, any sort of like backpacking outfitting type of service?

Johg Ananda: I don't think so. It's a really good idea. I mean the basic pitch is that if you want go on like a safari or you want to go on one of these crazy trips the companies that ... There's companies that will facilitate this for you and kind of coordinate all of the ground logistics, but as part of it they say you have to get some things on your own. You have to get like travel insurance. You have to get your vaccines. You have to get your passport. Then you got to bring all this gear like mosquito nets and power adapters and just things that you don't typically have. It's a long shopping list of like 50 plus items. My idea was to partner with these travel companies, get their list and then source everything and just have a bundle that people could buy at the time of purchase instead of having to go and go buy it all themselves.

Tony Federico: My wife went to Uganda to see the gorillas a few years ago. Just buying the plane ticket was the easy part. That was kind of baring witness to all, like you said, the vaccines and the power adapters and all this other stuff, you're like, "Oh wow, there's a lot more to going to a country," that's maybe not like western Europe or something like that. If you want to actually get out there there's a lot to it.

Johg Ananda: Yeah, especially ... I mean, I've done it several times. I knew some products that someone on their first time would never think to get these things. I knew I had something. I knew I had some good expertise. Then the way that we, I refined the business model which is the way I present it to you now, which is not how I started it, but what's good about it is that once you partner with the travel company they're doing all the marketing for you because they go and find the people. I can't stress ...

I know this isn't actually an entrepreneurial podcast, but the biggest problem I see with entrepreneurs because I met there some people is that the people get so in love with their idea of what they're going to do and they're so convinced it's going to be the best thing in the world that they tend to just keep punting on the customer acquisition strategy and they're like, if we can just get the product made and the website done and the business cards printed and like do all these other things, if we

build it, they will come kind of mentality.

But it's kind of a little different. I mean the way business works currently is that almost anyone can do their thing or make their widgets. Whether you sell cups or computers or you wash cars, or you do massage or whatever at a certain point it's like can you do the thing or can you make the thing and then you can do that. So that's good and that's great. That's very important. But then really what separates the Apple computer from all the beige boxes that went out of business or whatever your example is, is can you sell it, can you market it, can you tell a compelling story that will get people excited and they'll want to tell their friends.

That's really where the wheat separates from the chaff, or the cream rises, is really that ability to market and make your brand compelling in a way that people are excited about it. That's really like one of the hardest things to do, because that's where the rejection really sets in. I mean you can make a widget, and if the widget sucks and it breaks like you usually don't get that far. You've got to fix that immediately. But you can go really far once you make your widget and you're like, "Okay, this is so great," but it's really once you go to market and you say, "Okay, everybody, I just got 10,000 widgets made." Like, "Come buy them." Then if no one buys them, that's really when you've kind of failed.

A lot of people want to push back as far, like the failing risk so much so that I've seen people never launch. I mean, I've seen entrepreneurs that for years will go to events and talk about this project they're working on and it's so cool and they keep making marketing materials, but they never go to market because it's kind of fun to be the CEO of this cool exciting thing that's coming. It's not fun to be the CEO of a company that you launched and then two months later no one's buying it.

Tony Federico: Yeah, it seems like there's actually some companies that have been quite successful, and especially with crowd funding and things like that, selling product that they haven't even made yet. So they're getting customers before anything. It's like do I have an audience, do I have customers, is the first step rather than the last step in this process.

Johg Ananda: Yeah, I mean that's ... I try to do that as much as possible. I mean I can just do an example with jambosuperfoods.com. A lot of what we do is we come up with a product line and then we come up with different potencies of it, so different, so many milligrams per bottle or the strength of it, and we don't really know. Because what's interesting about cannabis space is that we're trailblazing, the whole industry is, and then Jambo Superfoods really is one of a handful companies that's really at the front with the machetes like chopping through the jungle. No one knows what the market is going to like. I mean, if you're going to come up with a new car like Tesla, they can look and say, "Okay, like sedans that are in this price range and go this miles per hour and has this

range,” like you’ve got a lot of mile posts that you can kind of look and say, “Okay, this is probably going to fit into the market.”

But with the cannabis business we don’t really have a clue. The people wanted to have 100 milligrams in the bottle or 1000 or 2000 or whatever. It’s getting a little more clear now as the market matures, but especially starting we didn’t know. Sometimes we’ll put an IM on our menu and we’ll take it to buyers and I’ll have my sales guys try to sell it. We’ll sell products that don’t exist. Then if they buy it, either we can rapidly throw it together or we can go to them and say, “Oh, I’m real sorry, you know, we’re sold out. That’s going to take a couple of weeks. Let me get you something else.” There’s ways you can handle it. But you really want to get that market validation from people saying that we’re going to buy it and that can just save you so much time and energy versus again spending \$100,000 or whatever it is to kind of make all these products and get all this back stock and then you go to market and you find that no one wants to buy it. So just do that-

Tony Federico: And just hope that it’s going to work.

Johg Ananda: Just flip those around, yeah.

Tony Federico: Yeah, that’s awesome man. Just to kind of create some continuity there. With Healthy Surprise you did the startup weekend. You started having orders rolling in, so this company was kind of growing and you got on board with doing that full time. Did the four hour work week promise of four hours of work a week play out? Did that actually happen prior to then launching Jambo Superfoods?

Johg Ananda: Yeah, okay, so that’s really how they connect, is that when I did Healthy Surprise I had always had this vision in my head of this four hour work week lifestyle business. When the investors came and all these different opportunities came in I felt every decision through that kind of prism was like does this get me closer to this four hour work week ideal? I highly recommend that for people, is to have some kind of core principles or vision that you use to guide your decision making, just it makes it more simple. I’m not saying to be so rigid that you never change your mind, but it was very very useful. As all these opportunities came in, I could filter them in through like is this getting me closer to this four hour work week concept.

One day I’m going to take this up with Tim that I think he undersells the amount of effort that is going to take to get there, and then on the perseverance and the amount of cash really, it was, I put a lot into Healthy Surprise to get it where it’s going to go, but I got it there. I mean I got it to the point where it ran basically autonomously with really no human input and I just kind of, it kind of just was happening.

Now that’s not ... I want to just also clarify that almost any business, you

can probably automate it, but you can always lean into it and put more energy into it and grow it and have more ideas and develop new products. If you just get it to this point and then just leave it on autopilot usually it's going to cost or probably start losing altitude very slowly and slowly deteriorate, because businesses, they require energy to maintain and to grow. But once I got it there, in the book you're supposed to go on to, in to Thailand and have a, yeah, drinking martinis on the beach or I guess margaritas would be the better, not martinis, and just go relax and take all these little mini vacations.

I did a little bit of that, but then I realized that my calling is to create things. I think that's a core part of the human experience, is to make things, whether it's art or it's business or it's music or it's love or whatever it is, is we're creative beings. I wasn't content to just do nothing basically. I kind of created all this space in my life where I had had this business, I worked on it for so hard for so long, and then I finally got it to this place where it was kind of on autopilot and I kind of said, "Well shit, what am I going to do now? Now I'm kind of just, you know, I got to keep busy."

That's where I saw the opportunity in the cannabis space. It was really the right time. It was right before Colorado and Washington were starting to legalize. That was kind of on the pipe, it was happening and I had all this ... I'd been in the healthy food space for three or four years and I knew what kind of a good consumer package good looked like in the packaging. Yeah, there was nothing paleo. Everything was just this idea of pot brownies and gummy bears and cookies. The food was really bad, the ingredients were really bad, and then the way that they processed the cannabis, I mean, I know everyone on the show is probably not an expert in how you do it. There's quite a few different technologies for extracting the cannabinoids from the plant matter, but what's very popular to this day is using the butane and different solvents like that that are toxic.

It just seemed like that there was an opportunity for someone to do this really well and to really care about the ingredients and having packaging that was clearly labeled and it kind of disclaimed the risks and was very consistent and used nothing but the highest quality and ingredients. I was kind of blown away that this is one of the most beneficial plants that's ever existed. It's incredibly powerful. I mean anyone that's partaken it knows that I mean it works and there's different levels of how much it works. But I just thought that someone should make something that really respects and made it as good as it could be. That's really the mission at Jambo Superfoods, is to look ahead.

As we're entering this new paradigm of legalization and decriminalization, I'm sure your listeners will know that it's not just cannabis. I mean, there's a lot of plants that have incredible therapeutic, analgesic, spiritual potential and they're very inexpensive and they work

really well and they're non toxic. When you look at the [inaudible 01:39:10] people that die every day from opioid overdose and all the addiction and all this, you understand that not that this is going to replace the pharmaceutical industry, but it's really going to be an adjunct, and it's going to supplement. I thought that there needed to be a brand that wanted to do this with integrity and help steward these plants like kind of into the mainstream. That's what we're trying to do, is make the best possible products for people. Then as your listeners will know, the best possible product just happened to be paleo.

Tony Federico: You had your experience with Healthy Surprise. You knew about package consumer goods. I think that's really an interesting sort of thing for you to be able to use. You saw all these products coming in, going into your monthly box, so you had a lot of examples I'm sure of things that were good and things that weren't so good. You knew what a good product looked like, but you chose to go into this space, I guess getting on the front edge of the green rush as they sometimes refer to it. What was your experience with cannabis before that, because I'm sure that you must have had some experience with it in order to even have been interested in getting into that space?

Johg Ananda: Yeah. I definitely smoked a lot of weed in high school and I sold it. I guess that was my early entrepreneur shining through back in the day. I think I can say that now. The statute of limitations is, it's been 20 years, whatever, 15 years. But yes, I was familiar with selling it. I had experience with that. I had also developed what is now our cookie dough truffle. That product I developed the progenitor of that when I was living in Florida. After school when I came back after DC I wanted to be able to consume cannabis in a discreet way, and I also liked the idea of just playing with cannabis and making healthy foods. I developed this edible product back, way, way, way back in the day. I've had some experience actually making an edible and one day ...

The story is that I got really high and I went and did a yoga class in downtown Los Angeles in Peace Yoga with Cheri Rae. She's a magical woman. After the class she kind of like let's you just kind of sit there and meditate and she goes upstairs and you can just hang out there. I went into this deep meditation and I was trying to analyze my life and like whether this was good or bad. I'm like, "Man, I'm consuming all this cannabis," and then I'm thinking, "Well, okay, but I'm doing yoga for three hours, so I'm meditating about how to make my life better. So it's pretty good. But I need to eat something that's better for me."

Then I went out into the marketplace the next day and I started looking and seeing if there was any products out there. There wasn't anything really that would, nothing that could come close to paleo, let alone just be like not made with horrible sugars. When I left I kind of was thinking, "Man, can I do this," and then I thought, "Well, I do have the experience with all the snacks and the consumer package goods," and then I

remembered back until like I was going, “Oh yeah. You use to make one of these things like 10 years ago.” Then I said, “Well I wonder if I have the recipe,” because I couldn’t remember. My anal retentive super organized personality training came in and passed me ... was helpful and I went through. I went to Evernote which I don’t use any more, but I used it back then-

Tony Federico: Well you read Four Hour Week so you definitely [inaudible 01:43:00].

Johg Ananda: Yeah exactly. This is back in the [inaudible 01:43:03], found the recipe and I was like, “Oh wow. This is pretty cool.” Then I ordered a bunch of stuff off on Amazon and I went and got some cannabis flowers.

Tony Federico: Some medical cannabis?

Johg Ananda: Yeah and I was like, “Man, I wonder if this still, if this works, you know, if I can make it.” We whipped it up and it was delicious. It’s paleo and it works fantastic. That’s kind of where it started. We started with that product. That product’s evolved of course and now we’ve got a couple other different product lines as well.

Tony Federico: What’s the basic, and there might be some proprietary ingredients and recipe techniques, et cetera, but what’s the basic gist of the truffle of the Jambo Superfoods paleo cannabis truffle as far as ... Like you said though, because there’s a lot of edibles out there. If somebody’s in a state that has a medical or recreational program and they can go out and buy them, most of them are just kind of junk food plus cannabis. It’s not like, you know ... It’s not good quality stuff just because there’s the cannabis added to it it’s brownies and cookies and jolly ranchers and gummies and things of that nature. What are you doing with your product to make it paleo? What are the base ingredients for somebody listening to this that they could get behind?

Johg Ananda: Yeah, so sure. I mean our processing is much more proprietary in the sense versus the ingredient. We’re very public about the ingredients. The cookie dough truffle has cashews, honey, almonds, coconuts, raisins, cacao nibs, pink salt and MCT oil and cannabis. I think that’s everything. It is all whole food ingredients that you can visualize and wrap your head around. Then we use an enflourage technique to extract the cannabis. We basically mix the cannabis with MCT oil and use time and heat and agitation to bind the cannabinoids from the cannabis flowers to the lipid, so the MCT oil fat. Then we kind of have a proprietary process of how we filter and extract that. Then we take that MCT concentrate and we mix that in. We use that ...

You can make this product, and we make the product without the cannabis. You just basically would use just regular MCT oil, but then we also use the MCT oil and we kind of sub in like infused MCT oil for the non infused. It gets trickier because we have dosages we need to hit

and not every batch of extraction is the same. Every time we do an extraction we send it to the laboratory. Then we have to do some algebra and we've got some good Excel spreadsheets just figure out how much we're going to put in, because that's one of the, my main things that I'm very passionate about and we have a very strict tolerance of excellence and quality here. We want every product to be very consistent. That gets kind of technical.

Tony Federico: That's been one of the criticisms of the emerging cannabis business space, is accuracy and labeling. There's been cases where products were tested and it's a wildly different content versus the label. You hear these stories of tourists eating a brownie and then admitting themselves to the emergency room. It seems like you're taking extra steps to really ensure that it is what you claim it to be and that people are getting exactly what they think they're getting.

Johg Ananda: Yeah. That's what we're trying to do. Let me rephrase that. That's what we are doing. It's a complicated issue and I don't know how in the weeds you want to get into it, but like one of the things that comes up that people probably don't know is everyone's heard of THC, Tetrahydrocannabinol. That's the magical ingredient that gets you "high" and all the euphoria and the inspiration and the anxiety and the paranoia and the downsides to it.

That comes in two different forms. There's the acidic version and there's the activated and inactivated form of it. When it grows on the plant it's inactive. You could eat. That's where you can eat the flowers by themselves and you wouldn't get ... I mean, you probably would get high because what happens is, is that the molecule has a carbon dioxide molecule attached to the THC. Then through either time or a couple different factors but primarily heat, that molecule breaks off and that's where the THC becomes active. If you were to take some of the flowers and send them to the lab, you'd find out that almost all of the THC in the plant is inactive. It's not a big problem when you smoke it, because when you smoke it you're applying heat directly to it and activates it. That process of activating the THC is called decarboxylation.

The reason I'm bringing this up is that if you send something to the laboratory, they're going to come back and they're going to tell you, "Okay, there's 50 milligrams per gram of inactive THC and there's 50 milligrams per gram of active THC," and then they'll say like, "Total THC 100 milligrams." What a lot of people do on a their packaging is they are just listing the total milligram count or they're just making it up. I don't really know. But I know from being in this business that I'll see things that they'll say like it's 1,000 milligrams, something that is just so crazy that it doesn't make sense. Either they're lying or they're just doing this total THC count.

Again, not to get so in the weeds, but it's confusing in that way, that even for the consumer or the patient that's going and looking at a product that says it has 100 milligrams of THC in it, it might. But if half of it is inactive, then they're really, really to go apples to apples, they would have to compare that 100 milligram product from someone else to a 50 milligram Jambo Superfoods product. Because we only address the active content because that's really what's going to affect you.

There's a lot of issues like that that are getting sorted out. What's cool about California is that we have almost no regulation here. Not that that's cool. I think we need some regulation. But in the absence of it it's created a very laissez-faire market economy for cannabis. Consumers are buying what they want and people are selling what they want and there's not too much from big brother telling you you have to label these things. In the time I've been in the industry, which in like marijuana years is like 20 years, it's been cool to see the market really mature on its own without any regulators coming down and forcing these issues. I've taken it is that we want to be the best, so I want to set the standard and we do all these things that I'm telling you about, but then a lot of our competitors are [inaudible 01:50:50] and be like, "Oh," like, "That's a good idea. Let's do that."

But then what's even more powerful is that the buyers [inaudible 01:50:57], I remember there was like one period in I think 2015 where it went from no one cared about whether your product had a label of how many milligrams were in it, to you couldn't sell it if it didn't have a label on it. The market responded that quickly. It was just kind of like this shift that just happened and everyone got it and like, "Oh," like, "We go to start paying attention to it." Now we still have the issues about the decarboxylation and da da da da, but it's been maturing and these things are kind of getting sorted out. It's a total new frontier.

That's part of the excitement of the industry, is tackling these issues and addressing them, but then it's also the [inaudible 01:51:43] of people having bad experiences. What makes this a little more forgiving is that cannabis is non toxic. No one's ever died and nothing really happens to you if you take too much. You'll probably have an uncomfortable ... You might have an uncomfortable experience. You might have an awesome experience. Sometimes I take too much cannabis and it's too much to function. I guess I don't know what that too much means, but it's like, "Whoa," but I'm just a giggly little cuddle bear after that and it's great. [crosstalk 01:52:18]

Tony Federico: Just to kind of contextualize a bit, I mean, I certainly recall situations where I remember in high school there's a ... We had a house party or whatever and I made a mixed drink and I didn't know proper ratios of hard liquor to whatever else we were mixing in there, and I had a single cup of this concoction and in retrospect I think I had alcohol poisoning because I was literally throwing up for, I don't know, six, seven hours

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non stop, passed out in the bathroom. In terms of sort of the margin of error it seems like there's a little bit more wiggle room with cannabis than even a socially acceptable drug like alcohol?

Johg Ananda:

Yeah, I mean alcohol, the advantage point alcohol is that typically you can taste if you're getting a lot of alcohol. It's very different if you're drinking some Everclear versus if you're drinking like a light beer. You can tell like, "Whoa," like, "This is like burning my esophagus."

Whereas in cannabis because of now how much they can concentrate, concentrate it with these different extraction techniques, you could have one little bite that has so much cannabis in it that you can't kind of detect it at that level. It's kind of like if you went to a bar and they were serving you drinks, and everything came in a beer glass, but sometimes it's a beer, sometimes it's like a glass of old whiskey but it tastes like a beer. It means there's times people are drinking like 20 shots in one go, and then they get these freak out experiences. Except with the cannabis freak out experience at least you are puking and risking liver failure and you're probably are not going to feel like shit for the next three days. You might have a rough go for a few hours, but in terms of overall risk, I mean compared to the potential of what could happen with alcohol, it's less risky in that sense.

But I'm in no sense advocating that we should just be willy-nilly, giving uninformed people random dosaging and not making that clear. I mean that's why Jambo Superfoods is a leader in this regard. We want to have really good labeling. I wanted to address head on the kind of overdose risk, the risk of people taking too much and not knowing. It's personal to me because my mother had a tough experience where she ate a little bit too much of one of our products, and it became clear that if my mother, who I can advise, "Look, this is how you kind of dose it out," if even she made a mistake, I wanted to do something that would be really physically foolproof for someone.

We've developed our THC potion. It's a one ounce spray bottle and every spray is calibrated to be let's say like one milligram. If the normal adult threshold dose is around six milligrams, for someone to kind of overdose, let's say someone that would have a good experience at six milligrams, they have a bad experience at 12 or 15 milligrams, they would have to spray this product 15 times. It's a very intentional thing to do to take 15 hits or drink 15 beers in a row. That's one way that we're working to address that problem in the market, versus some of these things that are 1,000 milligram brownies or whatever they are. If you take one bite of it, it can just be way too much.

I think we'll see a lot more innovation in the space in terms of people coming up with ways to kind of lower that risk. Then a lot of it too is really the prohibition's fault. I blame a lot of it on the regulators in that sense that they don't allow ... They've cloaked everybody in ignorance

and people don't really know. People don't know how many milligrams is a dose. Most people know if you have three glasses of wine, you probably shouldn't be driving. Most people know that. Most people don't know how much cannabis to take. There's a lot of ignorance in that space where part of it is on the product manufacturers responsibility and some of it is on the consumers responsibility, and then a lot of it is on the prohibition's responsibility because they've made everybody ignorant and they've also put out so much false propaganda that people don't understand and people have a lot of myths in their head.

We're going to have a lot of untangling and reeducating of people. Again, I go back to what I said earlier about Jambo Superfoods mission, is that we understand that there needs to be a really good steward of the plant medicines and to basically bring the truth to the people. Because who's trusted? I mean, I don't trust the DA to come and tell me the risks about any of these is, when they tell me that marijuana has no medical use and it's going to fry your brain and all these things. They clearly have an agenda which is not based in the truth. Know that eating potato chips and watching a movie is probably a good idea. It's fun to do that on cannabis, but there's so many things that are really fantastic, and what the plant is really good for.

That's where our story is and what we're trying to tell and elucidate people a little bit more, is more on the meditative and the contemplative and the spiritual side of the plant. It's an incredible medicine for helping people do internal work on their own emotions and them figure out their own spiritual path and understand their place in the world and in society, which I think is where some of that paranoia comes in, is part of that. People don't know how to navigate that or to use it and so they just get kind of freaked out and they think it's bad. There's big opportunity there to educate people and teach them about this incredible plant and how to use it.

Tony Federico: To touch on that one of the things on your website, and I'm in Florida. You left Florida but I'm still here. We don't have really any allowance for responsible adult use of cannabis in this state. So I'm not in the same situation that you are, but I can still go on your website and I can do a Pranayama box breath guided breathing or meditation breathing exercise, which I have done and it's actually a really well-done. I don't know if you'd call it a tutorial or what have you, but there's music and it's very clearly step by step instructions for how to do some of this kind esoteric meditation and breath work.

Just a couple days ago I'm sitting out on my back patio and doing the Pranayama breath before my wife got home and really it just kind of put me in a good positive mental state. It was a very accessible and well produced thing. I really applaud you for the fact that you're not just producing a high quality food product, and in some cases an infused food product, but you're also putting out high quality information and

tools that people can use, whether they have access to cannabis or not, that are powerful tools and powerful ways to get to back in touch with something as essential as our own breath.

Johg Ananda:

Yeah, thank you for that. I put a lot of work into that and I think accessibility is a big part here because there's so many people that have been lied to or have weird conceptions in their head about what these different [inaudible 02:00:36] are. But yeah, we have a big vision here and we try to look at it holistically. I understand that if you just unleash these substances on people, even if they're really good for them and they have some really good use, if you don't set a container and give them some guidelines about how to use it, we'll end up with a lot of people kind of waking and baking and just getting stoned all day and being unproductive.

Every now and then it's okay to be unproductive and to get high and watch a movie. I don't want to say that's a bad thing. I don't know that it's a good thing to do that every day. But I think that that story is really well by a lot of people and the culture and Cheech and Chong and a lot of people have kind of pioneered that part of cannabis. But we want to tell this other side of it and say that, you did this Pranayama which I highly recommend. It's a really good way to just within 10 minutes change your mental space and kind of get you to drop in into the moment, but if you do those with some cannabis it's much more powerful. It's one of those situations like two plus two equals five or six as opposed to four.

That's in part what we want to do. We want to create these amazing products to really pioneer and help people and to make them paleo and really good for you. But then we also want to say, "Hey, here's some other ... Here's how to use, and how to use it in a way that is going to give you a lot of benefits." It's really echoing my staff and my story and now the team. We kind of walked the walk and we get our own dog food so to speak. I just started doing those Pranayamas and different Kriyas and yoga and stuff, and I realized this is so powerful for me and it's been so [inaudible 02:02:40] and it seems like the culture just needs it so bad.

I mean, when you look at some of the things that the political candidates say and the interesting figures we have, like their sex tapes and all the drama they have with family, just all that noise that's out there, that's okay for that to be there, but I feel there needs to be someone kind of saying, "Okay, well, here's this other piece too for you to do some work on yourself and feel a little more substantive than just," kind of like the superficial television culture that doesn't really go go kind of go go ...

As we experience this stuff for ourselves, we want to pair that with our products and make content and tell our story. I think it's good for the culture, and I think it's good for our customers and our patients. I think it's good for me and our shareholders, because it makes the business

better. I think it's good for the culture, for people to be kind of become a little more enlightened. It's a win-win-win scenario. That's what I've been trying to do now with my life, is try to instead of finding zero sum situations is try to say like, "Well, hey, how can we do something where it just kind of helps everybody?"

Tony Federico: It's interesting kind of going back to your original business venture or I guess most successful previous business venture it was the Healthy Surprise, and you kind filtered your decisions through the prism of the four hour work weeks lifestyle business kind of efficiency model. Now it seems like you're filtering your decisions through a is this going to benefit humanity, and me, and you, and all of us. It seems like your prism has really expanded. One thing I did want to ask you about, because obviously I'm curious, is you've changed your name. I wanted to get some insight into what your name means literally and then what it means to you and kind of wrap our conversation with that.

Johg Ananda: I mean it's a reference to my given name, Joseph. It works really nicely because if people call me Joe, the reference is there and I get it and I'll like turn and I'll look. Then I mean really my spiritual teachers were referring to me as Jogananda which is a little nod to Yogananda who also in a lot of ways I think I'm following in his path of bringing these teachings to a level. I think that was the reference there, was that Yogananda came from India back in the 60s or 70s with a mission of basically bringing this technology and this knowledge to America, because he felt that the west really needed it. As it was industrializing and building all these things and consuming, it was really losing this kind of spiritual reference point.

In a way that's a big part of what our mission and my mission is to do, is with this [inaudible 02:05:58] and with these Kriyas and technologies that we're developing in our kind of brand story is to also bring this kind of, this ... [inaudible 02:06:09] you said was very accessible. That's what we're trying to do, is make this stuff accessible too. Johg Ananda really is my kind of staking the flag in the ground and saying, "Okay," like, "I'm doing this now." We're making these products for people, for helping them. We're going to bring them this technology and these Kriyas and meditations to help them get better and try to get, spread the goodness to people.

Tony Federico: Yeah, and maybe try to cut through some of the fog of ignorance and complacency that might be lingering, or maybe more than lingering, kind of pressing pretty heavily down on quite a few of us, to make some headway into contributing to our evolution as individuals and then ultimately to our species and hopefully doing good work with that knowledge. Johg Ananda, coming from south Florida to bring spiritual technology to the masses, I thank you for that and thank you for talking to me.

Johg Ananda: Thanks. This was great. I really appreciate being on your show. I think that people are listening to this. I mean, they're on their way. I mean to walk away from the mass market food system and just pay attention and be conscious about what goes into your body, well maybe they'll end up on my path and start paying attention at what goes into their mind and spirit as well.

Tony Federico: That was Johg Ananda of Jambo Superfoods. To find out more about Johg, Shannon, and their inspired edibles go to jambosuperfoods.com. All right Paleo Nation. That's going to do it for today's episode. Next week's show will be a powerful paleo radio bite featuring personal coach Sarah Ramsden. Here's a preview.

Sarah Ramsden: I just really had this thing that kept coming up in my head saying, "They're missing something, because they're all confused as to why the symptoms do not align with the diagnosis." So I actually, while they had me booked in for an MRI, was actually six months away which was after this proposed brain surgery and I was just like, "No, this doesn't feel good, and it doesn't make any logical sense." I actually drive myself down to Buffalo in New York and paid to have an MRI down there. That's when I found out that I had MS as well.

Tony Federico: Overcoming a brain tumor and multiple sclerosis was only the first part of Sarah's story. To find out what came next and how she turned her health tragedy into an opportunity you'll have to tune into next week's show. To make sure you don't miss it just subscribe to Paleo Magazine Radio on iTunes or favorite us on Stitcher.

Before we go I'd like to thank the sponsor of today's episode Healthy Human. Every morning I start my day with a cup of Chameleon cold brewed coffee and my favorite way to enjoy this is from a Healthy Human stainless steel one pint rover. I'd also like to mention that we have dozens of paleo friendly appetizers, entrees, snacks, and even deserts like my personal favorite, Paleo Girl Scout Cookies on our website paleomagonline.com. But to access all these great recipes, you'll need to be a subscriber first. So what are you waiting for? Sign up for a print or digital version of Paleo Magazine by going to paleomagonline.com today and start enjoying all of our amazing subscriber benefits immediately. (signing)

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