

EPISODE 161

[0:00:00.3] AV: Welcome ladies and gentlemen. I'm Ashleigh VanHouten and you're listening to Paleo Magazine Radio, the official podcast of the original Paleo Lifestyle Publication.

[INTRODUCTION]

[0:00:18.3] AV: It's girl talk time, or women talk I should say, because today I'm talking to Stefani Ruper, the founder of Paleo for Women and the cohost of the Paleo Women Podcast. Stefani has been a main stay in the paleo world since she started her website talking about her struggles with PCOS and other hormonal issues and she tends to focus less on prescriptive rules and more on ways to love yourself and have a healthy mind and body.

She's open, she'll talk about real stuff, even if it's uncomfortable, like acne, PMS, sexual health, all the good stuff we really want to hear about, which is why I'm so glad she's on the show today. She wrote a book called *Sexy by Nature*, acknowledging what most of us women already know, that our health and physiology is a bit more complicated than men's. As such, we need to pay some extra attention to it rather than just following some blanket weight loss plan and hoping that will fix everything.

Today we're going to get into all of that and more and there's plenty of girl power but anyone can enjoy this podcast because Stefani is just so fun to talk to and listen to and everyone can learn something. So I hope you enjoy our chat but before we get started, here is some info about today's sponsor, Desert Farms.

[SPONSOR MESSAGE]

[0:01:25.3] AV: Today's show sponsor is Desert farms. A company offering camel products like milk, meat and fat and even kefir chocolate and soap made from their pasture raised, grass-fed camels that live on family farms around the US.

Camel milk has lots of calcium and vitamin B1, it's a good source of protein, potassium and fats, and it's generally easier for most people to digest than cow's milk and it's tasty but you don't

have to take my word for it. If you want to find out more about their products and why camel milk is so awesome, check out Paleo Magazine Radio episode 158 where we interview Walid from desert farms and you'll learn everything you need to know. You can also check them out and order some camel milk products of your own at desertfarms.com and you'll get 25% off with the coupon code "paleomag".

[INTERVIEW]

[0:02:42.0] AV: Hey Stefani, thanks so much for being here, how are you?

[0:02:44.7] SR: Hi, I'm really good. I'm in Boston, which is unusual for me and yeah, there are people I love here so I'm pretty happy and yeah, I really — I love, and I'm not just saying this, and I know I could even be just saying, "I'm not just saying this", but I also really love Paleo Magazine. I love the people who work for Paleo Magazine. Every time I meet somebody who works in and around Paleo Magazine, I'm just like so kind of overwhelmed by their passion and also their kindness. So this is really nice.

[0:03:19.2] AV: That's so nice, thank you so much for that and I agree with you, you know? Because I feel lucky every day that I get to work for this magazine and this new job that I have, I'm so happy. I do feel like it's a very sincere group of people. Yeah, it's awesome.

So I'm glad we got a chance to catch up, I know it's been a while since we have talked and I know you said you're in Boston now, you've been really busy. You were traveling a lot, right? Were you just in Paris recently?

[0:03:44.3] SR: I was just in Paris, I currently live in London because I'm doing my PhD at Oxford. Yeah, I used to live in Oxford but it's a very, it's so beautiful, you know? It's like Hogwarts, the whole town is a castle. It is. I mean they filmed the movie there, it's Hogwarts. It's lovely but it's also a little bit sleepy and a little bit quiet for me and that way definitely not enough dancing. I moved to London illegally, Oxford would kick me out if they knew I was living in London but I moved to London where it's super exciting and the library's opened 24 hours and the dancing is amazing.

[0:04:26.0] AV: Nice.

[0:04:26.0] SR: Also yeah, also from London, it's super easy to get to the rest of Europe you know? Oxford's slightly harder but from London, you know, it's \$33 bucks to fly to Poland on a moment's notice. That's a part of why I've been traveling a lot and Paris of course is Paris.

[0:04:45.9] AV: Yeah, I've only been to Paris once and I remember, I was doing the whole Europe thing, you're traveling to all the different places and I remember thinking like on the way to Paris, "There's no way this place is going to live up to the hype that it has," right? Of course it did and beyond. It was just like the most amazing place in the world.

Yeah, you were just therefor fun, hanging out?

[0:05:05.3] SR: Yeah. Well, I don't know if this is an explicit podcast so I won't give you any details as to what I was up to in Paris.

[0:05:13.1] AV: No, okay.

[0:05:16.3] SR: Tune in to the Paleo Women Podcast for slightly more detail on what I was up to but yeah, no. There was a guy, obviously, that I was visiting and dancing with and taking the train. You know, there's a train from London to Paris, it's like two hours you know? You go under ocean so it's very easy and the dance community there is of course great. Yeah, I was just there for fun and I'm actually going back when I go back to Europe. There is a lot of really exciting dance happening in France next month. Sorry, that's just...

[0:05:49.4] AV: No, that's great, I like it.

[0:05:52.5] SR: I'm going to stop talking about dancing now, paleo matters.

[0:05:55.9] AV: I might actually get back to you on that. But tell us, I guess I wouldn't know this but you're doing your PhD, what are you doing in your PhD in?

[0:06:04.8] SR: Philosophy of religion.

[0:06:06.3] AV: Right, okay, cool.

[0:06:07.7] SR: Yeah, super relevant to paleo. It's actually, what I do is, I've learned a lot in my perspective from having worked in health, has really shaped the work that I do. Because I take a very evolutionary approach, the questions that I deal with all surround like the existential quality of human beings and sort of where does that come from, you know? What is it? I take an evolutionary approach, I talk about animals and how we evolved and how we sort of developed our awareness and what I call in my dissertation, our embodied limitations.

Because we are embodied creatures, we have health problems, right? Because we are bodies, we will die, right? We are not super humans as much as all the CrossFit athletes would like us to believe, you know? Hi, I really like you guys, CrossFit athletes, that wasn't a derogatory thing I promise.

[0:07:02.4] AV: We love them.

[0:07:03.8] SR: Yeah, I love you. Yeah, paleo is really relevant to it because that evolutionary perspective. That way they're related but in other ways like completely not.

[0:07:13.5] AV: Is that you pursuing this education for just to inform kind of everything in your life or was there a specific goal with going back to school?

[0:07:22.7] SR: Well, I've always been in school, I've never not been in school. When I was four years old, I said, "Mom, what happens when you die?" Because I was really worried and I panic attacks laying in bed at night, thinking about dying when I was four. I know, I was so worried, I was quite the existentialist back then and my mom said, "I don't know." I'm like, "Well who knows?" She says, "The philosophers, I guess."

Ever since then, I was sort of gunning for philosophy and always thought that the more letters I put at the end of my name, the more people would love me so right? I'm at Oxford and I really enjoy what I study, I really like this questions of meaning, I enjoy putting arguments together very hard and good.

Yeah, I'm there. Probably, my hope is, I really love what I do in paleo and I have some books that have come out and some books that are forthcoming coming out which is exciting. Over time you know, over the course of decades, I'm also going to start writing about things like spirituality and existence and that sort of stuff.

[0:08:28.4] AV: Cool.

[0:08:28.8] SR: Yeah.

[0:08:29.6] AV: Very cool. While you're over there, you're still busy with your podcast, right? With the Paleo Women Podcast that you do with Noël Tar, who is the founder of Coconuts and Kettlebells and is also an awesome and smart lady.

[0:08:42.9] SR: Yeah, I am. Noël is amazing and I'm very lucky to have her to work with because she knows what to do you know? She knows how to make these things work so I'm so happy to be able to show up every week and do that with her. It's really good.

[0:09:00.3] AV: How'd you guys connect?

[0:09:02.1] SR: I met Noël at — I don't know if I should use coded language right now. I met Noël at the same time I met you.

[0:09:08.0] AV: Yeah? Okay.

[0:09:09.0] SR: Yeah, Noël actually — Noël's and my relationship started when Noël started working for me. She was like, "I'm a social media specialist and you really suck at this. But I really like your ideas so I'm going to help you." That was good. So it ended up being really great because Noël had a lot of advertising know how because she has a background in marketing and business and she's very detail oriented and brilliant and driven in that way and I had sort of all these high minded ideas about feminism and bodies, you know?

We were able to sort of put them together in a way that works, she worked for me for a while and that became more of a partnership over time and then she was like, “Hey, let’s do the podcast,” and so now we’re like business partners. It feels more like I work for Noël you know? I do what Noël tells me to do.

Yeah, it’s great and I enjoy the podcast a lot. It’s continuing to grow, you know, it’s more successful than we ever thought it was going to be, we’re really grateful for our audience and happy.

[0:10:12.2] AV: I listen to the podcast all the time and I love how, obviously you guys are friends, and I love how casual and, you know, friendly and conversational you guys are. I feel like I’m at a friend’s house when I listen to it. Is there anything that you guys have kind of talked about recently I suppose or learned about through the podcast that’s like particularly interesting to you?

[0:10:33.7] SR: That’s interesting. Well, Noël’s pregnant right now so we’re recording all of our episodes kind of in advance, getting ready for baby. Stefani Junior, you know, crossing my fingers. Stefani junior. So I’m not sure how this airing is going to line up with that airing, but what have we been doing recently? We’re coming back to a lot of the same themes all the time. Every once in a while an episode comes out that does really well that we like totally didn’t really expect. There was one episode that we aired about veganism that went crazy.

If you put ketosis in the title, you’ll get like a million downloads. We don’t normally do that, we do a lot of — we talk about stress, you know, we talk about emotions. Paleo people do that all the time though, I guess. We also, I think we focus a lot on bio individuality, talking about how everybody is different and has to experiment and figure out what works for them and that could mean a lot of carbs, that could mean a lot of fat, that could mean a lot of sea food, you know, different levels of vegetables, that sort of thing.

We focus on that a lot, we focus on self-love, destroying body image problems because that’s really important for your physical health too. I mean, that’s sort of the corner stone of mine and Noël’s projects is that our physical health was really terrible because our relationships with our

body were so messed up, right? From the world telling us we needed to be thin, we needed to be fit at the same time.

We need to be XY and Z things and so we were starving ourselves and that was making us unhealthy. Even people who think that they aren't starving themselves often are. They're like, "Well, I eat 18 to 1,500 calories a day." I'm like, "No, that is not enough food." Those are sort of the themes that we come back to a lot, a lot of ranting, some feminism here and there.

[0:12:23.5] AV: Love it, that's my favorite. The ranting is my favorite. Okay, going back to this destroying these unrealistic sort of body image things that we see everywhere, how do we — it's such a massive problem, right? Even when you get these surges of sort of body acceptance people in mainstream that are like bringing different body images to the forefront and practicing self-love and all of this stuff, it's still such a prevailing issue when you see things.

Going back to the CrossFit, now, there's like the strong is the new sexy because it has to relate to sexual — how you're seen sexually. Kind of this like never ending and every listen step it just turns into something else negative. Here I go ranting but how do we do it? How do we keep fighting against it? Is it just continuing to get out there and talk about it? I mean, what do we do?

[0:13:20.6] SR: I think, do we look at generational change? I think what we should have done was to tell young girls that they're smart and courageous instead of that they're cute, you know? I think obviously it starts at the beginning, but we've all be cultured to really so deeply prioritize the way that we look and so it means that we end up taking things you know, again, the CrossFit, "strong is the new skinny", "strong is the new sexy". I like that but I think sexy can be whatever you want it to be.

[0:13:54.7] AV: Yeah, like the whole real woman thing, like "real women have curves". It's like we're all real women, it just always kind of has to relate to still how we look. Even if it's just a more open approach, it's still about how we look and also kind of pitting people against each other.

[0:14:08.7] SR: It's terrible, it is the patriarchy. I mean that, please don't run away if that word scares you but it is...

[0:14:18.1] AV: It does, but I mean, that's the reality.

[0:14:20.9] SR: I mean, but again, there's a lot of people in my audience, there was one episode of the podcast, episode 77 where I was finally like, "You know what? We're going to talk about feminism," and I wanted to be like — so I took the episode to tell people why it's not a bad thing because there is so many people I know who are like, "Well, I really want the genders to be equal and I believe women are strong and men are still good too, but I hate feminism." I'm like, "No, those are the same thing, that is feminism."

Anyway, I throw words like patriarchy around but I know that some people have an allergic reaction to them. So anyway, please know that I am sensitive to your allergies listeners. Yeah, it's all very looks based. I try to focus, this is what I wrote about in *Sexy By Nature*, which is the book that I published a few years ago. Sort of trying to conceptualize sexy as something that yes, it does come across physically, but it's also like our health, completely individual and a lot of about our presence in the world, how we treat people, our personality.

I write a lot that the sexiest thing about me is when I'm in the library wearing a baseball cap. Focusing on my work because these are the things that make us embodied, right? Like sitting in ourselves comfortable with who we are, confident. I think these are the things that make us compelling to other people and even you know, often sexually or physically or what have you. But I try to pull our self-esteem into attributes that aren't obviously based on our looks. Then we can channel them in ways that we look sometimes. If you want to have a nerdy aesthetic, if you're a nerdy person, if you think that makes you sexy, you know, wear those offensively large glasses that everybody's wearing these days.

[0:16:16.3] AV: Yeah.

[0:16:19.3] SR: You know, do that sort of thing and maybe that helps but also of course you know, just try to be human and find other people who treat each other as human and also, avoid the things that make you think about your looks.

Even just watching TV shows makes me feel bad about the way that I looked because there's just like all this skinny hot people running around, you know? Conventionally hot people you know? The way we're told to look and so, if you find that is a problem for you then I would recommend avoiding it, read some books or something.

[0:16:52.1] AV: That's a good kind of piece of advice for anything is read some books, really. It's a smart piece of advice. Like the answer like coconut oil, "Have a problem? Coconut oil. Have a problem? Read a book." I like that. I think maybe some of it too is, you know, when I ask you this question already sounding hopeless, how do we deal with the patriarchy. I think that maybe one answer, and I know there are many, but one answer can be an answer that we give when it comes to eating well and finding an exercise practice that you like and it's about consistency, you know?

As you've said, if we've been raised to kind of believe that our looks are so important then we need to fight against that, it's consistently finding your worth in other ways and, you know, affirming yourself through this other ways and feeling comfortable and proud of and happy about these other parts of you that aren't just how you look. I think the consistency over time then you start to believe it and then you start to live it. I think maybe that's part of it too.

[0:17:50.8] SR: Yeah, there's so much there, you know? Being surrounded by people who support you, you know, who aren't judgmental, that's so important and I also, I talk a lot about you need to sort of deconstruct the negative stuff often in your body before you can build up the positive stuff or do it at the same time you know?

If you figure out where your negative feelings come from, it could just be watching TV or it could be that you grew up with a mother who dieted or you took ballet class and, you know, where your waste was measured every day. Anything. It could be a relationship you're in, where your self-esteem was uneasy, all that sort of stuff, you know?

See a therapist, write in a journal, figure out where it's coming from because once you do, I think the tension sort of alleviates a little bit and it creates a more calm setting from which you can be like, "Okay, I'm going to put a sticky note on the fridge or I'm going to write that says something nice about me. Or I'm going to make sure that I write down one thing that I'm grateful

about every day. I'm going to post on Facebook one thing I'm grateful about every day or I'm going to say one thing I love about my body that has nothing to do about the way that it looks. I love that my body enables me to dance. How lucky am I, you know? That's amazing. I love that my body can breathe and stuff." Seriously.

Another thing I often say is for all the things that you think in your head about your body doing wrong, it does a million more right that you're completely not conscious of, you know? All of the — there are trillions of molecular cascades happening in your body at every moment. Every given moment, and it's remarkable and it works, it does stuff. So hopefully that can help us build and appreciation for what our bodies enable us to enjoy and have in our lives as opposed to focusing on tiny insignificant things about their shape or what have you.

[0:19:50.1] AV: Your website, Paleo for Women, has always been one of my favorite resources because — I mean of course, the focus on women and our unique sort of challenges but even just the idea of paying a bit more attention to women in the health and fitness world where the assumption is that whenever you're talking about a study or you're just talking about "people" in general, you're usually talking about a man and their physiology, right?

It's just nice to go somewhere where you know, you're going to hear about lady stuff and I love that that stuff encompasses more than just eating and even exercise. You talk about hormones and sexual health and mental health a lot and I think that's really important.

Are there any topics of particular interest to you for your blog? Is there anything you've been working on or mulling over lately that's especially interesting to you?

[0:20:40.3] SR: Well, I've actually now been writing this blog for five years and publishing at least one, if not two or three, posts a week. Yeah, it's a lot of content. I focus — there were some things I know really well because I have experienced them myself and learned them front to back. Like polycystic ovarian syndrome right?

How many post do I have on my blog about PCOS, like 50? You know. They're all, you know, they're all different and important and that's something I think about a lot because that's another condition that you know, a doctor's medical professionals, whatever, bloggers, just sort of like

lumped PCOS into like, “Oh, they’re insulin resistant, tell them to lose weight and exercise more.”

That’s just what PCOS was for decades and I was like, “Wait a second.” As it turns out, you can get PCOS from the opposite direction, from under eating and exercising too much and a whole bunch of other crap, that nobody really talks about it at all and so I have tried to push that and talk about that. The blog first became well-known when I wrote an article about intermittent fasting, which demonstrated very poignantly, very trenchantly, this point that you brought up that women’s bodies technically, scientifically, factually, I’m not like making this up because you know, we need pink colored toothbrushes or something.

This isn’t web Paleo for Women is. Paleo for Women is the fact that in studies, when men fast, their insulin levels improved and women’s get worse. You know, but we don’t talk about that, nobody talks about that and so I brought that up and people are like, “Oh wow, okay.” As of late, I mean, my themes have stayed pretty consistent. I’ve tried to talk about menopause as much as I can. It’s hard, again because I haven’t gone through it.

I have a handful of posts about pregnancy, and breast feeding, and the like. Most of what I focus on though is also, motherhood is important but I don’t like to define female existence by motherhood and so most of the blog is like hormone issues. Birth control, polycystic ovarian syndrome, hypothalamic amenorrhea, a lot of fertility stuff, you know, mood swings, tough love stuff, right? All of that, things that we can do to make ourselves feel good, right? That’s when I do tend to focus on.

I have a ton of post on the blog about acne too because I used to struggle a lot with acne, and acne, like autoimmune disease, like headaches, like mental health, women suffer it nearly twice the rate of men. Now, there are people who say that this is because men don’t report their stuff and for mental illness, this may be true. Women see therapists and men get drunk, right? Statistically, that’s what happens, you know? I’m not just saying that, it’s like in the literature, that’s a fact.

Men tend to turn to substances more and women to therapists. It’s possible that men suffer from mental issues more than we have on record but women have so many more autoimmune

diseases. Women are risk for each autoimmune disease typically more than men and are at risk for more autoimmune diseases like hypothyroidism, men suffer that like hardly at all, right? So that's really important and acne is another one. Women suffer from more than men. IBS. Yeah, quite a bit.

[0:24:08.4] AV: That's interesting.

[0:24:09.9] SR: Well, I mean it makes sense to me, people have said to me many a times in paleo, there is this idea that the gut, okay, so gut health is really important but there's this idea that the gut is the answer to everything and I'm like, "Uh." That's my response, I was in a talk and I'm pretty sure it was Chris Crusher who said, "If you have an acne problem, it's a gut problem," and I was like, "Unless you're a woman then you have hormone issues," you know?

Because, yes, the gut is involved with inflammation, but if you're like — if your testosterone production is really high, if your inflammation levels, even are just like really low, you're still going to enflame something. You don't need to have systemic inflammation necessarily to have acne because if you have a properly functioning immune system and really clogged pores then stuff's going to happen on your face. So yeah, women do have a lot more acne than men.

[0:25:11.8] AV: You already mentioned the work that you are doing with PCOS but are there other things that you find have either changed or evolved since you first started the blog? I know I read one of your blog posts about, and I don't know if this was super new or not, but how you started out kind of strict paleo and then you've since kind of taken it down a notch and found more balance and making the idea more of a guideline and less rigid.

I think that's a theme that I'm finding sort of throughout the community right now. Even Robb Wolfe's new book, *Wired to Eat*, and Mark Sisson's and all this people, it is taking sort of a step back from "you must eat paleo" to "you've got to find out what works for you", right?

Are you finding other things kind of evolving and changing since you first started the website?

[0:25:57.8] SR: Yeah. When you were talking, I thought of three things in my head that we'll see if I can remember them as I speak. Yeah, I did, I started out doing paleo the way it was done

then which was you know, really low carb, low calorie, low pretty much everything because I think it was a very hard guy, even aesthetically, fitness, whatever, driven agenda.

I was a part of the group, one of the early people to speak up and be like, “Well, you know, let’s step back a bit,” and in *Sexy by Nature*, which came out — oh my, a while ago now. Three years ago I think, maybe four, three. Three years ago, I said, “Look, like some people can probably eat bread, it’s just not ideal,” you know? I went to Paleo f(x) in 2013 or 14 and everybody was standing around drinking tequila and smoking cigars, some of them.

[0:26:57.9] AV: No, come on.

[0:26:59.3] SR: Yeah. Sure, I won’t name names. Well, I’ll smoke a thing, a different kind of thing, different kinds of things from time to time.

[0:27:08.6] AV: Yeah, that’s kind of hot these days. But okay, maybe you can tell me who was smoking cigars because I’m interested.

[0:27:15.2] SR: I’m not saying, to be clear, I’m not trying to codedly say marijuana. I’m saying like things, all things.

[0:27:21.9] AV: Sure.

[0:27:21.9] SR: Like drugs you know? Life is short. This is me. I realized that paleo was not going to make me live forever.

[0:27:32.2] AV: Right.

[0:27:32.8] SR: And nothing will. So I’m not really neurotic about the perfection. Anyway, everybody’s like drinking tequila, some people are smoking cigars and I tell them that I had like a handful of weedies or something and they were like, “No.”

[0:27:52.7] AV: Blasphemy, yeah.

[0:27:54.1] SR: Anyway. I think that that has softened over time. For them and for me, I have relaxed more on my body image, which has been really nice. Because for me Paleo I could pretend I was trying to be healthy, but I was actually trying to be thin and so now, I am trying to do that less and feeling really good about that. I developed this idea that I think is pretty neat and that will be in some sort of tangible text-based product that people can consume that I am not sure if I'm allowed to talk about in a year or two, okay it's a book.

[0:28:33.0] AV: Yeah, talk about it.

[0:28:34.1] SR: Anyway, this concept of macro nutrient minimums. We've always focused on don't eat more than a 150 grams of carbs a day or 300 or you're going to have "insidious weight gain" all sorts of things like that. Talking about "don't eat more than this, don't eat more than that" and I'm like, "Look let's set minimum levels, let's eat minimum 50 grams of protein a day, 100 grams of carbs, 40 to 50 grams of fat," those are my minimum levels and then fill it in with whatever the heck else you want.

I think that's been really liberating for a lot of people that I work with. That's been really helpful for me and yes, I do, I have grains sometimes and the world doesn't end, it's fine. I think if you figure out that you are somebody that does okay on them, again I wouldn't make it the basis of my diet because they are not nutritionally rich, but I don't think that eating bread is going to destroy my life. It's technically not and I know plenty of people who are really old who have eaten bread their whole lives and been fine.

So clearly for some people it's fine and it's fine. Another issue I turned around on a little bit was phyto estrogens. I used to be and has always been in paleo and I have never been on the legume boat. I'm like, "Eat them." Unless you have an autoimmune disease. That's what typically I tell people, if you have an autoimmune disease you'd be strict but if you don't, be flexible. Go ahead and have chickpeas. It's why I was eating a tub of hummus and showing my Facebook Live today, the huge tub of hummus. It's the size of my face. Yeah big.

Phyto estrogens, people used to just say don't eat them because it put estrogen in your body and that's bad, but the science of plant estrogens is so complicated. You have different kinds of estrogen receptors in your body, there's different kinds of phyto estrogens that interface with

them in different ways and the estrogen receptors in your body are differently concentrated in different organs and all that sort of stuff.

It's very complicated, but the medical literature seems to demonstrate that when people are helped by them often more than they're hurt by them. I don't think that the problem with estrogen dominance or what have you in our society is from people that are eating chickpeas or flax seeds or even soy beans. I wouldn't eat a ton of soy, I don't, I can't, it gives me terrible acne because it increases the estrogen activity in your reproductive organs, which is great for my sex life. But it reduces the estrogen activity in the skin, soy. Yeah very interesting and reducing estrogen is bad for your skin.

So anyway, I softened that and I have encouraged people to experiment with phyto estrogen intake a lot. I don't give it a hard no-no that's something that I've turned around on. I'm sure that there are plenty of other things. The world in general has relaxed and I'm really glad about that. I think it's really wonderful.

[0:31:38.5] AV: Well it goes to the personalized nutrition concept that Robb Wolfe talks about. I know you just did a review on your website and I think you're going to have him on the podcast soon too, aren't you?

[0:31:49.8] SR: Yeah, I'm not sure when its airing but we're recording in a couple of days, yeah.

[0:31:53.8] AV: Yeah and then the carb test and it's about figuring out what works for you and maybe chickpeas are great for you and make you feel great and maybe for other people not so much. Like I know for example that I love oatmeal. It makes me feel good, it gives me energy. I haven't done the carb test yet but I have eaten a lot of oatmeal and I know how it makes me feel. Sometimes that's all the test you need really. But I think yeah, it's paying attention. It's about framing things.

Food, like he says in the book, you don't cheat with food. You don't cheat on your diet and food isn't evil, it's how you make use of it and what you get from it right? Framing even like you were talking about this macro nutrient minimum, even just framing getting that minimum in versus this

is as much as you can have and no more, I think that's really important. It sets — your whole mindset's different when you are looking at this that way.

[0:32:46.4] SR: Yeah absolutely and it was a few years ago, I don't know who said it. It might have been Mark Sisson who said or who I encountered saying the future of health — maybe it was me? I don't know who it was, but the future of health is going to be 80% psychological. It's going to be setting up our mental health and our environment such that we learn how to nourish ourselves consistently and sustainably.

Such that we figure out ways that work for us, such that we empower ourselves that we feel motivated and also that we don't go over board and get really neurotic and I believe 100% that that's true. We'll never be able to be physically healthy if we are not mentally and emotionally equipped to do so.

[0:33:36.3] AV: Right. I'd like your opinion on something; you already talked about fasting and I highly recommend that our listeners checkout your article on fasting because it's a very good read but there's another one and you mentioned it that is so hot right now and I don't want to lead the conversation. I am just going to say it and you tell me what you think and that is ketogenic diet.

[0:33:58.7] SR: Oh and go. Okay so A, I don't pay a lot of attention to what people are talking about these days.

[0:34:09.5] AV: That's good, I feel like that every time I open up any browser or book or a podcast and we're talking about it. I mean, I'm guilty of it too because I have been talking about it a lot on this podcast but I am very interested in your take on it.

[0:34:25.3] SR: Really? This is news to me, to be honest with you. I kind of thought we were over it. What's surprising to me — I really did, I'll have to figure out who's talking about it or who's promoting it and stuff and then send them hate mail, just kidding. Troll, secretly I'm a troll. Okay what I am seeing a lot of on my personal Facebook page, because I am friends with all the paleo people and also Beauty Counter or whatever, that's how I feel about Beauty Counter.

No, it's good, it's great, I have no problem with their products. It's literary taken all of the paleo advocates and turned them into skin care people, which is interesting. Anyway, ketosis. I'm seeing a lot of ketosis supplements. Keto O's, what the hell is a keto O?

[0:35:16.2] AV: Yeah, is it like exogenous ketone powders and stuff?

[0:35:19.1] SR: I should do some research but I am not sure I understand because part of the benefit from ketosis is supposed to be the fact that you are not eating carbohydrates because that is, again, theoretically keeps your blood sugar low, your insulin levels low and that's supposed to be really good for stuff, for whatever. But the ketones is taking ketones and yeah, ketones are good fuel for your brain. There are certain organs in your body that like them.

But yeah, I'm not sure how taking a ketone is supposed to make somebody lose weight and I've asked before. I have asked these people I know who promote these ketosis products. I'm like, "A: what's in it?" Nobody ever tells me, "B: what does it do? Why?" And then if you go to the pages for the companies that sell these ketosis products, they'll list citations, resources like, "This is why our product is amazing." But they're all studies done on really low carb diets. I'm like, "That doesn't tell me anything about why I should be taking a ketone powder."

[0:36:28.3] AV: Yeah, we actually interviewed Nora Gedgudas on the podcast, that's going to be coming up in the next couple of weeks and she, as I'm sure you know, strongly promotes a fat based ketogenic diet and I did ask her about the exogenous ketone thing and my understanding and her feeling was that they generally are unnecessary and don't really do anything.

But her explanation was that just because you are putting exogenous ketones into your body A, it doesn't mean you are using them and if you aren't in ketosis and you're still burning sugar you are not doing anything. You are adding ketones but your body is still using sugar and if you are in ketosis then you probably don't need these exogenous ketones in the first place. So yeah, that's my understanding of it.

Then also even the most launched ketogenic advocates are saying that in many cases if you are an actively growing person whether you're pregnant or you're younger, or you are trying to build muscle or whatever, generally these diets aren't necessary for you. There are a certain possibly issues or illnesses that a ketogenic diet can assist with for sure, but my argument about it and this is just one woman's opinion has always been that it seems like it's such a tough spot to get into or to actually be.

A lot of people think they're in ketosis when they're not just because they're eating low carb. They assume they're in ketosis and it's a very tough spot to get into and then it's also a tough spot to stay in, right? Because if you finally switch over to this fat burning thing like one night out and eating some tacos and you're out of it all over again and then you have to start all over. So it seems like almost, at least for me, more trouble than what it's worth. But anyway, that's just my two cents.

[0:38:16.1] SR: Well I definitely agree. I think ketosis can be therapeutic for certain health conditions. Some people for their migraines it can be really helpful and I understand that, that makes sense. I'm all about that. But yeah, I don't see the point. I think short term it's fine. I think long term it's not necessary and can be harmful. The thing that bothers me about people who advocate for a particular thing, low carb thing or a low fat thing or what have you is I'm like, "Okay I'm glad that works for you, and it works for a lot of people and studies but there is so much variety."

I think everybody had a different cure when it comes to paleo. Some people really need or could really be helped by a ketosis approach. Some people could really be helped by a really low fat diet maybe because, again, maybe they have some insulin issues and this is a good holder. Although I would argue that the best way to fix an insulin issue is to fix a gut issue. I would argue that it is reducing inflammation fixing some gut dysbiosis not necessarily a low carb diet. To me that is a band aid, it's not a permanent fix. Because I think that if you can rectify an insulin issue then you should be able to eat carbs and be fine, for most people.

Anyway I think that there's a lot of variety, some people when they come to paleo a lot of the women that I work with need carbohydrates desperately because they haven't been consuming them and especially for women of reproductive age. They are important for thyroid levels and

important for libido, they are important for a lot of people for making the hypothalamus think that it's been fed. Insulin people demonize just like so much, but it's one of the body's most powerful satiation hormones. So a lot of people really struggle with feeling full and then they eat a potato and then they're like, "I don't have to eat for days."

I am completely serious and so I really caution people to go ahead and experiment with this sort of thing. See if it works for you, again it's really hard to get into and yeah, okay but also it might not be good for you long term or short term. So I wouldn't approach this kind of thing as like, "This is going to be my cure and I am going to do it forever." But like, "All right, this is something I'm going to try and see the effect it has on me." Because other approaches are valid too and there is nothing bad for your health about carbs.

I like to think about carbs as there are high quality and low quality ones just like with fat. I'm not running around eating trans-fat just like I am not drinking soda. But I will eat an apple and I will have a piece of bacon, you know? Maybe I should have picked a slightly healthier example not like there's anything wrong with bacon.

[0:41:06.1] AV: Bacon is the best. That was a great example.

[0:41:08.5] SR: Bacon is fine. I'm not on the bacon train. I think it's fine. But I don't have T-shirts with bacon on it, you know?

[0:41:16.4] AV: Got it, okay. So if you don't mind me being nosy, can you talk a little bit about your personal self-care or your regiment right now in terms of — and I am interested in this personally for myself because I struggle with sleep hygiene, sleep issues. Do you have a meditation practice? I know you're doing a lot of dancing, that may be is your movement practice, what else? What's your life look like that way?

[0:41:42.2] SR: Yeah, I struggled for a very, very long time like 25 years. But it got really bad for a while and this is actually because I took a drug to try to fix my acne and it gave me a kidney problems, which gave me a lot of other problems. Anyway it was a very dark time for me for three years or so, which you can read about on my blog I guess if you're interested but coming out of that, I was very serious about constructing a life that had as little stress as possible.

Functionally, my body does not handle it well and I stopped sleeping and if you don't sleep, I've gone several days at a time without sleeping hardly at all, and it's very traumatizing to say the least and so I have to make sleep my number one priority and this means making my life not stressful a priority and so I designed my life that way. Dancing is wonderful. It's movement which already stimulates your body to make dopamine and other feel good chemicals.

It's touching other bodies, which has so many unique chemicals involved. You know, you get oxytocin. I do some dances like salsa is really energetic and you are moving around a lot but I do a dance called Bachata and another dance called Kizomba that are hugging the whole time and you just touch people. Touch is so important and there's music and it really lifts me up and it also is tiring and so that does help me fall asleep. My self-care involves not having a nine to five job.

That's very important for me. I know that everybody can't do that but I need to be able to have that flexibility in my sleep and I need to let my body sleep when it wants to. If I don't let my body sleep when it wants to then I can't so I have to do that and then I work. I sleep when I have to when my body can and I work my work around it. I work my work around my self-care. I am very fortunate that I can do that but I also deliberately set up my life that way.

And so if you feel like you might be somebody who also benefits from that, you can find a way to do that. To work from home, to be a contractor, to be a freelancer, that sort of thing. That's very important to me. I take the same approach to eating. I don't have a regular eating schedule. I let my body eat when it feels like it and I also let myself be a little bit emotional with my food. I like to come home at the end of the day and watch an episode of — I watch bad TV shows. I watch none of that high quality stuff like Game of Thrones. That just freaks me out, I watch the bad stuff.

I sit down and watch an episode of TV and eat stuff like a lot of stuff. Eat a lot. That feels really good to me. There's a lot of dopamine involved and yeah, like some people but you could label that a disordered practice, but I don't have any mental hang ups about it and it doesn't cause me physiological and mental problem. I think that if we are conscientious of our doing it's all right. So that's what I do.

I make those things — I make feeling comfortable with those things and nourishing myself and letting myself be natural and not force my body into a state that it doesn't want to be in. I try very hard to make that a priority and, again, I am very fortunate that I am able to do so. But that has been very important for me and then my primary priority in my life is being a good person and helping other people but I cannot do that well if I am not nourishing myself mentally and physically so that's how it goes.

[0:45:30.9] AV: Awesome. Yeah, I agree with the — I struggle with sleep issues a lot. That's probably my biggest challenge and I will agree with you that the work schedule thing is a big deal and I am very lucky too that I have flexibility in that and I would say even the last year just not being woken up by an alarm every day, the quality of my life has gone up significantly. Waking up when your body wants to wake up is such a luxury and it's so nice. It's so good for your health.

[0:46:04.1] SR: Yeah, it's really amazing. I unfortunately never sleep through like a solid seven to nine hours and you probably sympathize and empathize with this that lying down to go to sleep is the worst part of my day.

[0:46:16.8] AV: Yes.

[0:46:18.4] SR: It sucks and I have to do it more than once every day two or three times and that's unfortunate. But I agree with you so much and that some days I wake up and I feel well-rested and I'm like, "Yo, this is the shit." Being well rested is great and it usually doesn't last. I feel good for a few hours and I am tired again. I feel like that's people these days. We are tired and busy and I would really like for that to not be the case.

[0:46:47.5] AV: Yeah and I'm so glad that someone else feels this way because I have so much jealousy for my friends and my partner and people who going to bed at the end of the night is the best part of their day. They just love it, you get all cuddled up in bed and you shut your brain right off and you're asleep five minutes later and they're like aliens to me. I don't get it, I don't understand.

[0:47:08.5] SR: I hate them. I have never dated or slept with a person who didn't shut their eyes and fall asleep in seconds.

[0:47:17.1] AV: How do they do it? I don't know.

[0:47:19.0] SR: They're guys, that's how.

[0:47:21.1] AV: True. You know it's really true, and I know some women who are that way too but I always find that in couples, any couple I know one is one way and one is the other. I don't know anybody where both of them are insomniacs or both of them fall asleep like little puppies. It's always one person who can sleep standing up and the other person who is just endlessly resentful of them. So yeah, it's funny. That's interesting.

I'd like to talk to you more offline about that because that is definitely something that is like, yeah an ongoing thing that I'm always working on. But you have good days and bad days I suppose with that.

[0:47:53.3] SR: Yeah, we should. I feel very passionately about helping people get good sleep and I am not sure I have answers, but I do have a lot of past trauma and experience getting past it.

[0:48:06.3] AV: Yeah, cool. Are there any other — you know, we're coming close to the end here, are there any new projects? You mentioned something about a book, are there any cool podcasts people we should be looking out for? Anything coming up?

[0:48:18.2] SR: I think my favorite thing going on right now is the Paleo Women Podcast. So I would check that out if you'd like. On my blog, there is a resource for women struggling with PCOS. I also have a resource for weight loss and I know that that might sound a little bit counter intuitive given the content of this interview, but I also do not begrudge people who are trying to lose weight and I think that there are good reasons. I also think that there are ways to do it that are not obsessed about the way you look and that are healthy.

So anyway, I have a resource for people who are interested in that sort of thing. There is a book but it's not coming out for another year so maybe I'll come back in a year and talk about it. It's going to be really great. That's all I can say. It's going to be really comprehensive and a lot about the bio individuality stuff.

[0:49:06.4] AV: Yeah, where else can we track you down online besides the podcast? Are you on slick, are you on social media a lot?

[0:49:14.7] SR: Yeah, Paleo for Women is on social media a lot. Instagram is @stefaniruper, my name but everything else is Paleo for Women. You know, Facebook, Twitter, what are the other things? Pinterest, I don't even know?

[0:49:29.4] AV: Snapchat, anybody? No?

[0:49:30.8] SR: No.

[0:49:32.7] AV: I won't touch that with a 10 foot pole either.

[0:49:33.9] SR: God, I'm so old.

[0:49:36.6] AV: I know, right? I was late to the Instagram game too because I'm a nerd who prefers words over images.

[0:49:42.8] SR: I like words.

[0:49:44.0] AV: Yeah, I was a Twitter person, even when people stopped — they were like, "Oh, Twitter is like not even a thing anymore." I'm like, "I can't do this Instagram thing," then I got into it and now I understand but I just can't touch Snapchat. I just can't do it.

[0:49:56.0] SR: Yeah, I can't do the thing, I can't have Instagram like I don't — for some reason, there's something in me that feels a lot of embarrassment and shame when I'm in public and I'm taking a photo of something.

[0:50:05.8] AV: Yeah.

[0:50:06.1] SR: Especially if it's me.

[0:50:08.7] AV: I know.

[0:50:09.2] SR: God forbid.

[0:50:10.2] AV: I try my best but yeah, I am on it but I do, I relate to that shame deeply. I can't take a gym selfie for the life of me, I can't do it. Last question before I let you go and I know this is like a very on the spot last kind of thing and it's a very personalized answer I'm sure for everyone, but for all of us out here listening, what are a couple major things that we can all do right now, high level things to just start feeling better and happier immediately?

[0:50:40.5] SR: Quit your job, yo. What can we all start immediately? Man, you really like to slam someone.

[0:50:47.9] AV: Quit your job, eat carbs.

[0:50:50.0] SR: Quit your job and eat carbs.

[0:50:53.1] AV: I like it.

[0:50:54.1] SR: Yeah, okay, sure. I would like to sit up and think about that for like three years and get back to you, but we can go with that for now.

[0:51:03.6] AV: Okay, that's great. All right, that could be the title of a book right there, really. I think people would read it.

[0:51:09.1] SR: Yeah, I'll keep that in mind.

[0:51:11.0] AV: Yeah, all right. Okay, well we'll end it with that. But Stefani, thank you so much for taking the time. I really appreciate it. So lovely to talk with you and best of luck with all of the

incredible things that you're doing and I would like to have you back for sure to chat about some more stuff so let's do that.

[0:51:29.3] SR: Okay, yeah. Thank you a lot and keep me — ping me about sleep.

[0:51:33.2] AV: Sure, I will do. Awesome, thanks Stefani, take care.

[0:51:37.6] SR: Bye love.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

[0:51:38.9] AV: Thanks everybody for listening and I hope my chat with Stefani put you in a good mood, she always has that effect on me. Next week's podcast is with Dr. Anthony Gustin, the founder of Pure Wad Supplements, Perfect Keto, and maybe a dozen other things. This guy is single handedly working on making us all healthier people and, you know, in our current supplement industry, it's basically unheard of to find protein powders, pre-workouts and other supplements that are made with real food ingredients and only a couple ingredients at that but he's doing it.

He talks about his exogenous ketone products like when and why and how to use them because I've always been kind of confused on that. He talks about his own routine, his experiments with fasting and keto and maybe, just maybe he convinces me to try the ketogenic diet. But you'll have to stay tuned to see how it all pans out. Make sure you subscribe to Paleo Magazine Radio on iTunes or stitcher and follow us on Instagram and Facebook, @paleomagazine.

Thanks again to our show sponsor, Desert Farms. They will be at Paleo f(x) this year teaching us about their camel milk and other products and they're even bringing camels to the show for a milking demonstration which I'm pretty sure is not something you see every day. That's worth checking out. If you aren't going to be there, I'm planning on doing a Facebook Live event with those guys for Paleo Magazine, so make sure you're following us on Facebook so you can check that out and I'll keep you posted. But in the meantime, check out their awesome company, their camel milk and all of their products at desertfarms.com.

[OUTRO]

[0:53:08.8] AV: Paleo Magazine Radio is brought to you by the Paleo Media Group and is produced by We Edit Podcasts. Our show music features the song *Light It Up*, by Morgan Heritage and Jo Mersa Marley, and on behalf of everyone at Paleo Magazine, thank you for listening.

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