

EPISODE 184

[INTRODUCTION]

[0:00:13.3] AVH: Do you ever get tired of going to the gym? Don't worry, I won't tell anyone, I won't judge you. I think everyone gets bored of working out sometimes but it doesn't mean that the only other option is to just sit on the couch, right? You don't have to take a class or throw a barbell around to be healthy and fit. This is something I have to learn myself because I know, I spend a lot of time in the gym and I have a hard time not being in the gym sometimes.

I'm telling this to myself too. You can get a lot of benefit from playing and just being outside and doing things that are unstructured. That's the main topic of the podcast today. My guest is Darryl Edwards, who may arguably be one of the most fun paleo authorities.

You might recognize his Primal Play methodology or his pension for picking up and squatting or running around with his friends at different events. Darryl is a speaker, he's a coach, nutritionist, he's an author, he's the founder of Fitness Explorer Training, he's been published in magazines like ELLE, Men's Fitness, Women's Health, he even has a feature in an international documentary called *We Love Paleo*.

He's just been in a new book, he was interviewed for a new book called *Born Primal*. Darryl's goal with Primal Play is to make movement and activity fun and effective, making individuals healthier and fitter in a way that's enjoyable rather than tedious.

I think it's important to note that play doesn't have to mean silly or superfluous, it can absolutely but it doesn't have to be. It could actually be pretty serious and pretty intense, it's just fun.

It's not about rules and incremental improvements and keeping track of every little thing, it can just be moving your body. He's going to give us some tips on that today and because I know even people who love to workout like yours truly, you know, sometimes we just need something different. He talks a lot about the state of pale both in London where he's from and in the greater world.

Where it's going and he's got some really interesting insights. I think you'll find a lot of inspiration and a lot of fun in this one, he's a great interview. Yeah, let's get started after a word about our show sponsor.

[SPONSOR MESSAGE]

[0:02:23.0] AVH: Today's podcast is sponsored by Clean Made Market and The Clean Made Food Fest. Taking place this October 21st and 22nd at the California Market center in downtown Los Angeles. This market plus food fest is essentially a family friendly, health and wellness lifestyle experience for folks who want to enjoy some healthy food and learn about new brands, products and services for clean living.

The Clean Food Fest is this all-inclusive tasting event that features more than 50 of So Cal's best chefs and restaurants and whether you're Paleo, Gluten free, Vegan, all of the above, this festival has food for you and whatever your preference, the event is judgment free but it's also free of gluten, dairy, soy and refined sugar, which I know us paleo folks are into.

Clean Food Fest is basically, it's a great event for people with food sensitivities but just people who love food and like to eat well and healthfully. The coinciding Clean Made Market, it's all about clean living. So attendees can learn about and shop a bunch of sustainable brands, products and services as well as checkout interactive workshops, cooking demos and talks from industry leaders and categories like beauty and wellness, energy and sustainability.

Tech, pets, fitness, I could go on. And, Paleo Magazine is a sponsor of the event so we will have a lounge there so you can come and hang out and say hi to us as if you didn't have enough incentive to go to this already. Yeah, it's going to be great, if you want to learn more or attend this event, check them out online at cleanfoodfest.com.

[INTERVIEW]

[0:03:55.7] AVH: Alright Darryl, welcome to the podcast.

[0:03:58.2] DE: Hi, thank you very much Ashley, how are you doing?

[0:04:00.7] AVH: I'm well thank you. I'd like to know where in the world you are and what you're up to because I feel like you're always somewhere fun.

[0:04:07.5] DE: Well, I'm in London, England, which is definitely a fun place to be, it is my home and that's where I am right now.

[0:04:15.5] AVH: Okay, you were at the Ancestral House Symposium recently, right?

[0:04:19.8] DE: Yes. In Seattle.

[0:04:22.5] AVH: Yeah, can you tell us about that? What you were doing there and I've never been there so I kind of just want to know more about what that event's all about.

[0:04:29.7] DE: Yeah, it's probably the premier event for discussion around ancestral health topics. So evolutionary biology, evolutionary fitness, nutrition, psychology and like, it puts a very heavy weighting on an evidence base. On the latest research and making sure we can validate some of our theories around living this kind of paleolithic approach in the 21st century.

Why this works, why doesn't it work? And looking at the evolutionary mismatch. Why 21st century, humans are suffering in terms of their health and wellbeing because of the modern lifestyle. I was there presenting. I had the presentation on the role of physical activity and exercise in chronic lifestyle disease in terms of prevention and also treatment.

I also ran some workshops around Primal Play, the Primal Play method, which is my kind of movement paradigm based on kind of primal natural instinctive movement and using play as a mechanism for delivery. I also attended to part in a panel discussion on the state of the paleo movement.

Where we've – what's been done and what we need to do going forward to ensure that it's relevant and most useful.

[0:06:09.1] AVH: Okay, that's great because that was literally one of my next questions. I'd love for you to talk a bit about maybe what came out of that panel but also your own personal feelings about that because I know, I've seen you at paleo FX, you're at all of these events, you're traveling all over the world for these things.

You definitely have your finger on the pulse in terms of the paleo primal community. I'd love to know what your thoughts are because I think, it's interesting that I feel like we've reached a certain level of maturity where now, we're all talking about what is the state of paleo. Like before, you know, when it was still new, when we were trying to get people to know about it and learn about it.

We weren't even able to kind of reflect on it yet, we were just trying to grow and help people understand and now, I feel like we've moved in to this new area where we can kind of look back and say, like "Okay, where were we, where are we now, where are we going?" Right?

[0:06:59.0] DE: Yeah, for sure. I mean, we had I think five panelists, maybe six panelists varying different points of view as would be the best option to have in a panel discussion. I would say, on the one hand, there was talk, discussion around how much paleo has evolved since the original discussions around paleo.

Since Loren Cordain's paleo diet book, it writes true to now where you're – people are now talking about much more about individualization around paleo and equals one experimentation. You know, the fact that now paleo for some can become a very low carb, almost ketogenic approach to paleo. You know, some people are very happy consuming starches and carbohydrates, some are like "No, we weren't evolved to do so."

There was lots of kind of polarized opinions as to what that prescription should be. Should there be a definition that we can use as a barometer of the paleo template and then the other discussions were around how we can have a much larger impact.

For some, some people felt that the paleo name, paleo itself actually holds the movement back. The kind of caveman imagery holds us back, the name holds us back and you know, paleo was

so 2013. You know what I mean? It seemed to be quite fad-ish and we need to get away from that.

At the same time, a lot of the things that we spoke about that have been discussed for several years, with paleo. Like avoiding blue light at night. Like focusing more on getting better quality sleep. Like having greater access to nature and thinking differently about movement and you know, a whole food, real food approach and quality of nutrient density from our foods and avoiding processed foods.

All of the discussions have become more mainstream whether you're "paleo" or not. I fear it still very relevant and I feel, I'm not embarrassed about the paleo label because I think we do need some identification sometimes. We do need to be aware of who our tribe are and what we can all do to move this forward.

My personal opinion and what I probably spend most of my time focusing on was how we can penetrate other communities and those who are probably disenfranchised from the paleo lifestyle. Whether it's due to cost or perceptions of cost, whether it's due to a lack of access to information, whether it's due to not being culturally appropriate.

You know, having attended the conferences for many years, it can be disheartening that you know, you've seen the same sort of people attending. You know, there's a limited diversity and most people are a certain demographic and within a certain income bracket to be able to enjoy the best of what paleo has to offer.

Even if we pay lip service to the fact that that's not what you need to improve your health significantly, that is the perception. That's what many are celebrating. Yeah, that's kind of given you a summary of the discussion, yeah.

[0:10:41.4] AVH: Yeah, that is a lot. It's interesting though about the name and the idea of it holding us back and that is a more complicated discussion I think because I agree with what you're saying that I think there is still value to the name and maybe I'm being biased because the magazine I work for.

I think that the whole thing with the Paleo FX conference and the rename, that kind of says something too, right? They made this big push to change the name to potentially make it more inclusive to try and maybe get some different people coming and then learning about it and there was such a back lash and such a disagreement with that, that they ended up not doing it and then sticking with the name.

I mean, there's something to be said there, you know, if we didn't name it paleo or if we didn't name the movement or the conference or whatever, "paleo." You get to call it something because that's how people could gather around something and that's how people can explain themselves and communicate.

But then, you run the risk if you call it something else then we've just got a new fad name that's going to tire out in a couple of years. Or we risk diluting the message by calling it something that doesn't mean anything.

There's all these kind of factors but I think what you touched on is really important is the idea of somehow figuring out how we can communicate and encourage and invite different types of people rather than this sort of very homogenous kind of group that tends to be attracted to it.

Was there any kind of conversation about how we can go about doing it? I mean, recognizing that it's an issue is great but was there any kind of conversation about, "Okay, well how do we then go out and reach out to different types of people?"

[0:12:16.3] DE: Yeah, there's definitely discussion around that and as I say, I was kind of championing the cause in relation to that. I suppose, some of that conversation is quite uncomfortable for those listening as well as for those trying to make change.

Yeah, I can't say I have all of the answers but as I was going back a second on the naming. For example, if I was vegan, I can't see any reason why I would feel I would have to drop the vegan label because it describes my approach to eating. It gives me an idea of what my lifestyle is and what my values are around that.

Just because somebody felt it was – I just don't like the term or it seems very fad-ish. That wouldn't be enough to sway me from "Hey, this worked to me, it's work for those who are close to me, I've helped many people using this approach."

You know, you strive on that basis and that kind of maintaining that tribal connection based on this lifestyle. In terms of spreading that message, I think personally I feel it's about simplification of the message and also recognizing, just recognizing that there are people who live different lives to us.

You know, if you just say to somebody, "Hey, it's really simple, it's really easy, all you need to do is to do X and Y." But if X is just not available to that person, in other words, you say to somebody, "This can be free and easy. I can give you all the information you need, come along to my blog, listen to my podcast even."

Some families may just not have the time to listen to a podcast. They may be doing two or three jobs, you know what I'm saying? It may be written way over their heads so there's a lot that needs to be done. I think it's going to take a lot of hard work and a lot of, it's just going to take a significant shift in how I approach this. Because on the one hand, our message is very individualized.

IE, it's your responsibility, you've got to do the research, you've got to build up your knowledge base, you've got a question and then you've got to put this into practice. We're driven by this, "I don't want to be sick or I was sick and I'm now better because of this lifestyle and I'm empowered by this."

Which is great but then what's the point me being really healthy as an individual if my closest family members aren't well. Me, just telling them to do what I do isn't always enough. You know what I mean? You need another approach, you can't just be evangelical and expect that to do – to be enough to convert people, to make people think about this lifestyle. We've got to change the narrative in some respects without diluting the kind of core values.

We've got to have some sort of appropriation of that message to make sure that it resonates to people of different backgrounds, different communities and that we're not patronizing people,

you know? I'll give you a prime example, I remember my mother, my mother had some heart cardiovascular issues and the cardiologist said to her, "You've got overweight, saturated fat."

You know, "You're recovering from a heart attack, these are the things you have to do in terms of your lifestyle." I disagreed to a lot of the tips that were given around what she should be doing for physical activity and what her diet should be.

One of the things I said to her was like, "You know, mom, you should start using coconut oil as your cooking oil, you know, get some extra virgin coconut oil and that will be..." She's like "Yes." She ran back to a cardiologist and the cardiologist said, "It's saturated fats, you have to avoid."

I said to her, "Mom, I've got some interesting research papers, take those, have a look through them, take them back to your cardiologist and see if the cardiologist is still denying that this would be helpful for you."

The good news was, the cardiologist was like, "Actually, yes, coconut oil is something that would be helpful. It's not a saturated fat that we're concerned with, it's not going to have any impact negatively on your cardiovascular issues." I'm like, tick, tick. This is all really good.

The problem was, my mom's like, "This is really expensive," you know what I mean? "I can't believe I'm spending this amount of money on just oil, let alone all the other stuff that I need to be buying. This is kind of ridiculous." A few weeks later, I visit my mother and I'm like mom, "What are you doing?"

She's like – "This is me making my own coconut oil" and I'm like, "What? You're making it yourself? How are you doing this? How did you learn how to do this?" She's like, "My grandmother taught me how to do this when I was a child."

You know, "It's inexpensive, just costs a bit of time" and I was like thinking to myself, "Wow, I had no idea that that was an option." That's an example whereby just because I feel something is quite relatively inexpensive or I can say, look how, it's medicine.

Reprioritize, that's what you should be spending your money on. She was just thinking, "That's just a lot of money to spend on oil when I could actually be making it myself," you know? There are lots of, yeah, I think there's lots of those – we just don't I know what we don't know. We're so convinced that our approach is the best way by just buying something from a store, packaged up as a coconut oil.

That's what we're – that's part of our narrative now, that's what all of us do. There are other ways that may appeal to those who do need to make the same choices but need another way of getting there.

[0:18:31.6] AVH: Yeah. This is, that's such a cool story and it's such – I think a good message for like a lot of areas in life like I'm thinking like politically in the states right now but it's just so easy for people to get behind their message and then just kind of stay rigid with it, right?

I think with any message, no matter how convinced you are that you're right and in some cases you may be, it's the ability to hear other people and listen to other people and be flexible and try to meet people where they are and all of those kind of stuff. I mean, rigidity in a message never is going to get the results you want.

I think that's something that we should all be really be thinking about and especially people who are in positions to influence people and teach people. I think that's really cool that that's something you're focusing on.

I'm also interested in, because you are based in the UK but you're traveling all over the place, do you find that the paleo or primal community is different? Like in the UK versus the States or is it, are there any differences?

[0:19:35.9] DE: Yeah, there are definitely are differences and I'm a bit of a veteran I would say because I've been following the paleo lifestyle now for well over a decade. So since the early 2000's. Paleo, it took quite a while for paleo to grab hold here in the UK. I think part of that is, some of the issues that you have – you're facing the US. Around everything from the influence of being a farmer and big food and the food revelations you have and the quality of food as a whole.

The chronic lifestyle epidemics that you're facing, you know, a lot of the western world are but the US is definitely, probably number one in many respects in relation to that. I feel some of the narrative in the US around why it makes sense doesn't apply here.

I'll give you an example, you know, intensified farming doesn't exist here in the UK. We don't have those huge farm lots of you know, cows locked in barns, never seen daylight being fed growth formula and lots of antibiotics, it doesn't happen here. Growth hormone is banned in the UK as it is in the rest of the EU.

We have fast regulations about agriculture and farming practices as a whole. Most of our meat is grass fed not because people are making – “Oh it's really healthy for us,” but just the way it is. You know, it's just the way that it's been done traditionally and cows aren't fed grass, that's usually something that's unusual. Whereas in the US, people make such a big deal about grass fed beef because it's something that isn't the norm.

You know, when you're using those arguments talk about this is why paleo works, people are kind of like, “Not really sure,” you know? We don't have the same fear of say big government here as you do in the US.

You know, we have the national health service, so we have a more kind of societal view on universal healthcare say. Rather than it's just about me looking after myself. There are definitely cultural and political differences which permeate into the different approaches, the paleo in the US and the UK so that's one of the reasons why I feel people are far more passionate about it in the US than here because you're almost fighting the system when you're part of the paleo lifestyle.

You know, you're constantly thinking about the bigger picture, you're constantly thinking about big farmer and big food and what the USDA aren't doing, and Monsanto. You know, that's always in the back of your mind. Where here, if you're doing paleo, you're probably just thinking, I just want to lose, drop a dress size, maybe I do have some serious health issues.

[0:22:31.1] AVH: Just want to eat well.

[0:22:31.4] DE: I just want to eat well, you know, it's easy for me to get organic food. You know, even in a normal store. It's easy for me to get really good quality food as a baseline because we have very strict regulations here.

Yeah, it's more mature in the US, there are more products available, people are talking about paleo far more here, I would say most of those areas of interest, it's just part of the common vernacular.

[0:23:05.3] AVH: Yeah.

[0:23:05.4] DE: Even if people don't know what paleo is, they are probably living a lot of that lifestyle anyway. They are going to farmers markets or they are thinking about sleep hygiene, even though they know nothing about the ancestral movements.

[0:23:21.9] AVH: It's so interesting though that because we are in such a mess here in the states and a lot of the cases that it's like a revolutionary thing to be able to eat food that isn't you know, messed up. To be able to go to farmers markets like the idea that we can do that and that being like an incredible step that we're taking for our health. Where as in the rest of the world, "We're just being healthy, that's totally okay."

[0:23:44.5] DE: Yeah.

[0:23:45.8] AVH: It's interesting. It's kind of scary really when you think about it but yeah.

[0:23:49.8] DE: It is scary and unfortunately, we are close cousins, you know, the UK and the US and so there's a lot of influence that comes across the pond. So a lot of the drivers for convenience and fast food and the like, we're influenced and impacted by that.

I'll give you a couple of other examples. McDonald's for example, right? A McDonalds French fry in the US comprises 19 ingredients, so potato being one, right? Then another 18.

And in the UK, even though McDonalds is huge, definitely influences, has a huge influence on you know, there's loads of people that eat McDonalds. A French fry in this country is basically two or three ingredients you know? The French fry or potato, sorry, salt and vegetable oil. That's it.

[0:24:52.1] AVH: What are the other ingredients, what even are the other ingredients? I don't get it, it's just –

[0:24:57.9] DE: I know one of the ingredients is, well, one of the ingredients is a hybrid of like about four different oils and like some of the oils are particularly inflammatory. You know, of course. But they also have chemical, additional chemicals.

For example, they have a chemical added which means that when you're frying the French fries, the oil doesn't pop and it's some industrial agent that's used. They have all these kind of like – I mean, you look at what's added and you're like, "Why are they using this really harsh chemical to add to your French fry?"

It's because we want to make sure that the fat doesn't burn beyond so many degrees, because it stops popping, that's the reason why it's added and it's like, "Well, in the UK, we don't add it." Maybe somebody was burnt you know, frying some French fries in the US and McDonalds was sued and so from that point on, they had to make sure they could have certain temperature regulation on their oil being fried.

But yeah, I posted about that point years ago because I saw this meme going around about McDonalds French fries and I was like, "I wonder if it's the same in the UK" and it wasn't. That huge list of ingredients were only two or three here in the UK. Similar in other parts of Europe as well.

[0:26:24.6] AVH: So sad to think though, we are almost conditioned in the States to think that you know, fast food or mass produced food or delicious food, all of these things, like have to be this terrifying concoction of whatever.

For me to think that in the UK where McDonalds is massive and it's like millions of people eating it or whatever, that it could still be simple. French fries can still just be potatoes and oil. If we in the states put as much, I feel like effort and intelligence and technology behind like trying to make things better instead of trying to make things better instead of trying to make things cheaper and easier and faster.

Imagine what can be accomplished. It's so bizarre, the lengths that they go to I guess, at the end of the day, it's like bottom line, it's saving money, it's you know, whatever, making easier and faster but like holy moly, that's insane, 19 ingredients.

[0:27:19.8] DE: Yes, it is insane and I think it's something like 17 in Canada and about I think it's about seven or eight in Australia. I did quite a bit of research on a French fry. I mean, of course, I wouldn't eat McDonalds myself but even, I think egg McMuffins I think is fairly universal food item at a McDonalds, like a breakfast egg McMuffins. The eggs here are free range eggs as part of the muffin.

They make a huge – they made a big deal about this that the beef is 100% grass fed British beef in their patties. Of course, questionable what part of the animal are used. But at the same time, you know, that's the messaging that they're using here because they recognize, people are like, "We don't really want to eat your food McDonalds so you've got to satisfy us that it's actually not what we perceive it to be."

They really – they up their game here. It's incredible that big food can be influenced in that way based on their customer base to make their foods questionably healthier, than me just going across the pond and having the same item of food.

Imagine, as you say, imagine that differential elsewhere and what we as consumers can actually do in terms of influencing big food and influencing the government.

I know we do have a different political system here but I still believe, there's still power to the people, I hope so anyway.

[0:28:58.8] AVH: Yeah, that is a positive thing and like even they talked about at Paleo FX last year and people can say what they want about the prolificacy of paleo bars and paleo snacks and paleo cookies or whatever. But there is the element still of you know, people are not going to provide something that the customers don't want.

You know, if you put your money where your mouth is and demand certain quality or certain ingredients or whatever, that is going to make a difference. Maybe it happens slowly and whatever but I mean, that's how you can have an influence. I think that's pretty cool.

Alright, we could go on this for a while but I want to talk about – you're involved in a book, it's called *Born Primal*, I've been checking on social media and I've been reading about this book. Can you tell us about that?

[0:29:46.3] DE: Yeah, it's a book by Kendal Kendrick who ran, hosted a podcast called *Born Primal*. I was fortunate enough to be interviewed for that as well as many other kind of incredible guests. She compiled a transcript of some of those interviews into book form.

Sort of interesting conversations, we have the ancestral health community and I was able to, you know, I was asked about lots of aspects of my transformation from poor health to better health with paleo and my approach to movement, to my movement philosophy. The great thing about this book is it really covers, as well as all the individuals involved, it pretty much covers every single aspect of the ancestral health movement, you know?

From the usual nutrition and fitness right through to the most obscure topics you could ever imagine. It's a really good book and I feel very privileged to be a part of that project.

[0:30:57.0] AVH: That's cool, is it available now? Can people buy it?

[0:30:58.8] DE: It is available, yes it is available now. I think it's been available now for a few weeks now at all good bookstores.

[0:31:07.5] AVH: Cool. Who would you say would be sort of the prime target for a book like this, is it sort of, is it introductory, is it kind of giving like an overview of where we are now or what would people like hope to learn or get from the book do you think?

[0:31:24.2] DE: I mean, I suppose, on the one hand, you'll be learning a bit more about some of the personalities, the kind of paleo personalities for sure. Different types of insight to them and some of the topics that I discussed are probably going to be a little bit more depth.

I would say, probably interesting for those who just want to learn a lot more about those individuals and other kind of key topics we've been, the paleo sphere that wouldn't normally be discussed. You know, you probably wouldn't get a whole book on the subject but you'll get a few pages or a chapter based on that conversation. So I feel like it's probably more interesting, potentially more interesting than a standard book because you just got so many different points of view, different subject matter experts. Yeah, it's a very good book.

[0:32:19.1] AVH: Okay.

[0:32:20.0] DE: I'm probably biased as well, but yeah.

[0:32:22.0] AVH: Very good, I'm in it to. So I think that's a good theme for this podcast though is different points of view, right? Being important and being good and I think people forget that sometimes. So I'd like to talk more about your actual works. You've got the Primal Play method, you're a health and movement coach, you do some nutrition coach and all of this stuff. You're travelling all over the world doing workshops and seminars and speaking.

I'd love for you to talk a little bit more about what your work entails. What a typical, maybe there wasn't a typical one, but a typical day or week is like for you, what are you doing? Are you still working too with one on one clients? I mean you've got so much else going on, maybe just give us the overview.

[0:33:03.0] DE: I do work still continue do with one to one clients, probably less now than previous. I suppose what really kick started this all was me being asked to write a book to be involved in a book project called *Paleo Fitness* and that's when I really started to think about

how I could influence the paleo movement. What my thoughts were around taking the argument, the hypothesis that, we evolved based around a certain nutritional template.

And if we still continue to eat in that way, we will improve our health and we'll reduce the risk of chronic lifestyle disease. I wanted to present the case for physical activity and movement to be also part of that paradigm that yes, we were designed to move in a particular way and if we don't engage in those movement patterns we'll also suffer the consequences of chronic lifestyle disease. So *Paleo Fitness* is really my foray into this in a big way and for me to really start thinking about building up and how I am seeing a fulltime business out of this.

And so nutrition was part of that movement, activity was part of that and then the evolution has been, how could I make this even more accessible? And that's how Primal Play was born. So most of what I am passionate about is getting as many people as possible to have fun with movement, to reclaim the enjoyment of movements that we all had as kids and have an effective prescription of a movement. So that's what everything has led to where I am today and that's what enables me to travel and discuss the subject.

And I have written other books on that and similar subject matters and I am now developing courses. So my business is trying to scale around online training, virtual training, one to one training. Which is probably focusing a more holistic work in terms of one to one work and how I can actually get other people on board to resonate with this message. So I will be training other trainers. I will be having certification program for Primal Play practitioners to teach others how to Primal Play.

So that's where in the very near future that will be running as a program. I suppose I just recognize that I can only do so much by myself and I need to – I can't clone myself so I need to start cloning mini me's or bigger me's, to larger me's to do some of this work and scale it out that way.

[0:35:56.0] AVH: Well is the majority of your clients and then potentially folks that you'll be training to be trainers, are they all over the world or is it mostly either in the UK and the States or how does that break down?

[0:36:10.9] DE: Yes so in terms of my virtual clients, it's all over the world basically. So from UK, Europe, US, South America, Africa, Australia and Asia. So pretty much all continents I've had virtual clients around the world and in terms of the Primal Play practitioners, it's wherever I will be able to host certification, the certification program. So it is going to be starting in the UK actually in November is going to be the first certification taking place in London.

And then I will be hopefully hosting in the US early next year and then it will just continue from there. So while it stays in demand which I will be testing and there's a number who wanted to do this certification, who have done my workshops, who have taken my online programs, who want to start teaching this to others. So we'll see how that goes. I am feeling very positive about that.

[0:37:09.0] AVH: Cool, yeah I'd like for you to talk more about Primal Play because I know in our community and in other health modest communities people talk about how food really is the most important. I mean some people argue sleep is first or other life cell factors but food versus exercise, you've got to get your food sorted out because exercise is only a small part of the piece or whatever but I think when people are saying that, they're often speaking in terms of aesthetic goals, right?

You are looking at improving your body composition or losing fat, food is more important. You can't exercise your way out of a bad diet and all that stuff. I think people often consider movement as being specific time you set aside to exercise and that's working out or that's being in a gym or that's lifting weights and people don't understand that you can improve your health and your mental health and your well-being and all of these things.

Through really unstructured or movement that doesn't have to be quantified I guess. I have a personal stake in this too because I am somebody who loves exercise. I love to work out and I love going to the gym and lifting weights and all that stuff but I like to play too. I mean who doesn't like to but I don't do it very much and yeah, I want to know how I can incorporate that more into my life and for people who want to – who do want to quantify everything.

Like they don't want to work out, they want to lift heavier weights every week and the week before and they want to have a goal and they want to reach it and they want to accomplish all of

these things. I think those people could probably benefit a lot from just fun play, right? So how do we get there? How do we do that? Talk to us about that.

[0:38:46.4] DE: Yeah, I suppose I wanted to accomplish two things with Primal Play because there is this misconception that play is superfluous. Play is this sort of thing you engage in when you've got the series to be out of the way. So if I am really serious about physical activity then it's all about metrics, numbers, measurements, periodization, programming, blah-blah-blah. And play is like, okay I just want to have a bit of fun now so I'll start playing whereas I personally believe sometimes play can be a super set of working out.

You can actually achieve more from a play out session than a work out because you're removing some of those barriers and sometimes a number can actually be a limitation. Sometimes even when you are aware of what you have to work, the constraints you have to work within that's what the constraints will be. So an example would be if I said to, this is an arbitrary hypothetical situation, a lady comes to me and she says, she's 45 years old and she says to me, "You know I like to start doing some training with you and I want to start doing some weights."

And she doesn't have any injuries, she's relatively well but she wants to get fitter. I said to her, "Right, I want you to do some strength training program, so what I'm going to do is I'm going to get a bar and how heavy are you?" "I'm a 150 pounds." "Okay, right I'm going to load a 150 pound of plates on this bar put it on your back and I want you to carry that around for 10 or 20 meters", right? If I was certified as a coach, I would expect to be struck off immediately.

That would be deemed to be negligent in me to do so but if she was asked to piggyback her friend who weighed something similar, most people wouldn't need to develop the strength and capability to do something like that. The body is more than capable to doing so. So if I asked somebody to lift up a 150 pounds, put it on their backs, it's like, "Hell no there's no way to do that. I am going to break my back, my back isn't strong enough."

Piggyback your friend. Piggyback your child, he's three quarters of your weight, "Oh that's easy not a problem. I am actually just laughing and smiling while doing so." So just removing the numbers and the metrics not even having to be given much coaching to be able to perform the

task, just piggyback someone is usually enough. I am not saying that I would definitely get someone to piggyback someone that I've never met before but the point is most people could see that that scenario is doable.

That there are things that they can do without thinking about the numbers, whereby you are almost patronizing people by saying, "Let's start off with a bit of piping first because you want to make sure your form is correct. You want to make sure that everything is dialed in before we progress." Sometimes real life doesn't wait for us to be able to do it. Sometimes you just have to get things done. So going back to kids, it's the same sort of thing as a kid.

If I am five years old and my oldest sibling is eight or nine, do I say to them and they are piggybacking me, I may decide I want to piggyback them. Do I say to myself, "Can you tell me how much you weigh? Can you give me a few weeks to work up towards this?" You'll make a decision. I recon I could do it or I can't and you risk assess and you attempt it and you can handle that safely and you may surprise yourself by lifting more than your body weight.

So it's a long winded way of saying sometimes play can be really serious, sometimes play can actually be overload. It can actually get it stronger and fitter and faster. So that's what I wanted to do with Primal Play is not just focus on the fun and the laughter and the jovial aspects of this but also using this to become even more human. To become like letting your imagination and visualization and fun distract you from the painful enduring aspects of exercise, which can be the case sometimes.

And just focus on you enjoying the process so much, you don't realize you are getting stronger, you don't realize you're building your cardiovascular endurance and all of the other things you want from fitness because you are actually getting more, you are distracted by all the fun that you are having. So myself –

[0:43:27.1] AVH: I love it, tricking people into it.

[0:43:28.7] DE: Yeah, exactly it's almost like misdirection. So I got into the sport of fitness when I started. I got really good numbers and I was tracking everything, all my metrics, I was very competitive. I also suffered some of the downsides of that which was increased risk of injury and

sometimes not really enjoying what I was doing. I only enjoyed the results, the outcomes, the “Look how great I look,” I didn’t enjoy the sessions one bit.

I only enjoyed the end result and I wanted to enjoy the process and the end result. So now I am actually stronger and faster and fitter than I’ve ever been even though I haven’t done an official workout for years, you know? So yeah, if I am dead lifting I will deadlift a human being. If I was going to do a bench press today, I’d rather push a car. If I was going to go for a run, I’d rather sprint with a car or a bus. I do that quite often you know?

[0:44:30.7] AVH: People are now curious to see you chase after a bus.

[0:44:34.3] DE: Yes, laughing at me as I am trying to chase after the bus. But yeah, so you know if I see a branch in a tree, that’s where I’ll do my pull ups and my muscle ups. I’ll just be climbing a tree rather than thinking sets and reps. So I am not anti-workout but I feel like some people like yourself, you love working out. That gets you going. You get the endorphin rush. You feel empowered, you feel great in that situation. There are other people who feel alienated by the environment.

They don’t like going to a gym. They don’t have the time to go to the gym. They can’t prioritize it in a way that many of us can and even for myself, I sometimes want to get stuff done as soon as I roll out of bed. So I literally will roll out of bed and move. I won’t wait to get my gym kit, get my bag, drive or go to the gym. Sometimes I want to get things done now. So my environment means I can move when there’s opportunity to do so.

So whether it’s exercise or working out or playing out or just moving for the sake of moving for the day, it’s all one and the same for me now. Sometimes I just feel like, I just need to. There is a bus shelter there, I’m just going to knock out a few pull ups just because I want to. Fortunately, I haven’t been arrested for doing so but yeah.

[0:45:52.6] AVH: This is so cool though because like I said, I am somebody who likes to workout but and lots of people even people who want like working out and going to the gym can get so much from this. Because what I am hearing you say is a lot of it is just getting out of your own head and this obsession with trying to quantify and put numbers on everything and put

rules on everything and I like to go to the gym and squat but I think it would be way more fun to be out in the park.

And picking people up and running around with them and stuff and that's something that we can all learn and enjoy and do a little bit more of. But I guess one of my questions would be putting this into practice. If we are not going to one of your workshops or your seminars. I would imagine that the people who go to them are already a different type of person in that and that they're interested in this and so open to it. What about people who are active.

Or they want to be active and they don't know what to do and they don't really want to go to the gym and they don't want to do the structured stuff or they want to try something more unstructured. What are some hurdles maybe that people need to overcome whether that's mental or physical or just I am thinking this is silly or it's frivolous or I am not going to get enough out of it. How do you start to change people's minds or how do people change their own minds and become open to the idea of trying this way of movement and playing for exercise, basically?

[0:47:15.3] DE: Yeah, so first off I would say try to avoid convenience. So that's deciding to walk rather than take public transports or carrying your shopping bags rather than have somebody do it for you. Taking the stairs rather than taking the elevator, just going back to basics and just moving a little bit more. So build to make your body recognize that movement is actually the natural order of things, that you being sedentary isn't so natural.

Cherishing convenience isn't beneficial for us, isn't helpful for us. So that would be the first place to go because even if you can't exercise for 30 minutes, 45 minutes a day at least you can just move a little bit more. Whilst you're avoiding convenience then you can start thinking about what gives you the most joy when you are moving. So I could be spending a bit more time playing with your kids. It could be introducing them to games that you've played as a kid.

It could be doing your regular scheduled workouts but also spending some time just having fun. So if I play tennis for example and I was really into playing tennis, I'll tell you what would probably be more fun than those endless training drills for me to get a better smash or to have a better service. It would probably be just having a rally for a couple of hours. No rules. If the ball

bounces twice. If I bat the ball between my legs, if I try to stand in one arm while I get the ball back over the net, do you know what I mean?

If I kick the ball over the net who cares? So literary just removing the rules and the only goal is to just have fun and continue the rally. That would be a way of creating this playful state and you could use that analogy for anything you get up to, in terms of movement. So it is just trying to remove the shackles of it has to be done in a particular way and I've got to achieve this particular objective and sometimes saying, "Actually no, the only objective is I just want to have a bit of fun with this."

So if I go for a run regularly sometimes maybe I should see my park as my gym. So when I run past a bench rather than just looking at the bench maybe I should stop and do a few dips and maybe there is some animal walks and a few bear crawls on my run. I see a tree, maybe I can try climbing it or even just do a pull up or just do a dead hand and see if I can just hang there like a bat, then I'll continue running.

I see a balance rail, I see a low wall. Okay let me see if I can walk along as if I am walking a tight rope. So it takes a lot to engage in that mindset because we do feel concerned about whatever people think. What's somebody going to think if they see me balancing on a rail or crawling like a bear, you know? But to be fair, if you in 1965 decided to go for a jog people would have said, "What the heck are you doing? What are you running away from?" Because people don't know recreational running back then.

So jogging became popular in the 70's and later and so now it becomes a norm. You see somebody jogging you don't think "I am going to start running as well because there's obviously some danger nearby." So I suppose the more people bear crawl, the more people climb trees, the more people do these type of movements, it will become normal. People will just see it as somebody exercising, even though it's just another form of fun movement.

So yeah, I would say avoid convenience, find something that you enjoy and think of making that even more fun and playful.

[0:51:15.4] AVH: I love that and I love the idea, it really it challenges your brain more too because you have to think outside the box. You don't have a gym with a bunch of machines that you just follow the instructions, you're out and you have this park and you have nature and you have everything around you like what can I do with it? How can I use what's around me? And that's good for your brain as well as your body right?

[0:51:36.8] DE: Yeah and as you say, like when you're passionate about movement and you start to learn how it really benefits us not just aesthetics but also our health and cognitive function and it can help us if we're studying. It can help us focus and concentrate, it can reduce stress, it can reduce the risk of say dementia and Alzheimer's. It can improve gut health. I mean it literally is almost a silver bullet when it comes to improving our health, if we do it of course.

So I really want to emphasize this fact around serious play because we do – it does get relegated to an optional extra sometimes. Or people will say things like just because you're outside swinging a kettle bell, they'll say, "Hey look at me playing" and I'm like, "Really? You are doing 20 kettle bell snatches and you would say that's playful?" It's not, you know what I mean? That's not playful at all. You are just outside maybe you've got a smile in your face but there is nothing really playful about that.

But a kid, when a kid is really serious about playing, here's an example, a kid will say, "There's a huge hole in front of me that's 20 foot deep and if I fall into that hole, there's a pit of snakes. I'm going to die. So I need to jump across this" put and even though it's all imaginary, they won't just fall in because it's funny. They'll jump and they'll jump quite far and there's a penalty if they don't hit that jump and that's what I think we should be doing as adults.

I don't want to get weaker just because I am only playing now. I want to be superman strong, do you know what I am saying? So yeah, it's great that I can go into a gym and deadlift 500 pounds but I want to be able to put two people in my back and go for a run. I want to be super strong by using play as a vehicle and that's where I feel the next kind of evolution of play is. That we are just see it as more than what it is which is it can make us do these things that we don't have no idea what's possible. So yes, as you can see I am definitely evangelical about play, but yeah.

[0:53:52.4] AVH: I love the idea of making it a bit more serious honestly because I think we – sure we can all lighten up a little bit for sure in our lives and have fun and not take things so seriously. I like the idea that because again, if you are taking people who love to work out and are serious and are competitive and all this stuff, you tell them like, “Hey just chill out and just play around.” That’s not going to appeal to them.

But if you say “A pit of snakes, like you’ve got to crush this job.” Like I am into that immediately. So you know I love that. Okay so we are winding down here but I love to ask a question at the end that gives our listeners something really tangible that they can take away. And you already mentioned a couple of cool movements and ways you can do things outside and I have a park five minutes away and you also have –

I should say you’ve got a lot of awesome videos and blog posts and free content on your site that you can shout out in the end here, for people who want to start learning some things and figuring out some things. Maybe before they sign up for anything. But what are – can you talk about a couple sort of universal fun, easy, good movements that people can do? Like if I am going to park after our chat today, what are some things that I can immediately go out there and start doing?

[0:55:04.4] DE: I suppose some of that is fairly accessible would be like a bear crawl like pretending to be an animal and trying to mimic the animal’s locomotion. So walk like a bear, walk like a cat, jump like a kangaroo, climb a tree like a monkey. That’s probably the easiest. Most of us would have a reference to our childhood at doing things like that so just trying to almost like engaging a play history. Go back in time and redo what you did as a child and that’s usually enough.

If there is more than one of you, play a game that you played as kid. Play tag, play capture the flag, whatever the name of those games were in your part of the world. That’s another suggestion. If you’re really struggling, then go along to my website, go along to my blog, primalplay.com, because I do have a book called the free book, free download called *The Importance Of Play*, that would give you some ideas and give you some justification for why you should adopt and consider this approach to movement. I always have lots of videos and interesting games, kind of Primal Play games that you can follow along to.

You know, you'll start recognizing that you can always add your own kind of experience and nostalgia to that process and start becoming more creative around that.

[0:56:25.9] AVH: Yup. I love the idea too of bringing someone along because not only are you then circling back to what we were talking about at the beginning of the call but you know, maybe leading by example a little bit. Or introducing someone who may not have known about this kind of stuff, you're sharing this with someone. But also, if you feel weird about like jumping like a kangaroo in a park, you've got somebody else to do it with you so you don't feel so weird. I think that's perfect, right?

[0:56:51.0] DE: Yeah, for sure. I mean, there's the wisdom of the crowds, you don't – people start, when they see a group of people doing, I have a group class, the people who aren't joining in tend to feel like they're the ones that are missing out. They're like, "What are those guys doing over there jumping like kangaroos? Why am I just walking like a normal human being, there's something not right with the world."

[0:57:11.9] AVH: Yeah. I'm the weird one, I love that.

[0:57:15.7] DE: I'm the weird one.

[0:57:16.1] AVH: I love how quickly your perspective can change, it's so good, that's awesome. Alright, before I let you go here, people can go to your website and then also where can we find you on social media?

[0:57:28.3] DE: Yeah, I'm also known as The Fitness Explorer. You can find me on Instagram, YouTube, Twitter with the handle @fitnessexplorer. My blog is primalplay.com so there you'll find lots of resources, either kind of the evidence based stuff, you know, the research around why this is a novel way to do what I do.

Secondly, some practical examples, you know, free examples of what, how you can incorporate this into your movement habit and then also some more kind of intensive online programs that you can take part in.

Usually, you know, they're suitable I would say for all spectrums so those who are couch potatoes and very sedentary. To those who are weekend warriors or take fitness really seriously who believe that they probably can't be challenged anymore.

I'm like "Yeah, try some of these things out and we'll see."

[0:58:20.8] AVH: Get back to me.

[0:58:23.2] DE: Yeah, you see the play can be really challenging.

[0:58:27.7] AVH: That's awesome. Okay, one last question and not to put you on the spot but have you talked to any of our guys at the magazine about the Paleo Magazine expo that's happening in the summer?

[0:58:37.8] DE: I haven't spoken to them but they have spoken to me.

[0:58:41.9] AVH: We got to get you out there for sure.

[0:58:44.2] DE: Yes, I am going to be there as far as I'm aware so we've had those discussions and I'm looking forward to it. I feel, you know, I'm really happy that people are championing the paleo course.

[0:58:56.4] AVH: I agree. I look forward to that and I felt bad, I missed out at Paleo FX, all these people that are getting their pictures with you like running around with them on your shoulders and stuff and I didn't get a chance to do that, we're going to have to do some Primal Play at Paleo Magazine expo in June. So I get a good shot for a social media.

[0:59:16.3] DE: No, you should do it for it. Not only will you have lots of fun but you'll also find that it's an interesting, you know, just another tool to your toolbox that can improve your fitness and your health and wellbeing. Yes, I look forward to that.

[0:59:31.4] AVH: Awesome. Thank you, Darryl for your time today. I really appreciate it and yeah, looking forward to doing some Primal Play in person before too long.

[0:59:38.9] DE: I look forward to it too.

[0:59:44.3] AVH: Alright, thanks for listening everyone, if you try out any Primal Play stuff, you can check out his website or if you just decided to go to the park and roll around like a crazy person, let us know on social media, you can follow us everywhere at Paleo Magazine.

We love your feedback, please give us some feedback. Don't just listen and then not tell us anything, we want to know what's going on, what are you thinking? If you get something out of this podcast which I hope that you did, I know I got a lot out of it, it will be great if you could leave us a review on iTunes to let people know that you enjoyed it and to recommend it, let us know.

Recommend on social media, tell other people, share it, help us spread the word, that could be your good deed for the day, okay? Thanks guys in advance for that. Thanks again to our show sponsor, Clean Maid Market and Clean Food Fest which is happening in LA on October 21st and 22nd. Check it out.

Learn more at cleanfoodfest.com or on Instagram @cleanmaid and @cleanfoodfest. Next week, we're talking to the founders of Chimera Coffee which is this amazing neutrophic infused coffee, company that I am personally kind of obsessed with and if you want to go down the social media rabbit hole, go follow Chimera Coffee on Instagram.

They do these insane videos and they sponsor some very interesting and entertaining athletes but they're truly a company that is doing their own thing, their own way and a lot of people are responding to it.

They just make really good coffee, they pay attention to the details. This is one interview that I'm really pumped about and I hope that you join me next week in listening. Make sure you subscribed and I'll talk to you then.

[OUTRO]

[1:01:15.8] 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.

[END]