

EPISODE 197

[INTRODUCTION]

[00:00:10] AVH: Hello everyone and welcome, this is a very special episode of Paleo Magazine Radio. Today, I am interviewing Charles Poliquin, he is one of the best known strength coaches in the world. He's trained elite athletes from nearly 20 different sports including Olympic gold medalists, NFL All Pro's, NHL All Stars, Stanley Cup champions, IFBB Pro, body building champs and more. Poliquin has authored more than 600 articles on strength training and his work has been translated into 12 different languages. He's written eight books including his latest which is called *Arm Size and Strength - The Ultimate Guide*.

Now, I know because I've met him that his guns, and by guns I mean biceps, and his very blunt straight forward approach to training and communicating are legendary and I was really lucky to hear him speak and to chat with him recently and convince him to be on the podcast to talk training, food, work life balance, stress and the foods you should be eating if you want to get jacked. Hint, hint, those foods are paleo.

But there's a lot more in Charles than his vast knowledge of strength training and there's a lot to learn from him in terms of living an authentic full life. Whether you're into building your own guns or not. Here is where I mentioned that this is an adult rated episode of paleo magazine radio.

Anyone who is familiar with Charles Poliquin knows that he speaks pretty bluntly and uses some colorful language. If you're listening to this in the car with your kids, it's probably earmuff time and don't say you weren't warned. With that said, Charles is an actual legend in the strength and conditioning world and he has some very useful and very paleo friendly advice for us in this interview.

I feel very fortunate to have wrangled him on to the podcast and I hope you learn a lot. Without further ado, here are two Canadians talking about wild game, testosterone, gratitude and coconuts. You'll know what I mean when you get there, so enjoy my interview with Charles Poliquin.

[INTERVIEW]

[0:02:05.4] **AVH:** Charles, welcome to the podcast, thanks so much for being here.

[0:02:08.4] **CP:** Well, thank you for having me.

[0:02:10.8] **AVH:** First of all, I guess I had the pleasure of meeting you in person at the Bullet Proof Conference which was last month now. You were there answering some questions and I guess I just wanted to get a sense from you what you thought of the conference in general in terms of the types of folks that were there, the questions they were asking, what was your kind of feeling about that event in general?

[0:02:30.8] **CP:** Well basically, they're modern day hippies that people that go there, right?

[0:02:36.1] **AVH:** Even more than paleo people?

[0:02:37.9] **CP:** Yeah.

[0:02:39.6] **AVH:** Okay, that makes me happy, I like that, all right.

[0:02:42.4] **CP:** The thing with the paleo people tend to try to simplify their life while the bullet proof tries to hack life and much into like turning gadgets, I'm not big into radiation myself, you know, there's been a condition in terms there. It's a great crowd but it's not the usual crowd, I say that.

[0:03:07.1] **AVH:** Yeah. I mean, I think they did ask some good questions and I'd like to expand on some of those today in our chat and also of course, I have to reference the Tim Ferris podcast that you did because it was incredible, I listened to it a few times and I don't want to ask you like the same questions that you get all the time so I'm going to try to ask some different ones. We'll see how it goes.

I noticed that you have a bunch of different classes and seminars around the world that you're working on over even the next couple of months. Like looking at your schedule online, you've

got, and they're so different, you've got strength training for wrestling and judo in Colorado, in December you got essentials of program design in Dubai, I mean, that's just the first couple. Is this the main work that you're doing from day to day is traveling for these seminars and these classes or are you still doing lots of individual athlete coaching as well?

[0:03:56.7] CP: My usual coaching is about 10% my schedule. I mean, I keep my finger in the pie because you're only as good as your last Olympic medal. I always pick sports I'm not familiar with so to prove a point, you know, muscle is muscle, biomechanics is biomechanics, neurosystem is neurosystem. A few years ago I took on wrestling but I love wrestling and really happy with the results that I had. I remember when I first posted on Facebook, people said, "What the fuck do you know about wrestling?" I guess an Olympic gold is not so bad and it is the first time women's won an American gold and now she's three years in a row and older. In the last three years, they've only scored six points out of the 126 she's scored on other people.

Like somebody having shut outs in the hockey game pretty much, right? At the last world championships, no one even scored a point on her. She won 51 – 0. Now, I took up judo, I've worked with judo before but the US needs help, I mean, they did better than the Russians who have put 60 million in their budget, we won more medals than them. I mean, the Americans do well but we could do better. My goal is to help out the coaching community so that we get four medals in Tokyo, that's my goal.

The other 10%, I do a lot of military/law enforcement consulting. You have to realize that running 20 miles, doesn't do much when you are trying to restrain somebody with a weapon. People drive to the event, they'll drive a Humvee so they don't need the cardiovascular work anymore. I mean, if you got to knock out a terrorist on the plain and you don't want anybody, your physical strength is going to be important. They finally opened their mind to that concept, only took a few thousand years.

But there's some teaching, that's probably 20% of the time but the rest is mainly writing. I find that people are largely uneducated, problem with the internet is that you have access to a lot of material but 99% of the material is bullshit, right? Now at Instagram, everybody's a fucking fitness expert with no hard work, right? With butt implants and I mean, one of the girls that does

photography for me told me that one of the best sellers on the internet is a butt building book but the girl has implants, she's never squatted or dead lifted so it's kind of a shame.

[0:06:12.2] AVH: How do we cut through all the BS then? I mean, it's one thing to just stay off Instagram where everyone's just you know, just butt pictures all day but if people want to start somewhere before they get a high level coach or maybe they don't have the money or whatever, how do we know what's good and what isn't?

[0:06:30.3] CP: Well, would you go see a dentist whose teeth look like a piano?

[0:06:35.3] AVH: Right, I guess not.

[0:06:36.6] CP: You need somebody who has done the work, right? Sometimes people have done the work but they don't know how they got up there that can't explain it, you know, some people, 11 out of 20 people who compete in Mr. Olympia, have actually defective genes and their muscles don't even know how to stop growing. It's a nice problem to have if you're a body builder so you can't really rely on the advice of pro bodybuilders.

What I think is better is to relearn something like Ed Cone. Ed Cone is just in a deadlift something over 77 world records, and he's done both in sumo [inaudible]. If he asks this guy, how can I improve my deadlift, he's broken to 77 plateaus in his life, right? It's better to use somebody with experience, you can learn other shoot from an NRA, we can connect or we can learn to shoot from a Navy SEAL who has killed 200 people.

Ready to learn from a navy SEAL who has been shot at and have shot successfully, obviously he's still teaching. I would say that people should look at what experience in the trenches does that person have. You know, in nutrition, a lot of people write nutrition books but they have no clinical experience in moving people forward, right?

Most people give advice at what I call 'virgin sex therapist' you know? How could he give sexual advice if he never got laid.

[0:07:55.3] AVH: Good point. I guess, don't believe anything you see on Instagram but look at people's resumes, right? Yeah.

[0:08:04.9] CP: I don't think medalist don't impress me, I'm more impressed with world records, I've had world records in 14 different sports, that I am more proud than the Olympic medalist that coach because when you do a record nowadays, you've done something that no one has ever done. You have to have proper training methodology, genetics is – genetics may make you make national teams but genetics won't make you a world record holder, you still have to put in the hard work.

[0:08:31.4] AVH: Do you work with any regular athletes anymore or is it all kind of high level, like Olympians, people looking for world records and I would imagine at this point, you are picking and choosing the clients that you work with, right?

[0:08:45.3] CP: Yeah, I made it a policy after 1992 to only select who I want to work with, not because I want to – it was more like I realized quickly that not everybody wants to do the work, it takes a certain amount of work. I do have people who are trainers, strength coaches who I write their program for and those are people that, they are the ones who will be leading the field in 20 years from now.

I save them a lot of time. I got two cases that I can think of where they say, I've never made that much progress. One guy at our five very high repetition, what you call bodybuilding coaches and I put 18 pounds on them in 16 weeks and 18 pounds was the sum of what you gain in the five years beforehand.

The thing is that I use a system based on people's neurotransmitter makeup. There's a lot of good training methods out there but there's very few that will actually work for you. If you're a rhinoceros why should i train you like a crocodile.

[0:09:47.9] AVH: Right.

[0:09:47.9] CP: If you're a leopard, you know you don't train someone as if they are an elephant. You got to train according to your genes. Not Levi's though.

[0:09:55.0] AVH: Speaking about this neurotransmitter thing, I took the Braverman test and my biggest issue was with serotonin. What do I do? I didn't get any further to see like what I do to deal with that.

[0:10:08.4] CP: Your serotonin deficient?

[0:10:10.0] AVH: Right.

[0:10:10.6] CP: That's quite common, you usually see that in high achievers because most high achievers are not happy. That's something some people should understand, I mean, I just spent last weekend in Phoenix with Joe Polish who has a genius network and there's 625 people in the room that make at least two million dollars a year and they had a show of hands was really happy and it's very low - the thing is that when you're very driven, your sympathetic nervous system is always in demand. The thing is is that -

The first piece of advice of your people who are serotonin deficient asking this question. When was the last time you got four hours of goalless fun? Purposeless fun? People look at me with a blank stare and like, I don't know, they can't even recall when, right?

I've asked the question, when was the last time you had un-purposed or no purpose fun for four hours in a row?

[0:11:04.2] AVH: Four hours, that's a long time.

[0:11:06.1] CP: When was it?

[0:11:06.3] AVH: I don't know, I mean, maybe I can think of four hours where I was having purposeless or I was just purposeless, I don't know if I was having fun and I may have been feeling guilty for not having a purpose during those four hours so I guess that's the problem, right?

[0:11:20.0] CP: That's right. When I work with executives, the first thing that make them do is schedule those four hours every week. They don't have to be in a row. For example, myself, I really enjoy shooting. I don't shoot animals, I don't shoot humans, I shoot targets that move or don't move but the thing is that, you can't shoot accurately unless you concentrate.

It's a form of meditation and I do all sorts of drills, kind of shoot with my left hand and I can shoot on one knee, can I shoot turning my back quickly. You know, that's fun but you know, it easily could have been martial arts. You got to find something that you truly enjoy and there's flow in what you do. If for you, it's doing knitting, it doesn't matter, as long as you're having fun and there's no real purpose to what you do, it's quite good.

I find when I go back home, I'll play with my nephews. You know, they always like to play with their uncle and I teach some stuff and we have fun and you know, being around kids, is a way to stay young because they got a way different look at the world.

But its amazing when I give them, for a homework on Sundays is like, how long it takes them to forget something fun to do. It's an excess that people should need to do and – or they could be anything, I like to draw when I draw I have fun but none of these drawings will be at the New York Metropolitan Museum one day.

The thing is that they're for me and they're for anybody else, right?

[0:12:51.0] AVH: What if your form of meditation, like you mentioned knitting but in my case, what if it's jiu jitsu and what if that is nice for me because I enjoy it and I'm not thinking about anything else but at the same time, but it's raising my cortisol because it's a physical stresser and you know, if I'm doing that to calm down, it's not calming me down, right?

[0:13:10.6] CP: Allow me to disagree because if you actually have fun with it, the hormones you make to mobilize yourself through the sport, they're pointless, there's a difference between making cortisol because you have a book to write and you're not going to get the down payment on your book advance if you don't finish by Friday at midnight. That's different and it's not fun because I mean, you're writing the book but there's time pressure.

I think if you go do jiu jitsu or draw or - but you know, I wouldn't call reading, it can be fun but I think people need to move, you know? I think more outdoor work as in walking in the woods. I mean, there's a place where I live called the Garden of the Gods and it's basically a rock formation that both are underground and the natives thought it's a meeting place for the gods but every time I've got foreign friends who come to see me I take them to see that and immediately you have peacefulness, right?

You know, kayaking, I think people have a deficiency of being outdoor and then one of the things that my friend does he walks for 10 minutes after every meal three times a day and I'll try that, it was freezing and I went around and I could see the point of doing that, I'm starting back to do that routine, I live in a beautiful neighborhood, I could line up all those 10 minutes. You know, I don't bring a podcast to listen to. I remember when I walked around it. I've driven those streets often as we go grab groceries, I never notice any of the detail of the houses or now I could, you know? I think it's important to just play outdoors more, you know?

[0:14:54.8] AVH: Do you find with like – you've mentioned things like shooting and drawing are some of your sort of meditative relaxing activities that you do. Do you, at this point still have to kind of schedule them in or is it more effortless for you at this point, you just incorporate it into your daily life.

[0:15:12.0] CP: You know what? I'm a type A behavior, dopamine dominant motherfucker so for me, if I don't schedule the fun activities, I will choose work over it, right? But as far as like training, I train four days out of five, it's always an hour after breakfast, I don't really schedule, I will write in my diary which workout. I tend to do and record it on my app that I just came up with because I think if you don't keep records, what you do, you're wasting time. I do a first fun activity I'll be extremely honest, I do have to put them in my agenda otherwise I don't do them.

If I go back home after Christmas, I don't schedule much but let's say if my nephews want to go outside and have a snowball fight then we'll do it more impromptu in those cases, right? A few months ago I was at the cottage and play king of the raft, you know, basic stuff like that, I mean, I think if we actually in Quebec, they have a medical code for lack of nature.

He could get insurance. They basically found that kids who were raised in a city have no clue of what happens outside the urban area. For example, a friend of mine who is a phys-ed teacher, took them on a farm and these kids were like four to five years old and they were freaked out that milk came out of the cow.

They were grossed out. You know, which means like how much exposure have you had to the outside world, right?

[0:16:43.5] AVH: Right, are they making more efforts then in Quebec to...

[0:16:47.2] CP: Yeah, they recognize it's a problem. Like the average Quebec male, 15 years old is in front of the screen 32 hours a week. I mean, that gives them a bad vulture type of posture because always bent over, crooked and you know, if they play a lot of video games they are desensitized to the normal world. One of my nephews who is a major in special forces, the first thing he banned when he was sent to Afghanistan was video games.

Because in real life, you get shoot out by a Taliban guy, there's no reboot button so you thought with the guys had a big shock once they got first time in combat. People live an artificial life so in Quebec, they're actually funds now to send buses to any student schools to take them outside the island and visit farms, visit what they call outdoor activity centers.

[0:17:35.5] AVH: That's a good start. Only in Canada of course. Okay, one question that I wanted to ask you, I didn't get a chance to do it at the bullet proof conference. You know, obviously, when we're talking about general questions about training and hypertrophy and all of these things, we're usually thinking about a man but obviously and as you know, from some of your really high profile clients, more and more women are getting into strength training really serious strength training and on of my first sort of high level questions to you is, do you think women and men need to train differently at all, if for example, me and my male partner are both in the gym and our goal is exactly the same, to get as strong as possible?

I'm not worried about getting bulky, I'm not trying to be skinny, I'm not doing any of that stuff, we both just want to be as strong as we possibly can. Would you approach our training differently?

[0:18:25.9] CP: Not really. Because physiologically speaking, the biggest difference between men and women is a plumbing, right? Outside of that, one thing though is that training response is always much smaller in women but I have never found any evidence that you need to have dramatically different programs from female to male. The only difference is when they first do weight training. Women tend to be neurologically inefficient at creating fibers and it's not a male, female thing is just a cultural thing so the first three weeks of strength training, they can make progress with 20 RM in maximal strength while men will only give strength and endurance out of that but after three months, that difference is gone.

I mean, there's a good study out of Scotland back in the 80's that showed that. I really believe that the only real difference is actually how much progress you're going to make.

[0:19:21.0] AVH: Really isn't a lot of that progress just because we have so much less testosterone anyway and maybe we're starting from such a smaller degree of muscle mass and strength relative to men that we're starting kind of at a disadvantage anyway?

[0:19:33.8] CP: Yeah, but the thing is that testosterone levels are not where they used to be. The difference between males and females is less drastic than it was four years ago. I mean, according to the world health organization, testosterone levels have decreased 1% per year, 1% since 1950, right? Do the math, we're 67% lower testosterone. If you look at the blood work so the work, it's quite confirmed. Some countries are worse like the UK and Australia, Denmark is probably the worst country for testosterone levels.

[0:20:04.0] AVH: Why are they worse? Do we know?

[0:20:06.6] CP: I mean, this is going to offend a lot of people.

[0:20:09.4] AVH: Well, it wouldn't be an interview with you if there wasn't something that was going to –

[0:20:14.1] CP: It's cultural.

[0:20:15.3] AVH: Okay.

[0:20:16.3] CP: I'm not saying this in a bad way, you know? I don't want to be quoted out of context but the thing is just that, Danish women called Danish men 'pink men;. For example, this is truly also in Sweden, Friday night, if you go to a bar at 5:00, the bar is probably 90% females, right?

As supposed to England, it will be 90% males and then what happens is that it's customary in Danish and Swedish culture that on Friday night, the women go out and the men stay home to take care of the kids. The women have a much larger, lack of a better word, castration effect because men are not allowed to be men.

I'm not saying that men should all drink at Friday night but the point is that they were the first – wants to say okay, boys should not play with guns and trucks and all these supposedly PC movements but you see kids playing, they'll make up guns with their index fingers you know?

The thing is that, if you – I'm a feminist, i think women have been for years negated. I think one of the good things about Cross-fit is that attracted women to live for it but testosterone levels, when you're in a culture that doesn't let men be men and women be women, testosterone goes down.

[0:21:32.9] AVH: What about in America over in our continent where guns are absolutely very accepted and I mean, you could argue that men are men in America and we're still having a testosterone problem here.

[0:21:44.7] CP: Yeah, for different reasons but the question I answered is why is it worse in Denmark? Because of cultural factors, they are very discouraged to express aggressive behavior at a young age but you know, so it's the only countries in the world where they have a hotline to rat out your neighbor if he's looking, and he's making too much money, right?

In Denmark, if you find your neighbor has too nice of a car, you could call to IRS and say, Jens has a nice car, there's something wrong and he's going to get audited the next day. They have like a jealousy hotline so when you live in a society like that, it doesn't encourage competition, right?

One of the biggest bullshit we saw during the last election was like, be like Denmark, you fucking kidding me, it's the country with the most prescribed anti-depressants in the world. They're not happier if you really dig it up, you could Google it, are the Danes that happy, you'll find people will say, "Fuck this bullshit," because suicides and depression and use of meds is highest in our country, right?

If you're not born rich in Denmark, you're basically never going to make it. It's a society that does not allow you to grow. One thing we know from plenty of research is competition increases testosterone, right? It's a good thing. Competition is not bad, one of the things I really like about the Cross-fit is that they said, "Okay, everybody's equal, everybody should lift weights, go, go, go."

I mean, there's things they can improve but at least it's not like, "You're a female, you must use the problem areas machine, like the thigh abductors, [inaudible]. That's one of the biggest impacts of Cross-fit and I think the paleo families and the Cross-fit families get along really well.

I think that the paleo movement was probably one of the most liberating things for women because they said, "It's okay to be strong, okay?" You don't have to be a skinny bitch that eats vegan meals, you know? I think that for example, in Australia, the main cause of why testosterone is low is alcohol consumption but also really high content in the soil of copper which centrifuge absorption which interferes with testosterone production, right?

The UK is full of cadmium in the soil and water, cadmium blocks zinc absorption, again, affects testosterone. There's numbers of hours watching TV. The US watches way more TV than Canada and it is reflected in testosterone levels, right? Average Canadian male makes about 30 to 60% more testosterone in average American male.

[0:24:26.3] AVH: Really? I did not know that. That is an interesting sound byte for all of the people who want to shit all over Canadians and say we're too polite and we're too nice but we've got more testosterone up north, that is an interesting point.

[0:24:39.8] CP: Yeah, but if you look at norms. For example, I remember being in the UK, I was teaching in Spain and this guy was telling me that his endogens were really high and he couldn't understand why he was fat so being my politically correct self I said, "In fact, you're very fat but I don't think you have high testosterone." He goes, "Yes I do, my doctor says my androgens are through the roof and I have the paper to prove it." So he brings his testers for salivary EAG sulfate and his was 1.9.

The norms for male British males is 1.6 to 1.8 so by British standards, you're super male so I correctly pointed out to him that in Canada, the norms for males are three to 10. By Canadian standards, he's not even a male. Norms are country based, right? What's good in England is horrendous in Canada for example. The point is that there's a lot of factors that get into testosterone, also like sleep, you know, Americans don't take holidays. The average American gets two weeks of vacation, takes only one.

One of the biggest things I learned from the owner of Baleko company was to take more vacations. I went 14 years without taking a vacation because in my mind, vacations were for wimps. And after that car ride I said, "Okay, screw that, from now on, it take you six weeks off a year," and it quickly, after friending myself with Tim Ferris, I went to a week a month, you know, July, August off and practically December off.

Now, it's probably 40% of my year I'm on vacation and my productivity has actually gone up. Again, it's first point I made in the podcast but I think that fun and rest are underestimated.

[0:26:22.7] AVH: Right. For American or Canadian men who have grown up and maybe had lower testosterone or maybe they supplemented with testosterone when they were teenagers and they were training and they were trying to get big and they were taking steroids or whatever. If you're a younger man and maybe in your 30's now and you're suffering with low testosterone, are there natural interventions or natural things you can do to try and regulate and improve your own production or is it once you're screwed, you're screwed and you're going to need like medical help forever.

[0:26:56.4] CP: It's a case by case. Some people can recover from very low testosterone. For example, in American units, I like people that have male athletes between 1,100 and 1,400 of

testosterone. But I've had guys from the NHL, NFL, Prison, 114 or maybe 300 of testosterone right?

It comes from the over training between the games, traveling, ship – there's homeopathic protocols, one of them is called GMO therapy where I've seen people with 114 of testosterone go to 1,100 in 56 days, right? It is possible to restore the HPTA, the problem is as soon as the season starts over, that testosterone will dwindle again and then maybe when a guy comes back the next summer the testosterone is 300.

We can do the same work or they can go back up maybe this time to 1,200. It is feasible but the biggest actually issues and it's getting worse is screen time and not food. For example, the guy from the major league baseball come and he only had one solid meal a day. The rest were shakes and he thought he was doing the right thing and he was clearly a skinny fat guy. I said, "Dude you've got to eat some food." So things like that and also people rely too much on supplements. I think that if there's one place you should invest your money in is high quality food and the most important thing if you want testosterone is wild meat. Okay, I can hear the extremes, "Well I live in England." Well okay, well fuck off then.

[0:28:28.5] AVH: Yeah make the effort to find the good stuff, right? You still get your stuff shipped in from Rural Quebec don't you?

[0:28:34.0] CP: I do. Basically the other reason why I live in Colorado, okay it's green, it's beautiful, you don't have any issues here. Is I can buy elk, ostrich, bison, yak that's locally farmed, right? I mean the guy who supplies my yak is two exits from me on the highway but anybody who comes to live with me sometimes we're filming and I have athletes come here and they basically eat what I eat for three or four days and they go, "Man it's unbelievable that there is such a thing as real food," right?

But if you live somewhere like Ireland, finding real food is a challenge. I remember being in Dublin with Dr. Mark Houston and we're ordering a meal and he goes, "What does this come with?" He goes a baked potato and he goes, "Do you have any other vegetables?" "Yes, we have fries." So I keep that a concept of vegetables. In that time we revolved around the potato, right? But if you go to Ireland and go to any gym, you could tell the local food is shit, right?

So I find that when I am overseas like Latvia for example or Estonia, you're at a local gym or Iceland, people are quite fit as in like you need to be at a certain level to be allowed to go to the gym. I remember being with my daughter, she was eight, we were in Reykjavik in Iceland and we went to the local chain which would be a good life in there or 24 hour fitness in the US and my daughter was very observant. She said, "Papa you know everybody is lean here."

So there's a person at that time, was probably 45 in the gym and I would say the average female that has maybe 15% body fat and quite lean, right? But the thing is in Iceland now there is a huge difference between 40 year olds and 10 years old. The fastest rising obesity in the western world is in Iceland because they drink, one of the highest consumptions of Coca-Cola in the world. The same thing with Denmark. One of the reasons why Denmark has very little testosterone is that the greatest consumption of the Coca-Cola per capita on the world is Denmark.

And that's why they also have the world record for PCOS. PCOS is not a sexual endocrine dysfunction. It's an insulin dysfunction that reflects on the endocrine system and then if you have a male Dane, I think the average was four liters of Coke a day. So if you drink four liters of Coke a day, that's drinking liquid castration. As Joe Polish says, soda is liquid Satan you know? There is nothing more evil than that. So if a male tells me he prefers Christmas over having an erection and I ask him, "Why?" "Because it happens more often, obviously they've got a problem. But I can measure the testosterone, the best way to measure the testosterone is not actually through blood but through measuring the DHEA sulfate four times a day and then you get profile because DHEA is the mother of testosterone. Testosterone in blood is not actually very accurate but DHEA saliva is very good and then I tell the guy, you know send the contract you can't watch the screen three hours within going to bed. It is the DHE sulfate will jump through the roof.

But after four or five days you will wake up in the morning with an erection that could fuck a coconut, okay?

[0:31:50.1] AVH: That's impressive. That's an impressive visual.

[0:31:53.0] CP: Yeah, the visuals release dopamine.

[0:31:55.9] AVH: That's very paleo.

[0:31:57.1] CP: Yes, so if you could fuck a coconut because you're dick is that hard then you're doing well. But it's amazing in private consultation if you ask a late teenager, "Do you wake up every day with a morning erection? And they look at you with a puzzled look like, "No. Are you supposed to?" I mean I remember going through teenager-hood I to do a hand stand and take a piss in the morning because it won't go down. So the point is that you know if the testosterone levels have decreased and it's getting worse every generation because even the females like their testosterones, the kids are not.

You ask any old timer, now I consider myself being an old timer, the strength coach or I think any coach, they will tell you that despite the fact that we weigh more than we used to is more chartered nowadays to make progress. Another thing that raises testosterone very cheaply is to eat wild meat raw like I think like carpaccio type. And if a guest comes to my house and I will make breakfast and I will just slice thinly let's say some yak and put it on their plate with some olive oil and Celtic sea salt.

And they will look at it and ask, "Aren't you going to cook it?" No and I say, "Okay don't be a wussy just fucking eat it and shut up." But I want you to score your brain on a scale of one to ten right now and then in an hour from now let's re-evaluate your brain and what's the average score after an hour? 10 out of 10 people will be like, "What is special in that meat?" Well the protein is not denatured right? So one of my favorite countries to visit is the Dominican Republic because you can have beef or salmon carpaccio anywhere.

I remember my daughter going, "Papa you want me to eat raw meat?" I say just try it and within one meal she was asking for raw meat, okay? So raw meat in my opinion is essential for your interest in building a stronger body and a larger body. But I mean I would not do chicken its only red meat, right?

[0:33:46.8] AVH: Right, this relates to a post on your website that I wanted to talk about and I guess this is a pretty small world because I spent half of my time in Ottawa, Canada which is where you are from, have you heard of Bear Brook Farms outside of Ottawa?

[0:33:59.8] CP: Yes.

[0:34:00.2] AVH: Yeah, so that's where I get all my meat. So we get our deer hearts and venison and elk and all that good stuff and make deer heart sandwiches and I haven't done it raw yet but I am going to try it now with your blessing because I love all that gamey where you can taste the minerals. I don't want to eat a chicken breast, there's nothing in that for me. I want to eat something that tastes like an animal.

[0:34:23.2] CP: Chicken is just a yard bird that lays eggs. I mean another thing is if you want to lose fat rapidly, I have been seeing this for a few decades but now the research backs me up is that the more cold water fish you eat the easier it is to put off those fat and put muscle on. So if you've got someone really fat, I got a guy from Saint Louis Blues, he was 23% body fat and then I took him down to 6% body fat in about 16 weeks and basically all he ate was animal protein from the sea and vegetables, right?

But the research, if you look it up is the amino acid composition of seafood and fish that is different and it tends to contain more taurine and when meat has more taurine it makes you – the protein has more taurine it makes you more insulin sensitive. So for example, lobster has to be able to keep the brackishness of the water so the salt content of the water. So it is a stressed animal when you look at it so if a plant is stressed or an animal is stressed it always has more nutrients.

So lobster I would say is the king of foods if you want to get jacked. I really like caviar. I think caviar is a great food, the problem is it costs a little bit. There are some types of caviar you can get but I tell people that if you have a very big meeting and you need to be sharper than the people you negotiate with, eat caviar and macadamia nuts before you go to the meeting and every day I posted on that in our private Facebook page but pretty much every day I get a private message saying that that shit really worked.

So when I travel overseas when at the end of the breakfast they will give you even in first class, the only airline that does a good job at quality protein when you fly overseas is Air New Zealand. I don't go to Australia and New Zealand that often. So even if you fly with Lufthansa which is probably one of the best airlines or Swiss Air, the quality of protein is shit. So what I do is I pack a few cans of caviar and a bag of macadamia nuts and that's what I have for breakfast. When I land I could work right away, I mean jet lag is a thing of the past when you use that approach.

[0:36:38.1] AVH: And I know you have said this on a blog post on your website about what you eat for breakfast sets up the whole neurotransmitter production for the day and you talk about this meat and game meat and nuts for breakfast as something that sets you up for having good brain function and energy for the day right? For the same reason.

[0:36:56.8] CP: Yeah, for example yesterday I was in Phoenix, I came home, I had elk but it was not thawed enough to be consumed. So I had mackerel and sardines from Vital Choice, it is probably the best brand to buy your fish from and then I had a great workout. So I had a lot of DHA so cold water fish especially if it's small fish it has low mercury content and it's another great brain food.

[0:37:22.2] AVH: So you talk a lot about earning your carbs so does that mean that you in general, whether we use the label or not, you think a keto-ish like lower carb approach for most people we are not talking about high level athletes generally, we are talking about regular people who want to look good and be fit that working on lower carb is generally a good approach or no?

[0:37:47.8] CP: Especially if you are Caucasian, yes.

[0:37:49.7] AVH: Okay.

[0:37:50.6] CP: You know people want excuses to have carbs. Well you know my grandmother is Italian or whatever bullshit it comes with, right? There's some genotypes that can only tolerate 20 grams of carbs a day. So why the hell do you want to eat pasta? Well mine is gluten free, fuck it's still a carbohydrate so that's one thing, gluten-free and I believe gluten can do a lot of damage. One of the problems with gluten is people exaggerate.

There's a city near me called Boulder, it's really grand little town, people are so afraid of gluten but yesterday some guy robbed the gun store with a croissant in his hand, right? It's like they tend to, but yeah, once you remove gluten from the diet your health improves but I think if you remove grains from your diet, your health will improve. It's far more simple than that, but what happens is then people come out, "Oh we've got gluten free donuts. Oh we've got paleo donuts".

Are you fucking kidding me? There is no paleo tree back in those days of chocolate covered donuts. I mean that's bullshit. So the more you eat like your ancestors the more you look like your ancestors and we know they were fit, had high bone density, a lot of muscle mass. I mean people started to generate once the Egyptians discovered agriculture, right? So there is a lot to be said about the paleo movement I'm a strong endorser of it.

Some people again take it too far, you know I have heard some really especially when it comes to exercise selection and ultimately in shape but the thing is, is that let's put it this way, I put you in a desert island and all I give you is fat and protein and I come back a year later you're still island. If the next year, I just give you carbs and fats, I can come back and within three months you are done. So there's no such thing as an essential carbohydrate outside of dietary fiber.

So that's why I'm digging to it, you need to deserve your carbs. If you are five-seven and 215 pounds with 4% body fat, you could probably handle a lot of carbohydrates but lose that muscle mass, fuck you lose the carbs too. So not everybody is a world champion because it is a commitment. Some people, I know a guy who is nutritionist who just died recently with a stroke and he would have a cape to his executives to eat more sugar to deal with their stress.

I said, "Dude, that's the complete opposite of what you are doing." "Yeah, well people will do it and they love me." "Are you in this job to be loved or to have fun and buy yourself some friends?" and obviously, his diet didn't work out well. He died of a stroke at the age of 50 so people, yes they should restrict the carbohydrates. I will tell you what is the biggest promise of low carbohydrate diet, is people are still fat-phobic and I don't like low fat low carb diets because those are insuligenic.

[0:40:32.5] AVH: That's basically starvation at that point isn't it if you are low fat and low carb?

[0:40:36.7] CP: Yeah and then basically you have to eat heaps of amounts of protein with the promise that you are going to jack your insulin all day. So you know the thing that people have to realize is a triangle and you are going to fit somewhere in the triangle. So if you do a world average counting all of the ethnicities, the average carbohydrate meaning clean carbohydrates should be 40%. That's the world average but it doesn't mean anything if you're from Tucker or Yakta and you need a [inaudible].

It should actually be zero percent carbohydrates and it is very confusing because nutritionists will always tend to recommend what works for them. I recommend what works for you but as a rule of thumb, no one is going to die if they go to bed hungry or if they restrict their carbs.

[0:41:20.4] AVH: I like that and I know I remember you said it a bunch of times that for men, a good rule of thumb for you know, "Can I eat some carbs," is look down and if you have a visible six pack, you are doing all right. You can probably eat some carbs but if you don't, you don't need any. So what about for women though because a lot of women genetically maybe it is not healthy for us to have a visible six pack all the time or maybe we aren't aiming to be super lean.

So what's the general rule of thumb for us, just don't really eat a lot of carbs ever anytime? I mean how do we do it?

[0:41:52.6] CP: I think women need more carbs because of menstruation. Typically it is quite demanding to menstruate every month, and one of the best ways to get rid of PMS is actually to increase your calorie intake by 50% three days before you menstruate and those calories will come from clean carbohydrates.

[0:42:11.5] AVH: Or chocolate either way.

[0:42:13.2] CP: Yeah, good chocolate is a clean carbohydrate. The advantage of chocolate as a pre-menstrual carbohydrate is the polyphenols which is are specific to eat for your uterus health, right? So the biggest mistake with women is the bullshit concept of isocaloric diet. In other words, you eat the same calories every day of the month, and women have a hard time losing

fat, will actually lose body fat if they increase their carbohydrates three days before they menstruate and then come that back down.

So women conditionally need more carbohydrates at certain times during the month but where I find where women fault the most is lack of protein and aversion to fats. So once you jack up their fats and protein intake, body fat is much easier to lose.

[0:43:03.4] AVH: I like that you talked about and you talked about it this a lot of times but at the Bulletproof conference too about how essentially there are really no new secrets or discoveries about weight training that haven't been already around for decades. There is no new quick sexy workout or quick fix or book with a secret that no one has heard of before. Everyone wants a quick fix but really it's about the basics and sticking with the basics that require a lot of dedication and a lot of consistency.

Which is why people don't stick to it a lot of the time because it takes work right? But if you could distill the basics down into a couple of sentences like "I want to get stronger, I want to get healthier" what are the high level, Charles Poliquin, direct straight and direct ways like what do I do? What are the high level things that I need to do?

[0:43:50.5] CP: Well first of all most people do train, they don't put intensity and concentration. You know they are more concerned about taking a picture or having their buddies film them so it goes on Instagram because they think if it is not filmed it didn't exist. So leave your fucking phone in the locker room, that's rule number one. I don't allow that. So if you're going to do the work, do the work, concentrate and uninterrupted, because that's the way to keep your neurotransmitters in line.

To produce the results if you are all over the place mentally it's not, you are not going to get strong. Number two is you put yourself in the screen time diet. Do you really need to be watching this? You need to constantly check your likes? So I restrict my social media to two times a day, 15 minutes. I need it because of business but I certainly don't miss it when I go on the road. Number three, eat paleo as much as you can but don't where you –

There is three things where you can't be cheap: Meat, butter and coffee. So unless those are organic you're in trouble.

[0:44:52.1] AVH: What is your favorite coffee?

[0:44:53.8] CP: You know what? Probably the Hawaiian Kona one or I've got a client who has a private coffee plantation in the Dominican Republic. I only get the coffee that's only their family gets and that's probably the best one and I've got quite a few Columbian friends and they bring me organic coffee from Columbia but I am a coffee snob like if I can read the newspaper through the coffee, fuck that. I'm not going to drink it.

So I'd rather bring me [inaudible] in a tea bag and drink that in this restaurant than to drink their shit coffee.

[0:45:26.7] AVH: Right, I know you have also said before, I mean these are some high level things obviously, get rid of grains, get rid of sugar, get good sleep and I know you also talked about being grateful and practicing gratitude and correct me if I am wrong, you don't really strike me as the journaling type but how are some ways that you practice gratitude every day or how do you recommend people do it who maybe aren't going to write in a journal every morning?

Or who maybe are these type A people you are talking about that have huge salaries and have everything they could ever want and still have a hard time being grateful for it. How do you do that? How do you put that into your everyday life?

[0:46:04.0] CP: Well actually I get to meet a lot of successful people and one of the common traits of the most successful people and Tim Ferris confirmed that in his book, *Tools of the Titans*, 90% of us are daily meditators and daily journalists. I've been journaling all my life but I made a daily practice in August of 2006. I journal twice a day, when I wake up and before I go to bed. In the morning, it's more about, I concentrate on one thing for the day.

Priority means one, so I always laugh at these so-called life coaches, "Give me a list of your top 10 priorities". First of all, you're an asshole because you don't really know what priority means. Priority means one. So you can only have one priority a day so I wrote down, "Today I win the

day by...” and then I fill in the blank and then I always write down three things I am grateful for and sometimes, it’s not bad to say, “I really like the sheets that I slept in on this hotel”.

So I wonder where they got those sheets but people tend to write the same shit. “I am grateful for my dog. I am grateful for my house.” So I try not to write the same thing every day. Another thing is I believe in being grateful for the things I want to manifest in my life. So like I said, “I’m grateful for the huge response ad to the paleo podcast.” It could be a thing I write and then I’ve gone on my day and before I go to bed, I always write down three fantastic things that happened today.

And the reason why I do that is I know I’ve got to fill that out every night. So I make sure there is three fantastic things that happen to me every day, right? And the last thing I write is, “How can I be better?” and so it takes a page and I used to print my own in the sense that I’d like, questions that I answer every day and then I found, I wasn’t as creative as the way I do it now. I find that’s better but I always write down people I am grateful for or contacts I’ve made. Everything I do every day is I put two people in contact.

[0:47:58.2] AVH: That could benefit from each other?

[0:48:01.1] CP: Yeah, I mean I get nothing out of it. The goal is not to get anything out of it but eventually, the more you refer people it’s just a basic step just to go out a lot more, you will get referred.

[0:48:11.1] AVH: That’s really cool. Do you recommend that your clients also, the people that you work with journal as well? Is that something that you ask people to do, yeah?

[0:48:20.1] CP: It’s one of the first things I do in the first interview.

[0:48:22.3] AVH: Wow.

[0:48:23.0] CP: I remember meeting this woman from Chicago, she was born into money. Her biggest stress was which car she was going to drive from the hairdresser to her writing lessons. I mean that’s it like she’s set for life, but she is very unhappy. I said, “Well that’s because you

are not grateful.” So I made her do a grateful log and it completely changed her life. She actually took on a job, right? She didn’t need to work but she realized that she was incomplete because she wouldn’t be anything. She had no legacy.

[0:48:50.1] AVH: Right, well you definitely proved me wrong because maybe there are a lot of pseudo macho guys out there who think that that’s not something that they’d like to do but I think if you can journal and write about the things you are grateful for every day then everyone can find the time to do that. I think that is a big deal. I mean I personally just started a few months ago and I’ve noticed a huge difference in how I feel and even more importantly because of my serotonin issues, how I sleep.

I think that writing out some of my challenges and some of the things that I am happy for in life and kinda getting it out there and putting it out there on paper has made a huge difference in how I live in general and how I feel. So I agree that that’s a pretty incredible tool.

[0:49:31.0] CP: Well for sure and again, at Joe Polish Genius Network, gratitude was mentioned in every single lecture whether it was Tim Robins or Gabor Mate, they all believed that you need to be grateful and one thing they explained with millennials a lot is ungratefulness and I think if they could change the course of society is to teach the millennials to be grateful because you have all of these people that shit on war veterans.

Dude, the reason why you can choose the clothes you wear every day, you eat the food you want and have a roof over your head is because of veterans otherwise we’d be speaking German, right? So I find that’s highly disrespectful. I think that people need to be more grateful and appreciate who was there before them because I get my stuff plagiarized all the time and when we confront them, they are shocked that we teach them that they’re wrong and it’s unethical.

They’re like, “Well you wrote it and therefore it’s mine.” I say, “What the fuck?” And then gratefulness is probably one of the best tools to be happy.

[0:50:32.0] AVH: Right. I think that’s a great place for us to end. I don’t want to take up too much more of your time today but you can feel good that you made one millennial feel grateful

today. I may be an old one, I'm on the old end of the spectrum but I am technically a millennial and I am very grateful for the time that you've spent giving us all of this information. I feel stronger already and I'm going to go have some lobster. I am from the Maritimes originally so I grew up on lobster. So I think maybe that's why I can do so many pull ups now because I ate so much lobster when I was kid.

[0:51:01.1] CP: Yeah, look one of my strongest guy was on the Guinness, he was a Nova Scotia boy and he was a big lobster eater.

[0:51:08.7] AVH: Yes, all that seafood. Anyway Charles I really, really appreciate you taking the time and thank you for everything and I guess the best way for folks to learn more about your seminars and the work that you do is just to go to strengthsensei.com, is that right?

[0:51:21.9] CP: Right and then you can probably get free information over there.

[0:51:24.6] AVH: Awesome. All right thanks Charles, I appreciate it. Take care.

[0:51:27.3] CP: Okay.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

[0:51:33.0] AVH: All right, thanks everyone for listening. I hope you learned a lot. I hope you had some good laughs and I hope this chat with Charles has put to rest once and for all the myth that Canadians are overly politically correct and soft spoken. So thank you for that Charles. If you enjoyed this podcast and you want more people to hear it, please help us out by sharing it on social media, leave a nice review on our iTunes page, give us a five-star rating, all that good stuff so that we can move up the old food chain and get more exposure of our podcast to the folks who can benefit from it.

So I would very, very much appreciate that. Thank you as always for spending your time with me and I hope you come back next week with my interview with Raquel. She is the founder of Fourth & Heart, a company making pretty innovative and very delicious ghee products. I was

actually able to hang out with Raquel face to face in New York for this interview and it was super fun. So I hope you join us next week for that. Have a great week everyone.

[OUTRO]

[0:52:42.8] 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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