

EPISODE 199

[INTRODUCTION]

[00:00:10] AVH: Welcome everybody thanks for being here. Today I want to talk about vacation. Now, most people say they don't want to work on vacation, right? I totally get that. Who wants to be looking at their phone when they could be lying on the beach or doing an adventure race or whatever it is, you fit, healthy people like to do on vacation.

But, if you're super smart, like my guests today, you can find a way to make your work also be your vacation. Vanessa and Adam Lambert, they created Bee The Wellness which is essentially a lifestyle brand encompassing podcast of which yours truly is a guest so you should check out their podcast as well as a coaching platform and a series of wellness and adventure retreats all around the world in places like Bali and Peru.

They're really inspiring in their positivity and in their energy and their genuine desire to help people and I was really pumped when we all connected over a mutual accomplishment this year, we were both named by Mark Sisson as a top health podcast. Yeah, Paleo Magazine Radio, crushing it.

Anyway, today I'm going to learn more about their back story, how they stay happy and healthy, a bit more about their coaching practice and how they've managed to cultivate such a positive tailored lifestyle that works for them in a world that I think sometimes tries to fit you into an unhealthy box, right?

You assume that to be successful, you kind of have to go to an office somewhere and work there all day and you have to – you've got the commute and you've got to work this many weeks a year without vacation and all this - I don't know.

Anyway, these guys managed to figure out a way that works for them, that's pretty incredible. I'm into it, I wouldn't mind going to Bali sometime this year, I don't know about you guys.

But before we get into it, I want to tell you about an exciting new thing we have added to make this podcast a little bit more interactive and to hear from you guys a bit more. If you go to Paleo Magazine's Facebook Page, along the left column, there is now an ask a podcast question button.

There, you can record questions for the podcast. They can be questions for me, they can be general questions on nutrition or health or fitness or the paleo lifestyle. They can be questions for a specific guest. I'm going to do a better job of posting on social media in advance, the guests that we're having, so if you have any questions for them, you can ask them there. Yeah, you'll get a chance to basically, literally have your voice heard on the podcast. I'm so pumped for this because I'm always getting folks asking me questions on social media and I want to incorporate more of this in the podcast.

You know, if you don't want to have your voice heard, you can still send me a question on social media or if you record the question, you can let me know, you don't want it published but whatever way you want to do it, just ask me the question and so I can pass it along or I can get it answered for you and I can really – I guess, help you guys as much as I can because that's what I'm here for.

Definitely do that and I can't wait to hear your questions. All right, that's it, here is my interview with Adam and Vanessa of Bee The Wellness.

[INTERVIEW]

[0:03:16.3] AVH: All right, Vanessa, Adam, welcome to the podcast, thank you for being here.

[0:03:19.6] VL: Thanks for having us.

[0:03:21.2] AL: Yeah, this is super awesome.

[0:03:22.9] AVH: I guess we got to start by saying, congratulations for being listed in Mark Sisson's best health podcast and I think we're all in good company, right? With that list and

that's how we connected online because I was extremely excited to be on that list too and we kind of found each other that way, right?

[0:03:41.3] VL: Yeah, exactly, it was really cool, you know, I didn't – obviously I didn't have any clue and then someone actually linked it to us and I was like, that's so exciting because obviously we love Mark and Mark's actually a really good friend and we've had him on the podcast a few times but you never know how you're going to rank or how things are going to fit in his world and it was really sweet to see that.

[0:04:00.4] AVH: Absolutely. Don't you sometimes feel like you're kind of speaking into a void a little bit sometimes with the podcast? Maybe I'm relatively new, I've been doing this for about a year and I find – you know, it's human nature that folks often respond to things a bit more overtly when they're unhappy with something, right?

When you're happy with something or you're enjoying something, you just kind of go along and enjoy it. You don't get as much feedback, right? Unless people are pissed about something so I sometimes feel like, 'Is anybody listening? Do you have anything, do you want to say anything to me?' Give me some feedback and some response.

Having that show up in Mark's list there kind of was just – it was really nice and reinforcing and showing that people are listening and hopefully we're doing something right.

[0:04:46.3] AL: Yeah, 100% because it's exactly like you say. As long as you're saying things that people agree with or are enjoying the consumption of, you won't hear a peep and it does become like you're just shouting into the void, that's a good way to put it. Yeah, we're always looking for some little bit of reinforcement or at least acknowledgment.

[0:05:05.0] VL: Confirmation.

[0:05:06.4] AVH: Yeah, just tell us we're doing a good job.

[0:05:09.7] AL: We always are looking at the statistics. Okay, does this mean this many people listened to the podcast or this many people downloaded the podcast? Is there any way to know if they enjoyed it?

[0:05:21.5] VL: Where's the thumbs up?

[0:05:23.3] AVH: Yeah, exactly and even when you're asking, I know I'm like pleading with people. I have thick skin, you can tell me if there's something you don't like, just tell me something, give me something. I don't know, maybe that's going to be part of my plan for 2018 is to get a little bit more interaction, you know?

[0:05:39.8] VL: Maybe we should just give a shout out right now, "Okay folks, go on iTunes and both Bee the Wellness-

[0:05:46.1] AVH: Yes please.

[0:05:48.5] AL: And the Paleo Podcast because it's like you know, you do, you want that feedback.

[0:05:53.8] AVH: Yeah, and if you want people, if people want to keep listening, right? If we're doing something good, people want to keep listening, you got to give us some feedback or some reinforcement because these things are finicky and we could be gone like any day guys.

Just don't be too afraid but tell us you like it so we stick around so I can keep my job. Anyway, this has gone off on a tangent already.

[0:06:14.5] VL: Threatening the audience now.

[0:06:15.8] AVH: Right, exactly, yeah. That can happen sometimes. Adam and Vanessa, I don't know a whole lot about you guys other than what I see online. I would love for you guys to just kind of give me the story, who are you guys, what do you do?

[0:06:29.9] AL: Okay, this is a good question and it's ever evolving. The 'who we are' is the easiest part. I work California natives, we grew up in the sun, in the surf, in the sand and the mountains and just sort of this outdoor kind of lifestyle and both gravitated towards athletics growing up and physically demanding jobs.

In fact, we met as firefighters with California's Fire Department and through that sort of just that shared interest in doing things that are challenging and trying to understand how to optimize that, we both sort of came in to the roles of coaches and kind of different ways.

Vanessa primarily with swimming and gymnastics and some things like that. Me, kind of right directly into strength and conditioning world, dealing with firefighters. We just so happened to kind of come in to some of these stuff while we were living in Chico, California and randomly, via the internet search, I found Robb Wolf before it was CrossFit NorCal when it was just NorCal strength and conditioning.

I was like, this guy has got all of these steps looks so relevant to what we're trying to do and lo and behold, he was there in town and we both started training there. He really introduced us to an entirely different way of viewing this.

You know, kind of for our own personal journeys as athletes and getting into the CrossFit world and all this but also as coaches and a new way of sort of looking at this that was working really well, fundamentally looked a lot like some amount of gymnastics, some amount of weight lifting and fundamentally, what turned into the paleo diet which at the time was just don't eat grains, legumes or dairy.

[0:08:11.8] VL: Yeah. Exactly, we always say that we kind of stumbled into this a little bit because living in Chico at the time, you know, it's a relatively small town and so to find like-minded individuals that are training in a sort of different way and have this different eating philosophy, this was right smack dab in the middle of low fat and high carbohydrate eating and real kind of sort of basic gym workouts.

It was really interesting to stumble into Rob and Nikki's world. From there, there was just kind of this blast off and there was a lot of us that came from that group. They're [inaudible] and a

bunch of us that kind of branched out from that world. We just got lucky and then years later we moved to LA.

Rob introduced us to Mark Sisson, I started creating Mark's coaching program so I was actually his first primal coach and did his executive coaching in house in Malibu for years and we did his

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[0:09:09.1] AVH: Cool.

[0:09:09.4] VL: Yeah, again, just so cool. Then Adam and I started hosting retreats with him in Malibu, doing the executive luxury retreats and it just kind of spiraled from there and eventually we thought, well, it's probably time for us to spread our wings and we started Bee The Wellness which is our holistic complete wellness company.

[0:09:30.6] AVH: Okay. I can already see that we have a lot of things in common and this could go down so many different rabbit holes that would be very selfish of me to do with the swimming and the gymnastics, that's part of my background as well, I was one of the first 50 primal coaches to be certified, I was very proud of that because I pitched to my editor at Paleo Magazine that I wanted to take the course and then write about it and I wrote a story about it and that's how I now am BFF's with Mark Sisson because I just seem to keep running into that guy and talking to him about all the stuff he's doing.

That's really cool and I love the story, you guys met when you were both firefighters?

[0:10:06.7] AL: Yeah.

[0:10:07.1] VL: Yeah.

[0:10:08.3] AVH: Okay, first of all, that's bad ass because I love a woman fire fighter, I just got to say it like I love that. Were you guys working at the same fire hall or what?

[0:10:16.6] VL: No, it's actually kind of funny. I started so I was 18, Adam was 20. Adam had gone through a separate fire academy so he kind of lateralled straight into the fire department

and got hired right away. I was still going through the academy part of it where you have to pass all the physical and you know, all the different testing modules that you go through to get a job.

He was kind of – he started working maybe a month or so before me and then I got stationed but not at the same station. We were fire fighters within the same unit but not working at the same location. We knew each other for years, working in the same industry and working in sister stations if you will but we didn't work together and then it wasn't until years later actually.

I was getting ready to move to Hawaii permanently because I fell in love with surfing and this is a whole other rabbit hole. I had moved to Hawaii, I'd moved to Maui for a winter during an off season and I came back and ran into Adam at a party and was like, I think I just fell in love.

[0:11:17.9] AVH: Uh-oh.

[0:11:19.8] VL: I've known this guy for years but you know, something just happened in that moment and so we'd been firefighters again in the same unit but it was just all of a sudden, this bolt of lightning, I was like, "My gosh, how come we never noticed each other in this way," and then you know, the rest is history as they say.

[0:11:36.1] AVH: I think good love stories always start with "uh-oh". I don't know, I think that makes sense to me. Okay, I interviewed recently, she's an MMA fighter named Jodie Esquibel, she fights in the UFC and she's also a badass and I'm kind of obsessed with her but she also, before she became a professional fighter, she was a firefighter and she is also five feet tall and so we had some conversations about that process and being in a very male dominated, very sort of macho, very physical work environment and how she was very adamant about doing the male test, not the women test because she said, "You know, I'm not going to pull up to a female fire, I have to be able to do that." I thought, it's so incredible and I love that things like cross fit, that things like a lot of the kind of fitness modalities that are out there now but jobs like this too are showing that women are absolutely capable of doing, they don't need to be scaled or they don't need to have kind of special workouts or whatever.

Women can do what they need to do and so I guess I'd love to hear from you, what made you decide to get into a job that's that physical and that difficult.

[0:12:43.5] VL: You know, it's funny because Adam and I are both from small towns in northern California and you know, when you grow up in the country, you kind of play with the boys, you're out with the boys, you know, it's sort of like you get dragged along to all the things that the boys are doing.

I was surrounded by boys growing up, I have two brothers and older cousins. It was like, I just got dragged into everything and I kind of didn't know that I shouldn't be able to do the things I was pulling off physically or whatever. I just didn't get, I got socialized into being physical and active and in different sports.

When it came time to go to college, a family friend of ours who was a firefighter recommended that I do it seasonally and he said, "You know, you're strong enough, you'll be great and it's really great because you can work in the summer and then you can go to school in the off season or travel or what have you."

I just you know, essentially just did it kind of necessity because I needed a way to be able to make enough money to put myself through school and all that good stuff and then you know, ended up having a love/hate relationship with it because I mean, it's so amazing to know what you're physically capable of doing and the bond that you share with your brother and sister firefighters is incredible. It also takes over your entire life when you work as a seasonal firefighter and you're working wild-land fires.

You just work straight five or six months at a time. You miss your family, you don't go home, there's that side of it that's really tough but the other side of it is that you gain this incredible knowledge of what you're capable of physically, you know, you have this incredible bond.

You know, what started as I'm just going to do this as a summer job just out of necessity, turned in to a real foundation of who I became in my life.

[0:14:34.2] AVH: It's kind of interesting too that you talked about kind of being unknowingly socialized to think, "Of course I can do what these guys are doing, I'm here, I'm doing it, it's not – you know, I wouldn't think otherwise." And it kind of shows how important that socialization or

that nurture aspect of growing up is. Because people are taught that they can't do things before they actually try it themselves you know?

Again, that whole other rabbit hole but it's you know, the difference is the way we raise boys and girls and we're so much more careful with girls and we treat them like they're more delicate and so they grow up to become maybe more cautious or less willing to take risks or do things that are scary or hard or you know what I mean?

[0:15:13.4] VL: Absolutely.

[0:15:14.5] AVH: That's a generalization but it's something to consider that kids will believe they could do anything unless you tell them otherwise, right?

[0:15:21.0] AL: Yeah, 100%. And the thing is that, we think anyway that it's sort of spills over to adulthood, I mean, these things, I mean, clearly the places we see it more often are in children when they're socialized one way or the other but a large part of what we do in our coaching business is convince people that they can actually do things that maybe they were socialized to think that they can't.

Start to develop the physical confidence for a lack of a better term that says, you know what? You can go and do some of these things. Like our training for the adventure series that we do, in fact, we're taking a group to hike Machu Picchu in March. That's a big part of it to say hey look, if this is something that you want to do as a person, let's train for it and go do it, I mean, this is 100% within the realm of possibility and it's something that I really garnered from the CrossFit days because I've always – I mean, I'm a big, strong guy, firefighting is like right in my niche as far as athleticism goes.

But CrossFit really showed me that there was a corner of my being that I was like reserving for – in case something really weird happens, you know? Really showed me that I could push far beyond what I thought that I was capable of doing.

Even for athletic people, there's still extra, there's still something else that you can do and the ability to achieve that really just adds a tremendous amount of confidence to your – just you're moving in a day to day life.

A lot of our clients, it's taking them from "You know what, I'm actually nervous about walking in ice because what if I slip and fall," to "Hey, you know what? We're going to go hike on the slippery waterfall in costa rica and everything's going to be fine."

You see some really big ships and people's just overall outlook on life from that kind of stuff.

[0:17:07.1] AVH: Right, okay, I'm really excited to hear more about the adventure series but I want to back up a little bit and have you talk about your coaching business and how that came about and how you guys decided to leave what you were doing and kind of pursue this as your career?

[0:17:23.4] VL: Well, I think a big deal for us was realizing like Adam said again, what CrossFit and what firefighting made available to us from a physical standpoint and how having that physicality and that expanded ability physically, actually expanded the world around us.

What I mean by that is that when you are worried that you're not capable of things from a physical standpoint or you're, you know, nervous emotionally or you know, you just don't feel like you have the faculties or the skillset to navigate certain things in life. You tend to live a smaller, more reserved life. You know, you don't branch out and try new things, you're nervous, physically, emotionally, whatever. We started seeing that people were living smaller lives because of these limitations, often that were imposed by themselves.

We just decided we wanted to make a difference in people's lives and we say that you know, we're not necessarily just strength and conditioning coaches or mindfulness coaches, we are coaches at helping people expand their lives. Figure out what it is that's holding you back, is that an emotional block, is that a physical block? Let's go in and tease it out so that we can help you live a broader, more beautiful, powerful life. It was kind of with that knowledge with us realizing, you know, not everyone just feels super confident physically.

Not everyone just can go charge out and surf or try a new sport and not think twice about it. We saw that there was this niche where we could really profoundly make a difference in people's lives by helping them find those spaces, expand them out and real blow their lives up and really create these awesome opportunities for them.

We just said, "Let's just keep building a brand around that, let's keep exploring what's possible for ourselves and for people with that mind."

[0:19:20.2] AL: Yeah. I actually still work for the Fire Department. I'm 22 years in at this point and I'm doing dual roles but exactly like Vanessa said, a lot of the things that have really steered me towards the coaching aspect of this, initially, it was sort of self-serving.

I need to know how to do this and how to train my guys to be better at this. The same things that got me into the fire service in the beginning which was this sort of innate desire to help people, to really be fundamentally helpful is what has really spurred me along to this new career as well.

Because it's really, at the root of it, that's what it feels like we're doing is legitimately providing health to people who are looking for it. It feels really good, it's some of the most fulfilling work that I've actually done.

You know, as you kind of move through the ranks of the fire department, as you can imagine, it becomes more and more bureaucratic and a little bit less of the stuff you see on TV.

[0:20:19.0] AVH: Right.

[0:20:19.8] AL: This is really filling that niche for me of "Hey, I'm actually being helpful and doing something now you know?" Instead of just pushing paper.

[0:20:26.1] AVH: Right. It sounds like the kind of coaching that you guys do is a pretty, and next level kind of approach to caching, its' not like give me your numbers and I'll give you some macros and I'll give you a workout plan, there's a lot more to it and I think it's a very important endeavor and it's something that most people need.

Because most people don't just need some macros, most people do need to kind of look inward and kind of do some mental work and some mental health work as well as improving their physical health. How do you even, I mean, first of all, what kind of training or preparation do you guys do to feel like you can be good coaches in that way and then the second part of it is how do you reach out to people who you think would most benefit from the kind of coaching that you do?

[0:21:15.9] AL: Those are good questions. As far as the preparation from our side, I mean, it's kind of been a little bit different for each of us, I mean, the way that my brain works, I like to know pretty much everything there is to know about something before I even open my mouth to ask a question about it.

[0:21:33.2] AVH: That's very smart, not a lot of people feel that way.

[0:21:36.9] AL: Yeah. I've gone kind of the traditional route from a coaching perspective. I'm a national strength and conditioning association, certified trainer, I did the CrossFit level one thing before there was level two thing and never went beyond that. You know, Bio Force certified conditioning coach. I kind of chased down the experts and try to figure out the best ways of doing this and Precision Nutrition coach.

The time that we spent training and this is probably, well, not probably. 100% the most impactful learning experience that I've had in this was the time that I was training at and then training for Rob at NorCal strength and conditioning. Because we were taking, what we were doing in the gym, I was taking it back to the fire station and applying it there and then back and forth between what we were doing at NorCal and what I was doing in the fire service.

Something that people maybe don't realize is that the fire services really just a cross section of the rest of humanity. It's just amplified a little bit. If you're a type A personality in the real world, you're going to be extra type A in the fire service and we see the same thing with the diseases of civilization in the fire service as well.

I mean, everybody's got diabetes, everybody dies from heart disease. It's just that like 400% higher rates than the normal people. It's learning to work and teach in that environment is

actually been incredibly beneficial to just working with the general populous because all the same things apply, they're just amplified.

You know, everybody has these sort of sleep disorders and stuff. For me, that's really been a huge piece of it and then you know, the training and the background that you give from, a kind of more formal education in that is certainly helpful and it's sort of laced that foundation. Yeah, that's kind of it for me.

[0:23:22.6] VL: Yeah, for me, it was kind of interesting because I really pushed back against becoming a coach for a long time, I really wanted to be the athlete. You know, suggestions of being a coach for me were like, "No way, I want to be coached, I don't want to be the coach," but what ended up happening for me, time and time again, literally since the time I was 10 years old is I would be a good athlete and then I would get asked to coach classes.

I literally started coaching when I was 10 years old, coaching the smaller kids at gymnastics and then swimming as well and I just kind of kept getting pushed into this coaching roles throughout my entire life. Whereas Adam took a little more formal route, I literally just kept falling into it so to speak and again, Rob was another perfect example when I went to NorCal Strength and Conditioning, I was just – I wanted to be the best athlete I could but you know, after years of hanging out with folks like Rob and Kelly Starrett and you know, Glen Cordoza and all these amazing athletes.

All of a sudden, you just realize you have a real arsenal of knowledge and ability to coach. I was living out in Nashville for a while and ended up coaching at a CrossFit there for about a year while I was living there and just – I just literally have kept being sort of falling into this role. Now I've fully embraced it and you know, now I love it and it's like what I'm totally passionate about but it took me a long time to really embrace it and to be like, this is who I want to be in the world.

[0:24:51.7] AVH: That's funny, it's like if it keeps coming up, it's like maybe life is trying to tell me something.

[0:24:56.3] VL: Exactly.

[0:24:59.2] AL: To answer the second part of your question about kind of how we approached people with this, this is where I think – because we talk to people who are trying to get into this line of work sometimes. Folks say “Hey, you know, can we setup a call just to talk about how you went about this or you know, what your thoughts are in the business.”

Almost inevitably, what it comes down to is the initial question is, well what coaching search should I do or how should I go about doing this, what’s my education should be. The answer almost always is, it doesn’t matter, I mean, it does matter but the most important thing is to just start coaching people because at the end of the day, it’s the interpersonal skill and the ability to really tease out what the root issues are that makes you a good coach.

From a good coach perspective, I mean, one that gets results and that retains clients. Because a lot of times, almost always, when a client comes to us, whether it’s through some sort of Facebook Ad or through one of the apps or word of mouth or you know, all the normal sort of channels, almost invariably, they think they want one thing, they come in and they say look, all I’m looking for is macros. I’m trying to lose weight. Five or six questions, follow up questions into it and what’s really going on is the same thing that’s going on with everybody else and they’re too busy, they’re over worked, they’re not getting enough sleep, they’ve got this problem, they’ve got that problem.

We bring people in often with their idea of what it is that they want and then end up sort of over time massaging them into making this lifestyle and habit changes, the fundamentally get them the results they’re looking for and then all of a sudden, we’re like – check back in and like “Okay, now that you’ve got kind of this basics are you ready for some macros?” you know, they’re like “No, actually, I’m feeling pretty good, everything seems to be good.” It’s one of those things where there’s definitely a system of kind of moving people from A to Z. There’s no doubt about that but it becomes a pretty individualized process and just trying to understand the – where each person is coming from and what their particular sort of lifestyle hang-ups are because that’s probably 99% of it.

[0:27:02.3] AVH: Right. Okay, I have a couple of more coaching questions that I think will be helpful to listeners whether they’re coaches themselves or are being coached or interested in

being coached and I'm asking also as someone who does some coaching, like I said, I've got the paleo or the Primal Blueprint Certification.

I've got a couple of other certifications, I do it on a smaller scale, it's more like you know, when people, friends of friends come to me and they're asking questions, it's kind of – it's like a smaller kind of side piece of what I do, it's still something that I really enjoy and I think is really helpful for both me and hopefully for the people that I'm working with.

One of the questions that I have, because again, I completely agree with you that people come to you and say look, "I want to lose 10 pounds." And there's really a lot more to it, there's always more to it, you know? Everyone wants to look better, everyone wants to lose a couple of pounds or have abs or get a better dead lift but there's always deeper and more elements to it than just simply.

You know, maybe cleaning up your food or getting in the gym more so one of the issues that I find I keep coming up against are folks who know that there's something not quite right with their lifestyle, they know there's something they want to change, they want to improve on or you know, they just know they want to feel better and I think a lot of them really know mostly what they need to do but when they're told what it's really going to take and they're told you know, there are no shortcuts, right? Isn't a quick fix pill or button or special 10 second workout that's going to fix you in a week, there really isn't. It's consistency, I find so often, coaches are, their real job is you know, just to be sort of a sounding board to be somebody who holds somebody accountable for a certain amount of time, somebody who kind of tells you what you already know but in a way that hopefully gets through.

I guess, my roundabout way of getting to this is that people, they want to change but they don't want to hear the hard truth of how to do it and I don't want to just say, "Well, you know, if you're not motivated, you're not going to do it," or "If you're not willing to put in the hard work, too bad, you're not going to do it."

How do you bridge that gap you know? Between people who obviously are motivated enough to come to you or to start asking questions but are just so resistant to, "Oh I have to change, I

have to eat properly most of the time? I have to do this for long?" You know what I mean? How do you bridge that gap?

[0:29:18.8] VL: I think for us, the biggest thing is meeting people where they are. It's often times you're exactly right, you'll ask these questions and you'll find out that they're not really willing to do exactly what your protocol would be to get them the results that they want.

Then you have to figure out what they're actually willing and able to do. For us, we've really started to dial back the amount of things that we lay on people in the beginning and we'll just say "Hey, let's start with sleep." You know, we know that that's kind of the foundation for all things. We'll just start with one thing like sleep and just say, "Hey, let's work on this one thing for two weeks or a month," or you know, wherever we can meet them so that they can have some successes is what we really want to get so that they're not feeling like they're going into this plan and we give them 20 things to do and they missed half of them so they're failing.

We'd rather people feel like wow, I've got assigned this one thing and I was successful at it. Now what else can I add on top of that? The other thing that we've really done is that I created a whole other program called the authentic self-program which is more of a life mastery, spiritual development program because after years and years of coaching people and seeing the same kind of things, you know, "I want to have this result but I don't know why I just don't do it. I know that this is the goal I have but for some reason, I just don't take the action."

We've actually created a whole other program that's looking at why do we have these default settings, emotionally, mentally, how can we rewire our brains and our thinking patterns and our lifestyle patterns to actually be in more in alignment with the life we want to create.

So sometimes we'll even say to folks, "Hey let's keep the food and the workouts and everything really basic and let's take a year and do a program like this where you're really looking at the emotional cognitive things that are getting in the way". So again, we've obviously learned at this point that there are so many different ways to actually meet people where they are so the biggest thing for us is having an arsenal of tools and saying, "Okay for you we think that this is probably the best jumping off point," and then we just massage it through there and ultimately, one of the biggest things for us is that we try to get people to have a goal and this is why we

started creating the retreats. We started getting people to think like, “Hey do you want to come to Costa Rica with us? We’re going to surf, we’re going to hike, we’re going to go white water rafting,” when people have this goal in front of them where they’re like, “Oh my gosh, I’m going to need to be able to be strong enough, I am going to be in a swimsuit.” They have this thing that gets the practicality of what these goals represent. They start going, “Oh okay, I have a little bit more incentive to stay on track with these things.” So it’s one of the big reasons why we create these retreats because it’s hard to just in your everyday life say, “Okay I need to eat right and exercise,” and blah-blah-blah, but for what?

Like just so my pants fit better? Sometimes it’s not enough for people. It’s just not you know? But if you’re like, “Oh my gosh I’m excited! I’m going to go have this adventure and this thing that I do today is going to mean that that adventure is going to be ten times more fun and successful.” It’s a better motivator. We are like this holistic approach where like, “Okay think of something fun. Let’s look at the mental blocks, let’s look at the emotional blocks, let’s get the practicality.” But we just realized that after so many years that that’s just what it takes for people.

[0:32:49.3] AVH: Right, okay so now you have to talk about your retreats and the adventure series and all of these trips that you go on that look like so much fun and that I want to go on this year. So tell us about that.

[0:33:01.6] AL: Okay, so there are two different models and the initial, which is our transformation retreat series which is what really the outgrowth of what we started doing with Mark Sisson with the Primal Luxury Retreats and those are intensive, normally in the United States and they’re a slog. They’re a lot of fun but it is a nutrient dense piece of time, so to speak. So we go through all of the basic strength and conditioning movements that we utilize in our programs.

There’s cooking demonstrations, there’s full blown mindfulness and meditation stuff. We really hammer in these lifestyle pieces and so it’s a lot all at once for folks but it is a very energizing and it’s a great way to seal up a lot of these things and generally speaking, what ends up happening for folks that come to those, they’ve been in one of our coaching programs for a little while and so they’ve had the online coaching, they’ve had this sort of stuff and they have really good questions.

Because they have actually been doing it so when they come to one of these transformational retreats, it is like to the point, "Hey this is the movement. I want to know exactly about this," and you dial it in and they're just like, "Oh this was absolutely amazing!" So there's those which are the transformation retreats and then we have our adventure retreats which are just like what they sound. They're adventures, so we take people to Costa Rica and we still do coaching.

I mean that still is a part of it but it's not the entire piece. We take people out and do something cool every day. It's all farm to table paleo, gourmet food. The chef that we have in Costa Rica is fantastic and we go out and we go hiking to the waterfalls. We go surfing, we go just doing all of the adventure things that you would do in Costa Rica and then at night, we have the opportunity to do some movement and mobility and some mindfulness stuff.

And one of the things that we found is that, because neither Vanessa or I learn very well in a seminar environment where there's a talking head and we're just supposed to absorb information but what we found works really well is to sit around and talk about complex topics over dinner. So we move around and we have this conversations when we go on our hikes and it gives people an opportunity who may one way or the other, be intimidated or afraid to ask the question. But when it is just you and two or three other people because it is a single track trail hiking through the jungle they're like, "Hey what do you think about this?" And you get a real opportunity to connect and communicate with people and give them information in a way that they're just not going to get in a seminar, if that makes sense.

[0:35:36.3] AVH: Yeah and just so, do people have to be clients of yours to go on the retreats or can anyone sign up for one of this events?

[0:35:43.1] VL: Yeah, anyone can sign up and in fact, a lot of folks end up coming to us through a retreat and that's their first exposure and then they end up joining an online program or joining other retreats and adventures and it's a great way actually to get integrated into the ethos and the vibe and to share an adventure. So that happens to us a lot actually where people just come on the adventure and that's our first encounter with them, for sure.

And then we actually started a new sort of model that we'll be launching. We just launched it but it's actually the first one that we are doing in July which was a little bit of a festival inspired experience. So we'll have live entertainment, we'll have music and some really fun things to do each day but then we'll also be doing an activity. This one will be in the Red Woods just north of San Francisco. So we'll be hiking, we'll be doing all of the physical activities.

But then at night we'll have farm to table meals with entertainment and we'll have that festival celebration kind of experience as well.

[0:36:46.2] AVH: I love that you guys are creating an environment where Adam as you said, people can feel more comfortable talking. I mean look, if you add food and movement to any meeting it's going to make it better, right? People don't walk in meetings so that's why everyone likes to gather around food because it is a more informal kind of open setting and I love that and I love that you guys are having these retreats. You guys are basically cultivating a lifestyle and fun for yourself.

It's also part of your work, that's very cool. I feel like so many people feel stuck that work or jobs have to look a certain way and you're like, "No we are going to go to Costa Rica and hang out. That's what we're going to do".

[0:37:25.8] VL: People go on vacation and they're like, "Oh I went on vacation and I gained 10 pounds," and they did the buffet every day or whatever and so we are trying to help people create a lifestyle that's in alignment with the body and the mind and the ethos they are trying to have in their life rather than going completely off the rails and then coming back from vacation and having to dig themselves out of a hole of cupcakes and pies and indulgences that they had.

So we are trying to help people to have these opportunities where the food is taken care off. They don't have to worry about coming off their diet or eating something bad for them. They're like, "Oh actually I am going to eat the most healthy delicious paleo food and I'm going to get exercise and movement and have a great time and share it with awesome people." So it's helping people bring it all around and make it more synced in their life.

[0:38:17.5] AL: Right, one of the other things that this wasn't in the intention but it's just the consequence of what it is that we are doing which is fundamentally remote coaching and then gatherings, you know? So what we end up with are a lot of folks who don't necessarily have community in the physical space that they live and this is something that we gleaned from our days at North Cal was that the community, the bond that we developed with the people at our gym was immense.

I mean these are to this day some of our closest friends are people that we trained with at that gym and so we recognize how powerful that piece of community is and what we sort of wound up doing with our remote coaching programs and our online communities is creating some of that. The people who come in and maybe they live in, far, Northeast Canada which I had quite a few people from there, they don't have any community around them.

That are into the same top processes, the same way of eating, the same general ethos of life and about life and so they are able to really lean into this community and get the support that they need to make a lifestyle choices that they are trying to make and then if they can find it within themselves to show up at one of these retreats, now all of a sudden they are spending time with people how maybe they have known online for a year or two and within our community and they put a name to a face and recognize the handle and go like:

"Wait, you're so and so," like "oh my god," you know? So it's been an incredible unintended consequence, the level of community and support that's been developed there.

[0:39:55.6] AVH: That's really cool. How many people are usually at each retreat?

[0:39:59.7] VL: So most of our retreats are anywhere from 18 to 20 people. Bee Festival will actually be the largest event that we've done and that one will have around 70 people. So we want to grow that event so that it can actually be the larger sort of annual gathering for all the people in our community. So we're starting with 70 this year and hopefully next year it can be larger but we wanted to make that a center piece of our community where folks can come together and have this awesome experience and also see each other at least once a year.

[0:40:32.8] AVH: Right okay, very cool. And I know you mentioned too that when you're on the retreats that the food is healthy and it's paleo, I love for you guys to talk about because I always ask this of my guest because everyone ultimately we're all nosy and like to know how people live their private lives. So how do you guys eat? What do you guys do for workouts yourself? Because another thing you hear is when people are in the fitness and health world, their own health often takes a backseat because they're so focused on other people that they don't have time to work out. Or they are rushing around and don't get time to eat. So walk me through like a day in your life in terms of what you're eating and how you're working out and how you're recovering and practicing self-care and all of that good stuff.

[0:41:16.2] VL: Well it's funny because we are actually serious tinkerers. So we're always changing up our training methodologies, we're always switching things up and lately for me personally, I've been in a glut training hole so I am pretty much –

[0:41:32.9] AVH: Definitely seems hot right now like all gluts, all the time.

[0:41:35.6] VL: All gluts all the time. So we came out with a glut program that started about five, six weeks ago maybe and so I have been actually following that and doing a lot of glut training. I am one of those people, I build muscle really, really easily. So after my CrossFit days, I had a ton of muscle mass that I actually didn't really need that wasn't really serving me for any practical way. So over the last couple of years of actually trying to lose a little bit of it because I love to surf.

And actually paddling around a bunch of extra muscle is not super easy. It is not beneficial to the sport so I've been doing a lot of long distances, walking and just trying to do a lot of low level cardio and glut training just to strip a little of the muscle mass of but I've always been into strength and conditioning and we Olympic lifted for a years and I was a gymnast for years. I've also got into aerial acrobatics for a couple of years really seriously. I've been taking a break off of that as well but I am always all over the map with everything that I do.

[0:42:42.3] AL: Well you eat pretty much, yeah.

[0:42:45.5] AVH: Variety is the spice of life, right? You've got to do new things.

[0:42:48.7] AL: Yeah.

[0:42:49.3] VL: Yeah, totally and for eating we just stick to really the paleo principles. We just eat, I do a little bit of dairy like cream in my coffee because that is not a problem but for the most part, we just eat paleo. It's pretty straight forward.

[0:43:02.0] AL: Yeah and so if you'd like to use the full blown paleo speak, it's like paleo plus safe starches plus dairy plus you know?

[0:43:15.0] AVH: Yeah but I think in the community like I am obviously deep into the paleo community where there is a whole range of die hards who want to stick to very strict rules and then people who are like, "Yeah paleo-ish whatever. I do what I want to do," but I think there is really a movement now in just the health world in general which I think is really great that's really about personalized nutrition and I think people always want to hate on titles because when you hear paleo, people are like, "What's that? Some weird caveman fad diet," or when people hear about fasting people are like, "Oh they're just starving themselves now?" And people like to latch onto to titles and dismiss them and so there are probably people who will never be into paleo just because they don't like the idea of joining this weird group of people who eat like cavemen. However if you strip it and say, "Really we just want to eat nutrient dense whole foods as much as possible". And then you experiment and play with other things that work for you because it makes sense to eat foods that make you feel good, right?

I think people are getting a little bit less dogmatic which is great because I am similar to you Vanessa. I actually did some of the 23andMe genetic testing stuff and it came back that is like, "You are one of the rare people who can digest milk all day long forever," and I'm like, "Yes!" So yeah, I love a little cream in my coffee and I know I am not even necessarily super –

I don't have a real problem with gluten necessarily. If I eat too much I get fat and I feel like crap but I don't have a major response to it but I know through experimentation the food ,like you said some of the starches that work for me and some that don't and I think people are starting to latch onto that a little bit more like here are the basic principles and then we play with it and

experiment personally because nobody, no two people are the same and you've got to figure out what works for you, right?

[0:45:08.3] AL: Yeah, you know that really is the thing and unfortunately for us it's easy enough because we have been doing this for a long time and we were strict paleo for a long time and I feel like that gives you an opportunity to really allow your body to heal. You know our guts will heal and just start. We are relatively healthy people and so now a little deviation here and there really isn't that big of a deal and then it would be a tough thing to explain to folks who are not necessarily healthy.

And they're like, "Well wait, I just saw you do this," and I'm like, "Right but you know I can." I mean if you can, yeah.

[0:45:40.8] AVH: Most of the time, I do, coming out, yeah.

[0:45:43.2] AL: And this isn't working for you and so fundamentally, that's what we end up going back to a lot of times like, "Well what's working?" If it starts to not work then let's take a look at it and we generally do a hard stop at gluten and processed vegetable oil and those are the two things that are just like, all right and everything else is just as minimally processed as possible.

[0:46:01.7] AVH: Right.

[0:46:02.4] AL: I definitely thrive on what actually starts to look a heck of a lot like protein sparring modified fast. I eat a lot of protein and a lot of vegetables and fat to satiety or whatever works because that seems to work best for me and frankly, intermittent fasting and stuff like that doesn't work great for me. So we have lots of people that does work for them, for me not so much. Keto not so much but you know four or five meals a day of decent amount of protein and a ton of vegetables and enough fat and starch to support my athletic endeavors seems to work out.

[0:46:36.9] AVH: Interesting, yeah I was going to ask you about that you especially Adam because I guess as a firefighter, you have some interesting schedule issues that are different from the average nine to five, Monday to Friday situation and it seems like keto and intermittent

fasting is really all the rage right now but it seems over and over again the kind of work more effortlessly either with people who have serious problems like diabetes or morbid obesity and things like that. Or for dudes who are already lean and in shape and they just don't eat for 16 hours a day and they're fine, whatever. So yeah, it's interesting that you found that keto and the intermittent fasting isn't so great for you.

[0:47:19.9] AL: Right, you know I think it all comes back to the total all aesthetic load, right? How much is your body trying to adapt to at once? How many "hermetic stressors" do you really want to subject yourself to at once? And there are guys, I've worked with a couple of guys, I literary work with them in the fire department but I also work with them from a nutrition perspective who are really interested in trying to figure out the keto thing as a performance enhancer for the kind of work that they do.

And they are strictly wild land firefighters. They don't have a sleep problem at night. They only staff their hand cruise during the day, there's largely the top end of aerobic work and with a little bit of glycolytic mixed in there but with appropriate training, they can get in there and so I've got a couple of guys who are finding success there in that realm but for the folks like me who's still working in a municipal environment where you're up multiple times per night.

And you just don't have their schedule, your feeding schedule and your sleeping schedule just are not in line it's really challenging and you know, it's one of those things where you're not on a therapeutic ketogenic diet for epilepsy or cancer or something, it's like, "Well what are you really doing? Why are you doing this is you're – "

[0:48:38.7] AVH: Why do this to yourself when you don't need to?

[0:48:41.1] AL: Yeah when you don't need to and it's not working. I think that that is one of the things that we tend to see is like, "I'm keto at all cost because it's the thing right now." It's like yeah, I don't know, you know? I mean –

[0:48:50.6] AVH: Losing sight of the reason why you are doing it in the first place, yeah.

[0:48:53.5] AL: Yeah sometimes and it is certainly right for some people but for others it's not. I think it's just important to recognize that if it doesn't work for you don't do it, you know?

[0:49:01.4] VL: Yeah, it's okay not to.

[0:49:03.2] AL: Or square away whatever part of your lifestyle is making it not work for you, you definitely have to sort that one out.

[0:49:09.2] AVH: It's interesting that you mention the idea of just adding another stressor because obviously, you guys know North America especially we are very good at stressing ourselves out and we're very good at riding ourselves up and over-caffeinating and over working out and under sleeping and doing all of these things and we're not so good at down regulating and calming ourselves and finding stillness and peace and allowing that kind of recovery.

And even internalizing that that's important and I think we are getting better at it but I think we're also in a small weird niche community that thinks it's important and the greater community maybe it hasn't quite reached yet but how do you guys incorporate that I suppose in your own life and also in the coaching that you do? Just that concept of slowing things down a little bit and sometimes less being more and a focus and recovery and that kind of stuff versus like balls to the wall all the time?

[0:50:06.3] VL: Yeah we actually have a couple of ways of dealing, for ourselves, we live close to the beach. So that's a huge place for us to go and take walks and breath in the fresh air, look out at the ocean, just talk and walk and just down-regulate all of the systems but within our coaching community, we actually offer quite a few things and one of them is our mediation challenge and so every month we offer a 21 day series, where there's a different guided meditation back to binaural sound waves and is just a really easy way for people to just put their headphones on and get that 10 minutes of de-stressing. So that's been a huge – you know I wrote and recorded the meditations a couple of years ago when we started our program and I thought, I am just going to do this because meditation has made a huge difference in my life I think the clients would like it and it's ended up being one of their most – one of the things that have shifted their health and wellness most profoundly.

So we offer those guided meditations every month and then if people aren't into meditation, we give them guidelines about breathing, different breathing styles. Box breathing, just different things that they can do even taking 10 deep breathes in a day. Just stopping and taking 10 breathes. If you actually do that it's one of the most profound shifts that you can make to your physical being.

I think people just literary forget to breathe so we give people all these different ideas and let them massage it into their world in the best way.

[0:51:41.4] AL: Right and then we structure the strength and conditioning program. It is actually periodized over the course of the year. You can jump in any one of the months and it will still make sense but if you follow it for the total of the year, we have a lot of de-load and a lot of things like that built in, a lot of active recovery. So it is very much geared toward the number one thing being recovery. I mean it's sort of a recovery driven program which tends to work out.

Because a lot of folks that we have, we don't have just a lot of fire breathing athletes. You know the vast majority of the people that we coach in our programs are every day folks who this is the hour that they get to squeeze in in a day or maybe broken up throughout the day to get their strength and conditioning and they can't just do it like that. They don't have the ability to go hit their hard hour at the gym and then take an ice bath and then go hit the infrared sauna and then get a massage. And then get 500 milliliters of vitamin C drip, you know they don't get to do the whole meal deal.

So we have to be really careful with that and then we also do monitor for folks who are trying to run on the edge of things. We do monitor things like HRV if they are interested in that and give them some guidelines on how to do that and for most folks, we find is that they start to see a shift in their HRV just from the normal things that we're doing from a training perspective.

It usually works because it is a pain, I mean Oura Ring is changing the game a little bit but truly tracking your HRV is a pain. So usually what folks do is they look at it and then they see that it is getting better doing the things that they are doing and then they just assume it works, you know? So it all works out.

[0:53:23.1] AVH: Okay, so it sounds like you guys offer a lot of different stuff in terms of you've got a very holistic approach but you do the recovery portion, the meditative side if you want to do that, strength and condition, the nutrition, if someone is interested in learning more from you maybe they're not sure exactly what they want yet or maybe they just want training, maybe they just want the meditative side, what are the steps they have to take?

How do they reach out to you and what's the initial kind of entry point? How do they figure out what exactly, how you guys are going to work together?

[0:54:00.3] VL: Yes, so they can visit our website which is beethewellness.com and it's got a list of all of our offerings there and they can also just shoot us an email at info@beethewellness.com. If they want to do a discovery call, we always are open to doing that as well but for the most part just by browsing our website, they can get an overview and start to at least segregate out the things that they think they might be interested in and then if they need us to dive deeper, we're happy to do that.

[0:54:25.8] AL: Yeah and then the podcast of course is a great place to just get to know us better and what we find is that that's just a lot of it. We'll have somebody and when we're doing our discovery calls, they might listen to many of the podcast and people who are everything is just flowing with them like, "Yeah, avid listener." So okay, well do you want to do this? And they're like, "Yeah let's do it," great, you know. People who we have never met –

[0:54:46.1] AVH: Right so like I already know what I am getting into, yeah.

[0:54:48.4] AL: Yeah, exactly. So you are familiar with this shenanigans, you know? But it really is a great place to know us a little bit better.

[0:54:55.5] AVH: Very cool, I'm excited to be a part of that soon myself and we're a little bit more on that end. That's going to be very fun.

[0:55:02.5] AL: Yeah.

[0:55:03.0] VL: Yeah, we'd love to have you involved anyway, any time.

[0:55:05.3] AVH: What percentage of your clients or the people you work with right now are remote versus actually coming in and physically hanging out with you guys?

[0:55:14.5] VL: Yeah, we don't have a brick and mortar at all. So we don't train, the only time we train in person is on our events and retreats. So a 100% of our clients are remote.

[0:55:24.4] AVH: Got it, okay so then I guess a better question might be how many are local or relatively local versus I mean you said you've got some people in Northeast Canada, where are they all?

[0:55:34.7] AL: Yeah, it's interesting that they're really pretty scattered at this point but there is definitely concentrations in the UK, Canada, East Coast of the United States and Australia which yeah.

[0:55:48.6] AVH: Yeah, that is an interesting demographic I suppose.

[0:55:51.9] AL: It's a group and in fact we actually started doing a paleo meet up in Los Angeles because we live in this Mecca of people who are trying to eat better and be healthy and all of this and no one in our program, there's two people in our program from Los Angeles. So maybe we should do a little better job here locally.

[0:56:08.6] AVH: But I suppose it goes back to what you said earlier that a lot of these communities don't have – they aren't fitness Meccas. So they don't have meet ups and places to go and things so maybe that's why there is a stronger response there because they're just reaching out and trying to find that community.

[0:56:25.6] VL: Yeah, absolutely and there is a handful of folks on the west coast as well but I think you're right. Folks that are especially with the paleo sort of ancestral lifestyle, it's a little bit out of the norm in those places. So finding your niche or finding your tribe of people that you can carry that forward with is super important for them.

[0:56:43.4] AVH: Right, okay. Cool so I think we're almost reaching the end here and I want to thank you both so much for your time and I am so glad that we got to connect in person and we are going to do it again soon and I would really love to meet up with you at some point whether on a retreat or not, we'll see what happens this year but I'd love to ask as we close out what you guys are most excited about either personally or work wise for this year since we are still at the beginning of the year here?

[0:57:10.0] VL: I think for me honestly it's our event Bee Fest that's coming up because it's really a culmination of so many aspects of our life, the things we're interested in, the experiences we'd had and the culmination of bringing in our tribe together on a bigger and deeper level. So for me, that's a really exciting event and then I guess I have to throw in there Peru and Africa are the two retreats we are doing this year. The three of those events this year are making 2018 shape up to be one of the most incredible years yet.

[0:57:45.2] AVH: Amazing, you guys are going to be busy.

[0:57:47.0] AL: Yeah, well the thing I am most interested in is developing our business system to the point that we can accommodate all of this.

[0:57:54.0] AVH: Right, I think this would be traveling all the time. Yeah, that sounds like a pretty decent set up. I'm into it. I'd like to hear more about that, maybe on part two. We can more about on how we can be in Peru and Africa and awesome days all the time. How else can folks aside from your website, where else can people go online to connect with you guys and learn more about you?

[0:58:13.2] VL: Well they can find Bee The Wellness Podcast on iTunes or wherever you listen to your podcast and then our programs are hosted on an app called Vimify but for the most part, the best portal is through the website or finding us on our podcast.

[0:58:26.2] AL: Yeah or Instagram. Instagram is actually a really good place to just get the visual representation of what's going on.

[0:58:33.6] VL: Yes, totally.

[0:58:34.5] **AVH:** Absolutely, it is totally no longer weird to meet people on Instagram.

[0:58:38.3] **VL:** No, it happens all the time.

[0:58:39.8] **AVH:** I meet the best people on Instagram I'm telling you.

[0:58:43.4] **AL:** Yeah.

[0:58:43.6] **VL:** I totally agree.

[0:58:45.2] **AVH:** All right well Adam and Vanessa, thank you so much for taking the time. It's been a pleasure and I'm excited to learn more about and follow your journey this year and all the cool stuff that you're doing and follow you guys online and yeah, thanks for everything.

[0:58:57.8] **VL:** Thank you.

[0:58:58.3] **AL:** Yeah, of course. Thanks for having us.

[0:58:59.5] **VL:** We're excited to have you on our podcast soon so it would be cool.

[0:59:02.1] **AVH:** Yeah part two.

[0:59:02.7] **VL:** Okay, see you.

[0:59:03.5] **AVH:** All right, talk soon.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

[0:59:09.0] **AVH:** All right thanks everyone for being here and please, whatever you do, do not miss next week's podcast. It is our very special 200th episode podcast with none other than Kelley Seret, the Supple Leopard himself. Now I think he basically needs no introduction but he has been the godfather of mobility and the CrossFit and greater fitness world forever. He's a

coach, a physical therapist a speaker and other of course of the bestselling book, *Becoming a Supple Leopard*, and he's the guy behind *Mobility Watch*, pretty big deal.

So we dive deep into movement mechanics and mobility and things to do to become healthier and more mobile that do not include a Lacrosse fall or a band so that's cool and much, much more. This one is a really packed interview so yeah, you don't want to miss it. Make sure you're subscribed to Paleo Magazine Radio on iTunes or Google Play or Spotify or Stitcher to listen and if you love it, please leave a nice review and let me know that I am doing a good job.

Us online people, we need to be told that we're doing a good job. You need to pat us on the back or else we just wither away. So yeah, leave us a nice review, let us know what you like and that's it, see you next week for our 200th episode. Thank you.

[OUTRO]

[1:00:12.8] 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]