

A muscular man with a well-defined physique is standing in shallow water, possibly at a beach. He is shirtless and wearing dark shorts with a black belt. He is carrying a large, heavy, brown rock on his right shoulder. The background shows a calm sea and a clear sky.

**BUILTLEAN**<sup>®</sup>

**Kellen Milad** 

How to Get (& Stay)  
Lean, Strong  
& Flexible

Podcast Transcript

**BuiltLean.com**

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# Kellen Milad.

Kellen Milad is a Milwaukee-based health & fitness professional, and level 3 certified MovNat coach. He specializes in practical movement education, progressive fitness training methods, and integrative lifestyle strategies, and has experience working with a variety of populations – from athletes to seniors. His unique approach fuses his background in counseling psychology with extensive education and expertise in movement and nutrition. The result is a holistic approach that aligns both health & fitness to create a balanced lifestyle that is individualized to each person.

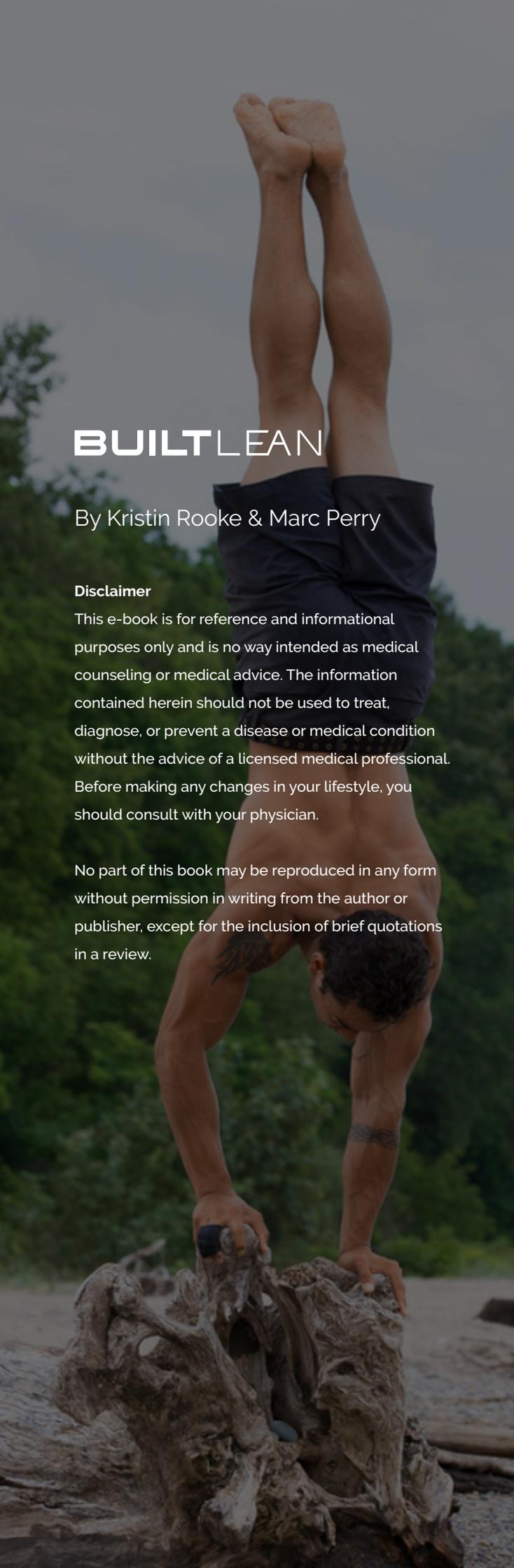
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# Marc Perry.

Marc Perry is the Founder & CEO of BuiltLean, a fitness company dedicated to helping busy men and women get lean and strong. When Marc worked in finance, he experienced what many professionals do when they join the work force – he gained 30 lbs of fat. His desire to look and feel like an athlete again, and determination to finding the most efficient and sustainable ways to transform his body led to the creation of BuiltLean. Using his proven exercise and nutrition methodologies, he has helped thousands of people lose fat and get strong, while simultaneously deepening his own knowledge of nutrition and exercise for overall fitness and wellbeing.

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A man in dark shorts is performing a handstand on a piece of weathered driftwood on a beach. He is balanced on his hands, with his feet tucked together and pointing upwards. The background shows a sandy beach and green foliage.

## **BUILTLEAN**

By Kristin Rooke & Marc Perry

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Hey, everyone. This is Marc Perry, the founder of BuiltLean, and I have a really special guest with me today. His name is Kellen Milad, and he is from Milwaukee and is now currently living in Milwaukee. I came across Kellen through an organization called MovNat, which you're going to learn more about later on.

Kellen has exceptional strength and flexibility, incredible conditioning, and has really reached what I think is that extraordinarily high level, I'd even say world-class level of fitness, that I personally aspire to. I'm a little bit selfish – part of the reason I wanted to speak to him is so I can learn from him too. I really hope that you learn some really great things in this call.

In this call, we're going to talk a little bit about his background and his exercise routine, like, what is he doing to look and perform so amazingly. I mean, the guy is impressive. And we're also going to talk about his nutrition.

We're going to talk about his lifestyle, and we're going to get a really great feel for how this man approaches his health and wellbeing, and how you can fit some of the stuff that he's incorporated into his life into your life as well. We really want to make it applicable to you, so you can learn from it.

One more thing with that said, Kellen is a Level 3 certified MovNat trainer. He has a lot of experience with different types of exercise disciplines, and he currently has a coaching practice as well. Without further ado, let's dive in. So, Kellen, I really appreciate you being on the call and sharing your insights with our audience.

Oh, Marc, it's a pleasure, man. I live this stuff, and I love these conversations. I love the opportunity to share what I've learned along my journey in the hopes that it can help other people out. So, I'm stoked.



Awesome. And before we start asking questions I do want to recommend people who are listening to this audio to check out Kellen's Instagram feed, which is absolutely amazing. It is so cool. So, even if you don't listen to the entire podcast, you can definitely check out his Instagram, which I'll be putting up or publishing along with this podcast.

Okay, so Kellen, you've reached a really high level of fitness, but it wasn't always that way, right? At least that's my understanding. Can you talk a little bit about your experiences growing up and how you maybe weren't that healthy?



Yeah. I definitely wasn't – it hasn't always been that way. As a kid, like any kid, I loved monkeying around, I loved moving, I loved being active and had a ton of energy. But as the years started to roll by and you grow up a little bit more, you get pushed into a certain framework.

I found myself getting pushed into a framework that was discouraging me from moving and monkeying around too much, and was encouraging me to be more sedentary. I was encouraged, or at least had the opportunity to watch a lot of television. I had the opportunity to eat a lot of junk food. And those practices quickly took a toll on my health as a kid.

So, I found myself going into my teenage years overweight, out of shape, and just way more lethargic and unhealthy than any kid should have to be.



Right. Even when I was growing up, I certainly wouldn't consider myself healthy. And I think a lot of kids growing up nowadays aren't. So, I definitely appreciate you sharing that. Let's talk about how you made a shift. What was it that made that shift? And maybe you could talk a little bit about how you became a fitness professional?



Yeah. Okay. So, how I got into the fitness world – I'll flash forward a little bit there. I was enrolled in graduate school where my educational pathway was psychology. I've always been super interested in what makes human beings tick, and human relationships and dynamics. I love that stuff.

As I got into graduate school, I noticed a trend that I didn't really like too much. I saw my peers and I saw my professors very dedicated towards helping other people. I saw these individuals foregoing their own health as members of the helping profession, and for a number of reasons, that among them, I just decided to take my career in a different direction.

Once I got my master's degree in counseling, I decided, "Well, I want to help people, but I want to do it in more tangible terms. And I think fitness might be the path for me." Now at the time, fitness had been with me for a while, but it started to take on a deeper role, a deeper meaning in my own life.

I just decided to take a leap of faith and try something new, and here I am about eight years later, a little eight years, and it just continues to excite me. This is where I thrive and where I love to connect with people and help people



Awesome. And so, going back to your teen years, you're out of shape, you're unhealthy, then you kind of made that shift. You started working out, and I think you told me that you started trying different things, and including that bodybuilding type of approach. Can you talk a little bit about that?



Absolutely. It was a marked shift for me. I hit my limit. I hit my breaking point where I was adopting this identity as the fat kid. And I wanted to break that cycle. So, it was after my freshman year of high school I just had enough with being that kid. I took it upon myself to start running and start lifting weights.

I didn't have a plan, a coach, a mentor. I didn't have all these resources we have at our disposal now, but I had the motivation. I had a block of time – I had the summer. So I was just like, "I'm just going to figure this out step by step, and I'm going to take each day as an opportunity to get better. I don't know what that looks like, and I don't know where I'm going to end up. But I know that effort is within my control, and I'm going to give it my best every day."

I dropped about 25, 30 pounds that summer and it really set me on this path by showing me the power of where my consistent efforts can get me.



That's awesome.



Like I said, it was the bodybuilding approach. Things have changed since then, but it was an approach that really served me at the time, and it worked out really well. And we'll talk more about how that's evolved.



Right. Right. That's one thing I wanted to mention. A lot of guys start out with this bodybuilding approach, and they can actually achieve some results, but I think as we mature and we start to learn more, we realize, you know what? Maybe a more holistic full-body approach is the way to go, right?

And that's one big reason why I wanted to speak with you and to really promote what you've accomplished in your current exercise methods....

...Most guys are doing the chest one day, biceps another day. And I think – as you have discovered, that's really not the most efficient way to really build and maintain a fitter, stronger and healthier body.

Obviously, we're going to dive into this in more depth very soon. So, let's actually just dive into exercise right now. General question, but can you talk through a little bit of what your exercise routine looks like now? I know that you're doing a lot of different things, but maybe just give an overview, and then we'll start dialing in and digging into details.



For sure. The way I describe myself is, I'm not a program guy. I'm not huge on the rigid structure. The way that I started to approach my own training is I like to think about it like a buffet. Over the years, I've really created a wide array of disciplines and types of exercise and movements that I can engage in, and that's what I consider my buffet.

What's at my disposal? What ways of moving are at my disposal and what can I choose from on a day-to-day basis? It's like how when you would go to a local farm-to-table restaurant or something like that, the menu changes with the season. It evolves. So, the types of exercise and training that I'm engaging in during the winter months is significantly different than what it looks like in the summer months.

Right now it's on the menu more running, sprinting, hill sprints, going out to the park, climbing trees, going down to our lakefront here on Lake Michigan and climbing over the rocks on the shores. A lot more interaction with nature and this practical perspective of, "Okay. I'm going to go out into these unpredictable environments and see how I can adapt. How can I use my movement abilities to adapt to the environment?"

And it's a little bit more like play, I guess, like how you would play as a kid. But I'm taking that foundation and being a little bit more intentional with how I'm focusing on my physical development. Winter tends to be a little bit more in-the-gym stuff, more weightlifting, more handstand practice, more crawling and more hanging it on the ground work and maybe a little bit more of the traditional functional fitness type approach in those months.



Cool. And by the way, I really love how you're talking about in terms of seasons. Because for some people, it's like, "Man, I just want to figure out how to try to work out for a month." Right? You don't think about it as, "Oh, man, I just need to work out for a month." It's more like a lifestyle. It's more like, "Okay. What am I going to be doing in the winter? What about next summer?"

It's almost like you've built in periodization without even trying to build in periodization. Right? Which is pretty cool. One quick thing – obviously, you've kind of given this overview of your exercise approach, and I think we're peeking into the brain of somebody who's super fit – so, on a day-to-day basis are you trying to figure out, "okay, I've got 60 minutes today, and I'm going to try to do this or that." I'm just trying to get a feel for, do you have a set specific time you're like, "Okay, I'm going to train today or work out today.?" How does that work?

Yeah. We talked about that, like I'm really big on language and on the words we use. So, when I think of this idea of training it ends up being consistent with what we think about with fitness, like strength and conditioning, and getting after it and doing some work. On a week-to-week basis, I think I'm looking to train maybe like two to three times for 60 to 75 minutes.

So there are two to three sessions where I'm really getting after it, and I consider this performance. Like, I'm asking my body for performance. Like, let's get after it. Let's add some stress to the system and then we'll recover and get stronger and so on and so forth.

But, I'm calculated with how I'm applying that stress. And again, that's what we might call exercise or call training. So, on the other side of that I'm moving a lot. I find ways to infuse my life with more movement, and I think that's really a missing piece that can help a ton of people increase their longevity, avoid injury and just stay in the game mentally, physically, emotionally, just by finding that organic, lifestyle approach to movement.



Awesome. Yeah. That's really cool. When we've spoken in the past, you've made the distinction between health and fitness. Can you talk a little bit about that?

Yeah. For sure. I'll touch back on what I was saying about training being performance. And I look at it as I really try to get people keyed in on thinking about your self-relationship. What is your relationship between you and your body? And when it comes to fitness we are asking of our body, we're asking for performance from our body.

And when I think of health, I think about, "Okay. What can I do to give back? What can I do to give back to my body? What are the types of movements or the practices that can help my body heal and keep it in good condition?" So, it's not something that we think about. We take our bodies for granted.



We expect a certain level of performance from our bodies, and then when the body breaks down we're very quick to say, "Oh, my body betrayed me." Or, "Oh, I'm getting old, things just break down." And if you step away from that, you can see that it's more of an imbalanced relationship. That perhaps you were asking and asking and asking of your body and not giving anything back to that relationship.

And when we look at it in that context, we all know what happens when the other relationship is imbalanced. When someone, a friend is always coming to us and calling in favors and never there for us when we need it. Like, what do we think of that friendship? We're like, "Ugh." It's taxing to us.

Our good relationships in our life are reciprocal. There's a give and a take. And when I think about this relationship between fitness and health, I like to think of giving back to my body twice as much as I'm asking for it to perform for me, especially at my age. I'm 34 years old right now.

Maybe that ratio might've been a little bit different in my late teens and 20s, but I try to balance and prioritize my health by keeping that key relationship in mind that I want to be giving back to my body. I want to be nourishing, nurturing my body and just really grateful for all the cool stuff my body enables me to do, and how it enables me to experience the world.

And it's a little bit different perspective, but I think if you can keep that relationship in mind it will serve you well for the long haul.



So, to sum it up, and I think to put it in a nutshell, you're not sacrificing your health for fitness, right? And I think that's something you told me before –

Absolutely.



– and it's really a profound statement. You're not trying to say, "Oh, I'm going to push myself a little bit harder," when your body's just not ready for it, and you're not just going to keep on pushing yourself without making sure you're feeling great. You're not going to push past the point of pain, like, bad pain, obviously.

So, and I definitely appreciate – and I think it's a really critical concept for people to understand and I certainly see it with clients I work with where it's all about go, go, go. It's like, "I need to lose this belly fat. I need to get strong." And it's like, we've got to create that balance or the body just falls apart, so I really appreciate your emphasis on that.

Okay. So, we've kind of touched upon this a little bit. We've kind of dug into this concept of free movement. I just was curious if you wanted to elaborate a little bit on it, but first I was hoping you could describe the concept free movement so that people can understand where you're coming from.



Yeah. And free movement is just a name. It's just what I call my practice, and it's this evolution where you start out with a foundation, and then it's grown into something more. I think of it as having three components, and that my practice is kind of grounded in what's practical.

In MovNat, we talk about a practical approach to movement where we're looking at foundational movement patterns, like the squat and the deadlift and pushing and pulling and crawling, rotating. Just these basic movements that really comprise the language of movements. Just get your practical basis covered first and make sure that you can deal with the demands that life places on you. Cool. That's a great place to be.

Where do you go beyond that? Well, we've got more needs than just that. I like to think about the role of play as well. So, this idea that we've got work but we've also got play. There are two sides of the coin, and one isn't more valuable than the other. And I say that in our society we value the work quite a bit. We value the sweat and pushing ourselves, but we've got to back off every now and then and replenish the well.

And doing that through playful movement is a good start. So, my practice includes a lot of games and a lot of play. I don't have kids of my own, but some of my friends have small kids or I'll play with them. But it's finding ways to make movement playful again. Go out and explore. Grab some friends and just don't worry about the calories, don't worry about the work. Just worry about enjoying it, and that's the playful aspect.

And I think when you get those two down, the work and the play, it opens up the door for what I call the personal aspect. Self-expression, or just simply being able to expand your comfort zone and experience new things through movement, and experience your creativity through movement.

And that might go over some heads at this point, but if you stay in this long enough and you start playing in the world of movement it starts the creative juices flowing,

and that might not make a lot of sense from the words that I'm saying. But if you check on my Instagram, you'll see all of these components integrated on an almost daily basis.

Where there's the work, there's me getting after it, there's me just kind of goofing around and being playful, and then there's me kind of going to those deeper levels where you get to see the creativity behind my movement. And like I said, as a coach I help people go deeper into that process and figure out what their version of free movement looks like.



Awesome. And I'm curious to hear – if you had to choose just a few strength training exercises to help a busy guy or busy lady get stronger, fitter, and more athletic, what are the top three or four exercises you would choose?

I'm going to go with the kettlebell swing. I'm going to go with the Turkish Get-up, and I'll throw a crawling in there as well. And if I had a fourth to throw in, I would throw in hanging as well because hanging is great for our upper body, great for our shoulders.

But in terms of what types of movements are going to give you the most bang for your buck, that are going to make you strong and are going to give you that endurance and the resiliency or the anti-fragility, I think that kettlebell swings, Turkish Get-up, crawling. If those are the only three that you had, I mean, you could transform your body with just those movements alone.



Right. It's really, really cool that you say that. I know in my own past, I always used to think, "Oh, I need to do 30 different exercises and hit each muscle group in three different ways in order to get a workout." It's kind of this bodybuilding mentality and I think it's really great to hear you, and myself experience as well, that with the three exercises you mentioned, you can build an incredibly strong, incredibly fit, incredibly athletic body. You don't need anything else really!

And of course you want to move and be flexible, but I mean, am I overstating to say that you can build a tremendously strong body with just those three exercises?



Definitely not. And it's a foundational principle that I would really love people to keep in mind. Because when it comes to getting fit, it's often like we're at the base of a mountain looking up. There's so much information floating around. We have access to all this information, and it just complicates things more than it needs to be complicated.

In my coaching approach I try to simplify as much as possible because there is so much depth within the basics. That's why the basics are the basics. So, let's explore that depth and get all we can. But when we start making it too complex, it gets messy, it gets blurry, you lose focus, and eventually you're going to burn out, or you're going to fall off. So, why not just keep it easy?

Keep it simple. Not easy. None of it's going to be easy.



Awesome. Love it. And I do know that you are a fan of some of the other basics like deadlifting, squats, as you mentioned, hanging. Hanging's also really cool exercise that I've been doing almost daily actually. I was partly inspired by your videos, by the way. You've taken hanging to a different level, man, which is pretty cool.

So, anyways, some of our listeners can check it out. Really different types of training that most people just don't see. Like, a lot of guys are stuck, like I said, they're just kind of stuck and they kind of go to the gym and start pumping instead of really kind of exploring how the body's designed to function, which is obviously what you're doing and what I've been striving to do.

And real quick, you are – I mean we're going to have some photos of you. Just in case – in case you haven't seen photos of Kellen, I mean, the guy is unbelievably muscular and fit and lean. He has kind of like this perfect male physique. If you can think of a sport and warrior dude in real life, I mean, you're pretty damn close to what you would think.

He has a very balanced body. No muscles out of place type of guy. So, I'm kind of curious to hear, how did you get so muscular? Like, how'd you build so much muscle? I mean, typically it requires a lot of volume, a lot of training. I'm just kind of curious how you made it happen.



Yeah. And this goes back to where I began along this journey, which is with this bodybuilding approach. It's kind of funny how, as movement starts to become more popular in the mainstream, people become aware of it, it becomes a, "Well, is this better than that?" type deal. And I reflect on that and look at, like, wow, the bodybuilding did help me with muscle building and hypertrophy.

That phase in my life is really where I set this foundation for my current physique. I don't want to downplay the role of genetics. I come from more mesomorphic, endomorphic people, bigger people with muscle mass. So, that has never been my struggle as much, but at the same time I look to those roots in some isolation training and higher volume work and kind of lowering the complexity of some of the movements that I was performing and that served me well.

But it's just the idea here is balance, and I didn't get stuck in that framework and say that's the end all be all. I've always been on the lookout for, like, "What else can I do? What else can I do? How can I take this and keep refining my style into something that works for me?" So, the muscle approach definitely – the information's out there and I'm grateful I had that phase in my life.



Cool. And so, just to be clear, you're not doing almost any isolation exercises anymore, right? None of that stuff.



In the winter months, I do spend a few months in more of a hypertrophy cycle. Like I said, I'm indoors more, so there are a few months in there. But right now, so, I'm in Wisconsin, we've got some brutal winters. We're in the prime right now where it's just beautiful out. I can't justify spending too much time in the gym when I could be outside engaging in nature and in my practice in natural movements.

So that's keeping me some different benefits, but I do spend a few months every year, particularly in the winter, working on going back to some of those basic isolation exercises. I don't do a lot of machines. I'm not in the typical global gym, but give me a set of dumbbells, a barbell, I'd love to bang out some curls and some skull crushers and some bent over rows, and all that good stuff.



Cool. I think the key is, of course, you're maintaining your joint mobility. And, like you said, I don't think there's anything particularly wrong with bodybuilding as long as people are really keeping their joints healthy, as clearly you have been. So, another quick question, what's your height and your weight? So, you're 5-9 you're saying, and you're 170 pounds. Is that correct?

That's right. I've been there for quite some time, yeah.



Cool.

That's where I found – it's like my sweet spot. So, I'm good here.



Right. I'm mentioning this because when you look at you, you think you're 185, 190 pounds easily. But it just goes to show you how when you get lean and you get well-developed, your entire body it's just like – I mean, you don't need to weigh a huge amount to get a pretty muscular and pretty impressive physique.

And I know that when I train clients, the average guy is 190 pounds, who's 20 pounds overweight and is like, "I want to lose fat and stay the same weight. What do I do?" Whereas, a lot of these guys can easily be 165, 170 pounds and still look a lot better. So, I think you've certainly kind of debunked that myth of you need to weigh 200 pounds in order to look muscular. So that's cool.

Absolutely. It's like a lot of guys – to touch on that, I find a lot of guys are looking for a presence about them. They want to be able to walk into a room and command it, and be noticed. And when you put the work in and when you dedicate yourself to that physical practice and your training, people do notice that.

But people also kind of know the difference between that guy that's just kind of pumped up or overinflated or just carrying some extra pounds just to look the part. And that's different than the guy that's really put in the work to cultivate the physique.





Absolutely. That's a good point, and with that let's kind of turn to nutrition. Obviously, nutrition is a critical component of health and certainly getting lean and strong, and you're a very lean dude. So, I understand you follow the Paleo diet. Of course, there are many different kind of versions of it, and there's a million different blogs on it. But I'm kind of curious to hear the version you follow along with maybe some foods you eat or don't eat.

Yeah. For sure. So, the Paleo diet came onto my radar at the same at the same time that natural movement did. The two kind of go hand in hand. For me it was just what I needed at the time. When my training and my diet had become way too complicated, way too much for me to manage, I was looking for simplicity. I was looking for more minimalism, and a Paleo diet really resonated with me. I was also open to this idea that, like, okay, maybe the foods that I've looked at my entire life as just being the stuff that people eat. Like, these are healthy foods. What if I were to challenge some of that thinking?

So that's what happened a bit with the Paleo diet, in this idea that you try to eliminate or cut down on consumption of grains, dairy products, legumes, and understanding that there might be some issues with gut health and inflammation that goes on with some of these foods that we just consider normal. Normal healthy foods.

So, I'm not a strict Paleo guy. I don't have a severe gluten intolerance or lactose intolerance. I try to follow more of a template. Follow those guidelines of the Paleo diet but also figure out over the years what works for me and what type of diet fuels me.

So, the crux of it is good sources of protein, high quality sources of fat, and I'm smart with my carbohydrate intake. That's pretty much it. But that doesn't mean that anything is necessarily completely off limits, but I have established some boundaries just by making that Paleo diet my overall template.



Cool. And what does your diet look like in terms of timing? I mean, how many meals do you have a day? How many snacks?

Yep. About five years ago, intermittent fasting came onto my radar and again, looking to simplify, it seemed like a great little experiment that I wanted to try, and it just stuck. I've been doing it ever since. It started out very – following the letter of the protocol, which was eating all your food within an eight-hour window that from about noon to 8:00 PM.





I got a little nutty about that, but over the years have found a good balance. So, I generally have my first meal of the day around anywhere between 10:30 AM and 1:00 PM. It's generally a medium sized meal, a good amount of protein and fat to keep me satiated. Then, the rest of the afternoon or middle of that day, or that eating window, I'm doing some grazing. More snacking, maybe some trail mix, vegetables and hummus, those are go-tos for me, some fruits.

And in the evening, that's when I generally eat my big meal, and I'm really getting after it then. But also trying to make sure that I'm not having that right before I go to sleep, but have a little buffer there afterwards to digest. But overall that's kind of the thinking for me is I try to give my digestive system a break.

Whereas, previously I've done the bodybuilder approach, eating small meals all the time, so my digestive system was always running, and I just personally notice some benefits from stepping back from that by giving my digestive system a break and trying the fasting approach. That's worked really well for me.



Cool. And can you give a couple examples of what might a – your kind of first meal of the day look like and your last meal?



Yeah. For sure. My first meal of the day, like, today was some grass-fed ground beef with some sautéed vegetables in the mix. It's nothing sexy, it's just fuel at this point. I'm in the middle of the day, I've stuff going on. It's just to fuel my body, and same with kind of some snacks throughout the afternoon.

And the evening meal is a little bit more of an experience. I take a little bit more time prepping it. It's the process of cooking, assembling the meal as well as consuming it, and consuming it slowly and preferably with my girlfriend or with a group of people. And it becomes something more than just fuel then. It's the experience of it.



Awesome. And so, in terms of – let's say drinking alcohol, do you drink alcohol or no?



I do drink alcohol. I'm out here in Wisconsin. I say it's the land of beer and cheese. Drinking is – and sports by the way as well. Drinking is really woven into the culture. I spent – getting deeper in my journey it became, like, you have a tendency to become martyrs at times, and you want to walk the righteous path where you're only eating clean and your body is a temple, and you would never dare put anything in to compromise that.

At the same time I started to recognize some of the psychological negative effects of that rigid type of thinking. So, for myself, drinking in moderation has never been too much of a challenge for me. I feel like I've had a pretty good relationship with alcohol, partly because spending years as a bartender I think I saw the absolute worst of human behavior in bar culture and under the influence of alcohol.

But I do really enjoy good tequila, good bourbon, good scotch, really nice crafted beers here and wine. So, I partake, but I partake in accordance with my personal code, if you will, not really drinking during the week. It might be one or two drinks on a Friday evening, two or three drinks on a Saturday afternoon or evening and maybe a drink on Sunday or something like that.

But, it's around maybe five or six drinks a week is what moderation means to me. And those are where – that's my sweet spot of enjoying life, but making sure that my consumption of alcohol doesn't leave me with a debilitating hangover that's going to compromise recovery for – and we all know, the older you get the more those hangovers seem to stick around a little bit longer.

So, I keep it within that window. I want to make sure that my next day isn't killed because I had a little bit too much fun on a given night.



Cool. Do you drink coffee?



Oh, I sure do! And I think that's a favorite for a lot of the fitness industry. Again, over time the tastes have refined, the personal code has gotten more dialed in. So, when I was working at 5:00 AM about five, six years ago, I was taking early clients. I've got to wake up and pound a bunch of coffee and get yourself super jacked up so you can bring some energy and keep that through the day.

And now it's like realizing that I've had to scale that back. I had an unhealthy relationship. I took a step away from coffee for a while, set some boundaries around it and now found

a much better balance where I can enjoy my coffee and, again, that's a process for me of making it at home in the morning or going out to a local roaster and enjoying a quality cup of coffee means much more to me than just slamming it straight out of the pot. I try to keep my consumption under 20 ounces a day and not after 2:00 PM. Those are my rules.



Yeah. That's really smart, and I definitely have friends and family members who are drinking coffee after 2:00 PM and there is no way they're not getting affected by that. Your sleep is going to get affected for sure if you're having coffee later in the afternoon.

So, it's definitely cool that you've created some boundaries, and you've allowed it to work really well for you. And so, I'm assuming you drink water, or is there something else you drink aside from those types of beverages?

Water is really the standard, and like I said, along with this awareness around coffee and the fact that caffeine is actually a very powerful drug. The understanding of the role and the reactions that occur as a result of sugar. As a kid it was completely normal for me to have three or four sodas in a day, drink a bunch of juice because it's fruit, right. It's healthy.

And this is all surrounding what's normal, creating a definition of normal that's based on what the media tells me and what other people are doing. So, yeah. That's normal, right. But then, as I did my research and as I got older and became more health conscious, began to see like, "Oh, wow. Holy shit. Your body really can't process all that sugar. It really freaks out. All this craziness happens physiologically when you're just mainlining sugar."

So, again, over the years it's like, the usage dropped off. My actual taste buds, my palate changed where that stuff is way too sweet now, and you create a new baseline where normal is you drink water. That's just the beverage of choice. You don't need to go farther than that.

You want something to make that's more exciting, then you can use essential oils, you can use mint or lemon or cucumber in your water, something like that. But water, that's life right there. So, that's enough. That's it.



That's great. I think you make an important point about your taste buds changing. I noticed the same thing, where some sugary foods that I literally was addicted to and used to love, I just really don't care for anymore. And people are just like, "What's wrong with you?" I'm like, you know, when you stop eating a lot of sugar your taste buds just change and that's

really it. So, I definitely appreciate that.

And let's shift gears and talk a little bit more about lifestyle. I'd love to hear about your morning routine. Can you kind of walk us through that?



For sure. So, the morning routine is – I mean, it's floating around everywhere in that fitness and self-development realm. We all know how important these routines are and I'm totally on board with that. Because first thing when I wake up in the morning it, again, back to hydration – I have a big glass of water with some lime juice and some nice sea salt in there. It's just a little thing that I picked up from Charles Poliquin's blog that just stuck as a simple health practice.

And then, from that, I'm moving. And on different days, that involves different practices, but I'm either stretching, I'm doing some calisthenics or some light lifting, going for a walk or going for a run.

But I'm doing something to wake my body up, to spark my body, and that starts with just my physiology, just like getting the internal system moving and revved up. And I will generally go for about 30 minutes to an hour. In a perfect world let's say I'm going to wake up, stretch and mobilize for 30 minutes, and then go for a 30 minute walk or run.

And I just find that, like, when I get done with that practice I'm ready to conquer the world. And so I think that's the energy we want to bring to every day. But it really brings me to life and grounds me, centers me, focuses me on the work that I get to do moving forward and that's where I really find my morning routine as a really like a foundational piece of what's allowed me to be successful over the years.



Awesome. And I should've asked this before and I'm curious. Do you foam roll? 'Cause you're obviously – and by the way, for listeners who haven't quite seen Kellen in action, he's a very flexible dude. He's very flexible and impressively so. And I'm just curious, do you foam roll? Is that part of your movement training practice?



Not as much these days. It's a funny thing about adding more movement to my life and more diversity to the movements that I engage in, and by bringing more movement into my lifestyle I found that I use interventions like foam rolling much less.

And I encourage people to think about that, consider that for the long haul because it's definitely kind of common practice in the fitness industry to – like, "Oh, you've got something that's hurting you?" Oh, well, just like, smash on it. Just use whatever instruments you have and just smash it.

So, I know there's a place for it, and I've seen the benefits myself, but I personally have found over the years a need for less foam rolling. My shoulders get a little junky sometimes from some of the hand balancing and slow work that I do.

So, the lacrosse ball in there is nice for maintenance, but I also wanted to throw out, 'cause I hadn't seen too much about the use of acupressure mats. Well, maybe about four or five months ago I picked up an acupressure mat for \$20.00 on Amazon. It's a little foam mat that's got these little plastic spiny disks.

You lay on, it takes a while to get used to, it's not super comfortable. It's a little bit of a shock at first. But I've stuck with the practice for a few months, and I've seen tremendous value from it. The areas in my body that just consistently hold residual tension, mainly my lower back and my calves.

I spend time on the mat every other day or so or after a long run or a heavy lifting session and my tension just dissolves away, and I wake up the next morning feeling like Gumby, and it's amazing. And I don't hear anybody talking about this. So, I want to give a shout out to acupressure. I don't really understand it, but it's definitely worked for me.



You know what? I have a buddy, he actually is a contributor to BuiltLean, Nick Holt who lives in Costa Rica, so in case you're ever in Costa Rica you can hit him up. He's in Tamarindo. He actually had one and I used it. I didn't explore it like you have, but I'm really interested, and obviously I'm going to buy one now to try it out.

But that's the only time I've heard of it, and it's funny. He has it and he definitely uses it. So, I'm definitely going to check it out and I appreciate you sharing that. And getting back to, I guess your sleep. I mean, how much are you sleeping a night?

For me the sweet spot is seven to eight hours. That's really, especially with how much I'm moving, how active I am that's really – I take that seriously and that's generally where I'm thriving. Get in bed between 10:00 and 10:30 every night and wake up between 6:00 and 6:30.



And like I mentioned, I'm not a super type A regimented person in a lot of ways. But that consistency and that structure has been instrumental in, again, just staying healthy. So that's where I find myself thriving.

And I encourage people to think about that, consider that for the long haul because it's definitely kind of common practice in the fitness industry to – like, "Oh, you've got something that's hurting you?" Oh, well, just like, smash on it. Just use whatever instruments you have and just smash it.



Awesome. And real quick before we finish off, we haven't talked too much about MovNat. But I just want to tell our listeners MovNat is a type of exercise framework where it teaches trainers and also people about natural movement. Like, how do we move naturally in our environment?

And Kellen is a team leader for this organization. He's reached a very high level and Kellen, hopefully maybe in a future podcast we can kind of go over MovNat in more detail, but I was hesitant to go into it too much because the movements are just so hard to describe, and I think that checking out your Instagram feed people will get a feel for it and be able to experience it versus just trying to talk about the complicated movements that are nearly impossible to describe.

Yeah. Absolutely. MovNat changed my life, and by that I mean it opened me up to a completely different way of thinking. Or maybe it got me reconnected or back to a way of thinking that I had abandoned or forgotten because the world of fitness and exercise was is very much about, here the exact form. Here is the way that movement is executed.

We don't think about kids as being the best movers, that we were born with all the mobility that we could possibly ever need and we use that mobility to explore the world, and we use that mobility to start exploring what are bodies can do. And our bodies are incredible, incredible, just even from an architectural standpoint.

What are bodies are capable of is incredible. And I think when we start to shift the framework away from this idea of rigid exercise and starting to get more into a more organic, a more holistic practice of movement by thinking about how movement occurs in context, how the environment and how the situation shapes the ways in which we move.

I think that paradigm shift, it's not simple – it's gradual, but getting to that place, like I said, it just opens up completely new ways of thinking and reconnects us with just a different



mindset to take to our training. And for me that has been an amazing game changer. I love going around the country teaching MovNat and just giving people the tools they need to start that process out for themselves. Because that's the spirit MovNat was created in. Let's give people a framework, a system to help them progressively redefine movement on their own terms.



Awesome. That's very well said and with that we're going to wrap up the call, and I guess the last question is, how do people get in touch with you? How do they stay in touch with you and then learn more about you?

Yeah. I hope that we brought some value to the listeners out there. I love sharing my experiences and I love these conversations, and I love connecting. People can find me at my website, [movementparallellife.com](http://movementparallellife.com). You can learn more about my views and my coaching work.

You can find me at Instagram, Milwaukee Free Mover, and our Facebook too. My professional page is Kellen Milad Coaching. These are all places where I'm looking to use these platforms to engage with people and keep the conversation rolling. So, by all means if you found something compelling in this podcast, definitely reach out and let's connect.



Awesome. Well, Kellen, again, it's an absolute pleasure to really peek inside the mind of someone who has had a really amazing fitness journey and clearly has reached an extraordinarily high fitness level. So, I really appreciate it, and I'm sure our listeners are going to appreciate it as well.

So, thank you very much again for your time, and look forward to connecting again soon.

It's an absolute pleasure to be here with you guys. I look forward to the next conversation.



Awesome. Thanks again.