Ep #75: Keeping Fitness Simple with Jordan Syatt

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Carrie Holland, MD, CPT

Strong as a Working Mom, a podcast with Carrie Holland, MD, CPT

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You are listening to the *Strong as a Working Mom* podcast, Episode #75. Want to hear how to keep fitness simple? Here's some ideas from my mentor.

Welcome to the *Strong as a Working Mom* podcast. If you're balancing career, family, wellness, and some days sanity, you are in the right place. This is where high-achieving, busy, working moms get the tools they need to eat, move, and think. I'm your host, physician, personal trainer, and Certified Life Coach, Carrie Holland. Let's do this.

Hey, how are you? What's new, what's good? So, what's good here is this is Episode #75, we are 75 weeks in. It has been so much fun showing up and hanging out with you every Wednesday. Thank you so much for supporting me and tuning in week to week and for helping me get to this point.

To celebrate Episode #75, I am super pumped to bring you my very first guest on the podcast today. So, I had the opportunity to sit down with one of my own mentors, Jordan Syatt, to get his take on a number of things related to fitness. This was super fun for me, because Jordan is someone I look up to.

I credit him with helping me get out of my own way. Jordan encouraged me to stop freaking out so much, start sharing my message with a larger audience, and not worry so much about other people's opinions. He was a mentor to me very early on in my coaching career, and it was so insanely cool to bring it full circle and sit down with him again and have him share his thoughts on the show.

So, if you haven't heard me talk about Jordan on the podcast before, here are just a few things to know about him. Jordan started his business Syatt Fitness from his dorm room at the University of Delaware in 2011. Since then, he has become a fitness industry expert.

He's been featured in more publications I can list. He's written a book. He's got a very active social media presence, and a YouTube channel that is

both funny and educational. And, he's generally an all-around nice person who keeps it very real. You'll hear him introduce himself in just a few minutes.

Be forewarned, there are lots of four-letter words in this episode. We talk about that too, so stay tuned. But if you've got young ears listening, you may want to stick some headphones in for this one. Okay?

I hope you enjoy this episode. And, I hope it not only reinforces some of the concepts I've brought up in the past, but also offers another expert opinion on fitness, with some humor to boot, for sure. So, check it out.

Carrie Holland: All right, I am super excited to introduce Jordan Syatt on the podcast. I'm going to let Jordan introduce himself in just a minute. I am so pumped because, I don't know if you know this, you are a very large part of the reason that this podcast even exists.

So many years ago, we had a conversation from my basement and I was very scared even just to start posting on social media. I remember very clearly you saying, “If Joe Somebody from your high school is making mean and nasty comments about you from his mom's basement, is that going to stop you?” That was years ago, it was before kids, and it still stuck.

Here I am now because you've really helped me just get out of my own damn way. So, I am pumped to have you here. When I started this podcast, I knew that I wanted you to be my first guest, it's all just happening, so I'm super excited to have you. Thank you so much for being here.

Jordan Syatt: I'm stoked. Thank you for having me. I remember that conversation. It's a blessing to be here. It's amazing. What a wonderful opportunity to speak with you again, and to still be in touch after all these years. I'm very excited about it.

I'm so happy that you're making this podcast. I can't wait to be the guest on the 100th episode again, and then on the 1,000th. I can't wait for it.

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Carrie: Awesome. One of the things that many of my listeners… If anybody has listened to the podcast, they know that I have referenced you before. But for anybody who's not familiar with you yet, rather than me telling about all of your accolades and pumping you up, I just want you to introduce yourself.

We've all got our titles and whatnots and whatever, but I would really love to hear how you introduce yourself. So, just tell anybody who's not familiar with you yet, and hasn't heard about you for me on my podcast yet, please tell us about yourself.

Jordan: Yeah. My standard intro is, I'm a short, bald, nerdy Jewish guy who likes to lift weights. That's my intro. I love fitness. I love health. I have a beautiful wife. I have a beautiful one year old daughter, 14 months. She's just starting to walk right now.

From a business perspective, I like to help people fit fitness and health into their lives, and figure out a way to make it more enjoyable, more sustainable. That's pretty much it.

Carrie: One of the things that really drew me to even want to work with you in the first place, was that you kept it simple. Everything that I have ever read from you, it's very much broken down. There's not a lot of sciencey words and a lot of mumbo jumbo and fluff.

How do you keep it simple? Because you talk to a lot of people, and I'm sure you get asked all kinds of questions. I don't know if people tend to overcomplicate things, but how do you keep it simple when it comes to fitness?

Jordan: Yeah, people love to overcomplicate things. I think part of it comes from a place of a lack of understanding. So, they don't know and they assume it's more complex. That's one part of it.

I think another part of it is that, especially now with social media, people making content around this stuff, they deliberately make it sound more

complex because they want to sound smart. This is something that I think the consumers of information don't think about. When you're not someone making content, when you're just consuming content, you often don't think about the psychology of ‘well, what is it like to make content?’

I know, early on in my career, one of my greatest concerns with making content was not sounding smart. I wanted to be perceived as smart. I think this is why people get nervous when they host a podcast. This is why people get nervous when they start making videos, when they start posting. Because they don't want to sound stupid. They don't want to be embarrassed. And so, they start getting really worried.

So then, okay, well, cool. How do I appear smart? I'll use these big fancy words. I'll make it sound more complicated. I’ll make it sound like I'm educated, and I've read all these books and all these terms. As a result of it, the people who are consuming the content don't understand what the fuck they're saying, because they're reading something with very high level, complex language. Oftentimes, language that the person who wrote it doesn't even understand.

And so, it just fuels this fire of complexity and this illusion that you need complexity in order to be healthy. When really, it's the most basic thing in the world: Walk more, lift weights a couple times a week, drink water, have fruits and veggies. It's all of the most common-sense things we all know.

But then, when you’ve got assholes on social media saying, “It's only carnivores… Don't ever have vegetables, because they're killing you. Fruit is going to make you fat, because sugar… Oatmeal is bad for you. Fish is bad for you,” or whatever it is. Something is always bad for you; there's always going to be someone saying this is bad for you.

So, it's easy to overcomplicate it, when the reality is health and fitness is very simple, very basic. It's not easy, but it's very simple.

Carrie: I love what you just said, because I tend to make the distinction between easy and simple. Because I'm a scientist, I like the science, some

of my listeners are scientists, and we like to get into the literature. We like to look at the studies, the randomized control trials, and all that.

But really, over and over again, the message when you boil it down is the same, it doesn't have to be complicated. And while it's simple, the easy part, it's hard. It's really a challenge.

So, one of the things that you didn't say, and I'm going to toot your horn here a little bit, is that you're an author, you've written a book.

Jordan: I did write a book.

Carrie: It's called *Eat It*, and it was co-written with Mike Vacanti, who's also awesome. So, if any of you are listening, please check it out because it's excellent. But one of the things that you talk about early on in the book is self-efficacy, which is totally speaking my language. So, what's your approach to building self-efficacy?

Because I do. I mean, even in my work over the years, I started out as a straight-up fitness coach, “This is how you do deadlifts. This is how you do this. This is how you eat.” Then I realized nobody's doing the things. Nobody's doing it. And I realized, partly with your help, that it's self-efficacy. It’s the belief in your ability to get the thing done.

So, what's your approach? Because you work with thousands of clients, thousands of people. How do you help them realize their own self-efficacy? Because really, for me, that's where it's at. That's where it all starts. So, how do you help them do that?

Jordan: Yeah, I think you're hitting it on the head. I love that you're talking about this, especially so early on in the conversation. Because I’ve done, no joke, thousands of podcasts, thousands of podcasts. From 2018 – 2023, I did between two to four podcasts a day, every day, five days a week. So, I've done thousands.

The number of people who have asked me about self-efficacy is less than 10, probably. And the number who have asked me in the first part of the

conversation is probably less than five. So, I love this because I think it is the most important, especially coming on the back of it being simple but not easy.

Well, why is it not easy? It's not easy because of behavior. It's not easy because when you practically apply these things it gets difficult. Changing the habits that you've had your whole life is very difficult. Changing self-limiting beliefs that you've had about yourself your whole life is very difficult.

So, you can know what to do, but actually putting into practice is very challenging and overwhelming and anxiety producing and worrisome. Finally getting back to the question, well, cool, how do we improve your self-efficacy?

Number one, self-efficacy, like you said, is basically the belief that you have in yourself to do what it is you say you want to do. Do you believe that you can lose weight? Do you believe that you can be consistent in the gym? Do you believe that you can eat well, with your nutrition? Do you believe these things?

If you don't believe in your ability to do it, then you're not going to do it. You won't. That's the unfortunate truth. I think anyone logically can understand that. If you don't believe it, then why?

If you don't believe that you can do well with your nutrition, then why would you bother spending time going to the grocery store getting all of these foods that you probably aren't going to eat anyway, spending all the money on them, and all of the time and all of the energy? Why not just order Chick-fil-A? It's just much easier. Why not just get the waffle fries, they taste better, right? It's like, why not?

Why would you pay the money to go to a gym? Why would you take the time to put yourself in an uncomfortable situation? To be self-conscious in front of other people working out in the gym and sweating and

self-conscious of yourself, if you don't think you're going to do it anyway? If you don't think it's going to work? Why would you do it? You wouldn't.

And so, you need to believe in your ability to do it, or else it's just not going to happen. So again, how do we actually increase it? There are many ways, but I think the best ways that I learned, actually I learned while I was coaching people in person. Especially from the perspective of working out.

Nutrition, I think I learned more online. Because communication happened every single day, emails, with one-on-one nutrition clients. But with exercise… I'll never forget. This was one of my first experiences coaching just a regular person. She was a woman. She was in her late 30s, early 40s. She was very overweight, and she was petrified to come into the gym. She was petrified.

This is something she'd tried off and on, and off and on, and off and on, for years. Like, I think, the vast majority of people. I remember, I told her, "By the end of today, you're going to lift 100 pounds." And, she gasped. She was like, "Absolutely not. There's no way there's no way I'm going to lift 100 pounds." I was like, "I promise you, at the end of today, you're going to."

She was almost hyperventilating with excitement and disbelief. Which anyone who knows, 100 pounds might sound like a lot to someone who doesn't know this, but 100 pounds, women can lift 100 pounds. It's not fucking crazy; you can do it. But I guarantee you, you can lift 100 pounds. The vast majority of people can do it, especially adults. But it sounds like a lot.

So, for me to just tell this woman, who has been struggling with her health and fitness, struggling with her strength training, struggling with exercise, struggling with her self-image, that she's going to be able to lift 100 pounds on that day, it was very exciting. I built it up, "You're going to lift 100 pounds."

And so, I started having her do kettlebell deadlifts. I started off with a 16 kilogram, then I went up to the 20 kilograms, and then the 32 kilograms. I'm

never telling her how much weight they are. I'm not telling her how much weight is the kettlebell. At this gym, we had some really, really big kettlebells. We have 'the beast,' which is about 100 pounds. Finally, I'm like, "Okay, before we get to the 100 pounds, just try this one."

So, she didn't know she was going to lift 100 pounds. She goes up, she stands up easily with it, and she put it down. And I was like, "You just lifted 100 pounds." And she was like, "What?" I was like, "Look, look at it. Look at the weight." She looked at it, there's 100 pounds, and she started crying.

Then, she went home and she made a big Facebook post about how excited she was, how exhilarated she was, and that became a habit that she could stick to, like she had never stuck to before. Because she finally was able to accomplish something that showed her, she could do hard things, that she could stick with it, that she was strong, she was stronger than she actually thought she was.

And so, when it comes to increasing self-efficacy, number one, you have to be willing to push outside your comfort zone. You have to be willing to do that, knowing that the reward on the other end will be a greater belief in yourself for accomplishing that task.

Carrie: Damn straight. One of the other things I want to ask you about, I imagine this probably comes along with it, is failure, right? Like you said, when you push outside your comfort zone, when you go through, when you do things that you're not used to, there's going to be some failure. And I work with a lot of women who are not used to failure, at all. They didn't get where they are by getting C's; fine.

So, what is your approach with your audience, with yourself, when you encounter failure? Because often, what I find is that we take an all-or-nothing approach. We make it mean that we're horrible, we're never going to do anything, and it's never going to amount to anything. And then, they give up. So, what's your approach?

Jordan: Yeah. It's a great question. It's something that early on as a coach I really struggled with. I started to notice, whether it was in person or online, that clients would say something to me, they'd say, “I fucked up. I really fucked up.” They would say, whether it was, “I fucked up this weekend, I ate way too much. I fucked up at dinner, I ate way too much. I fucked up. I missed the gym a couple of times.” It was, “I fucked up.”

When I was working with people online, early on, I started to get some people who would ghost me in online training. They're paying me several hundred dollars a month, I'm reaching out, and all of a sudden, they're not replying for a week, for two weeks, for three weeks. I'm like, “Oh, my God, I hope they're okay.” But then I see them posting on social media. So, I know they're safe, but they're just not replying to me.

Finally, when I would get back in touch with them, they'd be like, “Hey, listen, I fucked up. I had a bad day. That bad day turned into two days. Those two days turned into a week. That week turned into three weeks. I felt like you would be disappointed in me.” This happened so many times I actually made a video course that I would send to my clients as soon as they signed up with me.

The first video course was titled, “You Can't Fuck This Up.” It was the idea that it doesn't matter if you go over your calories one day, or for a week or for a month. It doesn't matter if you miss a workout, or five workouts, or 50 workouts. The only way you fail is if you quit altogether. That’s the *only* way you fail.

And so, if you stop reaching out to me, you stop consulting with me, and you stop doing everything, well, now you've quit and now we have a problem. But if you go over your calories one day, who cares? My wife made pancakes this weekend. I had like 1,800 calories by 9am. It’s not a big deal. I continued to eat throughout the rest of the day. Cool. I’ve got to get back on track, not a big deal.

When you quit, that's when you really mess up. So, people spend their whole lives, 30-40-50-60 years, never working out, never eating right. They

get very, very overweight, and on a dime, at 60 years old, they're like, “I need to make a change.” They start exercising, they start eating well, they start sleeping well, they start paying attention to their health, and all of a sudden, they lose 75 pounds, and they change their life forever, at 60 years old.

They haven't done it for their whole life, and you're going to tell me because you took a fucking weekend off, or you had a week vacation and you ate too much, that you ruined everything? Get out of here. It's ridiculous.

So, talking about this, and helping them understand how ridiculous it sounds… A very famous quote, “If you got a flat tire, you wouldn't get out of the car and slash the other three. You'd figure out a way to fix that one tire and keep going.” Why are you slashing your other three tires? Just fix it.

Carrie: Absolutely. Well, you've mentioned it a couple of times, so I'm going to go there. I know you're married, and you said she's 14 months old now?

Jordan: Yeah, 14 months.

Carrie: All right, so you have a 14-month-old daughter. So, I followed you when you were still single. I don't know if your wife was in the picture or not, I have no idea.

Jordan: No, she was not.

Carrie: Either way, now you're married, you have a kid. How have things changed for you? Specifically, I don't know if your wife is into fitness. But I've seen some videos of her and I think that she's into fitness, so how do you guys do it?

Because I work with a lot of women, maybe their partners, and men, maybe their partners aren't into it, or they're trying to get into it. So, how do you strike that balance? Especially now where there's a kid in the mix?

Jordan: Yeah, so she loves fitness. She loves fitness. She really enjoys it. A lot of people ask did she get into it because of me. No, she actually [we

actually] So, we first met when we were 12. When we were in sixth grade. Yeah, we met when we were 12. She moved to my town. I was like, “Man, that girl's super-hot. That girl is wicked hot.” I asked her on a date, and we had a school field trip to this place called Roller Kingdom in Hudson, Massachusetts.

So, we went to this rollerblading place, and at the rink there was a guy selling these light up roses for $5; they had flashing LED lights. I was like, “Oh, well, all the movies say girls love roses. So, I'll get a rose.” I gave it to her, and her stepsister laughed in my face when I handed her the rose. The next day, my now wife broke up with me because she said things were getting too serious too quickly.

And so, we didn't talk for 15 years. We didn't talk. She ended up moving to Atlanta, and we grew up in Massachusetts. So, she moved to Atlanta. We didn't talk. Then, before my online business started to get more traction on social media... I had like 5,000 followers on Instagram… she found my Instagram, because she was really into fitness.

She just shot me a message. She was like, “I know we haven't spoken in a while, but I really like your content. I've been strength training and I really like it.” I was like, you are still super-hot. And so, I actually scheduled a trip down to Atlanta just to see her, and we've been together ever since.

But she found me because she got really into strength training, specifically strength training. That was one of the reasons I was so excited, because usually, up to that point in my life, whenever I would speak to women who say they like working out… and there's nothing wrong with Spin or Zumba. I literally just took a Zumba class and made a YouTube video about it. It was amazing.

But I really wanted someone who liked strength training. I wanted to be with a woman who wanted to be strong and saw the benefit in it. And when I started talking to her, I was like, “Oh cool, what are you doing?” She's like, “Well, I'm squatting this much weight,” and I was like, holy shit. I got really excited about that. So, she's really into fitness.

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We both make sure that the other one has time for their fitness. So, right now she's working out. She goes at like eight in the morning, and I'll watch our daughter during that time. Then I'll go at 10 in the morning, and she'll watch our daughter. It's a give and take. So, we both figured out ways to make it work for the other one.

When my daughter was just born it was very difficult. A lot of people were like, “You're going to get out of shape.” I'm very competitive, and I was always like, “I'm not going to get out of shape because I've made this part of my life. This is my habit. This is what I do.” It's not like I'm just going to stop working out and eating like shit because she's born. I'm just going to have to change my schedule.

So, it's far more difficult on the mother than the father, just because the baby needs the mother. The baby doesn't need the father biologically. And so, I said I would take the 1am or 2am feeding because she needed some sleep. What I did was, instead of working out when I would normally like to in the morning, I made my workouts at 10pm, 11pm, or 12am. Because I knew if I worked out that late, then I wouldn't be tired by 1am or 2am. That way, I could be up for the feeding and it wouldn't be an issue.

Yeah, I sacrifice sleep and I was really tired, but I was still going to get my fucking workouts in. They weren't the best workouts in the world. I wasn't an elite lifter, but I was still working out. And so, that was how I did it from firstborn until three to four months. Then I was able to start switching it back to a more regular schedule.

Carrie: I mean, everything you're saying, it's just been… You’re kind of screaming to me ‘identity.’ You clearly are somebody who exercises obviously, you've built your like identity around it. You're somebody who exercises and you've made the shifts when you had your daughter. You made shifts, and you're like, “Okay, I'm somebody who gets his workout done,” whether it's at 10 o'clock, or the night, or whatever.

I remember seeing those videos of you at midnight in your gym. But you made it happen, because it's important to you, and that's just how it's done.

I mean, that's how it happens. Maybe there were days it wasn't perfect, but you still got it done.

Jordan: And, it sucked. It sucked. I didn't like it. I tried to make that very clear. Like, “I really don't want to do this right now.” But what's the alternative? The alternative is not doing it for several months, and then me feeling way worse. So, I'd rather get a B- or a B workout in, then not do it at all.

Carrie: Hell yeah. Speaking of your daughter. I mean, you do a lot. You have impacted so many people's lives, and someday she's going to look and be able to see, “Hey, my dad does this.” So, when she looks back and sees your videos, sees all the things you put on Instagram, and reads your book, what do you want her to know? What do you want her to know when she looks back on all the awesome work that you've done?

Jordan: I want her to know that I cuss a lot. But she's not allowed to until she's out of the house. My parents cussed a lot in the house, which is now very clear why I do it.

Carrie: Oh yeah, same here. Oh my gosh. I'm the one with the potty mouth. Oh, my God. So, thank you. No, I'm glad to hear you say that. Thank you.

Jordan: It's funny, the majority of the people that I work with are women. I've worked with many men, as well. Both men and women struggle with body image, but I think women have it much more difficult than men do; in a large-scale population perspective. I think it's much more difficult for women.

There are men who really struggle with body dysmorphia, and it can be very difficult for them. But I think with a large-scale population, generally it's more difficult for women, in terms of just straight numbers.

And so, now that I have a daughter, I have a pretty good idea of what she's about to go into, in terms of the body image standards. And not only how difficult it can be from boys, but other girls, and how absolutely ruthless

they can be. I really want, one of the things I'll try and do, is try and get her connected and reading information from women who went through it.

Not even necessarily me. Because I feel kids are like, “Oh, you're my parent, whatever, don't really care.” I'll try and get her information from women who aren't her parents, who have gone through it and have spoken about it.

Because there are really some amazing women in the industry who have gone through it. And so, I think the best thing I'll be able to give her is access to those other people who've lived through it and experienced it.

And yes, obviously, I'd love for her to see my thoughts and experiences, but I know how kids are. It's like, if it's your parent, it doesn't matter if I'm the president, I'm still just your parent, so whatever. So, I think being able to have access to people who have lived through it, and had the experience of a young girl going into a woman, will hopefully give her more perspective and help.

Because she's going to go through those tough times. We all do as humans, there's no way to avoid it. I think going through those tough times is what makes you a better human. But I just want her to have the good voices in her ear, and to have that perspective from a young age, knowing that you know all of this stuff that people are being mean about, there's so much more to life than just that stuff.

Carrie: Did you have fitness all through your life? I’m trying to remember. I know it started largely in college, but it was before that, wasn't it? Was it high school? I feel like wrestling. I know there was some wrestling.

Jordan: Yes. I started wrestling when I was eight. So, my family is very unathletic. They're Ashkenazim Jews. There are not that many Ashkenazim Jews who are like high-level athletes. My entire family is doctors, lawyers, and professors. Fitness was not what my family did.

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I was the black sheep of the family, and also, I was in special education. So not only was I just focused on sports and athletics, but also, I hated school. And everyone in my family was like, “Well, that's not good.” Everything was about higher education and all that.

Fortunately, because I was very athletic from a very young age, my mom actually put me in gymnastics when I was two. Which I think was probably one of the best things she could have done. I don't know why she thought of doing it. She did not do it with my brother. But I went into gymnastics at two.

We just enrolled my daughter, who's 14 months, in gymnastics, and she's going to start it next week. I think it's the best thing a young kid can get into from a really young age. But then, I think that gave me a base of athleticism, of balance, of coordination, kinesthetic awareness, that then also helped me. I always loved sports. Sports I was what I was good at, and academics was what I was bad at. So, I went even deeper into sports.

By the time I started wrestling at eight years old, I was just sports, sports, sports, sports, sports, wrestling, wrestling, wrestling. And so, I've been doing it forever. That's really just all I’ve really cared about.

Carrie: Well, I'm totally switching gears here, but I'm going to run with it. I recently listened to a podcast where you described yourself as a coach and then as a personal trainer. You didn't use the word “influencer,” and I don't even know how you feel about that word and what you consider yourself, whatever. I guess that's neither here nor there. But I think of you as somebody who is important in the fitness industry.

What do you think your role is within the fitness industry, and especially with so much junk out there? I mean, I've seen you debunk a lot of stuff, go to bat for what you believe in, and kind of go after things that you didn't believe are true. Like, when other people are posting things you just flat out did not believe in.

But what do you think your role is? Because you have so many people… I mean, you have a lot of people watching what you do. So, what do you think your role is in that, within the fitness industry?

Jordan: Yes, so in my mind, I have a number of roles. Number one, is that I want to help people believe in themselves, whether it's fitness or otherwise. That's why I'm so glad you brought up self-efficacy so early on. If you can instill self-confidence within people and teach them how to build it up themselves, you give them a life. Far more than just simply teaching them how to deadlift. Far more than teaching them how to eat well.

You give them the opportunity to be who they want to be, and have the courage to actually chase that. Whether that's saying hello to that woman that you find really attractive and you have a huge crush on her, and you want to get her number, and taking that opportunity.

Or if you're a young woman at this job or whatever, and you want to go for the promotion. Building up the confidence, saying, "You know what? I want to get this promotion. I want this raise." Whether it's someone being rude to you, and you need to stand up for yourself and say what you believe, or whatever it is.

I want to give people the ability to believe in themselves and do the things that are really difficult. I think another separate but equally important thing is I want to teach people to become critical thinkers. Especially in school, so much of my upbringing in academia, I look back on with contempt and resentment for the way that the school system taught. I was told that I wouldn't do very well because I was in special education. Looking back, a lot of these teachers didn't understand. They looked at their one way of teaching as the only way to be successful.

I'm like, there's so many other ways to be successful. Just because you get an A on a test, or multiple tests, doesn't mean you're going to succeed in life. Just because you're failing these tests doesn't mean that you're not going to succeed. And I think that one of the things that I would have loved to include within schooling was more critical thinking.

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So much of schooling nowadays, I feel like it's just memorization. You just memorize this and that, at school. But what about learning how to critically think? About, “Okay, we're presented this information. Let's talk about what you agree with, what you disagree with. Then, let's steal a minute and let's run it the other way. And then, let's try and run in the opposite direction.” Having debates, critical thinking, learning research, and having difficult conversations.

That's one thing that I would love to help people do, is be better at critical thinking. Because, again, that improves everything in life. It helps you disseminate information online. To help you understand, “Okay, well, that sort of sounds ridiculous. Let's look into it a little bit more.”

Those two things, even while it applies to fitness, it applies to everything. And those were probably the two major things; that I want people to improve their belief in themselves, and then being able to be really solid critical thinkers.

Carrie: I think part of what I really love about how you work is that you do all of this, and you do it with Harry Potter references, and loads of four-letter words, and you wear wigs, and you make crazy videos, and you end your posts with “penis.”

How did you flex that muscle to become so unapologetically real? Because so many of the people that I work with, even in me, myself, struggle and still do struggle to put our full selves out there. I mean, I don't know how many people I work with that tell me they feel stuck in one way or another. Whether it's in their career or their relationships, or just wanting to be more, and they don't.

But you just go out and do it, and it's so unapologetic. I don't know if that's just always how you've been. I don't know if you started out that way. I don't know what your very first posts look like. I'm not sure. But how did you get that way? Because I think that there are loads of people out there that are thinking to themselves, “Damn, I wish I could be the way he is.” I know I’m one.

Jordan: Yeah. Number one, thank you. I appreciate that a lot. I think it's a little bit… It's always been there. But it's also gotten more pronounced over the years with experience. So, I mean, if you go back and watch my old YouTube videos, you will see a very different speaker. You will see someone who's very nervous, red in the face. I used to sway side to side out of nerves while I was talking on YouTube.

All the videos are still there, from 2011-2012-2013. I was really nervous. You can go watch them, and you will see I was not stuttering, but fumbling over my words, and I had my hands in an awkward position. Literally, I remember the swaying thing. It's vivid to me because I would ask random people to film me, because I didn't have anyone. I was in my college gym, or whatever.

One of my buddies was filming one day, and he was like, "Why are you swaying side to side?" I literally had to torque my feet into the ground to prevent myself from swaying, because I hadn't noticed it before he said that. But that was a nervous tic.

On the other hand, my very first website; I'll never forget this. My first website, I made it in July 2011, when I published it. On the homepage I had a brief description of who I was, and what my goals were with the website. And I vividly remember writing, "My name is Jordan Syatt, I'm going to give you no bullshit, and… And if you don't agree with me, I don't give a fuck." I vividly remember it. And the reason I know this, is because my mom was so mad. She was like, "Jordan, this is on the homepage of your website. No one's going to want to work with you if you're swearing. I literally don't give a fuck if you don't like me…" On the homepage of my website. What a weird thing to put on the homepage. But my mom got really upset.

I said, "Mom, if someone doesn't want to work with me because I swear, then I don't want to work with them." And so, there is the aspect of, I was nervous and I was self-conscious. And there's also the other aspect of, I was ready to be myself. It was just going to take some time and some years before I could be fully me. I think it probably took about five to six years before I truly got to a point where I could be on video and on camera.

Because I think that's the ultimate, when you can be on video. It's easier to be yourself behind a keyboard when you're writing an article and no one has to see you. You can edit the article and change it. But when you're on camera and on video, you're doing something live, that took me a much longer time.

Again, I've been doing two to four a day, every day, five days a week since 2018 for podcasts, so I have a lot of experience and practice doing it. There have been times where I've said things that I've regretted. But one of the greatest things that I've realized…

When I watch politicians, and I think everyone can relate to this, if a politician makes a mistake, all I want them to do is just say, "Oops, I fucked up. I made a mistake." I just want them to own it. But they always blame it on the other side. They're always like, "Well, it was this person. That was that…" And I'm like, can't you just take responsibility for fucking up?

I realized, what if I just did the same thing? If I said something I shouldn't have said, if I made a mistake, how about I was like, "Ah, you know what? Oops, that came out wrong. I didn't mean that. I apologize." I think people really respect that, as opposed to either digging my heels in or whatever. It's like listen, we all fumble over our words at times. We all say things we regret. We all do things that we aren't proud of. It's like, cool, it is what it is. So, I'm just going to be as much me as I can. And if I fuck up, I'm human.

Carrie: Yeah, one of my mentors calls it gag-and-go. I mean, you have to gag and just do it anyway. And, I really love that. I have to remember that, and remind myself of that sometimes, because I still feel like I'm standing in my own way in a lot of things.

Okay, so, another question. A lot of the people I work with are pretty exhausted. They know how to work hard, they know what to do, but a lot of them have left their fitness sort of by the wayside, as a result of working really hard, getting the career, establishing the family, having the kids, whatever.

How can they make change as easy as possible? What do you think is the way to get started, and to make it as easy as possible?

Jordan: Yeah. The first thing, just walking. It's just movement. I haven't seen this movie. I don't know why this popped in my head right now. Have you ever seen *Legally Blonde*?

Carrie: Yeah.

Jordan: Remember when in that quote, where she's like, “She exercises, and exercise gives you endorphins, and endorphins make you happy, and happy people don't kill their husbands. They just don't.” It's one of those things that it's comical because it's true.

I think the best way to make yourself a happier individual, never mind healthy, is just movement. I think most people radically underestimate how much better they'll feel, how much more productive they'll be, and how much more they can do, if they just go on a walk, they just get some steps in every day.

If you live in a place where it's sunny outside, great. Go out, get in the sun, it's amazing. If not, I think the best investment I've made is a $300 walking pad that I got in March of 2022. It's made getting 10,000 steps a day just unbelievably easy. I can have it in my apartment, and if it's cold out or whatever it is, I can get steps in any time of day. It's super quiet.

Just walk, just move. Obviously, this is not all encompassing. I would love for you to do strength training. I would love for you to stretch. I'd love for you to do some more endurance work. I'd love for you to do some sprinting every now and again. But if you don't know where to start, I think the most impactful thing you can do, the most bang for your buck, the lowest hanging fruit with the highest reward, is just walking.

Carrie: So, you mentioned this before, about how fitness has always been a part of your life. How is it important to you now? Especially now that

you've got a wife and kids and a successful business to run? What place does fitness have for you now?

Jordan: Yeah. The biggest thing is I just want to feel good, and I want to be able to play with my wife, specifically play with my kid. Sometimes I'll screw around and do jiu jitsu on my wife, but she hates it. So, mainly, play with my kid. For example, my daughter is so funny. She loves to be scared. She loves when I scare her, if I chase her around. And so, I'll take her and throw her up in the air.

We do this thing where I'll be in the garage and she'll be in the yard, and then I'll run at her and she gets super excited. Then she'll crawl to her mom, and I'll grab her or throw her up in the air, and she's losing it, laughing really hard. But I'll do this for 30 minutes straight. I'm running and I'm throwing and I'm bending over. And thank God, I feel really good. I don't have back pain. I don't have joint pain.

But I know many of my friends, my same age, who I've known since I was young in elementary school, middle school, high school, they can't do that. And, we're only in our 30s. It's only going to get more difficult. It’s going to get way harder.

I'm very blessed, I have a unique perspective, because my first ever client when I was 16 years old, was 68. His name was Fred, and he had shoulder issues. I've worked with people since I was a teenager. I've seen how much age and a lack of movement impact your health, impact your pain, impact everything.

So, for me, good fitness is just ‘I just want to be healthy and have a long, not just lifespan, but healthspan.’ I really want to make sure that I can live a high quality of life, with minimal pain and the most amount of comfort.

Carrie: When you said “healthspan” you made me think of the book *Outlive* by Peter Attia. I don't know if you've read it.

Jordan: Yeah, it's a great book.

Carrie: I'm going to run with that, and just ask, what are the books you read? What are the things that you read? Because you're always talking about the latest trends. You clearly are citing research, you're well read. I mean, if people want to know what's up, they should check you out.

But what are the things that you do to stay up to date? Because it's always changing, it's constantly changing, and constantly contradicting itself. So, how do you keep up with all of that, and what do you read?

Jordan: So, I go through different phases. Lately, I get the majority of my nutrition and fitness updates from research reviews. So, Alan Aragon's *Research Review* is just by far my favorite. I've been subscribed to it since like 2011. It's like $10/month. That, for me, is where I get the most up-to-date breakdowns of the most recent research. Alan is just one of the most quality, standup guys. He's so unbiased and very, very… The guy.

It's funny, I went to school to learn science, at university, and I learned from Alan actually how to read peer-reviewed research articles. Alan is the one that really taught me how to do it, just because I subscribed to his research view. Far better than I learned from a professor at my school. So, from a fitness perspective, I think Alan has a great one. There are some other great strength and conditioning ones, as well.

But at this point, in this moment in time, the majority of my reading is actually more historical based. I just love history. I mean, I've spent years reading fitness. My mom would always be like, “Why don't you read something else? Read something else.” I was obsessed with it.

And so, I've read probably every book… You go into the library and it’s fitness related? I've read it, whatever it is. Whether it's strength training, whether it's starting strength, or practical programming, or the science and practice of strength training, or Super Training, whether it's nutrition, whether it's any of Lyle McDonald's work or Alan Aragon's work or Martin Berkhan’s work, and some of the greatest minds in the fitness industry and nutrition world. So, I've read all of that, and they're all amazing.

Now, I'm reading a lot of World War Two. I'm reading a lot of Israeli-Palestinian conflict. I am getting a little bit more into World War One. But I love history. So, that's sort of where my head is right now.

Carrie: Cool. You and my son could talk. My son is obsessed with… I have two boys. But my oldest is obsessed with World War Two.

Jordan: Is he?

Carrie: Yeah, he's read every book about World War Two that he can find. It's really amazing. So, it's just cool stuff. All right, so, as we're wrapping up here, I just want to ask, do you have any other advice for the people listening? The people listening are generally smart, hardworking, professional women, who've worked really hard to get where they're at, but they may not be taking the best care of themselves. So, what would you say to them?

Jordan: You have an amazing coach, and an amazing individual in Carrie. Unbelievably intelligent and super smart. And so, follow whatever she says. You're in the right place, listening to what Carrie is saying. So please, that's number one. The other thing I'll add to this, specifically in reference to that type of a person who is very smart and often a very… This term really annoys me, and I hate that I'm about to use it, but I've just seen it so much it's sort of in my head… The high achiever. The person who's a high achiever, whatever it is. I fucking hate that term. But it is what it is.

A lot of those people tend to often think of themselves as perfectionists, and if it's not going to be done perfectly, then they're not going to do it at all. They are looking for the best workout program, and the best nutrition program, and the best this and best that. In pursuit of the best and the perfect, they end up not doing anything.

They end up… Because, well this isn't as good as it could be. Maybe they didn't hit their macros perfectly, or whatever it is, and they just give it up all together. One of my favorite sayings is, "Anything worth doing, is worth

doing poorly." A lot of people think anything worth doing is worth doing like perfectly. But number one, you can't do everything perfectly, it's impossible.

Also, if you're that high-achiever person, if you're that individual, I guarantee you didn't get to where you are by doing everything perfectly. You got to where you are by fucking working hard, period. And when things got tough, you kept working hard. And when you made a mistake, you just rectified it and got back on track.

So, if it's worth doing, it's worth doing a C- on. Like I spoke earlier, even if I had a C+/B- workout it's better than not doing any workout whatsoever. So, get this idea of perfectionism out of your mind, because the reality is that's just an excuse to not do it at all.

Perfectionism is an excuse. You know you're not perfect in everything, but you still do other things not perfectly. So, why are you using that as an excuse to not do this? Right? You're not perfect. No one's perfect. Stop using it as a justification. Just fucking do it, Carrie says, and you'll be fine.

Carrie: Well, I do think that the perfection totally gets in our way. And then we perfection ourselves into procrastination and just not doing anything at all. But I think the sooner you can get out of your own way, and the faster you mess up, the better. So, I agree.

Well, okay, I know you just said a lot of nice things about me, but how can people find you? Where can they find you? Tell us about your Inner Circle. Tell us how can people work with you and find you.

Jordan: Yeah, I'll just say, listen, if you want to follow me, I have my own podcast *The Jordan Syatt Mini-Podcast*, Instagram @syattfitness, syattfitness.com. I'm not going to give a pitch for any of my coaching programs or anything. If you find my content and you like it, you're welcome to. But you don't need to, because you've got the best podcasts information with Carrie. So, you don't need my shit. You got her. If you want to follow me, you're welcome to. But you got everything you need with Carrie.

Carrie: Awesome. Well, I really appreciate it. I appreciate you being my first guest on the podcast. It's been awesome.

Jordan: I'm stoked.

Carrie: It's been really great to just talk with you and just catch up with you, and see you. I can't thank you enough. It's been a great, thank you.

Jordan: It's been amazing seeing you. Thank you. I appreciate you. I hope I get to see you soon, in person. But thank you, and this was fantastic.

Carrie: Awesome. Thanks, Jordan.

Jordan: Of course.

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