

Vlada Parrott - Episode 768

Mon, May 08, 2023 4:29PM 1:39:35

SUMMARY KEYWORDS

talk, mom, gymnastics, day, ryan, work, latvia, audition, parents, body, years, heal, absolutely, people, broken, figure, big, dancer, sleep, hard

SPEAKERS

Vlada Parrott, James Geering





James Geering 00:00


This episode is sponsored by a company I've used for well over a decade and that is 511. I wore their uniforms back in Anaheim, California and have used their products ever since. From their incredibly strong yet light footwear to their cut uniforms for both male and female responders, I found them hands down the best work were in all the departments that I've worked for. Outside of the fire service. I use their luggage for everything and I travel a lot and they are also now sponsoring the 7x team. As we embark around the world on the human performance project. We have Murph coming up in May, and again I bought their plate carrier I ended up buying real ballistic plates rather than the fake weight plates. And that has been my ride or die through Murph the last few years as well. But one area I want to talk about that I haven't in previous sponsorship spots is their brick and mortar element. They were predominantly an online company up till more recently, but now they are approaching 100 stores all over the US. My local store is here in Gainesville, Florida and I've been multiple times and the discounts you see online are applied also in the stores. So as I mentioned 511 is offering you 15% of every purchase that you make. But I do want to say more often than not they have an even deeper discount, especially around holiday times. In fact, if you're listening to this in the months of April or May 511 days is coming up between May 9 and may 16, you will get 20% of all gear and apparel. And that applies both online and in store. But if you use the code shield 15 That's S H I E L D one five, you will get 15% off your order or in the stores every time you make a purchase. And if you want to hear more about 511, who they stand for and who works with them. Listen to Episode 580 of behind the shield podcast with 511 Regional Director will airs Welcome to the behind the shield podcast. As always, my name is James Geering. And this week it is my absolute honor to welcome on the show. Vlada parrot. Now Florida was originally born in Latvia before moving to the US and ultimately meeting one of my close friends Navy SEAL Ryan parrot. So we discuss a host of topics from her childhood in Eastern Europe, being the daughter of a famous gymnast and a famous dancer, her own journey into professional dancing in the US music videos and tours. The injury that sent her down her own wellness path, strengthening the pelvic floor and how that affects both women and men, the role of the military spouse, The Incredible Human Performance Project 7x, through her eyes, and so much more. Now, before we get to this incredible conversation, as I say every week, please just take a moment, go to whichever app you listen to this on, subscribe to the show, leave feedback and leave a rating. Every single five star rating truly does elevate this podcast therefore making it


easier for others to find. And this is a free library of fast approaching 800 episodes now. So all I ask in return is that you help share these incredible men and women's stories. So I can get them to every single person on planet earth who needs to hear them. So with that being said, I introduce to you Florida parrot enjoy. Florida I want to start by saying thank you so much for taking time. I know you're very very busy with young kids now. So taking time out of your busy day to come on the behind the show podcast,

 Vlada Parrott 04:02
of course James for you anything.

 James Geering 04:05
So for people listening, where are we finding you right now?

 04:09
I was about to say there's a lot I could I can answer that. So I'm actually in Dallas, Texas, that's where I reside. That's where my business is. So that's where we're at.

 James Geering 04:21
Now, just like myself, people can probably tell by your accent that you're not Dallas born and bred. So let's start at the very beginning. Tell me where you were born and tell me a little bit about your family dynamic what your parents did, and how many siblings

 Vlada Parrott 04:34
so I was born in Riga, Latvia, was just Eastern Europe. And we came over it's just me and my mom. My parents are divorced, divorced and we came over when I was 12. So 41 Now you can do the math been here for a little while. Um, it's funny you say about the accent because some people say I don't have one. Some people say all sorts of things. So at this point, you know, it is what it is. But yes, I speak Russian. English is my second language. So my kiddos also get to learn Russian. My dad is still in Latvia with his family. And I've got two half sisters in Latvia. And I've got my mom who's with me here. She's a gymnastics coach. And that's actually why we came to America. And yeah, my mom's just solo it's been her and I the whole time.

 James Geering 05:34
So I know that your dad had a very interesting profession as well. So talk to me about what each of them did went through a young girl's eyes and what impact that had on you as in your early childhood.



05:46

Well, I love it. So, you know, both of my parents are movers. So my dad is you can in like in America, you can consider it like he's a Baryshnikov of Latvia. He grew up dancing ballet his whole entire life. I think him and Baryshnikov actually at one point were training together. And then Baryshnikov left to America later on in his life, but my dad has stayed in Latvia. And he was a very, very big prominent figure in our Riga Opera House. So that's where he, you know, not only choreographed majority of the ballet performances, but he taught all the classes and everything that had to do with ballet. So he's Yeah, he's a big figure in Latvia, who everybody knows his name. And he only recently retired and stepped down from from actually performing, he's still conduct some of the classes. So he's 73. And yeah, it was only recently when he had to finally you know, not dance on stage himself, which is I know extremely hard. If you grew up, only doing that to your entire life. And my mom is to, I mean, the same almost type of person, but she's in the gymnastics field. So she has an extensive background as well. She was part of the kind of lead generation that put gymnastics on the map. Uh, she was part of the Soviet Union team with oil, Corbett, and huge names back in the day she was going to the Olympics, however, my mom ripped her Achilles heel. And back in the day surgeries were not as easy and kind of a smooth healing process that it is now. So consider it, this is she's 71. And this is we're talking about. I'm in her teens. So like 1716 I can't remember what issue was at that point. But they had to replace her Achilles bone with actually a man's cadaver. So even as a little girl, I used to touch her Achilles. And where she has the scar, one, one of them is super thick, and one of them is still, you know, a different kind of like, bone or whatever the Achilles is made out of this point. Who knows what they use actually back in the day to make it happen. So because of her healing process, she was not able to continue to train and she had a big shot to go into Olympic Olympics and she was not able to go. So she continued to actually do gymnastics. She was she's a well renowned choreographer, and she was able to travel all over the world. She actually did the role of displaying for Queen Elizabeth. At one point she was selected to go to England and be one of the choreographers that made this display because the Queen's granddaughter was doing gymnastics. So I have a video of her shaking, Queen's hand and as well as me, she's done incredible things. She did the closing number for the Olympic Games in 1980. That was when the Olympic Games were in Moscow. So my mom continued to thrive and be you know, and build her name in gymnastics. So she's still 70 years old and teaching it and she's a head coach at one of our gyms here in close to Dallas a little bit north and McKinney. So my parents have been these movers that's why we're all movers their entire life. very driven, but I'm also it's a different lifestyle. You know, it was scary. It was hard to grow up because I don't wasn't really parented, I kind of grew up on the sides Learning mind how to navigate through life while my parents were these big figures you know.



James Geering 10:14

Now when we talk about know the GMAT, gymnastics and the dance fields, you're not thinking of longevity, usually we think and a lot of times that these, especially in in America, these kids, you know, we talked about this a lot on the show, high school, college, the peak and then you know, a lot of times those athletes then the performance side is so, so acute that then there's injuries and then there's there's kind of like an abandonment of that love of movement. And then we see a lot of former great athletes in the college and high school space are now very deconditioned. They've kind of lost that love for movement. What do you think has allowed your parents to keep dancing to keep doing gymnastics when a lot of people kind of peak very, very young, and then they just stop?



10:59

But for sure. No, you know what I see my parents broken and injured. That's the thing. What has given them that kind of longevity is their mentality. They have zero health, they have zero bone density, basically holding them up just to see it. You know, my dad has now early signs of I think dementia, because he just wished me happy birthday in what's almost spring, my birthday is in winter, this is the first year. So I have heard that he's not doing well. So from seeing physically, I see my mom every week, so she can barely walk. It's her mentality that keeps her going and going. So that's a good thing. No, and that's why I mean, I've taken I've taken notes my entire life. And I had this actually very rare opportunity to change my life and not to become what my parents are. I mean, we I think we have a huge say, and who we can become and who we are. Right. So I could have been exactly like my mom exactly like my dad, but I chose a different path. So. So, you know, that's the only thing they know. And my mom chose her career. And she made that her husband, she made that her baby, you know, she made that her entire life, you know, the good and the bad. So without that she really doesn't have a lot. So I think it's just again, it's a mental focus, she didn't really kind of spread that love and have a relationship after getting divorced, or, you know, taking time to go to restaurants and enjoy. Other people have more friends should eat choose chose not to do that. So unfortunately, you know, there are injuries to the body. And, you know, some of them can heal. Some of them can, you know, possibly show up year after a year. But it just depends how you want to carry on. And it's great that in America, you can take it to collegiate level you know, you don't have to go to the Olympics with it. But you can train and if you love it, you can go to college and great and get scholarships and continue with that. And I think that's a rare opportunity. I don't know right now what's happening in Latvia. And I do not see that. There's a big window like that. And that was the difference. Because when I was growing up, I could have went and you know, also grew up as a gymnast, but my mum didn't let me because she only saw it in like the Olympian eyes. She said, You know what, you don't have the training as a three year old. And as a five year old, and as eight year old, you don't have that, where she called talent. And that's that mental capacity to take this on as a career. So you don't need to do it. And as a six year old, that was really hard because I'm actually I grew up in the gym. I was tumbling around. I was, you know, playing around, but she saw it clearly. She said you don't have the mental retention and that what do you call already that kind of? Yeah, mental capacity to train and not just to have fun, have fun, but really concentrate on the sport so therefore you don't need to do it. You don't need to break every single bone in your body because she didn't understand how you can just do it for fun. She's like, this is your life. And you got to be the absolute best. So I like that American It does have different opportunities and you can succeed up to whatever level you want to take it at. You know,



James Geering 15:07

so your parent, now you got young boys. At some point, they're going to get into that sporting arena, you have a very unique lens, and we'll get into your dancing journey a little bit. But, you know, you experience peak level performance, you experience injury. And when you move to the US, like I said, I saw this with English eyes, there was this incredible performance at the school level college level, but then a credible amount of lack of wellness as people progress into their 30s and 40s. And beyond a lack of enjoyment of games of play, rather than this, you know, if you're not first, you're last mentality. What would you advise people as far as finding that balance between performance and wellness with their children when they are in school, and they are in college so that they're not broken? Adults that we see sometimes?



16:00


Um, yeah, that's a tough, you know, balance is a tough thing. Are we ever going to find balance? Hmm, I don't know. However, there are steps that you can take to be proactive. Right. And like, when I think about it, in terms of, yeah, if you want to go the Olympics, your guarantee, if you want to be not even in the Olympics, but you want to be the best football player out there, you're gonna break at least several limps, concussions and so forth. So the best thing is to have an umbrella team to help put you back together, really. And that includes your parents, that includes some of the best professionals out there, and meaning physical therapists, nutritionist, it takes a team. So if you want your child to succeed and have a great career, I think like looking at my boys, I want to start to get my head wrapped around what he's going to need. Because that's not my specialty, you know, too, there's only so much I can provide. And some parents have, you know, absolutely no time as well. So it just, we have to, I think, look at it a little bit smarter and say, Well, I do want my son to play to be I don't know, he loves soccer, he wants to be the best. So that's going to take some maybe extra coaching, so maybe an outside coach to also do privates with him, that's going to need some physical therapy, to make sure that his joints and how he's growing, that it's also keeping up with the demand that he's pushing into the sports nutrition, huge, huge factor. So I think we just need to step up and make sure that all of these pieces of the puzzle are being addressed. And that was, I think that was the lack of that was the lack in my parents life, they didn't have these opportunities, there was no no nutrition, your nutritional was. I know, for example, in my mom, the coaches needed to them to be small, so they can, so not only can they move fast, you know, they don't have an extra two pounds on their body on their joints when they're pushing off. And you know, doing back handspring back tuck, so it's huge in an insert to, you know, if you have a partner that's lifting you, they can feel that two pound difference. And I speak of it because we also know a lot of cert performers. My mom has had Olympic Olympians in World Champions, I'm sorry, in acro gymnastics. So a little amount of weight is going to make a difference. So their mentality was always to not drink water, to stay kind of dehydrated, not eat, because that was going to affect their performance now takes us 30 years later, we know more how much in nutrition impacts your performance and makes you better how it can heal your body from injury, you know how water is huge for not only your brain, just just everything, you know, from from your brain to every single organ that you have. So I think as a parent, we have to look at all these different things. You have to tap into your kid's nutrition, you have to tap into what is the what is this training, like? What kind of professionals they need to help with this training and recovery. So I mean, and that's the best we can do the rest, you know, we'll just have to we'll have to take it and as we go.



James Geering 19:45

Yeah, well, it's an interesting perspective. Because when I'm listening to you, I'm thinking about what we don't have in the fire service too. And it's all those things and we're, you know, high level athletes the same as Ryan in the SEAL teams. You know, I know there's been a progression of experts like Chelsea and MJ that came with us and 7x that now some of these, these high level operators have nutritionists and physical therapists and psychologists, but the fire service, we have none of that, you know. And so listening to what you're saying, as a parent, I agree 100%. And I've got a son who runs track at the moment for high school. And again, I'm looking at the way he's been trained the way especially some of the strength and conditioning stuff, he's been told some is good, some is terrible. So I'm having to kind of pull

back there where it you know, I actually know a little bit more. But then like you said, the the massage, the chiropractic, the, you know, the nutrition, these are all very, very important. And if you're going to ask someone to be a police officer, or a firefighter, we have to do the same things from the Academy moving all the way forward.

 20:44

I agree. And that's huge. And those are the people that are protecting us are saving lives on a daily basis. And I also think about doctors, surgeons, you know, how I mean, they're on call, and there's some of the surgeries that they're doing that are extensive amount of hours. And, you know, I personally don't have the answer right now to fill that gap. But it's something that I'm even thinking continuously for my postpartum moms. And in my fitness business is how do I build this umbrella? That moms don't have to sit there on internet? They're delirious. They're, they're, you know, exhausted, just like, you know, all of the servicemen. So how can these contexts be faster? How can these you know, helpful tools be way more accessible? Nutrition being biggest key, you know, but, you know, what would the fire department especially, you know, I think it starts with somebody. So noticing what's missing? And then how do we find that?

 James Geering 21:51

Absolutely, well, I know your dance journey began not with gymnastics or ballet, but with hip hop. So talk to me about we get a very, I think, stereotypical mental image of certain countries. And you mentioned about, you know, the USSR and Latvia, and now has independence. So talk to me about the actual environment that you grew up in what was Latvia, like at the child level? And how did you get into an American influence, like hip hop.

 22:20

So of course, I'm growing up what my mom and dad, I think it was just inevitable, I was going to do something to do like, you know, I was going to move in some sort of way. I really gravitated towards gymnastics, because it was the energy that I liked. It was, you know, it will require more energy and was fun. And it was very physical. But my mom, early on, they wanted me to try a ballet. So they actually put me in one of the best ballet schools at the time. And that was a huge privilege, because all they had to do is walk me in and the director looked at my parents and said, specially my dad, because his name was his face was recognizable everywhere. So they just looked at him and said, Okay, here we go, the doors open. And that's crazy. To think about that, you know, I had that type of an opportunity. And I did, I came into a class where a very prominent ballet teacher, you know, that was her class, she was teaching this group. And I didn't like it. Um, it was not, I didn't like the music. It didn't resonate with me. early on. It was too mellow. And I did not have that mental capacity that my mom was talking about, which I didn't understand at that point. But 2030 years later, I and I see what she was talking about. And he had the mental structure and the capacity to to hang strain and hang in there. And I would shoot my moves. And I never got in trouble and all the other girls got in major trouble, even for a certain type of, you know, physique that they had. And we're not talking about fat. There was a little girl who had bigger calves. And I remember it was a problem like how she felt I remember what she was talking about and how she felt and therefore it was somehow

addressed with the teacher already. So she had this mental kind of block already early on because of her calves and she's seven years old. So it was just not a place. I felt like I would thrive. And I my mom told me that I asked to not come to bely anymore in that I wanted pancakes. As a kid, I made Russian pancakes. For us. It's like you know, crazy Oops, American crepes, I guess. And that was like everything. So I told her listen, I want pancakes, and ya know bely for me. So they took me out. But it was unfortunate, there was no other window of opportunity. I did try ballroom dancing and absolutely love it. But in Latvia, you had to be able to sew the costumes, like as a parent in order to even be able to take these classes and compete. Because there was nothing that you couldn't do that was just for fun. It had a competitive level. Yeah, otherwise, nobody had that type of money to just be thrown away in classes, you had to eventually start to make money out of that skill that you developed. So my mom couldn't so so therefore, I was not able to, you know, proceed with ballroom dancing. And it's only when we moved to America. And I dabbled a little bit into gymnastics like she let me do the warm up with them. And, you know, I kind of started to watch the kids and just learn how to tumble. But honestly, she didn't let me join any kind of teams. So therefore, I just grew up running around the gym and doing what I liked. And it wasn't until I found a dance studio, that we're here in Dallas that was connected to the building in the gymnastics building. And by the way, it's world Olympic Gymnastics academy that is very prominent here in the Dallas area. And that's my mom helped. You know, she's one of the creators, who helped put this huge establishment together and all the protocols that needed to build these awesome Olympians in like nice to Lukin, Carly Patterson, all of these awesome people came from New World, the Olympic Gymnastics Academy. But it's because of the dance studio I saw that was attached. And I would sneak over and watch these kids dance. And I was just glued, it was different. And then I saw a boy and a girl dancing together and how they were moving. It was just incredible. So I begged my mom, if she could talk to the owner and see if I could take classes and when he had the money to take classes at that time. So she kind of bartered and I was able to take a class there. And the owner of the studio, Christie and Christie has changed her last name since then, and I don't want to mess it up. So but Christy was her daughter's actually were in cheerleading, and they needed some tumbling. And so anyways, we were able to train, my mom helped them with tumbling, and I was able to dance a couple of times for free a week. I learned Jazz at that point. That's where I started. And I started to learn hip hop, and it was it felt amazing. It's just and again, I go back to that energy, it's the music, it's the energy, it kind of really resonated with me, the movement was extremely hard. And I think that's why I loved it because it is not traditional, your body just has to go in many very different ways. So it was challenging. It was super challenging, and I loved it and I actually put myself I sign up to be in a different studio later on and started hip hop and started competing in hip hop and just kept growing and growing and quickly on started teaching started be part of professional teams. And it kind of took off from there.

J

James Geering 28:44

It's funny because when I was a little boy, I grew up in a farm in England and hip hop spoke to me. I don't know why I'm a white kid and you know, rural England but it was the same thing like the I don't there's a lot of music where it just does not speak to me at all but hip hop and I wasn't really in a struggle I was a struggle with mucking out stables and wrestling sheep but it wasn't like I was worried about getting shot but there was again there was something about that kind of underdog story that some of the because I liked the conscious music I didn't like that you know the quote unquote gangster rap so much but uh, yeah, it was it's funny music is an amazing thing music and comedy you know the the the the strike you in the heart of they don't.



29:21

I completely agree with you to my very favorite things.



James Geering 29:27

So, you become a hip hop bouncer, talk to me about your journey to LA and then the pinnacle of that that whole career experience.



29:37

Well, boy, so as I mentioned, you know, in that as I entered a you know, to kind of thrive in a different studio and really concentrate on hip hop and competing and learning different styles. I just immerse myself in as many different opportunities to study from as many different choreographers as I possibly could. And I think that's what was very, very helpful to me. I know sometimes, you know, as a young teenage teenager, you can be intimidated, you know, this is my dance instructor, and I cannot steer away and learn from somebody else, I will get in trouble. And there was a little bit of that, but I didn't care, I kept going for what my heart wanted. And what was missing if I didn't know how to do this type of move, or is a different type of movement. Because every choreographer has a different style. I was just eager to learn it and apply it. So I just kept falling that no matter if I got in trouble or not, so that helped me become more. What's the word I'm looking for? Shoot can't find it. But anyways, kind of progress and all different styles and learn different styles. And I decided out of nowhere, well, I'm going to go audition for Janet Jackson, because I feel like I would absolutely nail this. And, um, that was one thing, I never had fear. If I can't do something, I just never had the fear, or I never process it, processed it fast enough to get that fear. So I kind of got excited about the opportunity and just jumped on it. And in my life, I think it's been a good thing. So I decided to jump on a plane, and I knew where the audition was. And this is something so first of all this, I've never been to California, and this was in LA and I've never actually even flew on a plane by myself. And I had somebody do makeup for me in the airport at 3am. So I just said, I'm going to book this ticket, and I'm going to figure out how to get from point A to point B, that 8am audition, God knows where. And that's what I did. I had somebody do my makeup, I had the attire that I'm supposed to be in. I had a picture. And I don't I don't know if I had a resume. Yes, I did had my little resume. And I remember, you know, I landed at I had one friend who was supposed to pick me up. He didn't show up. So I kind of looked around, I was already in a panic, my heart rate was racing, I'm you know, standing there in Burbank Airport never been there in my life. I don't even know I only have the address for this location. There are no iPhones at this point. So we only have a real map that we can open. And we have taxis. And that's it and flip phones. So I remember kind of looking around and waiting maybe 510 minutes and not seeing my friend pull up. So I found this girl with a mom and I asked to kind of hitch a ride. And I said, Do you know this location? Are you able to kind of bring me there? And she's like, Yeah, I know. I know this that. So I kind of jumped in the car with these strangers, and didn't think twice. Because I was hoping for the best. It's a mom and you know her daughter. And then they dropped me off right in front of the studio. Believe was Alleycat kind of in Hollywood. And I saw a giant line like miles and miles long. This is 8am and there was at least 300 people lined up to audition for Janet Jackson. Huge. Um, I don't have an agent at this point

majority did have an agent. So I kind of just wiggle myself into the line and it kind of started there. Long story short, no, I did not make the first cut. I got cut pretty fast. But I kind of stepped out to the street and I saw this Hollywood sign and everything kind of gravitated. I just said this is where I'm going to end up. This is this is it. And as soon as I finished it was maybe less than a year. As soon as I finished my associate's degree back home in Dallas. I packed up my car. And at that point, I did go back to LA one time to audition for an agency. I got an agent so they were just waiting for me to get there. I finished school, just my Associate's degree. And I jumped in the car and I drove 11 hours straight, paused and another 11 hours and didn't leave for the next nine years.

 James Geering 34:49

Where did you live because you talk about Burbank Airport, my I when I worked in Anaheim I started off in Burbank and we were like two streets from the landing strip of Burbank. airports so it was literally that moving to LA story, tiny little apartment in a inefficiency behind you know, what would have been a garden once and you literally could see the planes wheels down over your head, you know, so where did you find yourself living at first?

 35:15

So, um, I'd first North Hollywood so right on the other side, North Hollywood? Um, well, I mean, Burbank is normally just going to keep going and then you'll hit Burbank, so like really close to Burbank. And then at some point I did live on in West Hollywood, but all in that small parameter, I guess it's like five miles, maybe. So.

 James Geering 35:39

So tell me about some of the people that you ended up working with during those nine years.

 35:46

Oh, boy. Um, you know, there's incredible opportunities. And some of the choreographers were the most incredible people that I was blessed to work with. But some of the artists like I have my very first video that I booked, which is kind of also funny, was an Eminem video, just just lose it is the one where he's kind of making fun of Michael Jackson. But what the funny part about it is, nobody knows how hard you work to get into something like that, or to you know, try to get into the video, which I was not a dancer at that point, meaning I was not hired as a lead dancer, I was only hired as background and some smaller scenes, but the way they shot the video, I was cut out. So here, I spent two days on set, and you can maybe see my toe. But that was just one of the videos. I can't really, that was my very first one. And I'm like, Oh, I'm not even there. I did work with Britney Spears did shoot one of the Beyonce videos, that's who runs the world. Girls. I worked with Al Ying KOVITCH. And I did his kind of Lady Gaga spoof. It is called perform this way, instead of born this way. So I'm the, I'm the whole body of Lady Gaga. And he's the face. I was able to tour around the world with Ricky Martin, for you know, we were working off and on for about two years. He's an incredible human. And that's like a second

family that I inherited. So there's some Jessica Simpson thing video. I mean, now that I think back on it, you know, I got to do incredible things. And then live shows traveling back and forth, you know, from Vegas to Bahamas, to kind of all around the country, doing various performances as well. I'm just happy I got even to do that. Because it's not easy to leave your whole family and to not only make money for a living in that profession, but to even be able to, you know, live and afford your groceries, your living expenses, your car, and anything else in that city. So I wish I did have another 10 years in there. But

 James Geering 38:22

that's funny you said about Eminem. I worked really as a glorified extra on the World Trade Center moving and we work for like two weeks, I think it was and I got to recruit a bunch of other firefighters and bring them into the into the production and that is funny. I got them in and then they almost didn't use me because they said and they quote, I look to Californian, and I'd be like, I'm a pasty Englishman. What the fuck you talking to California? Anyway? Because I think again, it's funny. I don't know, if you found this, you would imagine that people in casting are quite imaginative, but they're not. And so they wanted you know, basically Italian Irish looking people, you know, New Yorkers, for this thing. Anyway, we shoot it and then we end up as I'm not exaggerating silhouettes in the very back two weeks. Oh, you got to stand here. You got to do this. Hold this right. And then it was it was just funny. And I'm sure maybe there were angles that they might have used that will be closer. But yeah, I mean, I wouldn't say I'm even in it because I don't even know if I'm one of those figures in the background that you can see. But yeah, it's amazing how much wasted time on set there is for all these productions.

 39:27

Talk about that. That was the very hard thing because as a dancer when you're trying to go for that one spot, and I mean, this is like the entire, you know, actual process in LA how do we even get this gig? The hard part is like same for Ricki store. They needed four girls out of 600. So like how do you know what you need, of course, and that's why they're the casting agents decide that's what the management decides. That's what Ricky decides, you know, he's like, I would love all ethnicities I want you know, if I want an Indian, I want to a one American Girl, it doesn't matter, you know, a white girl mixing Good girl, black girl. And then same thing with the guys. So then when you're auditioning for that spot, that narrows down to a very tiny window. So now you know me as a five foot two, petite kind of blonde, white girl, I am now competing against, you know, the other 300 white girls who have blonde hair. So that is the tough part. It's not that they needed 1010 of us, they just needed one. And when you talk about that, it's yes, it's kind of debilitating. And that's what why a lot of dancers don't make it because you have to pick yourself up every single audition. And I can't tell you how many auditions that was there for four hours and the last person standing in that white category, and all of a sudden got cut. So you and they don't and that's the hard part. You don't. They don't tell you why. But when you look around, and there's 10 of you guys, and you're the only white girl you're like, okay, so it obviously wasn't my skills. Because I was I've been here for four hours, and there's 10 of us left. They're only picking nine. So definitely wasn't my skill. So you kind of have to think about, you know, you kind of have to actually build your own credibility at some point. Otherwise, you're going to be broken. And so there was only one time that thank goodness, and he is a great friend. He's also choreographer Marty Koudelka. When he's Justin Timberlake, choreographer. He's the only photographer that called me after the audition. And

when I auditioned for Justin's big tour, and he said, Listen, I just wanted to call you really quick. And that's when your heart is frozen, you're like, either got it, or I didn't get it. It's, it's not like, we're going to chat about something. It's either A or B. So my heart kind of frozen. He's like, Hey, I just want to let you know, you know, you did great at the audition at the audition. And when I watched the tape, the replay back because back in the day, everything was taped like that. He goes, You killed it. And it was the biggest compliment I could have ever gotten. And he didn't say anything else. And I already knew it was just the best and the most nicest way, you can say, you're doing good, but you're still you're not going to get the spot. But you're doing great. Like, you know, you did the job that you're supposed to do. But there's a look factor, there's a height factor, there's like a team kind of factor that's going to fit the mold. And unfortunately, at this time, it's not you. And it's a tough, tough, you know, field to be in, because you're constantly had to figure out how are you doing? Get defeated? You know, so,

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James Geering 43:19

ya know, I had, I had the opposite experience, as far as always being cut. So I, I will put my hand on my heart and say that I went to drama school for a year and it was actually to follow a girl. I don't think I was a very good actor, I certainly wasn't model material. So I went out in that world and got no after no after no after No. And it was I think it was the lack of investment in that profession that really didn't make it to crashing. But I did remember having a kind of setback moments like people whose this dream who have this dream, their entire self esteem and self worth is based on whether a roomful of strangers thinks they fit a role or not. Now, of course, you can be horrendous actors, which I was and so skill set, you didn't get it as well. And it was funny, because then we ended up the instance instead. And that was something that actually did well. It was kind of my, my genre in the end. But yeah, I mean, you basing your self worth on whether a you know, a manager in a model agency or the director of a theater production or you know, whatever it is, if they say no, immediately, it's like you're not good enough when like you said it could be that you're not dark enough, you're not light enough, you're not tall enough, you know, you're too old or too young. And then you know, obviously there's your skills as well. So it was an interesting brief insight for me because I wasn't in there very long. I got into the stunt world and there's a lot a lot less competitive. I would say especially in Orlando Where did a lot of stunts. But yeah, I mean if you do not have that intrinsic self belief, and you rely on it external validation, I think that's why so many of these celebrities, they have this moment where they on the thing, and then so many of them struggle after because it's that hole, where are they now mentality?

i

45:12

Yeah, that was a hard point. And honestly, um, you know, I think the only reason I was able to rebuild myself every single time was how I was brought up. And it's not the greatest thing, because I'm choosing to be a different mom, you know, but my mom was kind of just my I wouldn't say a parent, she was just kind of like, almost like my business partner, or just somebody who was there to definitely feed me protect me and, and to make sure I'm alive. But she was not there to nurture me as a child. So I had to figure out how to do many things. Like Absolutely, and I was a horrible teenager, yeah, put her through some shit ins because, yeah, because I had no boundaries, I had no guidance. So in my career, it kind of helped build my resiliency. And but I mean, it's not it's not easy in you know, I always look for the positive and always look how, how quickly, I can kind of remodel, and focus on the good things, because

obviously, that can affect you, and take you down, period. So that's, that's really, really tough. But it's just one of those things, that I've used it as a power tool in my life to kind of keep going, but in the good thing is, I don't have to, you know, now, I can have more, I guess, clarity and more understanding behind it and use it better, instead of have a lot of ego behind it. So I can use it in a very wise way, and hopefully teach my children, you know, we don't have to just kind of break our faces down and keep going and going and, you know, into this debilitating state, but we can kind of use use some, some sad moments and some bad moments and kind of rebuild ourselves in a better way.

 James Geering 47:32

Well, speaking of that, one of the problems, I'm sure you've seen it now being a military spouse, or a veteran spouse, as well, but a lot of us struggle with identity. So when I was hurt as a firefighter, I hurt my back about eight years ago now. It was absolutely crushing not only physically, but mentally as well, because my body had been everything stunts, and fires, fire and martial artists and all these other things. And all of a sudden that physicality was taken away. So talk to me about your injury that you had that I know kind of led you into the kind of wellness space. And then what was that, like, not only physically for you with that journey is trying to figure out what was going on, but also mentally when you weren't able to dance for a while.

 48:15

So, James, it's interesting how you phrase that because my body was everything. For me, it was my livelihood without me moving. Not only was I not, you know, I couldn't provide my life. I couldn't pay my bills. I couldn't sustain the livelihood. I couldn't take classes i. So my body made the money. And that was my career. So when I tore, I partially tore my hamstring. It was it was in it put a stop on my life. It really did. So it was probably the lowest point for me, because I didn't know what to do. If what if I wasn't dancing? I didn't know who I was. And I didn't know a lot about myself, actually, you know, if I wasn't dancing, so it was interesting how it happened it because of my hamstring. I had to take a step back and figure out what physical injuries do I have and then the healing process kind of started on the inside out. And it did transits transition me into a different field, but it was almost like this hard revelation and the universe stopping me in the tracks because I think the lifestyle I was living and how hard I was going I probably wouldn't have lasted five more years. I mean, like I mentioned, I didn't have very great parenting around me. So it's just me being a rock star. You know, kind of living almost like a dangerous life. Of course, we're drinking a lot. We're partying a lot. And we're exhausting. You know, like, it's that whole kind of dancer circle. We're exhausting our bodies to the point in auditions and kind of our outside gigs. So when I had to stop and fiddle and think like, what am I going to do now I'm in excruciating pain. I can't even put on pants. The pain was so bad, the inflammation was so horrific, I couldn't sit. I remember leaving a Britney Spears audition. And even a choreographer noted something like he said, Hey, veterans, like veteran dancers. He announced it, he's like, I don't, you guys need to really pull up. And of looking around, I was one of those veteran dancers. And I was like, I just have to leave. Because then I left holding my neck, actually physically holding my neck with my hands. And I went straight to one of the chiropractors that I knew, so I'm kind of holistic kind of base. And I didn't know what was wrong with me. I knew my leg was hurting, excruciating, it was excruciating pain, I couldn't sit. I've taken already two MRIs, nobody really can tell me how to fix this. They're just saying

you're have a lot of partial injuries. So I'm now just trying to find somebody that would help me with the pain. In here I am leaving auditions because I cannot even dance to 60% of my ability. And you can see it, you can literally see it on my face, you can see it on my body. And now I'm holding my neck because that can't even hold my head is like wobbling, I have no it was it was the craziest thing my head was bubbling around, I had no almost kind of no strength in my neck. So thank God, I got that back. But it took me almost two years to heal my leg. But in those two interesting years, I found out that I also had kind of overgrowth of Candida, which leads to kind of leaky gut syndrome. So I had to repair a lot of my internals. And I was working with a holistic doctor to kind of repair which was a very, very strict diet, there was absolutely no sugar for a serious amount of time, we're talking about, oh, my gosh, not a month, not two months, not three, we're talking about six months to a year until I transitioned over to sugar, taking different supplements, sorry, healing the gut. You couldn't. So I couldn't dance. Now I can't eat the food that I know that I lived on, I have to learn everything new, you can't have sex, because you're trying to clean everything, basically, from any office, because the bacteria keeps coming in. So you have to kind of take a pause. So then I can't drink alcohol. And I'm bartending at the moment, because we're doing the show. And I've luckily, somebody gave me this job opportunity where we're dancing on on this bar during this crazy show. And I have to bartend so I had to learn that. But that provided my income. And I was able to kind of dance I was still in pain, but it wasn't the type of dancing that you know, that books me like a tour, it was just kind of fun. And so I have to stop doing everything that I absolutely loved, in order to have a mind and body intervention. And that journey took two years. And when I finally started to kind of heal from the inside out, heal a lot of problems that I had growing up from, you know, parenting from my parents, and choosing to go into a different pathway. Choosing to have healthy relationships, choosing to have kids in the future. It kind of sealed my world and I didn't want to audition anymore. I didn't want to dance. I wanted to give back. It transitioned me into the fitness field. You know, it's it's, you know, I was just kind of guided. I said it's kind of guided and opportunities presented and I was there for the right moment. So I tried to audition a couple of times and I just didn't want to hustle like that. It didn't speak to me that you know, book In the video or going on tour, it was just not what I wanted anymore and to especially, to be around 500 dancers and to be competing for that same job. No. So now I wanted to learn how to heal my body continued to go on that path, and then now provide that information to as many people as possible, like how can I help you not to feel what I felt and not to go through what I felt physically emotionally, in God, if we can just skip that and be born and to just to be like, awesome for the rest of our life. That would be cool. But, you know, it's just a little bit more difficult. That's okay.

J

James Geering 55:48

I did a pirate stunt show in Orlando, and that in Winter Park as well. But there was the one part of the choreography where you were kind of dropped down, the big brute guy would try and swing, I think it was a weapon at you, and you drop and you hit him in the balls. And so I'd be like, well, I can do a split. And so I'm going to do that. And it looked great, that kind of vandamm Move, but I remember one day, and it was like a February or something super cold hadn't warmed up, drops into a split, and probably did a very similar thing that you did Tora hamstring stage, carried on with the show. But yeah, that hurt for a long, long time. But that the injury I talked about in the fire service, which was years later, it took me to think or foundation training. And that was really, it was movement practice, again, that really helped me realize a how I was what caused the injury in the first place. Secondly, to support the injury using actual, you know, balancing the spine and the muscles around it to take the pressure off the nerves. And then you know, to be preventative from there on in. And it took it took me on a

completely different path as well. And I was shouting from the rooftops, I ended up getting certified in that coming back, training my entire Fire Department on this thing, foundation training. And then I think that was really one of the one of the reasons that led me to just keep learning and learning and sent me on this path, because I had the same thing as you when I was a stuntman first and a firefighter. And when I would come off shift, I would have done all this kind of service in uniform, and then I go do a show. And I'm sure you've seen this, sometimes we'll be cleaning out because their costume wasn't right, or whatever it was, and you're like, I just cut a dead person out of a car 12 hours ago. And it was just such a weird paradox. And there's some amazing people in the entertainment industry. But what I found is, when you're performing it, there is that element of I am the center of attention. When you are serving, you're putting yourself last you're putting other people first. And so I'm curious to see if that was kind of the transition for you that you realize that now you could actually rather than just entertain you can make a long lasting impact on the world.

 57:57

Yes, and honestly, when you say that, the way that you said I see my parents, like that was the show like they lived on stage in that was everything. You know, that was their breath. And that's how I grew up the stage was my breath of air. If I wasn't on that stage, and that kind of light, you know, whether it's a small group or 40,000 people looking at you. It was how what made me kind of feel complete.

 58:33

And gave me a sense of I don't want to see purpose, but it gave me

 58:40

that gratification and not having that. And honestly, it's almost like saying, Wow, that's not important. The most important thing is your health. You know, you strip all of that stuff away, you take the cool, you know, you're you are Taylor Swift. But if Taylor Swift has no health, she has nothing. So it gave me back that human humility. And really, yeah, it just made me refocus. And now it's important, you know, he transitioned me into that aspect. So I could start to figure out how to kind of bare minimum how to help people, right, and my biggest focus was to prevent injury. But then when I became a mother, that went into a deeper layer, how I help moms transition from that postpartum kind of broken body mentally, physically and how to then even try to run you know, just try to do and this you know, you think that's simple and it's not so really just kind of being a mom at an a deeper layer. Now, and it's just when I See my clients healing and, you know, happy and injury free. That's everything. You know, I don't need to state for that anymore.

 James Geering 1:00:11

Well, I want to get to obviously meet him Ryan. And we'll talk about 7x. But just before I do, I had a few guests on the show that I've talked about this one, again, one observation that I've made. Another thing, this is unique to the States, I think it's in the UK and Australia and other

places too. But there seems to be an acceptance of, for example, weight gain during pregnancy. And now we're seeing you know, the the gestational diabetes and the the hypertension and some other things that are attached to ill health during pregnancy. But then you watch the CrossFit Games, and it's almost like a running joke when his athletes are urinate, and I'm so female athletes. And so, you know, you start diving into the real experts, because obviously, Women's Health is not exactly my wheelhouse, you know, but it just to me is like the How can this be normal, you surely the human body is such a beautiful design, there's no way that you have a child, now you're going to be paying on yourself the rest of your life. So talk to me about what you are actually unpacking when it came to, as you talked about the kind of the physiology, whether it's during pregnancy and postpartum and getting these women back to, it's never going to be the same because you just you had a baby or a completely different person, but regaining your health and your your anatomy again, after a very traumatic event like that.



1:01:28

Yeah, and you're right, it is a traumatic event. And that's what women are designed to do that that's not normal to push a human being, you know, out of your vagina or your belly and have all those muscles opened. So it is an injury to the body. And we have to also not look at it that we're broken, it is possible to heal. And it just takes the right steps to make sure the muscles are healing well, there's the timing, you know, naturally your body is going to heal no matter what, but then you have to provide the right amount of stress. And we look at stress kind of as a bad thing. But your your muscles need to be stimulated in some way, when specifically. So there needs to be a little bit of stress and it needs to be time to heal. So part of that stress is what type of training you provide those muscles. And you know, in nutrition, because that is what is going to obviously heal the tissue. It is a tough process. But thank goodness now, fitness professionals and such as myself, I'm learning for physical therapists, I'm partnering and kind of a great relationship with pelvic floor PTS, and great communication. So we can kind of learn from each other and get the most amount of kind of knowledge around to help moms because that window is still not bridged from the time that you leave the hospital. You get your you know, either they're checking you out for your C section follow up or if you had a just a vaginal delivery, they're checking you out for that. And that's it. Like, oh, okay, you still have a vagina. Great. See you later. But wow, if they if you left with, like, say a pamphlet of like a little sheet, only a couple things it gave you, for example, a pelvic floor PT, a fitness professional that understands corrected postpartum movement. And also say a lactation consultant, and shoot a doula and a mental consultant. You're rocking. And it's not it's not hard. But that's what I'm trying to provide for the moms that big umbrella so they can have a better success at recovering. Now, back to your original question, which I already forgot, because I want him to my tangent. The body can heal, you know, it's very possible and peeing on yourself. The normal. Normal is not the right word. We're seeing it very common. It's becoming very common, but is it normal for your muscles to not function properly and protect the body? No, that's not normal. But if it's if it starts to happen, then that's where people like myself or physical therapists need to come in and step in. So no mom needs to like no mom needs to wait. And definitely reach out at this point because your muscles basically what it's saying the system is unbalanced. You know the system's unbalanced and there's not great coordination between your pressure management. For example, if you just knees and Peter peed yourself, your muscles are not responding to the amount of pressure you're putting down on that pelvic floor. Now, the same thing with heavy lifting, you know, men, they are ripping their things down there, I'd like to call them something nicer. But you know, everything down there, and honestly, even after hard core training in the military, men are experiencing issues with the rectum, and

you know, anal seepage and things that are happening in the rectum. So it's, it's the same as how, how much was your body put through. And if you were not cared for and properly kind of instructed how to rehabilitate yourself, it's not easy, you're gonna keep doing the same type of patterns and the same time of movements that I probably going to exacerbate the issue. So there is a way and we're getting a lot smarter and trying to provide this information way faster to moms, like myself, especially. But I'd also love to tap into the military community and help them kind of also rebuild because we don't need broken buttocks. We

 James Geering 1:06:22

just had a slide that said anal seepage that will get everyone's attention. I didn't expect that to come out.

 1:06:30

Not a problem.

 James Geering 1:06:33

All right, well, then I want to segue, but I'm trying to get away from the word anal seepage, but and then connect that with Ryan parrot. And maybe it's a direct correlation, I don't know. But so I'm gonna jump a little bit ahead. I mean, we haven't got time to kind of really unpack you guys meeting. And so you find yourself, you know, meeting this amazing Navy Seal, a very altruistic human being, he's created sons of the flag, which is the nonprofit for the burning should military and first responder community. Talk to me about the onramp. And the experience for seven acts, because I got to watch this, through my eyes as a friend to Ryan and I could see it, I could hear it on the phone, I could see it when we actually were face to face. I mean, the day he walked into the airport, and we were getting ready to initiate our our first flight, it just looked absolutely broken. So the goal of seven axes, once we actually went on the journey, we were simulating the physical and mental breakdown of a deployment of a, you know, wildland fire of you know, whatever it is that our profession would do. But what I observed is random, you have to get on that plane, that was such a exhausting, on ramp experience for him. So that means that it was exhausting for you, and exhausting for the kids as well. So talk to me about the inception of that project, and you know, your experience of that whole dynamic, pre during and post through the eyes of a spouse.

 1:08:01

So just a little bit about the 7x projects, you know, Ryan created this project to stop suicide, there's got to be a stop, and it's not an awareness campaign. There's gotta be now professionals are coming in in and figuring out on a deeper level. How to put a stop to this. So first, we're going to figure out how the body's broken down. How does he even get to that level? What were why a person's taking his life, you know, whether it's man, female, now kids, it is a horrific thing. And statistically, I think he just even had a discussion he would have he mentioned that the Boston University, he'd said did a study. And so they said that there is post 911 The amount of veterans and military members that have died in combat, were over 7000.

And since that same timeframe, 30,000 more were actually actually committed suicide. So there are more people that are committing suicide, you know, veterans and active duty members than actually being killed in combat. And that's huge. So is that whole training? What I mean, just not the training is everything that they see everything that they experienced the whole entire thing at effects, but how does it affect the body? How does it affect the mind? So Ryan said this is we got to stop. You know, there's so many brothers that he has lost. And I know you have to very close people. And we have to figure out how to how to make it. Put an end to this, you know, we have to step up because we can We can do better as a society. And so it's a tough project. So of course, he put together an incredible group. And that's where I stepped in. And that's why I said, you need nutritionists, you need physical therapists, because I'm not doing this again and again and seeing you broken, there's been great events that Ryan's done in the past, like 100 mile run to raise \$100,000 for burn survivors in his last organization, but it broke his body, their nutrition was an OnPoint, and everything else to go along with that. So this time, I said, I'm just sitting back, and I'm just checking off the things that I see that needs to be in there. And he did, he put the great team together, that checked all the boxes, with the doctors, with nutritionists with the whole group, the runners and you know, every single person that he handpicked, yourself included. And so, the tough part was, he's also raising funding funding to make this happen, because we need the funding to make sure that testing is done to figure out how the body's broken down what's needed, how it needs to be read, generate, regenerate, and then how to continue all of that research to keep going and create a manual. So there is now direction to better heal, you know, to to mentally, physically. So the hard part was, there was things funding wise that were falling apart at the last minute. And of course, nothing's going to ever go perfect. But when you can feel incredible amount of tension. And now you have a window that gets shorter, shorter, shorter every day. And I think for the last two weeks is one it was the pressure was like it was like a pressure cooker. You know, every person that might have said yes, and was contributing to funding, not every person, I'm saying some of the important people that were contributing to the funding, have not have backed out, then you have to look for other people and other resources. And now the team is already assembled, everybody's ready to go. There's you know, VIP kind of selected people that are also on that experience, seeing what you guys are doing how, how you guys are accomplishing this mission, and they're contributing to this mission financially as well. So, I saw Ryan kind of go into like these red zones, which I've experienced as a very newborn mom. And I remember, like, when our first child was born, I had such a high level of anxiety that I forgot, in three days how to sleep period, I couldn't access that sleep anymore. And I wasn't a huge panic. And I was absolutely delirious, you know, trying to figure out what to do with a newborn baby. And we're all kept fighting back and forth. Because nobody can reason clearly when you're have zero amount of sleep. So I went into that mode. I remember that feeling. And I could see it in him. Because at that point, Brian hasn't slept already in three, four days. So he's continuing on the phone calls bring in this mind making sure the plane which is in a different country, we can still get this plane so everybody can go on it across the world. It's a seven country continents in seven days. So bottom line, it at first I could kind of step back and make sure he was doing his job. And then as the week's progressed, and maybe the last three days, I kind of inherited all of that stress, because I was I became in the same panic because at that point, I stopped kind of motivating and rooting him on and I saw that we ran out of options, like we and of course when he would just you know to tell me what was happening like he spoke to this person and they are not able to fund it. He spoke to this additional person and they just, you know something happened and they pulled out. So once you tapped out of all of your resources, and you have a group that's assembled to go because they're already put half of the funding in and they've taken on their jobs and they are waiting to board the plane actually. It's It's hard not To feel stressed, that's impossible. You can't, you can't. So, um, Ryan was just in a huge, huge panic. And I think we just, we ended up solving it at the last minute,

literally, one second away from basically that stopwatch ticking off, we able to get everything in and I say we it's just, you know, I was by his side, trying to help with what I could, you know, even running to the bank and say, Mom, here's what I need. And that's it, you know, I need to put down this money to help. This is now kind of a family problem. And, unfortunately, I also had to kind of figure out how to check out and be alone. And I couldn't, because I've seen now my husband hasn't slept in four days, and he's about to board a plane and go to South Africa. What's that flight like? So and so actually, as soon as he left, I knew that he was with you guys. And that made me feel 2% Better, and I had to kind of recalibrate myself and make my nervous system go down, and now chicken and be full time mom and focus on my job. But I would send him every day. And I guess every 10 hours, whenever he could check in with me, I would send him ways that he kind of things that I've learned in my path of healing, how he can reset his nervous system, and things that he can do. Little kind of, I wouldn't even say to trick it's really kind of how to use breathing to really reset your mind, your, your brain, everything, all your stress levels, everything from A to B, A to Z. And it wasn't helping you would help a little bit in the beginning, I'm sorry, in the beginning was very hard. So he kind of had to apply it every single time he was on a plane and he was sitting. But he was still was not sleeping. And it was day six. So he ramped up his stress levels so high that like you said, you physically saw it, you might have not even known that. He hasn't slept already for five days. But he's already physically broken just by looking at him. And I continued to worry, because yeah, it's going on day six. And I'm giving him my little skill set. And it's not working 100% Because he's still on that hamster wheel. His brain is still spinning and trying to kind of get back but it's really hard. So thank goodness for the doctors that he did have on the plane, that they were kind of tapping into that and giving him some of the medicine, some of the natural stuff that we're trying everything. Honestly, they by the time by day three, I think they could have tranquilized a horse and what they gave him and he was still operating in that high level of stress, which is nuts. One thing didn't work, okay, Ambien didn't work is fully functioning. And on that continuing you guys, you know, there's skydiving, things that were happening. There's Bajur jumping, he's running 14 miles every 24 hours, his team is running a full marathon but Ryan still opted to do half even though he was absolutely delirious. So physically, he's still exhausting his body and his body's not ready to go to sleep. So mentally, he's just a super high level of stress. And thank goodness with a concoction of multidose to to things if finally hit him and his body started to reset on day six of not sleeping. And that's a lot it just it just shows how what crazy potential we have ourselves. He did it to himself like nobody. There were outside things obviously that pushed him into this but we are responsible and we control how much we put ourselves under that stress level. So just glad that that part is you know, that's done

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James Geering 1:19:40

was amazing. Because I mean, I watched that myself and I came here and every day I go check on him in the morning and you go nope, not away and I think he would have micro sleeps and not realize it but even so I mean not a good sleep, and I will give them the dark pasty sleep remedy which I love. I was I have my CBD so I've given his like a baby birdie opened his mouth and I drop CBD in his mouth every night. And you know, hopefully the next morning is going to have this miraculous change. And like you said, it was like a vicious circle that needed like a really heavy farmer's pharmacological reboot at the end of the day. But that's the point. That's what firefighters experience when we're on shift, you know, especially when we get forced to stay extra shifts, you know, we, we can still operate, but we don't realize that our baseline is absolutely trench level compared to where it should be.



1:20:32

And, yeah, that's a scary place. And why would you be mentally sound and happy and, you know, normal? And I say normal? Why? Why would you be happy around your family? You there's no way you're experiencing so much deprivation in your natural state that it's humanly impossible to continue such a pattern for a long time. So there's definitely has to be precautions, and there's steps that have to kind of distress your mental things, mental levels, where you can kind of do quick resets, along with bigger resets? Which, of course, you know, that's where we need more.



1:21:21

I won't say protocols, but that's where we need way more. You know, what's this? James, what am I trying to do? Like, what are my hands doing right now,



James Geering 1:21:32

putting this together? Yes, doesn't really



1:21:35

need a lot more tools and a lot more help. Because, like, the things that I was giving Ryan with breathing and just mental kind of decompression, they were helping him. These are easy things to do. But however, the level of stress he already took himself upon, it's not going to be like a snap type of deal. So you have to understand, you have to now almost make that like you're drinking water because you're thirsty. So now I'm doing these breathing drills, and kind of letting go the stressor, stressors. And also bringing new energy and rebalancing myself just on in little ways, as I continue to find the bigger holes that are missing. So there are little things that you can do. But of course, sometimes like those drugs need a hardcore, just a pause, so you can catch up on even three hours of sleep.



James Geering 1:22:33

Absolutely. Well, I mean, I know we were all sleep deprived, but I went in, it was interesting, I went in with it with a very well slept, you know, mind when I first went, so I got to see the breakdown. And I didn't have that pre exhaustion that he had. And I was just amazed how just Delirious I was in London, especially, I mean, I just barely could even see straight and I'd spent 14 years in that, that, you know, state or similar to that state. And I think it's important for people to hear, you know, this wasn't a kind of look at me adventure for social media. This was, you know, initiated by him losing David, his sniper partner via suicide, and then wanting to do something good wanting to change the world. But I think it's important for people to hear the stuff that you know, he went through you went through your family went through financially, emotionally, etc. The other I think the biggest value of this whole thing was really the reboot stage. Like, how do we build ourselves back up again, I made so many mistakes when I first came back, not anything serious, but scheduling. And just I was it took me genuinely three, four weeks to get my mind back to normal again. And that was just 10 days, you know, without all

the pre stress that he had before. So as a last thing before we wrap up, so you gotta go. What were some of the things that that you saw work when he returned, and in his personal reboot after such a harrowing journey?



1:24:00

Ah, you know, he's on this. I mean, I guess that's, you know, his situation maybe reflects a lot on like firefighters and everybody else because you guys kind of accent that and come into home life where kids are screaming, or you have to take children to school, into camps and so forth. And then you have a wife or partner, somebody by your side that also requires either attention or, you know, some sort of responsibility. So, I knew that we need to kind of step back for at least a week to just let him adjust. So of course, I his mom was here so we kind of took that time to do all the kids chores, make sure that we're you know, dealing with the kids of course they wouldn't be around dad. So as long as Ryan was sleeping, we weren't going to be okay. As long as he was sleeping. Eating and just, yes, he was falling asleep. And just random times, you know, he was probably, he would sit down on the couch and fall asleep and just sit down. And so just letting him kind of do that. As long as he needed to, that was the biggest thing. And it was hard for him transition like week two was tough, because then mother in law was not there. And then I'm kind of jumping into more work. So it was baby steps. And still nutrition wise. He's still continuing to kind of follow what he needs to follow, since there's a protocol that and a manual that you guys are building while his him in the doctor's and everybody's putting together. So of course, there's a supplementation kind of regimen that he has to follow to make sure that his body's healing well, but to decompress for something like that. I think it took him a lot of sleep, and just not jumping into work. And having to fund and do anything that had to do with like business relationships, sales, anything, anything that had to do with the money. And I don't even know if he he's never he hasn't run since then. So. So yeah, he hasn't been moving. But except for, you know, the traditional model mowing the lawn and doing easy things like that. And it's been now a month. So he's still kind of in. He's working now. But it's just sleep was essential. And that's the biggest thing that we're all kind of missing. I think you know, what the horrific things that you guys will see and encounter every day. And you know, what Ryan's experienced in the service. And after the fact, with this the suicide, it's still a big, big key to tackle. Because our mind does it and I'm, you know, our mental health that doesn't get to decompress and just kind of sleep and snap out of it that needs a lot more nurturing and precise, like precision, really precision.



James Geering 1:27:12

Absolutely. Well, I think that's the whole point of this manual is, you know, there are great books on mental health, you know, when it comes to psychology, or, you know, there's great psychedelic experiences now and these things, but you've got to look at the whole holistic being, and this isn't trying to be the answer. It's trying to give people tools to prepare for this profession to try and stay healthy during it and to transition out healthily as well. And I think, you know, they did such a great job of simulating that they really did, and we're all at different stages, I'm actually going to sit down with Ryan and dukes, because Ryan obviously had the, you know, the the origin story and put the scene together. But Dukes, this journey was one of the most incredible to watch while we're on there. So I think, you know, we talked about this a lot, we went in almost thinking like it was more of a fact finding mission. And then really, it was a human experience mission. And within those human experiences are the takeaways, you

know, the, the tribalism and you know, the community and the the mental health and nutrition and the fitness but the actual human experiences, I think, is really what's gonna make the manual and the Docu series so powerful, because you can put up PowerPoint, you know, presentations and display data. But it's not until you hear someone's journey from a dark place to somewhere amazing, through a lot of these things that we talked about that you really understand the impact and the value of such seemingly trivial things like sleep.



1:28:40

Right. And that's a big thing to having that community you guys became a community, a very small tight group on that Aeroplan journey for seven days. So you were able to take the hardships together and kind of also reflect on what you've guys done in your life and many people we're a different levels, you know, we have businessmen that are you know, our high level of business then we have like, base jumpers, a professional base number. So there's all different walks of life firefighters, and, and, yes, military not. So to kind of share your hardships together and then to go through something like that and to come out on the other end, because that was a tough that was tough for her that was not a party. That was not a party to be an aisle. Although, you know, you guys did have some wonderful moments that made it feel like a party because you guys were all together. But I think that's what's important too is if you feel like you're going alone through something like that, and a mental difficult challenge is to have some sort of an outreach and I know that's when we isolate ourselves the most one is difficult, but at least a phone call a text semester says, Hey, I need you to check on me. Or like, as a mom, I remember when it was so. So you know, postpartum depression was was huge. And I've experienced different levels of that with both kids differently. And I do wish I had a bigger circle. And I wish that I maybe it's not even about the circle. But I wish I reached out myself and said, Hey, I need I need help to a friend, I reached out to professionals my second time around, I thought that would be a better more. Yeah, more legit way that I could get help. And no, it was absolutely scary. Because then I thought I was going to be in prison. Because there say, Hey, if you're thinking this, we're going to have to, you know, we have the right to contact Social Services or whoever and you're like, Oh, my God, I don't know what information I can trust you with. I don't feel safe. So therefore, I can't I don't think I can communicate with you. So what I'm saying is, you know, a community and outreach to somebody when you feel alone, or when it's the toughest time in your life, I think it's huge. And for you should just push a button to your closest friend and say, hey, help me you don't even need to describe. But you got to say something. And I think that's what we have to ask ourselves, we have to become better at. Because then we need more more hands reaching into our bucket and saying, Oh, I didn't even know I had no idea what you're going through. Because 99% of the time, they have no idea. Nobody knows. I mean, what you've seen as a firefighter and saving lives on a daily basis. We can't even fathom what you know, what, what you have endured, and just through your eyes and physically helping somebody. So friends need to do a better job to also yes, this is your time, this this timeframe? Yep. What do you need, but we are the first people that can bring that to the attention. So we definitely need to do that ourselves. We need to take that first step.



James Geering 1:32:17

Absolutely. I think nothing that's that's underestimated is how much people want to help. You just have to ask them, you know, and of course, we can be proactive and look and I reached out to Ryan a lot towards the end because I knew he was going through it. But ironically, you know,

he was so overwhelmed that he wasn't didn't even have capacity to talk. He was trying to, you know, fundraise at the time. But at least they're seeing like, hey, when you need me, I'm here when you need me. I'm here. Because sometimes, you know, you don't get those texts answered. But I've heard people say I always, I always read your texts. I knew you were you were there for me, you know, so even if you don't get it back, but absolutely, I think a lot of people, if you simply ask for help, you'll be blown away by how much people want to help. They just need a little direction sometimes.



1:33:04

Right? Right. Because I mean, people are busy in their own lives, but they will take the time, you just have to say you have to sit the rest the right way. Like I need help, you know, and they know who you are. So it's it's it's a rare thing, probably to hear something like that. And they will, they'll stop and don't give up you sent send that message to a couple of people because you do deserve the help. And yes, you deserve anything, anything that you need. You know, especially if it's a time like that. And that's one, James, you're probably reaching out to Ryan, ice stepped in fully. Because I knew at that point, I could be the only person that he can access. And I could piggyback all the issues right away. So I had to like take full step in there and be there. And unfortunately, like, you know, I inherited every piece of that emotional and physical stress on me. But I think I was able to separate it when I knew that he was gone. I'm like, you've got the team. And now I have to take you know, every day I have to take a percentage off of that off my shoulders and be mom, you know, be here for the kids. Because I got a long nine days. That was nine days. I counted nine days. It was not seven, by the way. Yeah,



James Geering 1:34:27

I know. We say seven. But yeah, we had the flight to Dallas, the flight to Johannesburg and Cape Town then, you know, Antarctica didn't go through. So stay in Cape Town and then yeah, so it was definitely 10 plus days for a lot of us.



1:34:41

And I mean, I mean Ryan's already checked out from kids and everything. You know, three days prior, he was not available like he would be eating in his office and I would bring a food and I'll check on him like he was literally he did not move. I don't even know if he went to the bathroom ever he would be in that one space from the From morning till night, and sometimes the kids would come in, hug him and leave. But it was just he could not shift focus. And that was it was excruciating, you know, you there was, it was painful to see. And I know he never wants to feel that again. So you have to control how much pressure how fast you're putting on. And that's also the timeline, you know, you're building that timeline. So there's got to be checkpoints to not get there again, that this has got to be a little bit of a better procedure. And that's an all everybody's, you know, family life or business for his business is very stressful. So better management of time is huge.



James Geering 1:35:46

Absolutely. Well speaking of management of time, I gotta be conscious of yours. So for people

absolutely. Well, speaking of management of time, I gotta be conscious of yours. So for people listening, I'm sure you know, they they're fascinated by hearing the journey, especially when it comes to the injury prevention in the bar, a zip bar, as they say, or bar or Yes.



1:36:03

My favorite things, you know, as a program I used to teach. But yes, that's something that as a dancer of course, that was the first thing I gravitated to. Because of course, for my body, my mind that made sense. I don't know where you're going with that. But that just is barked.



James Geering 1:36:22

Well, I was gonna say so you offer classes in bar and some of the other disciplines that you have you help as you said with especially with the postpartum side. So talk about where people can access you as a coach and access your information on life.



1:36:36

Yes, actually, I now shifted to really focusing on one on one coaching is online coaching. So I'm really focusing on helping my busy moms heal their dialysis, their separation of the rectus muscles, postpartum and help rehab the whole core system with their pelvic floor. So I created an awesome program that they can tap into online, and it's one on one coaching with me that provides nutrition, and that provides the fitness portion of the training. And it's great because moms don't have a lot of time. So you can access this whenever you need to. However you need to, but you can create that timeframes that you can, you know, block off for yourself, and you can now focus on healing from the inside and the outside. So you can you can access me from a lot of fit.com That's my website, Lada fit.com. Also, of course, um, you know, it's tough to be a mom, but I'm trying to be a little bit more proactive. So I'm starting to send more information through my Instagram, which is just Lada dot parent. And the same thing you know, from Facebook, a lot, a lot of parents. But you can definitely find my program, if you reach out to me, and you can reach out to me at Florida fitness, lot of fitness@gmail.com. And I can give you all the details about my program if you're interested for helping shed some belly fat and heal the muscles of the stomach and of course prevent leaking, because that is not a thing that is cute. And we don't need to think about it as normal because it's not it's it's your bladder is trainable, and your muscles are trainable. So we can put a stop to that. So if you need help, that's what I'm here for.



James Geering 1:38:37

Beautiful. Well, I want to thank you so much. I mean, we've we've gone all the way from, you know, your childhood in Latvia, all the way through to your immigration story in your time working with some of these, you know, elite entertainers and then your transition out and then the lens that you have on seven acts, you know, as a wife as a mother, but also I think your perspective kind of illustrates the altruistic element of this and the immense pressure that was put on as well as you know, the mirroring of service that you never got to witness as a military

spouse but you've got you saw simulated through a completely different environment. So I just want to thank you so much for being so generous with your time and come on the podcast today. Thank you, James. I appreciate you