



Transcript of “The Art of Less Doing with Ari Meisel”

Bulletproof Radio podcast #23



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Podcast #23: The Art of Less Doing with Ari Meisel

DAVE: Today's cool fact of the day is about your sense of smell and your unique smell. You probably know that certain parts of your body, like maybe your DNA are just yours. You have your own fingerprints, you have your own eyeprints, things like that, but you probably didn't know that no one else in the world has exactly your smell.

All mammals have their own body odors that are determined by their environment and by their genes and these are called "odor types" which means that every person has a different one unless maybe you have an identical twin who eats about the same stuff that you do. It turns out that your diet will mask that odor, but you can't completely change it. Your odor is with you.

In fact, this is so useful that in Eastern Germany, post World War 2, when they would bring dissidents in, they would have to sit as they were being interrogated on a special pad in the chair--this is absolutely true, I've seen photos of the setup they used to do this--and after they sweated you for 8 or 10 hours, with bright lights in your eyes, they would take the pad and they would save it in a special file. So if they needed to find you again, they could use that in conjunction with a police dog and that could help to track you down.

DAVE: You're listening to episode 23 of Upgraded Self Radio with Dave from The Bulletproof Executive blog.

Today's interview is with Ari Meisel. Ari is an entrepreneur, a writer, a self tracker triathlete, survivor of a life threatening disease, a father, and an expert on doing less and living more, which is of course, why we have him on the show. He comes on today to talk about how he cured his Crohn's Disease and some of his best tips on productivity and efficiency. If you'd like to see the pinnacle of biohacking and productivity, you're gonna wanna listen to our interview today with Ari and see what he's up to.

Our Q&A today includes a discussion of the problems with beans, seeds, and oats. 4-Hour Body guys, you might wanna listen to what we have to say about beans. We talk about curing candida, training tips for marathons--even though the first person who ran a marathon actually died, which is why other people keep running them in some way to somehow get healthier even though it appears to be a deadly activity--blogs that you should be reading, and healing cuts with ursolic acid.

We close with our Biohacker Report where you're going to hear a brief summary of three pieces of research that caught our attention this week. Today we'll be focusing on how to maintain mental performance by allocating your energy intelligently. This is very core to what The Bulletproof Executive is all about. We talk about how to improve cycling performance with weight training. Hm. More evidence that you might actually wanna lift weights if you're going to exercise and how to boost your brainpower with DHA.



You can find out more about us by checking us out on Twitter on @bulletproofexec, on Facebook at facebook.com/bulletproofexecutive or we really appreciate it if you sign up for our email newsletter. When you sign up, we promise not to spam you, we just basically send you the latest research that we write. But having people on our email list really helps when it's time to come out with a Bulletproof Executive book. So having a larger email list lets us go to publishers and say "hey guys, it's time to strike a deal," which lets us afford the costs of putting together a really world class book.

I know this works because The Better Baby Book, which is coming out in December from Wiley, this is new information, which includes essentially Bulletproof style techniques for how to have healthier, happier babies. That book is getting really raves reviews. I just had a physician, actually an optometrist, who's looking to get pregnant, who read the book, a prerelease copy, and she said quote "this is the best fertility book I've ever found in my entire life and i'm amazed at this!" So we're getting feedback like that from medically trained professionals and I can't wait to share the book with all of you.

All right, let's get started. What have you been doing this week, in terms of biohacking?

INTERN: Well, in the introduction to this episode, you just talked about Tim Ferris and anyone who's read that book has probably read the section on swimming. And what Tim Ferris covered in that book was something called total immersion swimming and that was invented by a guy named Terry Laughlin. And I actually got to see this guy speak and I got to ask this guy several questions over the weekend at The Multisport Expo in Bethesda, Maryland. I also got to see Dave Scott who is the six time winner of the Hawaii Iron Man. And I actually got to ask Terry about several new pieces of his protocol and his techniques on swimming, and it's all about efficiency. It's very Bulletproof actually in the way he does it. It's all about maximizing how far you go, the fewest heartbeats, the fewest pieces of movement and he actually has made some pretty big changes since writing his total immersion book that actually weren't in 4-Hour Body. And I know this won't be relevant to everyone, but he talks about instead of swimming on your side, rolling off your stomach to visualize that. And he also has some other cool tips you're gonna have to see in his DVDs online. I highly recommend them. If you're one of those people who do their competitive swimmer even olympic swimmer or just somebody who can't swim and wants to be able to survive if they fall off a boat, you should definitely check out his stuff. It's called total immersion swimming.

So what have you been working on Dave?

DAVE: I'll tell you in one sec but I've got a little total immersion story that's pretty relevant here.

INTERN: Uh oh.

DAVE: The first time I came across total immersion was about 1997-98, I mean this stuff's been around for a while. And a certain friend of mine who was, oh, about 40 pounds overweight decided she was going to do a triathlon. Which maybe wasn't the healthiest choice for her at the

time because her body wasn't really ready. So she decided after she got her wetsuit at the time, the unfortunate process of team in training was to order black wetsuits with white stomachs that had the word Orca on them. I'm not joking, this was the branding. So you would see these 40 pound overweight sort of middle age women who really were interested in improving their health having to do this humiliating suit up in a tight outfit that says Orca and is painted like a killer whale and then climb out of the water.

Upon seeing this, my friend was like 'no'. So she spent the money on total immersion and completely transformed her swimming practice even though she was about as far from an athlete as you can get. So this stuff absolutely works, and it makes you look a lot less like an orca.

INTERN: Yeah, Orca actually makes great wetsuits, but honestly, I think the total immersion part of The 4-Hour Body was one of the best parts even though it was one of the shortest. It was actually one of the most scientifically relevant.

DAVE: I think so, yeah. The Orca gear was really good. It was just that for, ya know, a competitive athlete, that's fine. You're a killer whale. But you tell that to the 45 year old secretary who hasn't really exercised much, it's maybe a brand in need of a refresh.

That said, I'm doing something that's pretty far from training in water. I'm still working on the Jack Cruise cold thermogenesis protocol. I sort of gave myself a first degree frostbite burns over a significant percentage of my body, about 10 to 15%, so I'm recovering from that. I'm mostly recovered, actually, since the last couple of podcasts where I talked about that.

But tomorrow morning, I pick up a HEG which is basically a blood flow neurofeedback unit. So, this is a prototype that's not available to most people though it was manufactured by the grandson of the inventor of bloodflow feedback in the brain. You use a bright infrared light to look at bloodflow in your prefrontal cortex and to train you to consciously improve your performance. I talked about this at South By Southwest and actually posted a photo of a fairly early prototype of this.

I decided to get this one early because the prototype is called The Peanut and I did that even though it's not really safe to use it hooked up to your computer if your computer's plugged in because it's not properly grounded. So this is sort of like a little bit flaky, a little bit sketchy, but when the final version of this comes out that will be commercially available, people have an amazingly low cost way to improve the bloodflow on the front of their brain.

More bloodflow on the front of your brain has profound effects, especially if you deal with headaches or mental performance or tiredness, but even people who are perfectly healthy who get more blood to their prefrontal cortex get better activation of that. You combine it with The Bulletproof Diet, high fat, the right cognitive nutrition, the right krill oil and things like that, and this is one of those really cool technologies that you'll be hearing a lot more about over the next five years as it becomes more mainstream.

INTERN: I would actually add one more thing to that cocktail, and that is the advice you're about to hear from Ari Meisel on productivity. If you put all that stuff together, you're gonna turn into a productivity monster. Now we're gonna have our interview.

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DAVE: It's time for The Biohacker Report where we bring you the latest research that caught our eye this week. The first piece of research here was titled Influence of mental workload on muscle endurance, fatigue and recovery during intermittent static work. This is a cool study.

This was done at Michigan Tech University and Virginia Tech and it was published in the European Journal of Applied Physiology which is relatively obscure from my perspective, maybe because I'm not in Europe. And they wanted to see how physical effort translated into mental fatigue. Now keep in mind that as I'm speaking here, I'm the guy who intentionally didn't work out for two years because I was sleeping less and basically doing a huge amount of career and family things. Here's what they found.

So it's a very complex protocol, but basically they took a bunch of volunteers and they had them do fatiguing shoulder exercises while doing mental arithmetic. In other words, as they're doing their workout, there's a researcher standing there saying here's a number. Multiple it by 3, and then divide by 2 and multiply it by 3 again. And the researchers looked at how quickly their shoulders fatigued and how quickly they recovered and returned to full strength in the 15 minutes after the exercise ended.

As you'd guess, the people who were doing math while they were working out lost strength and reached failure more quickly than the controls and here's the kicker: it also lowered their heart rate variability. Keep in mind Bulletproof protocols. You increase your heart rate variability by learning to consciously control it using the M-wave and you exercise when you have time for recovery. But the idea that you're going to work the body while you also work the mind there, it doesn't necessarily pan out in this study. That means that if you're going to push yourself physically, maybe you don't wanna do a ton of mental work beforehand. Maybe you should do some heart math after you finish your days cognitive work before you go work out. It's also a really bad idea and this drives me nuts, I see people on a stationary bike, ya know riding really hard and trying to do cognitive work like on a laptop or read sales reports versus kind of read a novel or do something relaxing. I even wonder if it's a good idea to have sports practice after school. Maybe it should be before school.

INTERN: The next study is called "Cyclists Improve Pedaling Efficacy and Performance After Heavy Strength Training." This was published in The International Journal of Sports Physiology and Performance at Aalborg University in Denmark. This is really interesting to me 'cause I'm a

huge proponent of both weight training and I love cycling.

They were looking at how heavy leg exercises can improve pedaling efficiency. Now what this means in practical terms is how well you are applying pressure around the pedal stroke and what you want to do is apply fairly even pressure around the pedal stroke, obviously pushing down more at the top of the stroke, and lifting up slightly less hard. And if you have pedal clips, which actually lock your feet into the pedals, it's easier to do that.

18 cyclists were split into two groups. One group did strength training twice a week plus endurance training and the other group just did endurance training. The strength training group improved their overall efficiency by 7% which was far more than the endurance only group. Now this is interesting, to put into perspective, Lance Armstrong only improved his cycling efficiency by about 8% over the course of his entire Tour de France career. Now obviously this was in people who are far less fit than Lance Armstrong, but it's pretty significant and this is one of the reasons why I think every endurance athlete should be lifting heavy weights.

DAVE: I really like that study. This just goes to show the idea that "I'm gonna grind out the miles," I mean there's people out there who still say--I see them on Facebook all the time--"oh exercise is good for the brain! Run 10 miles a day!" And they actually do it! And they're fully convinced that people who don't do it are lamers, lazy jerks, and I'm just here to say flat out it doesn't work that way and this study helps to show why.

The next study, and the last one today, is called "DHA Rich Oil Modulates the Cerebral Hemodynamic Response To Cognitive Tasks In Healthy Young Adults Using Near Infrared Spectroscopy." This was published in The Proceedings of the British Journal of Nutrition. The study looked at how DHA and EPA effect brain function. These are the two types of oil that are most common in fish oil. So when you see people selling fish oil supplements, it's all about the DHA and the EPA.

This study looked at 22 healthy adults, and it was double blinded, it was placebo controlled. The group that took one gram per day of DHA had large increases in oxygen levels of their blood that entered the brain, and they had increases in cerebral blood flow to the prefrontal cortex during cognitive tasks. The EPA group did not.

Now, that said, you may be tempted to do what a friend of mine once told me he was doing, he was buying liquid fish oil and he was taking two glugs. He would put the bottle up to his mouth and just pour it in until it glugged twice. That's not a good idea. People on excess fish oil don't do well because it is highly polyunsaturated. You need enough to ensure cell membrane flexibility but not excess. There are also scattered reports, and I've actually had this effect, of very high levels of fish oil contributing to depression, believe it or not. Low levels or moderate levels usually help with depression. High levels in some people can contribute to it. So don't go crazy with it, but if you want to turn on your prefrontal cortex, having enough DHA is really important.

I've been an EPA fan for a long time because of cell membrane flexibility, but the more research I



do, the more I've been sort of leaning in the direction of DHA, particularly for pregnant women and for kids under 7, DHA is critical because you are not able to convert DHA to EPA if you're under 7 or in utero. So it's particularly important there.

That concludes today's Biohacker Report. If you enjoyed our show today, you can say thanks by going to bulletproofexec.com and maybe trying some Upgraded Coffee with low toxins that causes big improvements in brain performance. You could simply subscribe to our email list, you could leave us a positive ranking on iTunes, or you can leave a comment on the forum for us to answer or you can answer someone else's question.

We really appreciate the community that's formed there, and we've got thousands of messages there so there are people who know the Bulletproof program who will answer your questions for you, and we will too.

Thanks again! See you next week!

INTERN: See ya Dave!

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