Keto Without Cheats: How Consistency, Integrity, and Faith Drive Real Results with Robert Sikes Transcript

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Introduction and podcast origins

What happens when you strip fitness, nutrition, and life down to the essentials and build from there? In this episode of Everyday Ancestral, I sit down with Robert Sykes, creator of Keto Brick, also known as Ketosavage.

He's a natural bodybuilder and entrepreneur. using nothing but real food, relentless discipline and ancestral wisdom. We talk about the mental toughness behind true transformation, why simplicity wins in health and business, and how the ketogenic lifestyle done right can connect us with how we're meant to fuel, move and live.

If you're tired of gimmicks and ready for grounded, lasting change, this one's for you. You're kind of the reason we have a podcast. I mean, I gotta be honest with you, right?

You had, when we first met, you were one of the first adopters of having me as a guest on a podcast. We met very early on in Pluck's inception. And you after we talked, You shared with me like, here's the movers that have really helped my business.

Here's how I've really help to build my community. and I heard you. While I wasn't ready to start, back when talked almost five years ago, I always kept your advice in the back of my head and was just like, I gotta do that.

I know Robert knows what he's doing. So it's really, truly a pleasure to have you on here. Thanks for joining me. Hey, no, man. And I'm glad you got it started.

Like I don't know how the whole podcasting things work. How the algorithms factor things into play. But I've been to the podcast for forever now. It seems about to hit episode 800. and it seems like it made a pretty measurable impact on my branding.

so I am super stoked that you've got one of your own now What did you say, miserable? What'd you just say? Measurable. I'm like miserable, what are you talking about?

No, it's not a measurable impact. Good, okay, I am glad you were being positive. Well hey, you're also on the precipice of having your second child. Yeah, if I have to pause this recording in the middle of delivering a baby, forgive me, but any moment now really.

That is incredible. Are you guys doing a home birth or what are you doing? No, we can't. We legally can. It's weird. Like every state's different and we had planned on doing homebirth with our first.

But in Arkansas, once you go past 42 weeks, you can have a Home Birth. So we have to go in and then things went downhill pretty quickly and have an emergency C-section for the first one.

So we're doing a v-back with the second one and you can't do a V back home birth right with a registered midwife in Arkansas So all kinds of rule is weird man.

Our second was v back as well and it went successfully. So, you know Fingers crossed for sure any prayers for you on that it would all go as. Well, um appreciate it but how is so tell me though like how I Like when we met, I think you had just had your first child or just about to, so how has fatherhood affected your outlook on life?

Man, that's a deep question. It gives me, I'm very ambitious, like I like to be grinding on things.

Fatherhood and family roles

And before I had the kiddo, it's like, you know, i can suffer, i can sacrifice, I can burn the metal, and I am the only one that is suffering from that.

Whereas now having a kid, its like okay, gotta take their needs into consideration. But also, and more importantly, is it gives me a reason to hustle and grind and fight in the first place.

Like I'm trying to build a legacy that goes beyond me for them. And he gives a me reason, to do everything I do in a day, which is, it's good. It's empowering.

How are you guys dividing your household? Are you the main person who works outside the home? And does your wife kind of cover the business, the whole business in this sense?

Yeah, so we're kind of traditional in that sense. Like when Crystal and I started the business, like she and built it from nothing. I mean, she, and us slept on a warehouse floor for three years.

We put in the work and now like her aspirations when we first met way back when was always just to have kids, make babies and have like a little homestead on some land and some pigs.

And I was like wanting to take over the world. And she sacrificed a lot in helping me build the business. And now it's cool because I'm kind of letting her do her thing now.

So she helped with everything business related and now she's pretty much not entirely removed. I mean, she still does like some of the, like she does payroll and she has things like that, but she is never having to be on site.

Like she at home raising our kiddo. She's going to do homeschooling when they get a little bit older and we've got the animals now that she, you know, taking care of.

I gotta say, that's probably like the one thing that… I do have regret over, I mean, my kids are still young, they're 13 and nine, so it's not huge regret, but I just recognize that my wife and I are both entrepreneurs, and the families that I've seen that were able to do a slightly more traditional, when I say traditional I'm mostly just talking one parent running the household, one parents making money outside the house, to me it doesn't matter which gender, But more that tradition of one-in-one, right?

My wife and I both are entrepreneurs, so we really struggled to run the household. Uh, because we didn't have help necessarily. We, we sometimes had, uh, coverage babysitters and stuff like that, but very often we had no one managing our household.

You know, had we, um, We had to do it all. And it's really challenging or it has been when our kids see us in the house, you know? They see this all the time.

Cause we work from home and they're like, Why, why aren't you playing with me or why are you spending your time with? And we're like, well, but we were working.

This is our work day. And so that divide has been so challenging of the years. sometimes created some behaviors that I'm not proud about in the kids and we've been constantly working through that but I am always encouraged when I hear more families finding a more traditional role of someone supporting that household and someone working outside the home because I genuinely believe that the kid's end up being a lot more grounded and regulated.

It's tough man, and there's no like playbook or rule book. So I don't know what's right and wrong. Like you kind of have to just go at it and figure things out.

But it seems to be working pretty well for us thus far. And like Rigel, my oldest son, like he makes it known when he's not getting the attention we should be giving him.

He's just more rebellious. Whereas like if I'm there, I am present with him, you know, he's like super chill and just loving. So like you got to kind of read into that.

He is only three years old, so he is still trying to figure out how to be a rational human being. But it's worked really well for us because like when I was home, i can pretty much set my work aside and truly be home and focus on him wholeheartedly.

And you know, my wife's able to take, one thing we've recently started doing is I'll leave the building at like four o'clock and then she'll come to the build and she will work out.

So she has some alone time to do her own thing and I will just be able focus on Rigel and playing with him. And that's been really good. I'm excited for when he gets a little bit older and he can come the the buildings and like help, even if it's little stuff like freaking sweeping the floors.

Like I can use the business as a vehicle to teach him some of these life skills that I want him to learn. And i don't think i'd be able to have that opportunity if i was working a corporate gig or she and i both were doing nine to five it's kind of funny i've got a friend that i went to the railroad training school where that's what i did before i started the business and he stayed with corporate america and then he had a kid about the same time i do writing.

and they literally get two hours a day with their kid. They leave early, they come back late. The kids with daycare the whole time, it's like two hour a days.

Man, that's crazy. My son gets 100% of his time with us. That's amazing. So what were you doing in railroad? Were you engineering or what? I was a train master, so I the direct supervisor over the engineers and conductors and I did that fresh out of college and did for like two and a half, three years.

That where I met Crystal. I got stationed in Washington state and was working there in Spokane, Washington and bought a house like, two blocks down from the coffee shop she was barista at.

And I just started drinking a lot more coffee and then the rest is history. You used to be in spokan. Yeah, yeah, I guess I was there for like three years or so.

That's where I met her and then she came back to Arkansas with me. Now, why did you guys go to Arkansas? Was that where you grew up? Yeah, it's pretty much where I grew.

I was born in Minnesota, but I had a family in Arkansas. That's where graduated. And Northwest Arkansas specifically is just where, I've always found home to be.

It's like in the Ozark Mountains, It is beautiful. The university is up here. There's a lot of money up in Northwest, a whole lot opportunity.

Arkansas, community, and business culture

But it is right in Ozarks Mountains. So it just beautiful, beautiful country and then Arkansas in general is just much more laid back so it's a good place.

I was recently in LA and reminded of kind of the hustle and bustle of LA, and just felt so grateful that I no longer live there. What do you notice in the difference in lifestyle between where you were, you know, in Spokane?

And given that Spokeane's not a humongous city, it is not like Seattle, but it still different. But what's the different for you than where are you now in Arkansas?

Yeah. I mean, I've been to a lot of big cities. Like I go to, you know, to New York, have spoken to all these conferences in these big city. And for me, like Arkansas, having like just a country vibe.

But I live on some acreage and, our business is in a very small town. Our population here is like 2,000. So it's just a slower pace, a slow vibe. People are friendlier, it seems.

Like people want to know their neighbor. They go to the local rodeo. Just little things like that that you wouldn't get in a big metropolitan area. And I feel like, that's what life's all about.

More of this intimate human interaction, connection, local community. I wanna double down on that. Yeah, that's one thing I relate, like whenever I see your conferences, I feel like the people that you have working with you, whether it's Greg or any of them that I've met, they're just…

It seems to me like you guys have a really, really solid grounding and relationship. How have you been formulating that? Are some of these people partial owners?

What's been your catalyst for making sure that the business is not only run successfully, but just in that familiar or community-based way? Man, it didn't always start out that way.

We've been in business for seven, eight years now and I've run through several employees over that time. I got some employees that I'm not on great terms with, former employees.

They just weren't a good fit. And I am very honest with my team. Very upfront. Let them know what my expectations are and don't try and micromanage them.

Like I just let them kind of know the standard of what the expectations were. And the team that we've got now is the best team I've ever had. Like many of them quit their jobs and traveled across states to work here.

And they're not part owners or anything like that. They just understand the mission. they understand what the trajectory is. and they want to be a part of something that's growing and something positive.

My crew is my family. I spend so much time with them. We had a meeting this morning actually. And I brought the whiteboards out. I showed them what the goals were over the next several years, like what trajectory I'm planning and striving for, how I want to make them involved and become a part of it, and how need them to step up to accomplish that.

And they were all for it. We're a big family, man. Every time we do a launch, I have them out to the house, cook out with them. It's all one big happy family.

They all work out together, it's a good vibe. That's awesome. Where did you get your business acumen? That is one thing that you also seem to model really well is just this very clear headed, clear minded businessman mentality.

I went to school for business finance. I thought I was going to be on Wall Street originally. Thank goodness that didn't pan out. But honestly, man, just kind of like trial and error, like figuring things out, and like I dove deep into it.

My uncle is an entrepreneur, so I used to work for him during the summertime, you know, in the warehouse, And just seeing how he interacted with his employees was always a very positive influence on me.

Um, my cousins are entrepreneurial, um, but I read a bunch of business books, listened to a business podcast, kind figured out how I wanted to run things, Watching my parents, they're very good people and just seeing their significance and importance on good character traits, how to be honest, maintain your integrity, be upfront, and be good to one another.

And I wanted to build a workplace that I didn't have to escape from. I'm excited to keep doing what I am doing and not feel the need to retire because I will be working on something I've been passionate about until the day they pat me in the face of the shovel.

You know, integrity is something that is absolutely my experience of you. From day one, the amount of presence and integrity you have, where do you think that comes from?

And I know we could potentially look at our parents, but what What, if someone listening has been kind of feeling like, ah, I just feel like I'm not kind coexisting with people in my life in integrity, what advice would you give someone to find integrity and make choices accordingly to tap into that integrity?

I think parenting is huge and now that I'm a parent myself, I really want to make that a primary focus. My dad and I butted heads a bit growing up, but he is a very solid person.

He's always had really quality integrity. Like he instilled work ethic and honesty and a lot of those character building traits into me. Um, he's not entrepreneurial at all, so I didn't get any of that from him necessarily, I got a lot of my basic core tendencies how to be as a person and then in doubling down on that and just building my foundation from that it's always done well for me like I've seen people who backstab one another that always comes back to bite him and you know when you tell a lie you just have to tell another lie to cover it up.

And I just never wanted to live my life wearing a mask or having to look over my shoulder. Like everything I do, everything, I say is 100% authentic and transparent.

People that hear me online, listen to my podcast or a YouTube video, but then they meet me in person, like I'm the exact same way they would have expected me to be.

And, and I take pride in that. I want to just be truly authentic. You know, just really try to living my live with gratitude. You know, I've got a lot of aspirations, and I want to take over the freaking world, but never at the cost of my integrity, never the at cost to being legitimately a good person.

And, you know I got clients that are multi-millionaires and totally unhappy in their life. They've sold their soul to the devil, so to speak, to make a buck, they're unfulfilled.

I just don't want that, like to me, the, like if I had a billion dollars, I told my crew this in the meetings this morning, it's like, if had billions of dollars in bank, would want to build a life similar to what I have right now.

I mean, wake up, have coffee with my wife, watch the sunrise, go work out with employees, having a morning meeting with them, talk about the things that we're going to do.

You know, we work on making the keto bricks or whatever else we get going on the day that's actually adding value to other people's lives and making them healthier.

It's, man, what could be more fulfilling than that? Like I'm happy. Yeah, that's awesome. Do you think that a mission is important? Like having a Mission is Important?

And I would say even like faith, like if you were to kind of like say, okay, well, to kind of live that honest, integral life, to feel happiness, you know, it takes certain qualities.

What do you think those qualities would be? This is a good question, man, this is good one. It's interesting because when it comes to faith, I've only recently become a man of faith.

Like I didn't, I wasn't raised in that setting. My dad's an evolutionary biologist. So he is not a faith-based person at all, but he's one of the best people I know, and he was one the most honest people.

And so I don't think that's, it's certainly not requisite for having those values by any means.

Integrity, faith, and bodybuilding mindset

But in growing in my faith here lately, i have found that that provides a certain underlying degree of just like peace

in my life that I didn't have before and that is is massive because like prior to I was just working and building and growing but there was never peace with it.

Now there's like this underlying level of genuine deep peace which I think is making me a better entrepreneur, making a a leader to my team, father to my kids and I think that's important so I thing that only been a benefit in a positive in my life but I thank honestly just simply We all know inherently if something is right or wrong.

We have this, our conscience speaking to us. And we know if we've got something that is, you know, cutting corners in life. I've just made it a habit to never cut those corners.

And I feel like when you know you're not selling yourself short, when know your doing the right thing, you are doing something that you can go to sleep at night feeling proud of and confident in, that compounded over lifetime is certain to make you successful in some form or fashion.

Yeah, absolutely. So when did the bodybuilding come in? The bodybuilding came in in high school, man. I was 115 pounds, soaking wet, I didn't wear a t-shirt in my last two years of highschool because I'm so self-conscious, couldn't talk to the ladies.

And then my uncle, who's the entrepreneur, he kind of took me under his wing, showed me how to do a few bicep curls, and I just was hooked, like, was addicted to it.

Because that was something where the fruits of my labor resulted in the outcome that I was striving for. It wasn't like a team sport. Whether I won or lost was 100% dependent upon the amount of effort I put in.

So I just really loved that aspect of it and started competing in 2012 and then have just been competing ever since. And I'll take a couple years off in between shows to build on more size.

But I've done it all naturally and I have kind of blended the world of nutrition with what I learned in the ketogenic diet from a bodybuilding standpoint and it's been awesome.

I know I'm kind focusing on qualities of the things we're talking about here but I really do feel like it is important but are there certain qualities you think people have to strive for to have, to be a bodybuilder, To move in that direction.

Cause there's weightlifting, but then there is bodybuilding, right? Like, well, actually let's take a step back. What's the difference for you between body building and weight lifting?

Well, bodybuilding is more of like an art, I guess. I don't want to ruffle any weightlifters feathers here because they may take offense. But like with weightlifting, the goal is to lift the most amount of weight, like powerlifting.

You want lift as much weight as possible. So in doing so, you'll shorten the range of motion and you just focus on lifting that weight. You don't really put any thought towards what your physique looks like in the process.

And there's totally a place for that, like I like lifting heavy as well. But with bodybuilding, it's more like an art form, you're a sculptor. You see your physique, what's lagging, What's overdeveloped, and you try and sculpt that to the image in your mind.

That requires different training styles, different nutritional manipulations, but from a character standpoint, My superpower as a human being, and this is both well for both bodybuilding and business, is that I'm just incredibly consistent.

Like once I set my mind to something, I will chip away at it every single day until I reach that goal. Period. I'll find a way to move the needle forward in some form or fashion every.

Single. Day. And that goes really great with, you know, adhering to specific macro goals, or being consistent with your training, being with consistent your cardio, and just working towards that end outcome.

And it obviously works well in business too, because business is a long arduous journey as well. But how do you deal with the not knowing? Like how you do deal, like how to know which path to follow?

For example, particularly when it's something that you're new at. Well, I try on air. I mean like with bodybuilding, like I tried multiple different diets before I landed on keto.

So I had done a lot of other diets, had success with them to some extent, but it wasn't sustainable or enjoyable for me. And my performance was only improved with keto, so I was pretty sold on that as the most optimal diet for body building for, me certainly.

And then like with business, I've tried multiple things too. I had several failed business attempts, i've done things that didn't work long term. But you just have to be very self aware and honest with yourself and be objective with things.

not take it personally but also like there's a balance between knowing when to quit or pivot or change direction and just like pushing through and you have to be really self-aware to know where that line is because a lot of people they'll work at it for six months and then not be where they want to and be and throw in the towel and with both bodybuilding and business like I've been doing this for years now, and the first several years are oftentimes where you're hitting your head up against the wall the most.

But, you know, the time is going to pass anyways, so you might as well be working towards something that you are aspiring to as opposed to just throwing that tile and kicking your feet up and watching Netflix every day.

Well, what do you find helps you to not give up? Because that is something I know, like when I've historically followed specific diets or specific exercise plans, I'll do them for six, 12, 16 months.

But I notice I'll hit a point where I wane. And usually it's because I don't feel the change. So how does someone in your judgment or how do you maintain that consistency even when it doesn't look the way you wanted it to look?

Well, the body is very adaptable, so it's going to try and reach and stay in a homeostatic state. And if you don't give your body reason to change, then why would it?

Because it is comfortable staying in its place. So I'll cycle through, for instance, a cutting phase. When I'm getting ready for a competition, I might be dieting down for 33 weeks long, and I am constantly manipulating my macros every single week.

To get leaner and lean and that's how I got down to 3.9% body fat and got my pro card in 23 But you can't sustain that conditioning, you know for too long So I'll reverse that out of that bring my calories back up focus more So on building muscle and I'm basically just cycling through these build building and cutting phases in a healthy manner and That provides a constant stimulus to the body that is asking it to change and and for that reason it continues to change.

Whereas if I were to keep the same calories, keep this same training regimen, not even necessarily, you can keep it for a long time, but manipulating the weight you're using, the rotation of the exercises, different intensity factors, all those little things elicit a stimulus that forces a response.

So if you are keeping everything consistent for too long, your body has no reason to adapt further. We're hearing more and more that heavy lifting is really key for longevity.

So anyone listening or watching who's not heavy-lifting, maybe not even going and doing any weight lifting, what advice would you give them of how to get started?

Maybe three things. Yeah, it's a quintessential example of if you don't use it, you lose it. And people that don' move as much aren't as active as they age, that muscle atrophies and decays and they become higher risk of falling and degrading very quickly.

But that doesn't have to be your story. If you keep that muscles in demand, then you can hold on to it pretty well. You can even build more muscles. I've got one client that's 72 years old, just started working out and he's stronger than he has ever been.

And anything is better than nothing and you just have to implement progressive overload with where you're at now. So like if you've never picked up a weight in your life, you are not going to go and start squatting 3 at 15. You have just to start with what you were at.

Maybe that's body weight movements and as those become easier, transition to machines and then start using free weights. implementing more weight or more time under tension or you know more intensity factors like supersets, drop sets, negatives, forced reps, things like that.

You can find ways to move the needle but yeah you got to constantly be giving your body reason to adapt further. What is your opinion about free weights versus machines?

Is one better than the other or they both have their place? Yeah, they'd both definitely have the place, especially for like a new lifter. Like if you're using a machine, like it's putting you on a specific path of travel.

So you are less likely to have an injury. I love freeweights because I can really connect with the muscle and feel what it is going through, what I'm putting it through.

Keto, nutrition, and the birth of Keto Brick

But I'll use both, like I use certain machines to target a specific spot. I will use free weights. You don't have to overthink. A lot of people over think their training protocol.

For the first several years of my bodybuilding career, I didn't had access to a gym. So I was using pieces of tractor equipment that my dad had in the shop.

Like you just make do with what you got. No, totally, man. Totally. But yeah, you can use whatever you have and make it work for you for sure. That's cool What so you mentioned ketogenic diet?

why why ketogenic why is it you think that that worked and What did you try before that? Man, I'd try them all so I was doing The bro diet, you know chicken rice broccoli Tupperware meals seven meals a day never two or three hours.

I tried flexible dieting if it fits your macros I never tried vegan or vegetarian. So I guess I can't say I've tried them home But i started doing carbohydrate back loading so after my first show in twenty twelve i lost eighty pounds in twelve weeks got shredded.

But I lost a lot of muscle in the process and then when I went out for my celebratory meal I want to read lobster and just eat everything man I gained.

Literally 24 pounds in a day like it was not healthy and then that kind of became the downward spiral of my sword eating so I would like binge on food and purge and I'd go three days without eating and it just became like a vicious feedback loop that lasted for two or three years.

So then I started dabbling in other diets that I could use to be more sustainable. So I started doing carbohydrate back loading, which is basically keto during the day and then a bunch of high glycemic index carbs at night, Which was good because it kind of like, you know, worked with my desire to binge.

But I noticed that I felt better without the carbs being introduced at the night. So I started doing carb back-loading without the carbs, which is, again, pretty much keto.

This was before keto was popular, so there wasn't anything online about keto, um, So, I just started trying that, just

no carbs and fats and proteins, figuring out what worked well.

And, lo and behold, my performance wasn' t hindered. I was still feeling great, and it improved my relationship with food because I was eating all real food like when I took away the carbs I Was just eating, you know animal fats and proteins So there wasn't any guilt associated with the foods that I wasn t eating and I think not having guilt with The foods was like the main catalyst for me recovering from that disordered eating tendency and You know once I kind of get that protocol dialed in was able to compete with a ketogenic approach looked great won my pro card and then was Able to replicate that across the board with my clients.

It's like, okay This obviously works people that I've worked with that had followed other protocols in the past and Were left feeling miserable their hormones were in disarray Wasn't sustainable form like I didn't want that for them because I had suffered from it as well And then when they started doing it with a ketogenic approach like okay.

This is way better I'm able to eat the foods that. I like. I feel better. i don't have that zombie mode mentality towards the end of my cutting cycle and So this is just a much healthier approach to nutrition and body composition changes.

So I just, you know, doubled out on that and then started coaching from a ketogenic standpoint once I figured all that out. That was back in 2016, I believe.

Wow. And so for the people that don't know what is the ketogenetic diet, like how does one follow it or what are the principles? I mean at a very high level, a ketogenic diet is basically a diet that forces fat metabolism rather than glucose metabolism as your primary fuel substrate.

So rather using carbohydrates and sugars for energy, I'm using fats, lipids and ketone bodies. Um, so basically I've shifted my macro distribution from a mixed diet, that includes carbohydrates to one that is very minimal of carbohydrates, and primarily comprised of animal fats and proteins.

And there's a lot of different ways to do keto. There's like a sense of keto has now become very popular. A lot versions of Keto. You've got, you know, modified keto, therapeutic keto carnivore keto lazy keto you got all these versions.

Dirty keto? Yes. I mean, it's kind of become bastardized in that sense, but at a very high level, It's basically just eating a diet that forces fat metabolism as opposed to glucose metabolism.

Now, why have you focused on animal fats? Because I think that's where the dirty keto comes in is a lot of people think, well, it's just fat, right? It's high fat lower protein.

And so then they go crazy on like nuts and seeds and nut butters and all that. They go with certain fats, but you don't, It sounds like you actually focus a on animals fats specifically.

So why? I'll eat a lot of I don't eat exclusively animal fats like all like the cacao butter and the bricks for instance is the world's greatest source of steric acid so all use things like that that are quality plant-based fats I try to avoid you know all the heavily processed seed oils and whatnot I'd more so focus on the animal-base stuff from a protein standpoint because animal based proteins are more bioavailable And it's just from an ethical standpoint, from environmental standpoint like I like the idea of knowing where my food comes from, eating animals that I know were well cared for, lived a good life.

I'm also a hunter, so I am able to make use of all the animals I harvest in hunting season. And I'm just much more in tune with the circle of life. When you take a life of an animal, you don't want to waste any of it.

You respect that animal all the more. I went elk hunting this past year, brought down an elk, I've got a freezer full of elk meat now, which is just delicious and incredibly nutritious.

But I busted my ass to get that elk off the mountain, so I won't let any go to a waste. And food waste is something I

don't have any tolerance for. So for me, it just really fits well with my lifestyle.

Like I'm eating primarily fats and proteins. I am eating the highest quality fats or proteins I can get. And I doing so in a way that is honoring the animal that I taking it from.

Where does fish fit in for you? Or does it? I love fish. My wife does not. So by default I don't eat much fish, but I, I loved fish you got to watch out for like certain heavy metals.

You want, you want to get like wild caught versus farm raised. We live in Arkansas, so we're not really coastal. Uh, So I can't really get to those kinds of fish You're not going to sushi restaurants, you know, every week.

Yeah, yeah, but I mean, shoot, man, when I was eating carbs, one of my favorite meals was getting like a catfish, going into a can fish fry with a bunch of fried potatoes and stuff as well.

But like there's a way to make anything keto now. So like the panko pork rinds, bread them with that and that is super delicious. I'm hopeful that my kids like fish and then I'll eat more fish as a family by default.

Absolutely. Where did Keto Brick come into this? Because you actually were following the ketogenic diet before you created the Ketobrick. You were already starting your path of bodybuilding.

So was this out of necessity? Yeah, totally out of necessity. Like I started bodybuilding as a junior in high school. I starting doing keto in 2014, 2015. Competed with keto for the first time in 2017. And while I was doing that first competition prep with Keto, I documenting what I eating on my YouTube channel.

You know, and I trying to find a way to streamline macro manipulation, meal prep, things like that. This was before there was any keto products because keto wasn't really popular.

So I just set out to make my own meal replacement bar that hit the target macros I was shooting for and just streamlined my meal prep. So, I made keto brick for my personal consumption, never planning it being something that I sold.

But there was several comments on the YouTube videos of like, hey, what is that? Because I like made a couple of earlier renditions of it and people were asking where they can get it, how they could make it if they buy it.

And I just kind of wrote it off, it's just something I'm eating, don't worry about it. But then enough of those comments kept coming in that my girlfriend at the time, wife now, we just rolled up our sleeves and decided to make a business with it, and that's exactly what we did, man.

So we learned all about having a certified kitchen space, We were leasing a kitchen in three hours away from us. We would work all day long, odd in jobs, drive three-hours, stay up all night making these bricks.

Our first production run, we were making each brick by hand with a measuring cup and a spoon, weighing everything out, took us all night long. We made 142 bricks.

we put them on the website and they literally sold out like in two minutes. And she and I just kind of looked at each other like, okay, maybe we should focus on this a little bit more.

So we just went all in on it, man. Like we literally just bootstrapped it from the beginning. Instead of leasing that commercial kitchen space, by the hour we found another commercial space.

We're leased in that for three years. I was living in one of the office floors, sleeping on the floor while we lived there for 3 years, then we just bought this new facility in 2020, got it fully renovated, and we have this massive facility now that we produce the bricks in-house with.

we've got a gym in here, we get the podcast studio in there, this is just part of our life now. Yeah, that's beautiful.

How do you, what's the secret you think to kind of balancing that business life and your health?

So one of the other businesses that we have is we're gonna relaunch our apparel company, and one the first shirt designs that I'm going to launch is gonna be one that says balance is bullshit, because I don't feel like there is much balance in my life.

However, I think when people think of balance, work-life balance specifically, they imagine like a teeter-totter, but if one's going up, then the others by default is going down.

And I don't want anything in my life to degrade anything else. So I've tried to reverse engineer my own life and make it very symbiotic in nature. Like everything complements the whole.

And a concept that I discovered a while back is called tensegrity. It's an architectural concept. Basically, tension and integrity. You've got these different things that are creating tension on one another, but in doing so it creates a more rigid architectural structure.

And I look at my life and I could pretty much break it into five primary pillars. So you've got health, you got wealth, relationships, spirituality, and self-improvement.

And everything that I focus on in life, everything I spend time on, fits into one of those pillars and everything benefits the whole and improves one another in some form or fashion.

Nothing is costing the other anything. Yeah, that's a really different and cool way of describing that. To me that is a balance.

Balance, long-term thinking, and vulnerability

But it's different, like you said, it is different than a weighted balance, It's almost like that tension, and they're both, That tension maintains and all lift up together.

Yeah, and there's like, there are times when certain pillars get much more time and attention than others, but in doing so, everything rises. And I feel like that's a concept that I can get behind a lot more.

In a world full of quick fixes, How do you teach people to fall in love with the long game? And I think if you figure out your actions, you've got habits in place that are all benefiting the whole.

And those habits and actions compound over a lifetime. There's no telling what you can come up with. So what I would encourage when it comes to just long game mentality is to do things that excite you for more than just the short term.

Bodybuilding is a long game thing. Business is long-game thing, relationships is the longgame things. You see so many people, you just look at the general public, look the masses and you look recommendations out there.

Most of my successes come from doing the exact opposite of what the status quo is or suggest. More than 50% of marriages end in divorce, more than the 50 percent of the population is obese.

do the opposite of what the masses are doing. And when you do then, you have that long game mentality. You get excited about the day to day because those little days ticking by, one after the other, that compounds into your reality.

I'm super excited to see how my life transforms over the long haul. Love the moment that I am in now. Grateful for it. Fulfilled by it, but I not satisfied with it.

I'm content with, but I am not done. It's just going to keep getting better and better. Wow! I love hearing you talk about these things. To me though, it has this level of confidence that I know we've kind of touched on already, what

things are you not confident about?

Where does a lack of confident come out in your life or does it Or maybe lack of confidence is the wrong word. Where does vulnerability come out in your life?

I'm very hard on myself. You know, I would like to be better at everything that I am doing. And I take the blame for everything goes wrong. I've got like this extreme ownership, Jaco mentality towards things, which I think is a positive.

Like you have this, like it's scary when you carry the weight, but it is also very empowering. But I beat myself up. oftentimes for things that I have no control over.

So for instance, kind of going back to some of the employees of past, ones that did not work out, you know, they may have some underlying character flaws or like upbringing issues or something that just would not make them a good employee in any work setting.

But like, I take that personally because I feel like I've failed them. I felt like there's something I could have done, could've been a better role model, like coulda said something differently that could of breathed life into them and got them motivated.

And maybe that's fair, maybe it's not fair to me, but that is kind of where my fault oftentimes is. And I don't think it is a fault on a macro level, there are certainly instances where it definitely comes back and bites me.

So, recognizing that I can't save everyone if they don't want to be saved is hard. You know like with family, with nutrition, you know, like you're in the nutrition space.

Some of the people that you would want, to the healthiest they could be, your closest inner circle of family are oftentimes the most hesitant or resistant to hear what you have to say.

And that bothers me. I don´t oftentimes know how to have those conversations with those people because they're not receptive to it. So that is where I probably lack confidence there.

Like if they're willing to talk, I can very confidently speak on what I'd like to say, but knowing how to make them receptive in the first place is a challenge.

Yeah, it's I mean, I think that's challenge for everyone. I learned very early on when I first went down this path as a chef and I learn some truths about our food systems, i would go to these parties with excitement and be like, oh, you guys, can't wait to share what I've learned.

And I would give the realities of our agricultural system or the meat industry and people just their jaws would drop and they'd be You know, F you, man.

Like, why did you just do that? Now I don't know what to eat. And I was like, I quickly learned. I'm like. Oh, just because I am passionate about something doesn't mean someone's ready to hear it.

and then I need to wait till they ask me, you know? And just kind of just model, model my beliefs or model. My lifestyle and. Let them come to me when they're ready and curious.

It's hard to know man. It is hard because we're all our own unique individuals. We're coming to the table with different backgrounds, different belief systems.

But you know your intentions. You know where your heart is. What message you're trying to convey. And if you simply do the best that you can with what you have, that's all any of us can do.

Why do you think people over complicate their health today? It's funny, I had a podcast the other day and I was

talking to this energy expert like on light energy and just like the energy system in general.

And it was like, that's a topic that is oftentimes like woo woo. But the way he broke it now is honestly very rooted in, you know, fundamental truths.

I mean, I can go down the rabbit hole with you on macronutrient manipulation and changing body composition and hormonal health and things like that. But when you distill it all down to its simplest core, it's like eat real food, eat nutrient-dense food.

Get out and move your body. Improve your circadian rhythm by seeing the sunrise and sunset. Things that we were all doing by default 500 years ago, but has just become so far removed from our reality now because of all the distractions that were in it with.

When it comes to nutrition and training, people spend 10 hours a day going through the Google rabbit hole as to what the best workout split should be.

If they had allocated one of those 10-hours to simply getting out there and moving their body in the gym and making mistakes, they would figure out really quickly where the results come from.

So just too much distraction, too many variables. Like just simply do the basics. Don't overthink anything, but do basics for long enough to elicit a response.

And that doesn't happen overnight. I'm curious, maybe you just touched on it, I wonder if we can even go a little deeper. You know, someone's listening, wants to live stronger.

truer to their nature, all the things you're talking about, and with more integrity, as we talked about earlier on in the podcast, what's one action they should take today?

I actually have not yet done this action, but I think this is one that would be very relevant, maybe very powerful. I'm reading a book right now, and it's from a military veteran.

And when soldiers are about to go into battle, they're required to write a death letter to their loved ones so that if they were not to come back, their friend or comrade could give that letter their spouses or kids or whatever.

But he's had to write four of these letters over his lifetime in his journeys overseas, and thankfully they were never delivered because he made it back.

But, he recommended in this book to actually write a letter to your kids, to you spouse, the people that are close to describing how much they mean to you, how grateful you are, all of that stuff with the full intention that you're not coming back.

And that's the last thing that they'd read about you from your own words. I think when people recognize in that degree of clarity that, they will die someday, it's going to happen to all us.

It really changes the way you live. That simple task would be incredibly impactful. It's impacting me just hearing it. It sounds incredibly powerful. Kind of scary.

You know, it's kind of scared. Like what would I write my wife right now? What would write in my son right? Now, you know?

Simplicity, mortality, and legacy

Well, what I want them to think of me if they weren't old enough to know me on a deeper level, but if you think about that, and live that out. If you live the life now that would be reflected on the words that you would want them to read and believe in, I feel like a lot of people would change what they're doing on a day to day.

Yeah, well, Robert, that's incredibly powerful. I want to actually just let everyone sit in that and really let that be the ending of the podcast. I just, I really think that there's nothing more powerful that we can do and think about than how are we impacting those that are in our lives now?

How do we want to impact this world that were on for such a short amount of time? Amen to that, brother. So I really appreciate you taking the time particularly so close to the second birth of your child, your second child.

I just, I really appreciate you. Um, and, uh, w I want people to find you, you mentioned you train people, You have the keto bricks. We're going to put all those in the show notes.

But you want to talk just as we come to a close a little bit about how you work with people. So that should they feel inclined, they know what to expect.

Yeah, yeah, so you know for the bricks ketobrick.com for for working directly with me I've got multiple different offerings depending on how involved people want to get.

You know, I got a book I have a free training app people can use and it's totally free if they just want start with that. Don't invest any money. Ive got master class that's also free.

But I also got the membership site where I do a weekly live call kind of like a group coaching setting. Tons of videos that walk people through this and then I've got my one-on-one coaching option if they want to work directly with me And that's all at keto bodybuilding.com Wow, what if you were to say like Like what is Robert Sykes mission?

Why are you here on this planet? How would you say that to the person asking that question? Yeah, this is you're asking some deep questions man. I wouldn't expect I wasn't expecting a philosophical talk today Hmm I'd want to live a life in such a way that At my funeral, I would be overwhelmingly amazed at how many people came in a positive way.

Not like in this, like you go to funerals, we've all been to funeral. Funeralls are weird, man, funereals are because it's like nobody knows the right emotions they're supposed to be having.

Like they are all there together, they like seeing other family members mostly. But they don't know how to act, how speak, what to do. I'd want my life to leave a positive impact in a way such that after I'm gone, people are just, you know, better for knowing me.

And then that's created an environment where they can help others all the more. Like I want it to be a celebration and I wants it be done in the way that has a lasting legacy.

I've been trying to build a brand and a business that maybe someday my kids would want to take over and continue to impact people in positive way. That's not the expectation, but if they want it, it's their form.

But basically just living my life in a way that truly means I'm leaving the world a better place for my existence. We all have a finite amount of time here, and that's all she wrote.

And we all had the opportunity to leave life better than we found it. That is what I want to do. I actually, that is really powerful. Instance or I strive to approach every every time I enter a new situation Or any really any situation that's I'm literally thinking about that how can I leave this situation where it was better than when I first arrived and I have to say that has been my absolute experience of you every Time I come into contact with you.

I Leave feeling better than when I arrived. So thank you so much for sharing your wise words. I appreciate you, man. Thank the world of you. You're making an impact out there, so keep doing what you're doing, brother.

Much congratulations to you and Crystal on your soon-to-be second child. And I much loved you guys. To me, this was a passion episode. I love what Robert does, I loved who he is, how he shows up.

And I'm just so grateful to share his gifts with our audience. You can find his podcast. Do you want to just share quickly your podcast? Yeah, so the podcast, we actually just changed the name from Keto Savage Podcast to the Savage Perspective Podcast.

That's what we're on there. Nice. Excellent. He's been doing it a long time and it's a great podcast But thank you again Robert and wishing you all the best and please everyone that participated in today's episode Please stay curious this to me.

It's been a big theme for me today is is maintaining curiosity and not judgment but curiosity really is what we need more in this world and I'm grateful to Robert for continuing to provide curiosity and entertainment and education to everyone out there.

So thank you again for joining us on the Everyday Assessor podcast. Be well.