



SuperCharged Podcast

Fasting, VR, and Fascinating Health Revelations with Abel James

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Harry Massey: Welcome to the Supercharged Podcast, where we help you to enhance your energy, health, and purpose.

Wendy Myers: Bioenergetics is truly the future of medicine.

Harry: Imagine having a body charged with energy and a mind quick as lightning. Is that a superhero? No, that’s you, supercharged. We’ll be talking to experts who have studied the physics of life so that you can have energy for life. In today’s Supercharged Podcast, we’re very, very pleased to have a very special guest, which is Abel James, who was previously known as Fat-Burning Man, and he now tells me he’s Builder-Burning Man. But for those of you who don’t know, firstly, he’s in our movie, Supercharged. He still has the number one health podcast, New York Times bestseller of one, two books, something like that. He also did a very popular TV show and he’s also a musician and a VR travel recorder. I don’t know quite how he’d describe it, but he will tell us more. So anyway, welcome, Abel.

Abel James: Hey man. Thank you so much for having me. Yeah, let’s go anywhere today.

Harry: All right, all right. Well, we’ll go anywhere, but maybe we should just start at the beginning of the bit that you’d probably find not so interesting. But could you just tell people how you became the Fat-Burning Man in the first place, and for this audience, there’s an awful lot of practitioners who listen to this podcast.

[00:01:30] Actually, a lot of them would probably want to learn from you of how you built up your following because all of them are trying to spread their helpful healing knowledge to others, and obviously you’re someone who’s done that very, very



successfully, so perhaps we could just start with I guess your initial purpose and passion.

Abel:

[00:02:30]

Yeah, absolutely. So I kind of came from, in a lot of ways, the world of alternative health. On my father's side, they all came from a farmer's family, and my grandfather was actually an organic farmer way back in the '50s and '60s before it was trendy or really a thing. They were primarily dairy farmers on that side. Still today, my brother is an organic farmer up in New York. And then on my mom's side, she's a nurse practitioner and also an herbalist. So, when I was really young, just an infant, just an infant, I got extremely ill, and my temperature would just not go down, and so during the course of that, I became allergic to almost all of the mainstream antibiotics. To this day, there's just about one that's safe to take, and so whether I liked it or not, I was kind of raised in the world of alternative health. While my mom was going to school and writing her books about becoming an herbalist and holistic medicine and all of that, whenever I got sick, which was pretty often, I would get rubbed down with weird balms and have to smell these tinctures and mom would run out to the woods and grab something to help heal me. Also was really into therapeutic touch and a lot of stuff that was not in the mainstream. So then when I was a teenager, I naturally wanted to rebel against that and was very much type A, trying to learn as much as I could and went to an ivy league school, got big loans, and then to pay them off took a job in Washington DC and for the first time in my life had really good health insurance in traditional western medicine, right? And so I went to the best doctor I could, and within just a few months, I was signed up to have a major surgery on my right hand. Also, my health was starting to really fall apart and I was in my early 20s. I was gaining weight. I had thyroid problems, kidney stones, was getting ill all the time, but mostly I just felt off. I was hungry all the time, kind of mentally cloudy. I didn't feel like myself. That was basically because for a few years there, I had been following, instead of what I was raised in, what I had read in running magazines and what I had been told from the great doctors in western medicine about what not to eat and what to eat instead. By doing all of those things so hard, by going so low calorie, low fat, zero cholesterol, high grains, yada yada yada, but still low sugar, I was always a health nut, I was the sickest I'd ever been in my life. So, at rock bottom, I kind of decided to do the opposite of that and try some experimental ways of eating that I had learned about and my older brother had experimented in for a while, and really got into a whole food kind of plant-based, no manufactured food way of eating. It's not necessarily keto or paleo or anything like that. This is years before the internet made those terms household names. So, there was a lot of confusion back then, not as much saturation of all this information and misinformation that we have now.

Harry:

Lot of confusion now, too.

Abel:

Oh, it's crazy now. But in any case, I was able to go from really feeling off and overweight and sick to just a few months later by changing my diet and not



much else, I lost almost all the weight, and I didn't measure it at the time, but it was probably around 10% or maybe even lower body fat. My muscles started to pop and I had abs that I could see and I'm just like, "Wow, how did that happen doing the opposite things that my doctors had told me to do?" I was really mad. Being that mad, and also being somewhat of a musician who had been used to working with microphones and the internet, I decided to start up ... I was blogging at first for a few years, and then eventually I started up the podcast, called it Fat-Burning Man for a number of reasons. Really, I wanted other people to have a place to learn about some of the things that I had learned, not just growing up kind of with my folks being in alternative health and farming and real food and farm-to-table and that sort of thing, but also there needed to be a space for other people who were true experts in the field, which I'm not, I'm much more of a generalist, I wanted to have a place to have for example, Dr. Perlmutter on the show or Harvard-educated MDs on the show to talk about very specific things in gut health, et cetera. So, after doing that for a while, at this point we have over 250 shows. Each one is more than an hour generally speaking, and I think to answer your question about how was I able to ramp it up and that sort of thing so quickly, well, for the first, I don't know how many years, I didn't monetize it at all. I didn't have any sponsorships, advertisements or anything like that.

Harry: You weren't thinking of it to be a business at all. It was just something that you were interested to do.

Abel: It definitely started off as a major passion project. Now, the goal in a lot of ways was to be able to work in an area that I was passionate in. There was a moment where I still had a job working remotely, doing consulting, and I was doing the podcast and also answering emails and doing just a little bit of coaching with people to help them through trying to get back to their high school weight and get athletics back. At the time, I was running marathons, so I was really acting more as a running coach, and nutrition was just kind of a piece of that, a major piece though that you've got to nail. And so, after doing that for a while, I'm not a personal trainer, I didn't go to school for physiology or anything like that, but I did go to school and learn about brain science and neuroscience was a major focus for me back in the day. So, there are a lot of things that start to, when you're a generalist anyway, or a more artsy fartsy type, you start to see the similarities between doing all these different things. So, for me, I really tried to focus on making the show a good one that was, if you're listening, you're getting high value information, and it's also like a pleasant experience. It's not boring. We're not like wasting people's time, and so that's a big thing to focus on, now that everyone is really in charge of their own personal branding. Even if you're just a doctor with your own small practice someplace or if you're a dentist or anyone in between, like if you have an Instagram account, a Facebook account or what have you, everyone kind of has their own little small podcast type thing, yeah, small platform they're trying to grow. So, it's really important I think to be nice to yourself at the beginning. Let yourself be bad. Give yourself plenty of



practice and permission to not be good publicly, and then over the course of time, it'll grow. You'll build a community of people who are hopefully somewhat like-minded. Having done it for many years now is probably the most rewarding thing.

Harry: What's your sort of tip to how you ... You said how you make it a really enjoyable listening experience, but is there anything you particularly do of how you ask questions or that type of thing?
[00:10:30]

Abel: Yes. It's always improvised. I do have a few notes of things I might want to touch on, but it's a conversation first, right? I'm here with you. Even though we're virtual and remote, it's like I have been in so many situations where I'm being interviewed and the person is just . . . and this is on some of the major news outlets, too. People are just reading questions, not listening to your answer at all, not kind of going in the direction of what comes up, because what you really don't want and what happens all the time on almost every show, especially in the mainstream, is you have all these big-time authors come on saying the exact same thing on 50 or 100 or 150 shows and they just become these talking heads of bullet points. So, if there's any hint of that happening, then try to snap them out of it. I think another big piece that's not right for everyone, but I think has really served our show and hopefully our community, is doing your best to make it family friendly. Yeah, you can kind of go into the locker room talk and drop a bunch of F bombs if you want to, but that's really a different type of show, and if you want something that's-

Harry: It's not quite a health show.

Abel: Yeah, it's not as much of a health show, and so I think it's important to honor the niche that you're in to some degree. It's like, I'm not necessarily a health person. I'm not a health expert. I'm not a guru or anything like that. Health is a big part of what we do, but I think it's important to be holistic with the way you think about all of that, too, right? You're not a podcaster. You're not a show host. That's like a small piece of what you do. You're a person, and I think we all kind of need to bring all of that back, because it's as cluttered and confusing as ever.

Harry: Yeah, it's just as simple as having a conversation.

Abel: I hope so, a good, deep, sometimes weird conversation where it's a little bit fearless, right? Because you're both on the spot. It's not going away, so you might as well do your best, and that's one of the things I like about it, because you're both kind of on the hook, right?

Harry: In the spirit of weirdness, what's probably the weirdest thing you've done in terms of medicine? Unless you want to tell us the weirdest thing you've ever, ever done.
[00:13:00]



Abel: How about the weirdest thing I'm doing right now, which also isn't that weird. So, Alison, my wife and I, we met in Austin, Texas and had been living there for almost 10 years on and off. We about a year ago moved up to the mountains of Colorado, so we're living in elevation, where it's really dry. We're at like I think today it's like 10% humidity. So I'm up here in my humidified studio with all my guitars. So, we're getting acclimated to living with less oxygen, which really took some time. To get to the level of strength training where I was at sea level up here, it took many months. I'm there pretty much with the strength stuff but when it comes to sprinting and running, you'll literally pass out because there's not enough oxygen. I felt that before doing sprints and really testing myself down at sea level, but up here, not just at 8000 but we go up in the mountains sometimes too, which go up like 14000, man, does that humble you, right? So there's that, and also at the same time, it's starting to get cold here. Winter's starting to kick in, and so pretty much every day, in fact, last night I was standing outside with my wife Alison, and the sun was going down. It was probably like 30 or 35 degrees or something like that, and I'm just outside in my t-shirt and regular small kind of running pants I guess and no shoes on standing in the ice and the snow, and she's like, "What is happening? What is wrong with you?" Just slowly over the course of time as the seasons have been changing, I'm letting myself use less clothes outside and just try to become more comfortable as if you just jumped into the ocean or the water and it's too cold at first but then your body kind of gets used to it. What I realized is it's a bit like that with the air, as well. I like to do Qigong outside, which is kind of like Tai-Chi or yoga, like a moving meditation, and that warms me up too, kind of gets the blood flowing, and so I've been surprised with how well my body's adapting to that. So those are the two kind of weirder things. I've done much weirder things. I'll have to think about that though, the weirdest ever.

Harry: I went to Colorado I think it was a couple years ago, and similar thing. I just thought, "Well, I'll go for a long walk and jog in the snow," but I don't know, I think I went half an hour out, and when I was half an hour out in just my tee shirt and shorts, I start to realize my arms and fingers were just so, so, so, so cold, and then you're like, "Oh god, maybe this is a bit risky," and you get back.

Abel: That's funny.

Harry: But it's good.

Abel: Frostbite's a real thing.

Harry: Yeah. I had frostbite before. I used to love ice climbing as a kid.

Abel: Sure, yeah.

Harry: Yeah, I was-



Abel: That'll do it.

Harry: ... once stuck overnight on a mountain, and I couldn't feel anything for about four or five months. I mean, I don't know ... very delicate frostbite where it just numbed the nerves. I mean, I didn't lose any function.

Abel: I've got it mild like that too a few times when I was a kid. It's not pleasant. It's not fun. So yeah, I think that's one good thing to point out to people who are really into upgrading and challenging their body and bio-hacking and that sort of thing, is also practice common sense at the same time. Your body is important. It's gonna be with you for the rest of your life, and frostbite can do major damage and so can other things, and so it's important to always keep your head on straight even when you're doing ridiculous, weird, and challenging things.

Harry: What would you say for ... I mean, I don't know if you coach many sick people, but I know a lot of sick people, and especially when I was sick myself-

Abel: Sure.

Harry: The thought of overly challenging or overly stressing your body like with cold or with exercise is a pretty foreign thought, but basically to regain your health, there's just this beautiful balance between the stress response and the nurture side of allowing yourself to recover from the stress to get stronger, so yeah, I don't know if you could talk a bit about that.

[00:19:30]

Abel: Absolutely. It's like exercise, but it's exercise for your senses and for your physiology is how I tend to think about it. I did not always think this way. I hated the cold when I grew up in New Hampshire, and I did not like the heat when I lived in Austin, Texas, yet I would challenge myself to go outside in the cold and run in the heat. I remember running. It was over 100 degrees and very humid in Austin, and I think I decided to run in the middle of the day just because I was particularly crazy that day for whatever reason, and it was miserable, just absolutely miserable at the beginning until I gave up ... The western way of thinking and the way that I was trained kind of as an athlete was harder, stronger, just everything bigger, right? What I was learning at the time was more eastern thought. I was learning from an eastern running teacher at the time, and I decided to try to relax as if I were in a sauna at the time sweating out everything, opening up my joints, relaxing all the sinews and all the muscles and all the tendons and ligaments, and really focusing on making it a meditation and letting my body do what I knew it could do. It can handle it. At the time, I was reading I think Born to Run and a few other cool running books that came out about the ultra running community around that time. We're talking about, I think they were running at Death Valley or some of the hottest places in the world. Talk about stressing your body or being miserable. But there is this weird nirvana that you can find not by doing that over and over again, but I think by getting there sometimes, finding the crazy edges so that you can once again



make your way back to the sweet spot, right? Because you kind of decide to be uncomfortable.

Harry: Yeah, yeah, it's just your focus really, isn't it, in some-

Abel: It is. Not always.

Harry: You're either focusing on being miserable from the heat or as you say, you're focusing on actually, it's gonna relax and detox my body, et cetera, et cetera.

Abel: Yeah, exactly. You could be really miserable. I noticed this, and it's still a problem. If I have showered and dressed that day and I'm going out in public or whatever, if I'm sweating and all sweaty and clammy, I just feel disgusting and gross. Yet, if I'm in the exact place and I'm in my running gear and I'm out for a hike or whatever, my hair's all matted, I've got just sweat coming down my face, dripping off my chin, I don't even care. So, I don't know what the answer is there, but I think perhaps that maybe we should all give ourselves a little bit more permission to act like we're on a hiking trip all the time. Maybe not all the time, but maybe the decorum that we've all decided upon, the good, whatever is defining or restraining our behavior, to feel uncomfortable when anything is wrong-

Harry: Yeah, I think the same applies to fasting or dehydration or any of these things.

Abel: Well, that's a good point. You asked me about crazy things, and I don't consider it crazy anymore to eat one or one and a half meals a day because I've been doing it for seven years. Seven or eight years, I've been doing it almost every day.

[00:21:20]

Harry: What does half mean?

Abel: Most people ... What's a half meal?

Harry: Yeah.

Abel: I always get that question.

Harry: You just get a bit hungry?

Abel: Well, yeah, but it's more about I don't tend to eat solid food or meals until like the mid-afternoon, generally speaking, and so I'll start off with some broth or a soup and some veggies or some fruit or some nuts perhaps. So, that's not really a meal, right? It's more just like I'm starting off with almost like eating a salad with nuts on it or breaking up all those foods over the course of a few hours in the afternoon, and I'll start grazing, right, in the mid-afternoon, and then I'll eat a fairly substantial but not always huge meal in the evening and usually a bit of



[00:24:30]

dessert after that, because I love certain food and I don't want to feel like I'm giving anything up or giving up things that are important to me and things that I really enjoy. So, when you do fast like that a bit more or you get into a cyclic type of eating strategy with an eating window like that, you can color outside the lines a little bit more and not torpedo your results as if you were eating six meals a day or nine, like some bodybuilders, right?

Harry:

And you don't find your stomach has to overexpand because you have to get all your calories into one meal, or you basically just need less calories.

Abel:

Yeah. I would say I eat a lot fewer calories than I used to. Some people might think that that's a bad thing, eating less food. I love it because I used to eat starting in the morning and ending in the evening and all day long, right? That's expensive. There's a lot of cleaning involved. There's a lot of shopping involved. When you eat one, slash one and a half, I say one and a half because there's only one meal that ... My wife, generally speaking, is doing the cooking ... But there's only one real meal that we're cooking, cleaning, and preparing and shopping for and all of that, and the rest is just kind of grazing or snacking or what have you. So, it really tends to simplify a lot of things, but once again, you don't just want to go running for an hour when it's negative 40 outside and start there. You don't want to fast for like seven days right now if you've never done it before. It's important to be nice to yourself and not feel like it's a punishment at the beginning, because it's really not. It opens up more freedom. If you can go a few hours or a few extra hours or even a day without food, then it's something that liberates you. If you don't need 4000 calories a day anymore, if you need half that, that's a liberating experience.

Harry:

How do you recommend people get there? They just try a fast for a day and then a week later try two days and you just build it up slowly?

Abel:

Yeah. One of the easiest ways to get started for a lot of people is just, if you're used to eating breakfast at 8 in the morning, then push it to 10, or if you're used to eating at 10, then push it to noon, and then eventually you push it all the way to noon, and that's your first meal, and then you only have two meals left, right? You have the lunch and then the dinner. And so, once you get to the lunch and the dinner type thing, then you're already at the 16-8, essentially, eating window, which means that you're going like twice as much day and night not eating and you only have this bit of time for eating that's putting your body into digestion mode. Honestly, one of the things that I've really appreciated since we moved up here to the mountains is we see a ton of wildlife. We had a couple of mule deer bucks come by today. We had a bobcat, a lynx. We had mountain lion tracks, just so many animals, so many birds, and you see how naturally they fit into the environment without a single extra thing, without a single bit of clothing, without a single bit of jewelry or wrapped food or manufactured food or what have you. I'm looking at a bunch of squirrels and chipmunks and birds out the window right now, and they are just not overweight. They're not



[00:26:40]

underweight. They look perfectly healthy, energetic. They love the birdseed, but they don't need all this extra stuff. They don't need all these products just to go outside or just to sleep outside or just to live. Not that we all need to be naked tree huggers living outside all the time, but I think we need to be able to give ourselves a little bit more permission to be totally cool just the way we are with what we've got.

Harry:

Yeah, yeah, absolutely. On that note, you were saying to us earlier how you'd just spent seven or eight months without any internet, but before I ask about that, I was just curious, how did you run your podcast without internet, or you didn't, or you took a break?

Abel:

That's an excellent question. It's not the first time we've done it. We've gone off grid, I think it's like the third time we've done it for at least eight months or a year. And so, with that many episodes over the course of seven or so years I've been recording, have over 250 episodes. And so, a lot of people have not heard the stuff from way back that might be worth bringing up again. So basically before we went off grid, we kind of prepared a whole bunch of our past content to just cycle back out and put out on social media and on the websites and on the podcast feed. I didn't post to Instagram though for like a year, a year and a half, and I didn't post to a bunch of other different places too, and I didn't respond to anything, even email, for a really long time. We literally did not have ethernet. We did not have wifi. We had our phones sometimes occasionally, but literally living up here in the mountains, we would only have one bar of service, so there wasn't much that we could do. It was half accident and half on purpose. We've done it before. We always learn something. Every time we feel like we mature so much. We go deeper in instead of being scattered more. Traditional media, social media, the internet these days is just so cluttered with gook and junk that you have to sort through, and it's like seeing billboards for bras, burgers, and bars and all this crap over and over again every day, except you're not driving down the highway, you're just on your phone. It's coming to you with all this crap and following you around on the internet, and being away from that for a while. Yeah, programming, literally programming you and your psychology.

Harry:

I sort of think it's quite ... Well, I don't know if it's funny per se, but I don't know, it's like Silicon Valley with all the coders. It's like we've been coding all the phones and computers and now it's like the reverse. All the computers and phones are programming us.

Abel:

Yeah, yeah, let's take a step back. It's important too. It's amazing because people call me crazy and they call me a rebel because I'll go 24 plus hours or sometimes months without social media, without the internet. That's crazy to people. That sounds extreme now, but it literally did not exist just a few years ago. It's a figment of all of our imaginations. Like you said, it's a little piece of code.



Harry: I mean, from a practical basis, obviously you put a lot of your stuff on autopilot and you just had a, I don't know, do you have someone doing accounts for you or someone would just handle your stuff?

Abel: Yeah, yeah. Okay, so it's me and my wife. She sets it up and I knock it down is usually how it works. She's more doing the operations and I'm doing the steering or performing or whatever, and then we have a small team of part-time, long-time employees. They're team members, you know what I mean? It's like they don't work for us, they work with us and help us out with certain things. So yeah, we've had a strong ... For example, I think it's really important to have a strong customer service department, which Apple doesn't, Google doesn't. It's like none of these big companies do, but it really matters to me, and so we've basically partnered with a team I think for as long as I've been doing the podcast, like seven years. As long as I could afford them, that's what we've been doing. I think that that's important, so yeah, you can kind of set things up and let it go out there and I mean, not be afraid of disappearing sometimes from the internet or whatever. Nothing disappears. People will be there. They'll still remember you when you come back. It's very easy to get caught up in the rat race of everything because it's all quantified, right? If you're not big on Instagram, then you better be big on Facebook, you better be big on Twitter or Snapchat. It's like, no. All of these things are completely made up. How did they get to decide-

Harry: It's a fascinatingly relevant thing for me at the moment because at our heart, we're basically an inventor, so inventing various products and stuff, but to invent stuff, any interruption, if it sends your thought off in some other direction for an hour or two, you're not inventing. Obviously the best place to be creative generally for me is on holiday, so I'll go on a boat next week. In doing so, you end up inventing all this stuff because you're completely off the grid. I've been thinking about how to do that on a more regular basis, which is gonna be an interesting transition, but one I'm gonna do.

Abel: Yeah. Once you open up the space for it, incredible things start happening. I accidentally wrote another book of poetry, which I wasn't planning on doing. I just kind of sat down in the mornings over the past few weeks and months and it's slowly but surely come together, actually kind of quickly. And to your point, when we didn't have internet, I'm like, "Well, what am I gonna do with all my time, and how are we going to entertain ourselves if we don't have any streaming internet?" Which we didn't. We also didn't have that when we lived in the Smokey Mountains a few years before that, before I did the TV show, and we also didn't have it a few years before that. So, it's like when you don't have any of that, there's all this space, and you become bored again. It's nice to be bored, because then you can make something happen and you can decide what that is, but you need the space first, and so once you have it, you can do whatever you want. So, Alison and myself got really into learning how to make virtual reality, and so for those months, I would record something during the



day or that evening and I would be the entertainment. I would play silly songs and just make stuff up and record it and we'd watch it at night and we'd be like, "Well, that didn't work," just from a production standpoint. It's just like there's a huge stitch line there, or just like the footage broke, or we need new hard drives, or it's like, "Do we even have another SD card?" You're working out the kinks behind the scenes instead of just scrolling through the feeds of hamburgers and bras on Instagram. For the same amount, a few months, you could actually be learning something and doing something, creating stuff. I don't mean to rip on anyone out there who is spending a ton of time on social media, because I consider it more something that's like alcohol or smoking where it's designed to be addictive. It's designed to steal your time and attention, so you have to be very intentional with what you choose to accept and subscribe to and keep coming back to, and you really need to practice self-defense.

Harry: You mean just from the internet or from-

Abel: Yeah. Well, for your consciousness, right? I consider my book as well, The Wild Diet is not meant to be like all of the answers. It's like enough. It's the primer. It's the pillars where you can kind of take it anywhere from there. It doesn't have to be dogmatic. None of this stuff does, right? So, playing self-defense is giving yourself credit for knowing enough. A lot of the wisdom hopefully that's in my book does not come from me. It comes from my grandparents. It comes from Weston A. Price. It comes from research. It comes from all over the place. So, it's really important to, once you feel like you have done your own research in the outside world of health and on your own body by trying things, seeing what works, give yourself permission to be your own guru to be able to realize that you don't need to look for the next big thing because we all know that we need our vegetables anyway. It's like we know what we should be doing pretty much every day. It's a matter of doing it much more than it is chasing the next big fancy thing that all the marketers are trying to trick you into buying.

Harry: Yeah, yeah, yeah. I call it the diet wars because, it's amazing all the diet offers.

Abel: An average American woman, I read, tries 61 different diets over the course of her life.

Harry: Wow.

Abel: 61 is too many. It's absurd. It really is.

Harry: Yeah, yeah, perfect. Out of curiosity, so with VR, in your experience with VR, how do you see that changing society? Do you think people are gonna go travel less because they can all be in their VR suits?
[00:36:40]

Abel: Well, that's really interesting, because they'll either travel less or they're not gonna travel more. One of the reasons I'm doing the Adventures with Abel show



in VR is because for example ... Alison and I have been traveling for many years now. We're not doing as much right now, but we've been to I think almost every single state together, usually with our dog, to over 20 or 30 different countries. When you go to all those different places, it starts to inform everything else that you do and it becomes like a steady source of content. So with VR stuff, it's a little bit different because if you haven't watched it on the other end yourself, what it allows you to do, I'll just try to explain, which you can't, but if you have a headset on, it almost feels like you're there. It's like looking through binoculars and looking around and seeing up, down, left, or right. My grandmother, who's in her 90s, has tried it. My mom, my parents. It's like, it doesn't matter if you're young or old. It's something that is highly experiential, and especially if you try it with the goggles on, it's a bit like going from black and white television to color television or going from 2D to 3D, right, with graphics. It's this whole next thing where you feel like you're there. You might even have dreams about it, right? It's just much more intense. So for example, you asked, "What do you do with it? How is it gonna change?" It's not all gonna be good, but I'm hopefully trying to do a little good there before everyone thinks that this new technology is all bad, because what it allows you to do is with a relatively small camera, it records in 360. It records the whole way around the scene. It's not just a little box. It's recording absolutely everything that you would see if you could look in every direction at the same time when you were there. And so I took it to my brother's organic farm up in upstate New York and had him kind of just go through the different plants that he was growing there and go up close to the beehives and so he talked about the bees as bees are literally landing on your head is what it would look like. So, it doesn't matter if you have the goggles or not. You can view it on a phone. You can view it like regular footage if you want to, but it's one of these things where for education, you can feel like my brother was teaching you everything about the organic farm as if you were there without ever traveling to that place. But, in the videos of Yellowstone that I've put out, you can see a lot of wildlife up close, wildlife that you probably haven't ever seen before, but prairie dogs at Badlands, gigantic buffalo, mountain goats, bobcats. Just all these different things might hopefully if someone is able to look at that, see that that's at Yellowstone or the Badlands or there's weird kind of ancient alien stuff in Ohio called the Serpent Mound. There's weird stuff in Salem, New Hampshire called America's Stonehenge. If you're in those areas, you might want to check it out yourself, and then once you go there, you hardly ever regret taking these trips and adventures, in my experience, anyway. So, I hope that going to these places will encourage other people to go there, but also for the people who just aren't able to because of money, because of accessibility, because of so many different reasons, then it gives you a little taste of the magic that's there, so maybe you can dream of going there later.

Harry:

What did you learn from filming it like that? I mean, are there special ways for camera positions and that type of stuff? Do you have it on you? Do you have it somewhere else?



Abel: It's fascinating because especially if you're wearing the goggles or the headset, then where the camera is positioned feels like your head. So, at first that doesn't seem like a big deal, but, right, if you put it at five or six feet, it's not, because that's a normal perspective, but if you put it a foot from the ground, then you feel like you're a foot tall when you're watching the footage. If you put it at three feet, you feel like you're three feet tall. You feel like an infant looking up at people. So, it's very Alice in Wonderland-y. It becomes very surreal very quickly, which can be used as an effect, but is really tricky to try to get used to. It's also one of those things where you don't want ... Like when we were filming that TV show I was on on ABC TV, there were literally 100 people there when you add up the crew, 100 people to film a TV show, right? And with VR, with 360 video, you don't want anyone there, because they're gonna ruin the whole scene. They're gonna be in it. They better be hiding or they better not be there, and so you have to do it. You can't cut it up if you make a mistake really that easily because it feels wrong. It violates your reality in a weird way. You can't switch scenes because you'll get nauseous. You'd feel like you were teleporting every five seconds or every three seconds or even every 30. It's like too much, right? It's too intense.

Harry: So the camera never moves pretty much, right?

Abel: For the most part, no, but it can. I've put it in my backpack for some hikes, which has been really cool. It can be a little bobbly. It's not perfect yet. Still working out the kinks of the technology for sure, but it's like good enough for sure for you to feel like you're there in a way that is several multiples of what video does for you. You'll like it, Harry. It's cool stuff, man.

Harry: I'll have to try it. Cool, cool. Well, is there anything else you would like to talk about?

Abel: Oh, jeez. I'll talk about anything.

Harry: That's a very open question, then.

Abel: Yeah, that one's pretty open. Have you got anything more specific? We can go in any direction you want. What does the world need to hear?

Harry: What's the world need to hear? Okay. Is there anything, I don't know, I guess where would your understanding be I guess in the last couple of years beyond ...
[00:43:40] Yeah, perhaps from an exercise point-of-view, is there anything else you've discovered recently that's really fascinating and a little bit unusual?

Abel: Yeah. I would say so. As I was saying before, I've been getting used to the elevation up here and kind of changing the way that I exercise. The grades here of the mountains, the steepness is so intense that it makes it really difficult to go on runs like I did even in New Hampshire, which was quite hilly, but certainly



in Austin, which is pretty flat. It's a whole different thing, and sometimes it's so steep that you need to use all four limbs to get up. I've been getting more into recreational, just in the backyard literally ... We have a few acres back here, and so I'll just go and climb. Nothing crazy, nothing that needs equipment. You need to be pretty sure-footed and not mess up or whatever, but doing a bit of that, much more recreationally, not running any miles. For a while there, I was doing Tabata style workouts where I would do 20 seconds of just all out intensity, usually burpees, and then 10 seconds off, repeated 10, 11 times, or it might be sprints. And so, I'm not doing that as much as I was for a few different reasons, but what I'm doing is almost every day with my dog, whether it's in the morning or in the afternoon, I'll just do one sprint up the hill to get my blood flowing, usually when I need to take my dog out to go to the bathroom. I'll just run up the hill until I'm out of breath and that's it. What I noticed is that even though I'm doing much less exercise technically, certainly a lot less intentional exercise, my body composition has about stayed the same. If anything, I may have gained a bit of muscle, but that's because of diet. If I've learned anything, it's that being active is very useful. Being strong is very important I think to your overall health and longevity and vitality and confidence. Not outrageous strength, but enough strength for you and what you do. Keeping that a priority is really important. But once you kind of get in the habit of maintaining your strength in one way or another, maintaining your recreational physical activity outside, and doing some things that challenge your body but not necessarily being super disciplined about it or super intense about it, even if you dial that down, your body might amaze you by just kind of still being in the shape that you need to be in to do whatever you're doing, because these mountains are really intense. It's just my psychology is a little bit different. Also, don't ever feel like you need to stay in the same routine because whatever starts out serving you will not serve you anymore if you just stay religiously attached to that thing. You need to be open to experimentation always.

[00:47:30]

Harry: I guess that would be a good summary really, but what would be your sort of three top tips just for a happy, healthy life?

Abel: Number one, give yourself that space. You could fill it with meditation or illustrating, coloring, drawing. Whatever you loved to do when you were a kid that you forgot that you loved, like make some space for that. Writing, geometry, doing math, playing basketball, any of those things, don't give it up just because you're adults or just because you're busy. Make some space for it. Number two, get health down. Get the basics of it. Know enough so that you can, if you want to, lose weight, if you want to, gain muscle, if you want to train for a marathon or do something small or whatever, I think it's important to have the confidence to be able to use your body as an instrument to get to cool places, whether it's the top of a mountain or going swimming someplace. That's why our bodies are here, not to be stuck in these rooms and to be stuck in cars and just all these enclosed areas are subhuman. They're very close to cages, and so get out of whatever cage life is trying to put you in. Then, number three, I



would say imagine what it is you want for your own life. Start with one day. I think this is really helpful, and I do this every day. I have a small notebook that's just really a notepad, not much bigger than a Post-It note really, where I write down the things that I wish to do that day. I don't have to do them all, but it's just this tiny piece of paper. If you can just set up what is that day that would be the best if it happened to you, just fill it up with whatever you want. If there are long-term [crosstalk 00:49:08]. Yeah, and then just do it that day literally, but you have to make the space first, right? A lot of people say, "I don't have the time." Okay, okay, but if you have the time for Instagram or Facebook or Twitter or anything on your phone-

Harry: You've got at least an hour or two a day.

Abel: Well, yeah. Shut your phone off for one day and then you have hours. You have hours to do whatever you want, and that is really uncomfortable at first. You may have to deal with some demons at first that pop up.

Harry: Yeah, it's quite interesting, because I leave my phone pretty much all the time on standby until I want to call someone, and then I take it off.

Abel: Yeah.

Harry: But it is interesting educating friends and other people, because they just think you're ignoring them. They're like, "Why do you never answer when I ring?" Well, that's because that's the only way I can do a creative piece of work. I have to leave it off.

Abel: Yeah, but once they hear that, they may not like it at first or be put off-

Harry: People are fine when it's explained.

Abel: They understand, and then oftentimes they'll come over and try it out themselves. I think if we're all okay doing that, then we'd all be a lot better off. We don't need to guilt each other into being on Facebook all the time. That's really horrible for humanity.

Harry: I know. We need a Facebook limit.

Abel: We do. I know that someone will come and eat their lunch eventually because creators and the people who are on the other end listening and watching and what have you, I think there is enough frustration with Facebook, YouTube. We're censored on the major platforms, and I don't like that. I think it's a big problem, especially when you look at a lot of the things that are pushed out big time that get tons of views and what have you, and all the paying for followers and paying for views. People just don't realize-



Harry: Something I heard the other day, which was pretty rad. So you know Josh Axe?

Abel: Yeah.

Harry: Yeah, so I think he had ... I don't know if I've got this right. I think he was getting about 30 million visitors a month to his website and about four months ago, it was knocked down to a million or a million three from Google's new algorithm. But anyway, it was some update to the algorithm which basically just pushed down all the holistic, integrative, alternative sites to keep up the pharma crap.

[00:51:40]

Abel: Yeah, exactly.

Harry: That's just a tweak in code. It's not from what people are wanting or from SEO. It's just a tweak in an algorithm.

Abel: Exactly, and so that's a really interesting point, because my videos have been taken down for no reason. Some have been taken down because they're my own songs and YouTube won't let me play my own ... It's really, really insane. And so, yeah.

Harry: Well, what's their answer of taking down your own songs, or they don't give you one?

Abel: They don't give you one and they don't have a customer service department, right? We have millions of views or listens on almost all these platforms, and we don't have a single person we can talk to when there's an issue that comes up, when we're censored unfairly or when none of our videos have views for no apparent reason, or when they put advertising for all these scammers on our videos, they don't even tell us. They certainly don't pay us. I don't allow monetization on any of the videos, and if they're on, it's because Google is pulling some crap. It can be frustrating for sure. I'm not sure how many people are aware of that, because it looks from the outside in like the internet and social media's working just fine, right? It looks like everything that's there is supposed to be there because what's at the top is the most important. No. What's at the top is the most manipulated and paid for at this point. It used to be a bit different in a lot of cases, but it's so over the top now that it's a bit tough to know how to navigate. So I think for anyone who's feeling overwhelmed by all this, there's no shame or harm and you shouldn't feel any guilt just dropping out. Just turn it off for a little bit. Read a book. Listen to your favorite music. You-

Harry: Book stores are great because you can wander around the shelves and then you can just explore all these different options whereas you don't get that on Amazon because it's always recommends, recommends.



Abel: Yeah, and you'll find literally like probably five fake Abel James or Adel James or Adel Jones or Abel, with pictures that look almost like me. You'll find them before you even find me on most of these platforms, and that's how absurd it is now. We need some accountability, especially if we're all gonna be assuming that this is our brain that has all the knowledge in the world that we're carrying around with us all the time, which, it's just not a fair assumption to make. I can see why people would say that, but it's just a BS device now. It's important to not take everything so seriously on it anymore. Turn it off.

Harry: Yeah, turn it off.

Abel: It's pretty funny. Alison, she's just like, "Wait a sec, so you go on all these shows on the internet and on social media, and you tell people to get off the internet?"

Harry: Yeah. That should be a beautiful ending for the podcast. Now once you've listened to this, log out and never listen to another one.

Abel: By the way, you can check out all my websites. Yeah, it's funny how it all works, but I think it's important to get that message out there. It really is. You don't have to be a zealot about it. I mean, I'm still on these platforms, but we don't need any of them.

Harry: Do you want to give out your websites, on that little reminder?

Abel: So if you do want to find me on social media, it's under Adel Jones. No, it's Abel James, A-B-E-L James. You can go to AbelJames.com and we post all of our videos and VR for free there at A-B-E-L James.com, except for the health podcast, which is at FatBurningMan.com. So if you're into the nutrition and health stuff, definitely go to FatBurningMan.com. Check that out. If you want to see some of the music, some of the virtual adventures and poetry and other things like that, go to AbelJames.com.

Harry: Perfect. Well, thank you very much, and yeah, that was great.

Abel: Right on. Thanks so much for having me and thanks for listening.

Wendy: Please keep in mind that this podcast is not intended to diagnose or treat any disease or health condition, and is not a substitute for professional medical advice. Please seek a medical practitioner before engaging in anything that we suggest today on the show.

