

# Eating Skills and Emotional Eating with Josh Hillis

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you can play guitar every day and get better at playing guitar. You could play guitar three times a week and get better at playing guitar, right? You don't have to practice an eating skill, every single meal, or every single day to get better. You just have to practice consistently.

**Debbie Sorensen:** That was Josh Hillis on psychologists off the clock.

**Diana Hill:** We are four clinical psychologists here to bring you cutting edge and science-based ideas from psychology to help you flourish in your relationships, work and health.

**Debbie Sorensen:** I'm Dr. Debbie Sorensen, practicing in mile high Denver, Colorado, and coauthor of ACT Daily Journal

**Diana Hill:** I'm Dr. Diana Hill coauthor with Debbie on ACT Daily Journal, and practicing in [00:01:00] seaside Santa Barbara, California.

**Yael Schonbrun:** From coast to coast, I'm Dr. Yael Schonbrun, a Boston- based clinical psychologist and assistant professor at Brown University.

**Jill Stoddard:** And from sunny San Diego, I'm Dr. Jill Stoddard author of Be Mighty and The Big Book of ACT Metaphors.

**Debbie Sorensen:** We hope you take what you learn here to build a rich and meaningful life.

**Diana Hill:** Thank you for listening to Psychologists Off the Clock!

I am here with Katy Rothfelder there who is our dissemination coordinator, and we thought we'd bring her on because we talk a lot about Praxis, how Praxis sponsors this podcast they've, offer online, continuing education for

professionals, everything from DBT to act training to compassion focused therapy and Katie's had some personal experience with practice that I think would be helpful for you to all learn.

**Katy Rothfelder:** [00:02:00] Yeah Diana. And I started out with Steven Hayes act immersion program, and that was really my first chance to get, you know, really in the act. And then since then I've had these kind of on-demand course opportunities., the one that really sticks out to me is Lou Lasprugato's feedback, enhanced act course, which was this. Beautiful mix of instruction for really difficult act concepts. And then in-depth learning with practice. that grew my muscles as a brand new clinician.

**Diana Hill:** so if you are interested in taking a Praxis course, go ahead and go to our website off the clock, psych.com and we have a discount code for you for some of the live courses, check them out. Praxis, continuing education.

**Jill Stoddard:** Hey listeners. If you've loved learning about acceptance and commitment therapy on the podcast, and you're a clinician who wants to incorporate more act into your clinical work, I have just the training for you. I'm offering my breakthrough act techniques and experiential exercises, a clinical roadmap to help clients overcome psychological distress through PESI.

This is an on-demand training that you can access at my website. Jill starter.com/. [00:03:00] Learn. This is an interactive way to really bring your clinical work, especially your work with act to the next level. You will get six CES and I hope to see you there.

**Debbie Sorensen:** Well, it's almost the new year, happy new year, everyone. We are excited that you're here today to listen to our final episode of 2021. It's been quite a year. And I know that for many people, you know, the end of the holiday season with all the extra goodies and the holiday stress, and then moving into those new year's resolutions is a time when a lot of people take a look at their health habits.

And maybe want to do a little work around. They're eating behaviors, healthy eating habits, and also around getting a little bit more active and physically fit. So I'm here today to introduce an episode with Josh Hillis and Josh is someone who really bridges the areas.

Fitness. He's a personal trainer has been for a very long time and [00:04:00] psychology and he uses evidence-based psychology as a way to kind of bridge

the two and say really help people who might not find the traditional fitness world very workable in their lives. And so I'm here today with Jill to introduce this episode.

Jill, what did you think.

**Jill Stoddard:** Well, Debbie, I loved this episode. First of all, I found Josh to be just such a positive presence. I thought, oh, I need him to be my coach. He just seems like he'd be so motivating. So enthusiastic. Um, and I appreciated so much of what he talked about. I have not read his book yet, but the whole time I thought, oh my gosh, I need to, I need to go buy this book and read this book.

Right. And what I think I appreciated most was his discussion around using guidelines, not rules and the importance of flexibility. And I think the reason that spoke to me, I mean, I can relate so much to all of this, but, um, you know, I feel like when we set really rigid rules about what we think we [00:05:00] should be doing, and a lot of that's based on, you know, culture, and like you said, like the fitness industry and diet culture, But when you break a rule, I think that leads to, you know, guilt and feeling like you're a failure and creates so much internal struggle, that it makes it much more likely, you know, one of the things you guys talk about is emotional eating.

And so I think it actually makes us more vulnerable to, to emotional eating and can really just kind of create. Cycle, you know, that's fueling itself versus when you have guidelines and flexibility. I think.

it's so much easier to maintain and persevere.

**Debbie Sorensen:** Yes. I love that. It's not so rule based it's because it's guidelines and skills. It's very compassionate, flexible. It's not so harsh and rigid where you feel like you have to follow it just right. And it's a major change maybe from where you're at now. And if you don't follow it just right. Forget the whole thing.

And Jill, I know this idea of [00:06:00] eating skills fits with something you've been doing for a little while.

**Jill Stoddard:** Yes. It was something that I, that I thought about as he was talking that I thought, oh, I'm actually practicing some of Josh's eating skills without even realizing it. Um, and you know, he talks a lot about the importance

of recognize. Hunger and satiety cues. And in order to be able to do that, skillfully, basically you have to slow down and create more awareness.

And so I have this acronym that I use, it's eat E a T S and the E stands for extra mindful. So pay attention and be aware. The EA has always sit and that came from, you know, if I'm preparing my kids dinner and I'm like picking off their plates, even though I'm not hungry, it's just something I'm.

Mindlessly, um, T is for times down. So put my fork down in between bites, which he specifically talks about in the episode. And then the S is just slow down slowly. And so this acronym is my reminder to just sort of be aware, slow down. And that allows me to really [00:07:00] tune in more to. My body, you know, like, am I hungry?

Am I full? What is it that I'm? Um, well, let's just do that to tune into my body. Am I hungry? Am I full, et cetera. So I think that mapped on really nicely to some of Joshua's eating skills.

**Debbie Sorensen:** It is perfect. Overlap with the actual skills. And it it's really based on this idea that these are skills we work on over time. And sometimes maybe we don't and that's okay, but you can always get back to it. It doesn't have to be so rigid.

And I think this is where it's a little bit. Sustainable in terms of maybe new year's behavior changed, because I think often people go a little overboard with how they're going to change everything and they get into something that's a little bit rigid and rule-based, but then if they don't do it perfectly, they give up on the whole thing.

And this is just more sustainable over time, which I love. And I think that, um, for me, one of the things that I've loved about Josh's work, I'm just working. Getting more physically active. I think I got a [00:08:00] little too sedentary during the shutdown phases of the pandemic. Just,

**Jill Stoddard:** we all did

**Debbie Sorensen:** Right. I was not one of those people who coped by like over-exercising right.

**Jill Stoddard:** And I think even the fact that none of us were, you know, like so many people are working from home where, you know, when we were in

lockdown, even just the amount that we were walking to and from our office or in and out of target, or, you know, there were so many ways we were moving our bodies that we suddenly weren't anymore.

So it was, you know, it, wasn't just a matter of not going to the gym. I think we all became more sedentary and in a number of ways,

**Debbie Sorensen:** Right. You're just sitting at your computer so much of the day. So many of us who, who tele work. Um, yeah, absolutely. And I think for me, Josh's work has really helped me. First of all, at a very practical level, come up with some doable, simple exercises. I can really easily embed into my daily life, but then also just overcome some of the.

Challenges where even if, maybe like last night I did exercise for 30 [00:09:00] minutes, but I didn't really feel like it. I was not really in the mood. And yet I was able to kind of have a little bit of willingness and go ahead and do this thing. That was hard. And I think, um, it's, it's motivating because it's flexible in that regard too, right?

Like we're not always going to have two hours to go to the gym and back, but we can still find ways to be. Active in our daily lives. And then when we don't, we don't and that's okay too. We're flexible about that. And then we just get back to it when, when we're able to,

**Jill Stoddard:** Absolutely.

**Debbie Sorensen:** Okay. Well, happy new year, everyone. And enjoy the episode.

Our guest today, Josh Hillis has a unique background bridging fitness and psychology. Josh, thank you for being here today.

**Josh Hillis:** Oh, thanks for having me. This is super fun. This super exciting.

**Debbie Sorensen:** Just saying when we jumped on, we feel like we know each other, cause we've both followed each other stuff. We were in some professional groups together and that kind of thing, but this is our first time actually meeting. So it's kind of fun,

**Josh Hillis:** That's

**Debbie Sorensen:** fun to have this medium person. So Josh started out [00:10:00] as a personal trainer in 2004.

Is that correct? Okay. And is the creator and head coach of GMB Fitnesses eating skills program. and is back in school now at metropolitan state university of Denver to study psychology and doing a thesis on contextual behavioral science and emotional eating. So we're definitely going to ask you about emotional eating today, Josh.

Um, he won the psychology departments, promising teacher of the year award as a TA. Yeah, and just work has been featured in the Los Angeles times USA today. Men's health, the Denver post and. he's also been writing a blog since 2007 and has some great posts on social media and Josh you're the author of two books and your latest book, which I have a copy of right here is lean and strong eating skills, psychology and workouts, which won the silver medal in the Benjamin Franklin book awards for psychology and is a Colorado book award [00:11:00] finalist. Congratulations. That's awesome.

**Josh Hillis:** Thanks.

**Debbie Sorensen:** Um, and is it true that you're already kind of planning on another book down the road?

**Josh Hillis:** Yeah. Yes. Um, yeah, there's going to be another book on specifically about emotional eating.

**Debbie Sorensen:** okay. Are you working on that now? When's that coming out?

**Josh Hillis:** Um, of kind of, sort of, um, it'll, it'll be a couple of years there's, there's some things that I want to do first there's um, yeah, there, there are some things I want to do first. I'll I'll I'll leave it at that.

**Debbie Sorensen:** Okay. I get that. Cause when I read your bio and I think about all the different things you're doing, I think, oh, you must be busy.

**Josh Hillis:** I am busy. I do a lot of things.

**Debbie Sorensen:** One of the things that's really interesting to me about your work Josh, is that you kind of bridge these two worlds, right? The fitness world

and the psychology world. And I know some people, you know, in psychology who study health behavior change and that kind of thing.

And I know some people who are more in the [00:12:00] fitness world and personal trainers, but rarely do I meet a person that kind of bridges those two.

**Josh Hillis:** Yeah. That's, that's what I'm, that's what I'm trying to do. I think, I think that. I think that we can have a much, uh, kinder and more effective fitness industry. If we brought in a little bit of little bit of modern psychological theory,

**Debbie Sorensen:** Well, how has it been helpful to you to have, you know, you've been doing this work and in personal training and fitness for a long time, how has your psychology, expertise been helpful to you in your work?

**Josh Hillis:** Oh, it's, it's, it's been, it's been essential, right? um, like I started studying psychology because, um, I wanted to make a difference for more people. Right. When I, when I started as a personal trainer, I worked for a company that gave, um, that gave meal plans to, uh, that had a registered dietician put together meal plans and give that to the clients.

And, and we tried to, um, have people [00:13:00] follow that, you know, and count calories and all that kind of stuff. And it worked for a small percentage of the clients we got and it didn't work for a lot of others. And, um, none of us really knew why, you know, like, uh, actually very, very few people there were even like asking the question of like, why can't we help more people?

They were kind of like, how do we get rid of the people we can't help faster. But I was like, I was like, how can we actually help these, you know? And, um, and that's when I started looking into like better coaching practices and, uh, a friend of mine's like, what are you doing is kind of like motivational interviewing.

And I'm like, what's that? And they're like, oh, this is kind of like this. And I'm like, oh, what's the self-determination thing. And realizing that like, oh, if I, if I get really good at supporting clients, autonomy, competence and relatedness, um, they actually saw a lot of this stuff out for themselves.

And so it was like, it was kind of a matter of necessity, The fitness industry is really good at making a difference for like a really small slice of people. [00:14:00] And, um, we need to get at least a little bit into, into, behavior and intrinsic motivation if we want to, if we want to help more people.

**Debbie Sorensen:** Well, I think that's really important. And I think we will talk a little bit more about what is helpful as we go through this interview. Um, I just, I kind of want to break this down a little bit more because you've been pretty open in social media and podcasts interviews about how your practice and your thinking around this has changed

Could you kind of walk us through like where you started and where you are now?

**Josh Hillis:** yeah. So, um, so, so like I was saying, when, when I started, I was, I was with a company that was giving out meal plans. Right. And I started with having people count calories And, and that, that worked for some people. And then like clients were bringing like, Hey, I want to try this diet.

And I'd be like, oh, okay. Like, I couldn't recommend diets, but clients always brought in diets that they wanted to do. And, um, so I got to see a lot of clients do a lot of diets and see like, okay. So then if that makes any difference, [00:15:00] um, you know, like, just, just even anecdotally, like this was before I got into the research.

None of the differences between diets made a difference. It was pretty clear just looking at my clients that like the people that can follow a diet. can follow a diet and it doesn't matter which one. And then everyone else struggles with that. And so I started looking at okay, what, like, what is making a difference for people?

And at the time I was framing it like habits. And I was like, okay. So , if, if they're keeping us food journal, like here's where they're hitting obstacles, how do we like pull out the habits that will make a difference? And I started getting really, to habits and I started getting really into like obstacle planning and, um, that helped also, but even, even framing it in terms of habits still gave people this kind of like perspective.

Like they were either climbing or sliding, like they were all either like, like on their habits or off their habits. And, um, and eventually that's why I got to skills. Cause like, um, my original background was teaching movement and I was like, what we're doing is actually [00:16:00] more like a skill like this.

Learning guitar than it is like following a rule or even, or even like building a habit. Right? like being able to check in with my own hunger and fullness cues

is, uh, like that's a, that's a skill. And so that's, that's kind of how I got here. And then, and then, uh, Just again, like all of the stuff on, um, on motivation.

Like when I started off in the beginning, like I thought that like goal setting was how motivation worked and, and, uh, like kind of silly things about people finding their why, or even clients would be like, Hey, I want to reward myself or punish myself. Like, does that sound cool? And I'm like, I don't know.

Um, and, um, That's wh that's when I really started getting into like self-affirmation theory and loves the motivation, realizing like rewards and punishments over here, and like values are over here and there's this continuum than the line. And, um, and that's, that's kinda how I got to here was, um, bouncing off a lot of things that didn't work and trying to pay attention to what did work.[00:17:00]

And then, um, and then about 10 years ago, when I really started reading a lot of research and textbooks and. When I realized I did go to school for psychology and

**Debbie Sorensen:** you kind of realize there was a lot of knowledge out there that could be applicable. and

that's where I think being that bridge is so helpful because I think that, and honestly, you know, you're usually on fitness podcasts and that kind of thing. And here you are in a psychology podcast and. That the things that the two have to offer each other is so interesting.

**Josh Hillis:** yeah.

**Debbie Sorensen:** So in your, because I think as a psychologist, I've learned more about some of your stuff literally on how to do weight training

**Josh Hillis:** Oh, yeah.

**Debbie Sorensen:** the eating skills themselves, which are so helpful. Um, but I want us to, to acknowledge something here that I I'm just, I want to hear your thoughts on this because honestly, when we talk about things like.

Weight loss and dieting and that kind of thing. This is a very divisive

topic. People are very opinionated. On the one hand, we have diet culture kind of rigid [00:18:00] dieting rules and really an emphasis on weight loss. But on the other hand side, there's this more like, you know, antidiet, body positivity movement and they're very.

Very polarized. So where do you come into this? And what's your stance related to that? And honestly, I'll just say really quickly, like we've had people on the podcast talking about health behavior change and, and habits, and that kind of thing kind of are on different places on that spectrum,

**Josh Hillis:** Oh yeah, yeah,

yeah. yeah. Um, so I love that you said spectrum, which is something that doesn't get acknowledged and, um, and it's actually like a big hole in the research and is actually what. One of the things that I'm trying to do, some, some Rachel research on right now. Um, but, um, yeah, so like, like on one side we've got intuitive eating and health, any size and our side we've got like rigid dieting and like straight up fatphobia and, um, I think that the thing that the [00:19:00] thing that we need to acknowledge is that um, that it's it's population dependent.

There's a sliver of people that actually do really well with rigid dieting. It's small, but that exists. And so, and I always like to say that because. A lot of times people have a friend that does well with that. And then there's other people that like really should not be playing the game of weight loss at all.

Like it's, it's just not, it's just not, it's always takes them down a bad path.

**Debbie Sorensen:** Oh, it can be dangerous for people and they can feed into fat shaming and fatphobia. Yeah.

**Josh Hillis:** Totally. Totally, totally. So the other side, like intuitive eating and Hayes is, is I'm so glad it exists. So that there's a, so there's an alternative. Right. Um, but what we don't have a lot of is stuff in the middle, right? Like what if someone, what if someone's relatively grounded about, um, About body and food and they, they want to lose weight and they want to do it in a way that's not going to like dramatically decrease their [00:20:00] wellbeing.

They don't have a lot of options. Right. Cause if, if they want to lose weight, the only option is, is, is really rigid and, and often really fat phobic. Right. And so, um, what I'm trying to sort out is, um, where to be in the middle. and so I think

if, if we have a continuum that there's like intuitive eating and that eating skills are like towards that side, but they're not intuitive eating.

Right. You know, and then like on the other side, you've got rigid, dietary restraint, and then a little bit towards the middle. You've got like flexible dietary restraint. Right. And so where I, where I think eating skills fall on the continuum is, um, closer to intuitive eating.

Um, but because we have the guidelines and we've got some structure and because we do allow for, People that have weight loss as a goal. It's, it's absolutely not intuitive eating and, and that, that actually is exactly what I'm trying to do research on is I'm trying to quantify where this falls [00:21:00] and, um, the research out there is kind of limited and not great.

And we've got some hint, I've got some hints about where it's at, um, which is, which is why I think I know where it is on that continuum, but I'm, I'm trying to sort out for sure. Um, But I mean, to get really nerdy it eventually it'll take better measurement tools and like that's a whole other monster.

**Debbie Sorensen:** Right. Well, it's so complicated. I just, I want to just appreciate your stance on this because I think it's where I live. And I think maybe a lot of our listeners, I think we're going to release this episode around new year's and I'm not into diet and culture. I think it can be. I've never been into that.

And I think it can be very toxic. And I do not advocate that in your book, you actually go through different diets and like why they are not great. They're too rigid,

**Josh Hillis:** The first chapter is don't diet.

**Debbie Sorensen:** Yeah.

**Josh Hillis:** That's the first chapter.

**Debbie Sorensen:** And I've seen so many people that just, you know, it's just not good for them to be doing that for so many reasons. But at the same time, like, I mean, I [00:22:00] think a lot of us during the pandemic, I mean, we got these delicious hazelnut cookies in the house and I kept like, I know, I know they're good.

Right. But I just like kept eating them all the time, but it was like, why am I doing this? You know? And it's like, I do care about my health. You know, I want to be conscious of nutritious food and exercise and that kind of thing. So it's kind of like, I think I live in that middle ground and I find it really helpful.

I think that kind of, I appreciate that anything goes kind of approach to that. It is a loosening up of that culture, but at the same time, it's you know, I don't really feel like it's very values consistent for me when I'm in that place in my own life. Um, and I think around new years, a lot of people are maybe like, okay, you know, we've been through this Panda.

It's hard and maybe I'm gonna like work on this a little bit. And that's where I think your wisdom is so wonderful.

**Josh Hillis:** and I, and I love that you said values consistent because that's the whole thing. The whole thing is can we build up the skills to be able to eat consistently with our values, [00:23:00] right? That's the whole jam. And. And really when people start comparing, like what, they're, what they're at, like what their values are, and also the different areas of like things that matter to them in their lives versus like societal standards of beauty.

That's where we start, um, getting at changing behavior without necessarily going towards, um, like all that like negative diety stuff.

**Debbie Sorensen:** Yeah. It's like sometimes people change their behavior, but the reason isn't really necessarily values consistent.

**Josh Hillis:** Yeah. Yeah. They're changing the behavior because they've been made to feel guilty or they've got like their, like their self-esteem is contingent on. You know, doing behaviors that they think will lead them towards a body image that they think will help them avoid feeling bad.

**Debbie Sorensen:** right. And I mean, there's a whole, you have a whole nother episode on this, but I think sometimes that shame piece, right. If

someone [00:24:00] gets into that place like that, just, that's not a good place to be. Right.

**Josh Hillis:** It's it's terrible that the diet industry tends to make people feel like that's what they should pull from for motivation. It's it's not effective. Long-term and even if it's effective in the short-term, it's not great for your wellbeing.

**Debbie Sorensen:** Well said, Josh. Yes, let's leave it at that. And we'll save more comments on that for later.

Okay, So your book, um, lean and strong is not just about the title, right? It's not just about a body type, lean and strong, although you do have eating skills and you have some workouts in there, but it's really also, it also has another meaning, which is the psychological meaning.

So could you talk to us about what what's lean and strong means from a psychological.

**Josh Hillis:** Yeah, liens, just being like efficient and agile and pursued your goals and, um, uh, efficient, agile, flexible. I, I for, I forgot what it was, but it's it, but it's in that world and then being strong, [00:25:00] it's just, um, doing what matters to you, even when it's hard. . it's it's one of those things where it's like, can we be, um, can we be behave really flexible? Right. And can we do, um, so can we make different decisions in different situations? And are we able to make decisions, land with what matters to us, even when we are, um, stressed out or tired or bored,

**Debbie Sorensen:** Yeah. yeah. Struggling. Yeah. It's like saying values consistent, even when it's hard to do so. Yeah. But in a flexible. Yeah. So I mentioned this, this episode is going to come out somewhere around new year's. And I think, again, a lot of people really try to kind of get back into the groove with healthy habits after the holidays, around the new years.

And we know right. That people sometimes start strong, but then fizzle out. Um, what would you say to someone who really wants to kind of work on eating skills in the [00:26:00] new year and wants to be, wants it to be sustainable? What do you recommend.

**Josh Hillis:** So the, the, the biggest thing is being, um, As being realistic about your schedule and stress level and being flexible with your practice, uh, like week, week to week or even day to day. Right? So people tend to approach these things with like a very like again, like diet world teaches the sort of like all or nothing perfectionism you're on or you're off, you know?

And, um, and so people tend to, start off really, really cranking doing quote everything perfectly. Until life happens. And, um, you know, how long does that normally take three to six weeks before, like they have a tough week at work or, um, kids get sick or something happens or, or maybe it's something fun.

Maybe they have like, uh, like a, a wedding to go to or something like that. And they can't follow the diet rules in that situation. [00:27:00] And, um, and so they drop off completely and they will start again later. One of the coolest things about having a practice-based perspective is that, um, practice is, is flexible, right?

Like you can play guitar every day and get better at playing guitar. You could play guitar three times a week and get better at playing guitar, right? You don't have to practice an eating skill, every single meal, or every single day to get better. You just have to practice consistently. So, um, someone, when they're super excited, super stoked about it, beginning of the year, they might practice their eating skills.

Two meals a day, you know, and they might practice like four at a time. And, um, and then, you know, somewhere, let's say week six, something comes up or even just like that excitement that started them off on it starts to fade and they're like, oh wait, this is work. Right. Cause it, it is.

**Debbie Sorensen:** It's hard, right? Yeah.

**Josh Hillis:** Yeah. Then, um, you can actually dial it back.

You can actually go like, oh, you know what, I'm going to [00:28:00] practice one meal a day, or I'm going to practice two meals a day, but I'm only going to work on like two skills instead of four, you can like, you can make those kinds of adjustments and state in it. And when people get good at like, oh right now I can do more.

And other times I can do less than, um, then they get off that roller coaster of on and off and, and it, um, it becomes really sustainable.

**Debbie Sorensen:** You know, I think that's, so I just love that. It's so encouraging. And I'm going to just tell a quick anecdote here, which is that when we were, I don't know if you remember this, but we were corresponding

to set up this interview. And I told her, I'd been trying some of the strength exercises in your book.

And I was like, I even was a little bit harsh on myself. I was like, I'm not doing as much as I should. Your response just made me feel so good because you're like, That's great that you're doing it. Like you're busy, you know, your, I see great results when people just keep at it, even if it's just a little bit here and there.

And I was so I dunno, it just helped me keep going because it's like, it doesn't [00:29:00] have to be like, I'm doing this five days a week or nothing, you know, it's like, Yeah.

I do it when I can once in a while. And it's okay if it's not like the biggest thing in my life, you know, it just, I think that that really is sustainable.

**Josh Hillis:** Yeah. Oh, I'm so I'm so stoked that that was, that was helpful. Um, but like that, that's a thing we do, like, we're kind of, we're kind of taught by the fitness industry that we're never doing enough. Right. And it's actually okay to look at like all the different things that we have in our lives and be like, oh, this is an important thing.

This is an important piece. And like, I've got all these other things that are important. And like what actually, you know, is a couple times a week and a half is like, you know what I mean? Like, It's it's people get really strong doing twice a week. Like it doesn't.

**Debbie Sorensen:** Yeah. And maybe it's not the most important thing in your life, you

**Josh Hillis:** of course it's not, I mean like, like, are you a pro athlete then?

It's the most important thing in your life for the rest of us? It's not, this is my, this is my career and it's not

**Debbie Sorensen:** Yeah. Cause I think that [00:30:00] sometimes that's portrayed, like it is the most important thing. Okay. So, um, tell me about emotional eating, which we've, we've alluded to a couple of times and you're doing some research on this and I just think this is really important. Um, I was

going to ask you what is emotional eating as if I don't know from like, of course I do it.

Right. Um, but like, what do you think? I mean, how can people. Be aware of emotional eating. And what do you recommend around that? I mean, I think most people have a sense of it because we've all probably done it from time to time. Right.

**Josh Hillis:** Yeah. Oh yeah, we'll do it. Like, it's actually an important question because a lot of people still think about it in terms of. Right. And it really doesn't have a lot to do with food. Um, it's, it's just a matter of like having an uncomfortable internal experience and wanting to avoid it. And food becomes the go-to way to do that.

That's [00:31:00] it? You know, like you have some thoughts that are uncomfortable. You have some emotions that are kind of low. You have like, you know, and, and, and food actually really works. Food works really well.

**Debbie Sorensen:** Yeah, pizza at the end of a stressful day, or, you know, my hazelnut cookies when I'm bored at three o'clock. Right? Yeah,

**Josh Hillis:** it totally works. So the trick is, it's just, um, it's actually even fine to do. You're allowed to emotionally eat. It's a, the issue is when it becomes our, our only coping strategy. Right? So if it's, if it's our go-to, then we end up eating a lot more than we want and that we need. And it's, it's one of those things where, when we start sort that out, then people can get like, oh, you know what?

Like the chocolate chip cookies, my kids bake, I want to eat, but the chocolate chip cookies, um, that I eat after my, you know, after this project was really stressful. Like maybe I actually don't want it. Maybe I want to find some other ways of coping with that. Um, and so [00:32:00] then we look at like, how, how do we, how do we be with those?

Right? Like, like how do we be with those internal sensations? How do we, um, The game we start playing is can we notice our thoughts is just thoughts. Like we're watching them on TV. Can we notice that emotions changed? Like the weather in its own time? We don't have any control and like, can we make space for that?

Um, and, um, can we, can we just notice that like it's, it's 100% entirely normal to crave delicious food and, um, can we let those cravings like build and crest

and, and fade and, um, And so we always look at emotional eating, uh, three ways there's um, you know, like, like what are the, what are the cognitive strategies for being with it?

Like, can I accept it? Can I normalize it? Can I learn how to notice it and get a little bit perspective on it? And then there's the self-care perspective, which is like, do I just need a little bit of self care right now? Like am I, am [00:33:00] I having the muffin because I really need a break. Could I just take a break because humans need breaks sometimes.

Um, and then the third way is actually both. Can I notice and be with it and allow it to be there and take care of myself just because humans need to be taken.

**Debbie Sorensen:** Yeah. I love that. Such a good example of how you kind of build in the psychology. And I know we both share an interest in acceptance and commitment therapy and contextual behavioral therapy. And I think when I have a client that's really in a pattern of that and there does tend to be shame around it and, you know, guilt, but it's, it's that sitting with discomfort, it's like, Being with those emotions that you're, you know, that are driving the eating behavior, the emotional eating behavior.

It's really, it's really a tough thing sometimes for people

**Josh Hillis:** Yeah. And it, it re it like in the fitness industry. It's really, there's really a heavy bet towards [00:34:00] like think positive and everyone's shiny and happy on social media. And, and so even just normalizing it, even just like, I I'm amazed at how many, um, how many clients are just like. It's not what they've been told by other people in the fitness world that it's actually like normal to be down sometimes.

And, and I'm, I'm always saying that it's normal to be sad when sad things happen. It's normal to be frustrated with frustrating things happen strongly bad when, you know, it's normal even below for no reason. Right.

**Debbie Sorensen:** absolutely. Yeah. And I think even what you just said, that it's okay to emotionally eat. Sometimes. I think sometimes we need to build in more flexibility and more maybe awareness and intention to it, but there's no crime going on here, but that must make you a bit of a, like a rebel in the fitness world.

**Josh Hillis:** Oh, that's totally a rebel. Yeah, yeah, no, no one is saying that. No, no one is saying that at all, but, um, but I [00:35:00] think. I was just reading something the other day about, um, like just using multiple coping strategies is, is typically healthier and more effective, you know?

And so even, even, even though, even though emotionally eating is like the wrong one or the one pillar trying to get away from like, it's totally like a great tool to have in the toolbox

**Debbie Sorensen:** Yeah.

**Josh Hillis:** And, and for, for everyone that's listening. I did air quotes when I said the wrong one. I just want you to know that like

**Debbie Sorensen:** Thank you. Yes. Thank you. I can see you on video, Josh. So I'm glad you,

**Josh Hillis:** yeah,

**Debbie Sorensen:** want to be clear on that, that you don't actually think it's wrong. Well, and that's actually a perfect segue here because I think I want to talk a little bit about the eating skills and guidelines. I think people will have to check out your book to get the full picture of them.

And I really recommend, I mean, your books terrific. It, it bridges all of these things like actual exercises. Eating kind of skills and guidelines with the psychology part. So to get the whole story, [00:36:00] people have to check out, but I want to just kind of talk through a little bit about that. Um, and one thing I noticed about eating guidelines is that they're not rules, right?

They're not super rigid. Um, and they're not, they're focused really more on the big picture. Um, so tell us, let's start here. Like, why guidelines, why do you kind of recommend it in that particular.

**Josh Hillis:** So I, um, uh, I used to work with a, with a, um, registered dietician who taught hunger and fullness cues. Right. And so I did that for a lot of years and that was really cool. And, um, when I, when I split off from working with her. And I was doing my own coaching. I was like, I went back through a lot of my client notes and I was looking at my client notes and looking at like, okay, what, what am I doing?

And, and, um, and it was kind of looking at like, like, am I like, am I actually mostly doing that system? Or am I doing something else? And what does it look like? And, and I realized that, um, I was doing a lot of [00:37:00] scaffolding for teaching hunger and fullness cues. Like a lot, lot, lot, lot, lot. I realized that like, it was, it was super clear going, going through all my client notes that like I was spending a lot of time setting up ways to make it easier for people to check in with, with their hunger and fullness cues.

And that's where the guidelines came from. So it's one of those things where like, It's cool to, uh, to be able to distinguish, um, hunger from stress. But, um, in the beginning it really works to put in like a 10 minutes. Right. Like, if you want to have a snack, you could put in a 10 minute pause and, um, that gives you that that puts some separation in between like the stimulus of wanting a thing and actually deciding whether or not you're going to have it.

And then also gives you the time to check in and use and use a skill to distinguish between, you know, uh, and I like the skill with. Okay. Am I, do I feel a hollow feeling in my stomach or do I feel something else? Do a, am I hungry for a [00:38:00] complete meal or do I just want this specific treat? Um, and, uh, if I, if I pause, uh, does it build it as a.

Right. And you can actually check in, but like putting in that guideline is like, uh, some really good scaffolding for being able to learn that skill. Right. And for a lot of people, um, get it just from that guideline. Like if they pause, then all of a sudden they've got more room to make their own choice.

Instead of automatic or like another, another guideline would be like putting the fork down between bites. And that's just a way to, um, that's just a way to like, make a behavior out of slowing down eating. And it's one of those things where like, if someone's going to practice the skill of noticing when full and stopping, then we've got eat slow enough to actually be able to do.

Right. Um, I mean, w we don't have to, it really helps to it's slow enough to be able to do that. And so, like putting a guideline, like putting the fork down to be by it's mixing, it was just a scale of like one full on stopping. Um, and [00:39:00] those are just some of the examples, right? Like, um, you could eat a balanced meal, which would also help notice when full and stopping you could eat without screens.

And that would also. And noticing when full and stopping, you could do any one of those, or you could do all three of those. And, um, and so that's, that's

kind of how the guidelines and, and it it's, it's important to, um, to say that the guidelines and the skills are, are hierarchical. So the, the skills always supersede the guidelines.

Right? So, um, it's like one of the guidelines is, having four to six hours between meals without snacking. and, um, that's just like, if you're going to have a snack in there, you check in, it's not like it's not a rule, the checking in and seeing if you're hungry, still supersedes that.

So like your hunger and fullness cues always supersede the guidelines. It's just a way to like scaffold. Um, can [00:40:00] I maybe reset the default or can I give myself a cue to check in?

**Debbie Sorensen:** So I'm really glad. So thank you for that. You've you kind of integrated a few examples in there, and I'm glad you mentioned the one about balanced meals, every, you know, four to six hours ish, and this idea of snacking, because that's the one. if, when I say it out loud, it seems a little bit, I don't know, obvious really, but reading it in your book really helped me, which is just thinking a little bit more clearly about that idea of. Balanced meals, you know, at a pretty regular interval and then looking at snacks in that context, you know what I mean? Um, and there's flexibility built into it. So like Josh, first of all, could you tell us, like, how do you define a balanced meal?

**Josh Hillis:** So I really like, um, I really like, uh, Harvard school of public health, healthy eating plate. Um, and I like, like when I think about a balanced meal, I'm kind of like taking [00:41:00] Harvard school of public health, healthy eating plate, and USDA is my plate and Canada's food guide plate. And just kind of like looking at what they all have in.

And what they all have in common is that, um, half the plates, uh, fruit or vegetables, um, a quarter of the plates, protein, a core of the plates, carbohydrates. And then, um, they'll have some sort of guideline about, uh, like healthy fats. And, and it's a little bit different depending on which one, um, and for our purposes.

Uh, and, and so like, like all those organizations say that that's healthy, right. So that's cool. But for our purposes, we're just looking at like fullness and, um, it really works to have balanced meals to, to notice when you're full and stay full. Right. Like, um, to notice when you're full during a meal, it really helps to have protein, carbohydrates and, uh, vegetables.

Right. And some, some kind of fiber. Right. And then between meals to stay full, it really helps to have [00:42:00] protein, fat, and vegetables. Right. And so if you have a balanced meal, Covered. Um, and then when we frame it like that, when we frame it like, oh, this is a tool to feel full, then there isn't any good, bad about it.

There's no magic about it. There's like, we can go like, oh, you know what? Like, I can eat a meal that doesn't have half the plate, fruits and vegetables. I'm not like a bad person. It just may, I just may be a little more full if I had that. Right. Like it's, there's there's, you know, and so that's, that's the deal.

**Debbie Sorensen:** Yeah.

It's not so rigid. It's very flexible to, you know, if you're a vegetarian or if you're not, or if you're, you know what I mean? Like it's, you can be flexible with. I think one of the, let me just kind of tell you why this was helpful for me, my kids get home from school and there's that time of day when lunch was a long time ago and we eat dinner pretty late in my house.

Like for people with kids like six 30, Even seven sometimes. And I realized like my kids are not eating [00:43:00] for like seven hours in between and I would give them this kind of small snack. And I was like, okay, now I don't always, you know, sometimes it's probably not super balanced, but it's like, let's have some cheese and crackers and snap peas or something like that word.

It's actually going to help him because what was happening is everyone was getting like starving and

**Josh Hillis:** Yeah.

Yeah.

**Debbie Sorensen:** And it's like, I almost look at that now as like a miniature meal. And I think you're, you know, I'm not, I'm not saying I never snack after reading your books, Josh, but I think your, your advice was like more about, you know, just generally speaking, not just sort of like grazing around, but it's like eat something that's going to actually kind of tide you over.

**Josh Hillis:** Yeah.

Yeah. And it, and it's, it's not, uh, and, and again, like, it's not about never snacking, right? It's about like how much snacking do we do? That's unrelated to hunger or, or to our value. Right. Um, and then I'm glad you brought up your kids. One thing that I would throw out there is that, uh, the guidelines in [00:44:00] this book are designed for adults and that, um, if someone's looking at stuff for their kids, I'd send them towards Ellyn Satter's stuff.

It's amazing. Right. And so, um, kids, uh, typically need snacks. They've got smaller stomachs and they're super active.

**Debbie Sorensen:** Yeah. They're very different.

**Josh Hillis:** Yeah. Yeah, yeah. Um, oh, and then that's it. That's the only thing, like before I was talking about that, there's a hierarchical relationship between, um, the, the eating skills and the guidelines. Uh, there's actually another level, which is your values. So it actually goes values, skills, and guidelines.

So, um, you could actually eat something even when you're not hungry because it fits your values.

**Debbie Sorensen:** Like for instance.

**Josh Hillis:** Oh, like, um, I mean, I was thinking about when, um, when my wife and I were in Puerto Rico and we're walking by this place that we heard had great ceviche and we just had lunch, like not that long ago. And we stopped and got some ceviche, [00:45:00] right.

**Debbie Sorensen:** exactly.

**Josh Hillis:** It wasn't about checking in with our hunger and fullness cues.

It was like, this will be rad. Like, let's, let's do this, you know? And, um, and you know, If your kids bake cookies and bring them in and like eat the cookie is a Fetter value. Is if it's your friends, bro. I mean, you know, there there's a million different things, right?

**Debbie Sorensen:** Yeah. I wanted some examples just because it's like, this is not about total deprivation or you know, being overly yeah. Overly rigid about it.

**Josh Hillis:** Yeah. Like if, if, okay. So like if someone, if someone knows her values and like they chose, they chose like connectedness to like being connected to other people is really important and you can make eating choices just based on bonding with people. that, that matters.

**Debbie Sorensen:** Yeah.

**Josh Hillis:** Matters to me.

**Debbie Sorensen:** Yeah.

So, um, I'm glad just talking about the skills. It's interesting to think of it that way, because I think one of the things that sometimes happens is that we didn't really learn some of these skills earlier in our life. For whatever reason. I don't know. Maybe people didn't know about them or [00:46:00] just, you know, Parents who had their own struggles around this area, you know, whatever the case may be.

But I think that looking at it as a skill, like, um, so with my kids is that I'm trying to help them notice their body sensations around hunger more just to kind of check in not a big deal, really just to help them notice. Because I think sometimes we got some like unhelpful messages about what clearing your plate and that kind of thing as

**Josh Hillis:** Yeah, Yeah, absolutely. Clean your plate club.

**Debbie Sorensen:** . Yeah. So with, so sometimes we are told things like clean your plate, or we have certain, we get into some unhelpful patterns around that. And I think it's a, it is really a skill during meals to pay attention to your hunger cues as a guide me.

Am I still hungry and my full, instead of things like the clean your plate club. So what would you say to someone who wants to work on that? You know, during meals being a little bit more mindful in terms of [00:47:00] paying attention to their bodies?

**Josh Hillis:** Yeah. Okay. So there's, um, there's, there are two components to the whole clean plate club thing. Um, one is learning to check in and, and trust your own hunger and fullness cues. And the other thing is also. Dealing with your thoughts about the clean plate club. Right? So, um, so the, the first thing, what we want to do is we want to, um, actually just start playing the game of

checking in with our, um, of like checking in with our stomachs and seeing how we feel.

Right. So we can start like middle of the meal, like actually just like pause for a minute and check in and go like, am I getting full? How's the rest of food? Look on the plate. Um, Like, does this look like it'll probably be the right amount. And then, um, check in towards the end of the meal again and see like, am I getting full?

Is this probably the right amount? How do I feel it like actually checking with my stomach? So part of it's going to be trial and error. And so there's going to be a certain amount of like checking with my [00:48:00] stomach, like looking at how much food I ate and thinking like, oh, that probably wasn't enough.

And then later finding out that it wasn't right, then you have to have a snack and then you know, and other times, um, like maybe you overshoot it and you're like, oh man, I feel a little too full or, or I don't get hungry for the next meal. And so, um, So part of, it's just playing that game of like, starting to check in and then seeing what happens.

And you can even sort of flip it and go the other way and use that leg. Um, like, do I get too hungry before the next meal? Or do I feel too full and in an hour or whatever, um, to see, uh, to sort of like help you narrow, like help you learn that. Right. So, um, so there's that aspect of it. And then there's also just being with all the thoughts around, um, and all the things we've been told around, um, clean plate club.

Right. And, um, we're going to have like, it's, it's typically kind of, um, uncomfortable. [00:49:00] Uh, for, for folks, um, maybe they were told that they should feel guilty if they didn't turn their plate, it didn't clean their plate or that, um, they're wasting food or all, all those things. And so there's the, there's the logistics of managing that, right?

There's there's like, oh, could I save this for, you know, breakfast tomorrow or something like that right. Where you're not wasting it or, um, But really what it comes down to is, uh, can I notice the thoughts around the clean plate club thing and notice that they were something maybe my parents told me, cause they wanted me to get my vegetables or whatever.

And maybe it made sense when I was six and maybe it doesn't make sense now. And, and being able to like notice and expect those thoughts to come up and be

able to practice our skills and trust our body, even in the presence of those contrary thoughts.

**Debbie Sorensen:** I heard Jason Lillis who's been on the podcast before he does act for weight

**Josh Hillis:** he's amazing.

**Debbie Sorensen:** [00:50:00] issues. Yeah. And he, I heard him talk one time in a workshop about the guilt, right. When we waste food or we throw food away, but we almost have to let go of that because. You know, it's like, okay, you're going to either eat it.

Or maybe it goes to waste. But if you tell yourself you always have to eat it, it has to go into your body instead of the garbage can, even if you're not hungry for it, it's almost like, well, it's not like it really goes to some greater purpose. Anyway, it's just going into your body. So it's, it's like letting go of that guilty feeling.

Maybe next time you just don't serve yourself as much, or you make a smaller portion or something like that. But it's, it's almost like it's too late. That ship has sailed.

**Josh Hillis:** Totally totally. I actually have had a couple clients that, um, whenever they felt like they were wasting food, um, by not cleaning their plate, they would actually like make a small donation to, um, like a charity that feeds hungry kids [00:51:00] somewhere. And, uh, and so I thought that was like a really interesting, um, and that was something that they came out.

I came up with out of their own, um, Like looking at what matters to them and their own values. And they're like, well, clearly this doesn't act this actually like, like me eating, you know, this extra, right. Isn't making a difference. Is there something I could do that actually would? And I thought that was super, um, super creative, right?

**Debbie Sorensen:** I love that. Yeah. It's tied to values.

**Josh Hillis:** Yeah.

**Debbie Sorensen:** And I want to say that for people who are interested, we have also had some episodes in the past on episode title awareness training.

We have Linda Craighead on and some episodes about embodiment. So noticing your body and paying attention to things like hunger cues. Um, so you can check those out if you want to, if that's an area that you struggle with. And I think for a lot of us, we just almost override our body's cues.

We don't pay attention. You might be really hungry and ignoring it because you're busy, but you also might be, you know, full and not noticing it. So it's a skill for.

**Josh Hillis:** [00:52:00] Absolutely. Absolutely. Absolutely. And that's, um, that's a, it's a, it's a practice and we can learn and it's like, um, I like that with the workout stuff too. Where, where it's like, can we actually. And be with our body. And can we check in and then can we,

**Debbie Sorensen:** you're psychic because I was about to tell you about the workouts, how helpful. And I want to just talk to you about this a little bit, because you know, again, as a psychologist, this was the part that was unfamiliar to me. And I think I have done. Exercise, I've taken exercise, classes, videos, all that stuff.

And it never really made much sense to me. And I think with the pandemic, I had to figure out how to do some of the stuff on my own and what was so helpful. I think you helped me get the big picture of the major movements to be doing, you know, and I have my yoga mat and I. To kettlebells. And I think for four dumbbells, you know, two sets of dumbbells, that's [00:53:00] all I have.

And based on your work, I have created a little routine, you know, I do like you recommend alternating even, and odd days. And I had to kind of piece together. What's going to work for me.

**Josh Hillis:** yeah.

**Debbie Sorensen:** Um, so Yeah.

Um, I just have to give you some gratitude for that because I find it really empowering to be able to just do it.

I think on my own a little bit better and to really understand it.

**Josh Hillis:** Yeah. So what, like, what was the big piece for you that like you hadn't gotten before?

**Debbie Sorensen:** Okay.

You're going to have to help me out here, but this'll be good for listeners because I can't remember, but it was, there's like these major movements that you needed to do, right? Like kind of an upper body pull and push. Can you help me out? Cause I can't remember now.

**Josh Hillis:** yeah, yeah. So, so most of the workouts are structured around a push, a pull, a squat and a hip. And so that's, um, it's kind of like if the body's big X you've got like [00:54:00] your, you know, that that's how you hit it all. And, um, I think it's a great way to structure your workouts and great way to think about it and had all the things and

**Debbie Sorensen:** yeah,

I mean, that was so helpful to me too, because I always seem to kind of random to me, like, oh, now I'm doing a lunch now I'm doing a squat and I'm doing a, you know, whatever arm thing I'm doing.

**Josh Hillis:** a lot of more random.

**Debbie Sorensen:** Yeah.

**Josh Hillis:** Yeah, so they probably weren't.

**Debbie Sorensen:** The truth comes out right.

**Josh Hillis:** Yeah. Um, so yeah, so yeah, these, these workouts are stretched around those big moments and we've got kind of like a, like a regular shift in rep ranges. Like we'll do a different rep range every month. And, um, and there's, uh, like depending on if you're working on higher or lower reps, we might focus on like a, like an external cue.

Like you might think about it in terms of like, um, Like pushing the ground away or pushing a weight up to the ceiling. Like you're moving a thing towards, or away from something else [00:55:00] which works really well for like

strengthened performance or, um, for higher reps, we might be focusing on like, what does this feel like inside?

Like where do I feel this working, which works really well for like being able to check in with what's working

**Debbie Sorensen:** well, people can check that out. If they're interested in what I did as I kind of took your spreadsheet. I, I mean, I don't, I should like show it to you. You'll probably be amused by it because I can you see that?

Yeah, I like having an even day, even days and odd days and it's all stuff I can do at home. Cause some things are. Like for the gym, but I, I made it all stuff I can do at home. And so it's just really helpful to me and I can do it at my own pace. And, um, so people can check into that if they want to. And it seems like to me, it just simplifies. Quick story is that my seven year old saw me doing it and she's like, I'm getting a snack.

And she went and got a snack and heckled me the whole time. She's like, that looks easy while, she's sitting there eating a snack, but the beauty of it is that I can do it in my life. Like when my [00:56:00] kids are there, you know what I mean? I don't have to drive to the gym. Yeah.

**Josh Hillis:** Yeah.

**Debbie Sorensen:** So Josh, you're clearly a busy person. You know, you have your, your work, your day job as a trainer and fitness expert, and then you write these books and you're taking psychology coursework. And so you're busy. How do you make exercise happen in your.

**Josh Hillis:** So, um, what's really kind of funny is that there's how I've made it work, like most of my adult life. And then there's how I make it work now. And it's completely the opposite. Um, most of my adult life, I did the absolute minimum possible to hit my fitness goals. So, um, So really, which is, which is really weird as a trainer.

Like that's not a normal, normal way that most trainers relate to it. But, um, but like mostly, um, I've worked out like twice a week, sometimes three times a week. And, um, and I hit most of my strength goals, just doing that. And, um, and that [00:57:00] worked, um, 'cause I'm uh, cause, um, I, I w I was really

struggling with, um, find like prioritizing working out that, like, I always have a lot of projects.

I have a lot of people that count on me. Um, there's always a lot to do. And, um, working out actually felt kind of like self-indulgent. Or kind of selfish and, um, and it was really hard to make myself or to allow myself to do more than that actually.

**Debbie Sorensen:** Um, just relating to what you're saying here, because to me, sometimes it does, it's like, oh, I don't have time to do this and this and that. And it's like, it's a time. I would actually, it would be great to be doing something that takes care of me, but I feel like I have to shortchange that.

**Josh Hillis:** Exactly like exactly. Exactly, exactly. Um, so that's, that's mostly what I did was just the minimum, minimum effective dose. Right. Um, [00:58:00] and, um, the pandemic kind of changed. Um, suddenly I wasn't leaving the house as much and was just super stressed out about a lot of things. And, um, and Uh, oh, and I'm in my brain and behavior class.

I did a paper on, um, stress, reactivity and moderate exercise and, um, And I was looking at like the, and I was considering the possibility that I might be a little bit more stressful with more frequent working out. And, um, and so what I've tried, I actually shifted the entire way I relate to working out. I don't have any fitness goals at all right now, other than like basic human maintenance, other than like trying to take care of myself and, um, And so, and now I work out like six times a week and it's just a priority to, um, it's just that I realized that I realized a couple of things.

One, if I [00:59:00] put that in the world, doesn't explode. I didn't miss all my deadlines. People weren't mad at me. Um, I didn't let everyone down. Um, in fact, like tracking my productivity with things like rescue rescue time and things like that, I've actually found that. It sounds so obvious when I take better care of myself, I actually get more done.

Um, but, um,

**Debbie Sorensen:** we must learn again and again in life. Right. It's like, oh yeah, it really helps me.

**Josh Hillis:** yeah,

**Debbie Sorensen:** don't I do this more? Right. Every time.

**Josh Hillis:** basic human maintenance, who knew, um, sleep movement. Yeah.

But, um, but so like I work out six, sometimes seven days a week, but it doesn't look like how most people, I think, envision working out, um, I do, uh, like I do some hard days, but a lot of medium and easy days. And I do a lot of different things.

Sometimes I strength, train. Sometimes I do a hard Peloton. Sometimes they [01:00:00] do an easy Peloton. Sometimes I go for a walk. Sometimes they dance. Sometimes I go for a nice bike ride outside. So, you know, like I think. People tend to think of working out as like sweating and soreness and difficulty. And most of my workouts are pretty chill and they're really just about, um, me feeling good in my body. And, um, and so that's what it looks like now. And that's, um, just kind of funny, like how different it is from even two years ago.

**Debbie Sorensen:** well, it's a great model of psychological flexibility and. Um, you know, just doing what works for the situation, but also how having that variety, I imagine makes it more sustainable.

**Josh Hillis:** Yeah. So like I pick, I pick what I'm going to do based on, um, based on what feels like would be cool, right? Like, like I try and get in a couple of strength training workouts a week, just because I want to get that in. But like between like dancing and bike, [01:01:00] riding and Peloton, you know, I just do whatever seems, um, Uh, like, it seems like it'd be good on the day and then, um, a warmup and see how I feel.

And if I feel great, all rock out and if I feel bad, I might call it early. I might do super easy. I might dial back the way, you know, like, um, It's a, it's really cool. If people learn to, again, like, um, pay attention to their body and be flexible based on like how they feel on a given day. Some days I don't, I don't have it to rock out and some days I do.

**Debbie Sorensen:** well, and you're paying attention to your body's cues around when you're maybe too tired. We are, we just had an episode recently on. The laziness lie and how we've learned actually to override those cues of like I'm tired and maybe actually that's a time to take a break, but we've almost trained ourselves that like, no, you must persevere no matter what

**Josh Hillis:** Yeah. I'm, I'm halfway through that book and I love it. It is so [01:02:00] so, So good.

Um, and that, that, that actually, that actually does help. It does help with someone's like, you know what, maybe a 10 minute walk is all I've got today.

**Debbie Sorensen:** that's better than nothing, right?

**Josh Hillis:** Yeah.

**Debbie Sorensen:** Yeah.

and that's going to help people sustain that in the new year as if you are one of those people. That's hoping to make some healthy, healthy habits that stick

**Josh Hillis:** Yeah. Like, like, look, look out how you can fit it into your life and look at how you can be flexible with it and you can keep it going.

**Debbie Sorensen:** Exactly. Well, Josh, thank you. I really appreciate you coming on today. I've learned so much from you from your book and just following you, how can people find you so that they can. An eye on your, your work. That is so inspiring.

**Josh Hillis:** Um, well, I'm, uh, I spent a lot of time on Instagram right now. So if they're into Instagram, uh, Joshua Hillis at Instagram, um, I've got a blog, uh, Josh Hillis dot com. It's getting neglected as I spend more time on Instagram, [01:03:00] but there's like a thousand posts, so I'm sure you could find something useful. Um, and then, um, Uh, do you still write some articles sometimes? Cause I have that coaching program there.

**Debbie Sorensen:** great. Well, we'll link to all of this on the show notes for today. And I have to say, you know, Instagram sometimes gets a bad rap for giving people unrealistic expectations, right? Um, it's so that social comparison thing, but yours is so encouraging and just kind of more of, of what you got today. So definitely check out.

**Josh Hillis:** Thanks

**Debbie Sorensen:** All right, Josh. Well, thank you so much for being here. I really appreciate it.

**Josh Hillis:** Thank you.

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