

# 42 Years Old and RIPPED: An interview with Mark Levy



Adonis Lifestyle



# Interview with Mark Levy

And Determining Life After AI...

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## From The Desk of **Brad Howard**



Dear Friend,

Welcome to the [Adonis Lifestyle Podcast](#)!

Inside this transcript, you'll find a lot of actionable information that you'll be able to put to use **TODAY** to help develop your body for maximum visual impact. With that said, here are a few things to remember as you're reading through this document.

1. Our trainings and opinions are based solely on the end goal of creating a body based on proportions and social influence. Just as baseball players, powerlifters, and MMA fighters train for a specific purpose, the techniques, tactics, and strategies we talk about revolve around "looks based" training and not "performance based" training. (although your average performance across most all regimes will, in fact, increase as a whole with our advice)
2. "Health" based training takes a backseat as the recommendations we give create bodies that fall within all of the generally accepted "parameters" for good health (blood pressure, heart health, etc) by default. And, although we do talk about health and aging from time to time, realize that "health" comes with the package, without having to **FOCUS** on it.
3. Our opinions are strictly our own and sometimes are about as un-PC as you can get, but we'll never hide from the truth or try to sugar coat reality. Our job is to help you get in the exact shape you want, with all the BS aside. So, if you think we're a little harsh sometimes... just know we've got your best interest at heart.

So, with all of that said, dive in and enjoy. If you'd like more information on our workout systems, just [click this link](#). We guarantee you'll save a bunch of time and energy in the process.

Your friend,

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**Brad Howard:** Alright guys welcome again to your Adonis Lifestyle podcast, I am Brad Howard and I got John Barban on the phone once again. And today we're going to be interviewing Mark Levy who is one of the people on our watch list from the last transformation contest.

**Mark Levy:** Hey Brad good morning.

**Brad Howard:** So Mark let's just get this thing kicked off right, lets cover some of the "big aha" moments you had.

**Mark Levy:** Well I wouldn't have consider myself an overweight person before, I don't think people that saw me that way. From a negative point of view, the one criticism I get from a lot of people is that I'm "too thin", and they want me to "put on some weight" and initially I use to look at this with a negative overtone. Now I think to myself "you know what look at yourself" and I don't want to say this to somebody because that's disrespectful but I would say "here they are telling me that I need to gain weight when really they should be losing their weight".

But over time I've become comfortable with these kinds of comments and it's almost like a feeling of being able to be incognito, I mean "here I am I look thin when I'm wearing a shirt or a suit" It gives them the impression that I'm an overall thin skinny guy but "here I am underneath" I know what I really look like underneath and when somebody will see me at the beach or a pool party it's like "whoa dude, I never realize that's what you look like, oh my god how did you get to be like that" and then their whole attitude changes and their reactions that they have too me.



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**Brad Howard:** That's the big thing, the shirt on versus shirt off look.

**Mark Levy:** It's huge because I'm sure you mention that many times in the podcast and "do you want to be shirt on or shirt off, big guy" and on the one hand being be shirt on is pretty much 90 percent of the time, so I can totally understand people that "you know you want to keep some fat on them and look big all the time" because it is impressive. But ultimately to be comfortable with yourself, who do you really want to be? Do you want to be this guy pretending to be this big muscular guy or you want to be the person who's as lean as he could be and feel really good about himself with the shirt on, I didn't get that. I work out for years in the gym and I was a husky guy, big muscular and never really felt good about myself especially when you look at all these magazines and all you see is these guys with single digit body fat.

**Brad Howard:** When people say you looks skinny they're making that reference to your shirt on look not your shirt off look and then it's a dramatic change in their attitude when they see you shirt off.

**Mark Levy:** A hundred percent, I'll give you an example, I was at a birthday party, a friends 40<sup>th</sup> birthday party. So here I am we were just chatting the whole night and I'm talking to this person and she makes a comment again, this person I hadn't seen her and her husband probably for six months and it was a shock "oh my goodness your too skinny you've got to put on weight" and I was just a little bit ticked off by this, every once in awhile it just gets to me so I just held up my phone and just went on to the website, clicked on to the link for the Adonis website, pulled up my pictures, looked right at her

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and I said “do you still think I’m skinny”. Well her reaction was completely different, it was skepticism, this can’t be you, and it must be photo shopping...

**Brad Howard:** She was in disbelief of your own picture that you showed her of yourself?

**Mark Levy:** Disbelief, it was no way and then we pull the pictures out of my blog and let me tell you the reaction is night and day.

**Brad Howard:** She thought you were showing her fake pictures?

**Mark Levy:** Probably.

**Brad Howard:** I don’t even know what kind of statement that is about other people, I mean they just don’t want to believe it’s possible. I don’t know why people don’t want to believe it’s possible but I mean that’s just a “wow” statement right there.

**Mark Levy:** Well I was talking to somebody else the other day and at another Christmas party and just chit chatting, I mention I work out a lot and I just went on the website to show him the picture and his response to me was like “ that’s amazing but I can never look like that, I could never get myself to be that lean, you must have always been lean” and that is the furthest thing from the truth. I was never a guy who had a six pack, I never had abs always have a little bit a flop around the belly and I consider

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myself I was a husky guy. When I tell people “look if I can do this, anybody can do it” but they still have disbelief to it with respect to that.

**Brad Howard:** It’s not easy for people to believe because they tried so many things and made it so much more complicated than it needs to be.

**John Barban:** That’s a good point Brad, Mark we talk about this can you go into that, you’re explaining before what Howard just said about it being really complicated and being preprogrammed into believing a lot of junk from the fitness industry and not knowing where to go with things?

**Mark Levy:** I’ve been training on and off I guess a lot of off since I was maybe 16yrs old. So I know my way around the gym and I read dozens of fitness magazines and I bought into all the hype completely hook line and sinker, I mean you got to eat five meals a day, you got to have a lot of proteins, you got to do this complicated workouts anything that came out I will try it. And ultimately none of it works, nothing gives you the polished look that you’re looking for which is a look that’s either the fitness model or a body builder. That look you seen in the magazine is just never the look that your quite attaining and the problem is that there’s so much noise out there and there’s so much hype and you’re preprogrammed to accept these that even when the truth is staring you in the face, you don’t want to accept. I knew when I read “eat stop eat” and they talk about fasting and the way Brad Pilon explained it, then I realized my wife and women that I known in my life have been doing this all there lives and they just stop eating when they want to lose weight and it works for all of them.

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So we know the truth but we don't want to believe it and we wanted to think that we know more and we want to think that we can change it or we can think of something and make it better we don't want to accept the simplicity of it. I think on an ultimate level things should be simple (not easy) but simple and I think that the combination of the program that we are doing and the nutritional lifestyle is simple with respect with the Adonis program.

The hardest thing in training was to try to manipulate the different parameters, how many reps should I do, how many exercises should I do, how many times in a week should I train and which exercises should I do and how much weight should I use. Adonis basically said "you know man you only have to think about one thing how much weight you're going to use, we're going to take care everything else" and that was a burden that came off my shoulders because I have a road map that was set up in front of me. All I had to do was every time I went to the gym look at what weight I use the last time and go five more than that and that was what I did, suddenly it became simple. That is something that I think a lot of people need to take from this Adonis program. When you go in you are constantly pushing yourself, you're not trying reinvent the wheel, you're not trying to show that you know more.

**Brad Howard:** Can you touch on that a bit where did you get your rationale for making your own programs?

**Mark Levy:** Well we would buy the magazines and compare the different programs over the different years, I bought the encyclopedia of modern body building (Arnolds famous book) when I was 16yrs old, and by reading and practicing you find out what you like and what you don't like, so you like barbell curls "okay so we do them now, you



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like easy curls better you use those a little bit” you suddenly read a program about some guy doing an incline curl with a little twist “okay we’ll try that”. Ultimately find the exercises that you like and you do those. The problem with that is doing what you like is not necessarily what’s going to work, it’s the variety, and it’s the constant change that’s going to work. So being forced to say “ look he’s got a tate press in there, I can’t stand that but I’ll do it because he put it in there for some reason” that’s forcing a muscle to work at a different angle, putting a little bit a different point at the fulcrum on it and ultimately I think that’s what makes the difference.

**Brad Howard:** What was your reaction or how did you periodize a program, did you not even understand that concept?

**Mark Levy:** I wouldn’t even try to pretend that I understood that, I would pretty much always work in a 10-12 rep range because I read somewhere that’s kind of hyper trophy stage and that’s what I will work on. I would never work at 3-5 reps simply because maybe it was fear, a little scary to get under a squat bar and thinking to do a three reps and that’s a lot of weight. Much more comfortable thinking I’m going for 12, something goes wrong I could rack that bar pretty easy.

**Brad Howard:** Right and then 21 reps no one even thinks of that.

**Mark Levy:** 21 reps for me the first couple of times I did I was like “what the hell is this, this is crazy”.

**Brad Howard:** So periodization was just something you didn’t even know how to start?

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**Mark Levy:** I wouldn't even start, I would just take that program maybe change the exercises, use that one base exercise and change the other two to three exercises for body parts to three to four reps, I think that's going to do it. The other thing I didn't know anything about was the whole concept of juvenile muscle growth. A guy 40yrs old should not expect the results of 21 yr old, it's logical, should've know that but of course I never thought that way because in my mind I see myself as still 21 yr old, training in the gym, I should be getting as strong as I was back then and I should be fit as I was back then and that was something else I think rocked my head around, just getting back into a gym.

I probably haven't worked out for about ten years or more, I got married, had kids, and started a business, life takes priority. Going back to a gym and knowing you we're able to bench press or whatever a plate and a half, two plates and suddenly going there and you got to put on the 25 pounders and you're having a hard time, it's kind of a sad situation and it discourages you and one of the things I had to do was get it into my head that I'm not here to impress anybody I'm here for myself. If I'm going to curl 10 pounders or 15 pounders and that's what I'm going to curl and if anybody doesn't like it, well too bad for them.

**Brad Howard:** Yeah nobody cares.

**Mark Levy:** We say nobody cares but in your mind you think everyone was watching everything your doing and you're not using a lot of weights.

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**Brad Howard:** That was one of the things way back then, especially women when they would come to join a gym, they were scared about people judging them and I would say “why nobody is going to judge you unless you come in a pair of pink and yellow dotted shorts” other than that nobody cares, nobody’s even going to recognize that you’re here.

**John Barban:** Mark can you talk about what you did as far as diet goes I think we seemed to have talked the training part through but give us your insights on your overall transformation from February to now.

**Mark Levy:** Back in February when I really got it into my head, I have to get back into the gym, I had to take control of my diet. What happened was in January I went to New York to visit a friend and my hotel room just happened to be right across from the hotel gym, I saw that some sort of a cosmic sign that I better start to workout. So I went into the gym on one of those universal machines just doing a little general overall workout and my friend walks in, I think I was doing triceps press down something like that and he proceeded to walk in and do double the amount of weight I was doing and twice the amount of reps and it was just like a revelation to me that “if I don’t change something soon” I just see a downhill road going from here.

So when I got home I joined the gym and I started training. I purchased an online program that was one of this full body workout programs something very popular on the internet. I started training and I was a bit intimidated at first because I was much weaker than I remembered 15yrs ago but it was okay and that program focused on nutrition but just by eating clean foods...you know; don’t want to eat soya because of the estrogens, don’t eat trans fats, cut the sugar, cut the wheat, the basic stuff that we hear on the

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internet all the time...and I still hang on to a lot of what worked for example I don't eat a lot of pasta, I don't eat a lot of bread, I don't eat a lot of rice...I leave it in on the weekends that I give myself that outlet because I like that stuff but I don't make it a main stay of my diet.

The program worked well for a few months and I hadn't come across eat stop eat or Adonis. What I noticed was here I was eating super healthy, I would eat an apple and yogurt, I'll be having this very healthy cereals, everything was clean, no junk foods at all but I wasn't losing weight, in fact I was gaining weight. First thing in my mind is like "of course you're gaining weight, you're training in the gym, you're putting on muscle, you're going to be a big guy" this was what always happened in my life and I said "okay the weight was going up" and suddenly it started going the other way and started coming down very, very slowly maybe lose a pound in three weeks. It wasn't giving me what I wanted and I guess I came across eat stop eat through a intermittent fasting article I read on the internet. Started looking into this and I said "you know something why don't we try this out and why don't we try eating less, what a great concept we don't need to eat so much".

Because I had already developed some good habits, I don't even eat a lot of junk food, I wasn't eating anything that came out of a bag or a wrapper, I was eating a lot of healthy foods. I noticed immediately that the weight started just coming off and it was like "will it take me three weeks to lose two pounds or a pound" suddenly in a week I'm losing three pounds and I'm like "wow this looks pretty interesting". Within two weeks of that I came across the Adonis system and honestly it took me a little while, I bought the program but didn't start right away because I was enjoying this other program, I was getting stronger doing full body work outs. Buying into the whole hype that, that's what you need to do and I was saying to myself maybe I should give this thing a real try a

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good three to four months. But something told me, you know something ESE and Adonis seem to be playing off each other, let's go for it and let's try to do it and when I started the program I realized that "this is something unlike I've ever done" because we were talking about earlier the fact that the periodization is not always the same amount of reps, it's really changing and the program looked like it was designed in a way that it will really maximize the experience of being in the gym and then getting on to the podcast and really who's behind the program, that really turned it around for me because I realize that the guys behind the program really knew their stuff and I listened to the podcast and absorbing the lessons allowed me to really apply the lessons.

Brad you talk about intensity...I never really understood that term until I heard the podcast which explains what it was, I think the podcast named "are you training or just working out" I would go there and sure I can do ten reps but was that really the most amount of reps that I can do and was I doing that in every exercise for the day. When I started doing that, that's when the transformation started to take place and every time people would see me they say "wow you look better, did you lose more weight" but it was the nutrition that really pushed it. I was following eat stop eat twice a week and I decided early on that out of the three meals of the day, dinner time was the one that was important to me. That was the one if I have to miss something, that's one I don't want to miss. Skipping breakfast is not a big deal and eating a light lunch or no lunch at all is no problem at all. And what I realized then was "okay how am I going to make this fit into my life, how I'm going to eat less yet not feel like I'm sacrificing everything in life" and once again it was an article that Brad had written and talked about constraints in life. Basically said "build this around what you're going to do, then deal with what you're not going to do" so for example you know you going to eat, you go out and drink on the weekend because that's your thing

Well figure out how many calories that's going to be and then cut somewhere else.

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So for me being married with kids the weekends are the times that I spend with my family, we're having big meals and we have family time together and I didn't want to sacrifice that. So a Friday night for example I'm going to have a couple glasses of wine, have an appetizers, have the main course, have the desserts. Sunday morning is a big breakfast. But being able to enjoy those weekends and to look forward to being able to eat with no barrier on the weekend, I didn't care about cutting food during the week and having a small supper, that was not a big deal because I knew come the weekend I was going to have my bread and my pasta and that was one of the thing that I try to pass on to people that, you have to develop a style that works for you and people sometimes say "tell me what your diet is like and I'll do what you do" and I said "no it doesn't work like that because you can't do what I do because you're not me" you need to find what's important to you what food you like, what meals you like to eat, how you like to eat and build something around that and the formula that makes this work is the total calorie load. Make sure you eat less calories then you expend and it will work. Even to this day I have to tell people this over and over they still insist that I have to give them a diet and maybe some people need that kind of regimented schedule in their life but I think it's much more sustainable if you find something that it works for you. To this day I eat dessert often at night and I know I'm going to have a piece of cake and it's 400 calories or whatever it is then I'll cut that out somewhere else in the day 400 or I'll cut the next day to give myself the leisure to enjoy that because ultimately life is about the pleasure we take out of it.

**Brad Howard:** Is this way of eating, was that a revelation, was that new to you, I guess I'm biased now because talking to everyone in our forms it just seems obvious now but was it difficult for you to accept that's how it works?



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**Mark Levy:** I never contemplated this notion that it could be something so simple. When we always talk about calories and how many calories you should to eat and even that number, when I first started the five meal a day back in February, I wasn't losing weight I went on with one of this calorie counter websites and I started counting my calories and I realize I was ingesting about 2000 calories a day which may seem fine but ultimately it wasn't because obviously I wasn't losing enough weight quickly enough to meet my needs.

So we always think about calories so I think ultimately I ended up around 1500 that was kind of my target to shoot for but in my mind you don't have to eat that every day. It's obvious to say "well no just do it on a weekly basis or monthly basis" but I guess we're not programmed to think that way. There's seven days in a week, 1500 calories a day and that's the way it works...I know if I blow it one day I can make it up by cutting off calories the next day, it make sense, it make all the sense in the world.

**Mark Levy:** Basically today this is not a diet for me; this is a lifestyle. I rarely eat breakfast, lunch for me is once in awhile if I go out with somebody I'll have a real lunch but otherwise I just have whatever is in the office maybe a protein shake or I just have something very light something not very heavy because I like to eat a big supper. For me sitting down and eating less than 1000 calories at a meal feels restricted. So I give myself the ability to enjoy myself for every single night because I'll just cut the calories during the day.

**John Barban:** You're the reverse of me. During the week I seem to want to front load my calories at the beginning of the day it just makes me happy but I can totally blow off dinner for two or three days in a row and just have something like a little fruit and yogurt

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at the end of the day...it seems that works for me during the week and then on the weekend I'd rather have bigger meals cause it's usually associated with going out so I kind of flip flop during the week I eat more in the morning and on week days then I eat more in the evenings on the weekends.

**Brad Howard:** The difference is that you've got more flexibility because you don't have some people you live with but for both Mark and I it's kind of the same thing where we use dinner to unwind and debrief and kind of get family together and stuff like. It's just part of our day, the way I eat is very similar to his, I rarely eat breakfast only if I'm just famished in the morning, lunch sometimes. Now I'll gladly blow off lunch for getting stuff done and sometimes maybe protein, sometimes might be a little bit of left over's something like that.

**Brad Howard:** I guess when it all comes down to it, it's just like you were saying is what you do when nobody is looking that often they define your success just across the board anyway and so it would just make sense that nutrition will work that way as well.

**Mark Levy:** It's interesting what you're saying there, I agree it's exactly that it's what you're doing when nobody is around because when people are around, everybody is on their best behavior and everybody is kind of just putting on a face. It's what you do during the day and the little things you do. I have a person who came to me a friend of mine and he was like "oh you lost all this weight, what's your diet like" I try to explain to him the basic parameters he said "couldn't do that because I need my breakfast, I need my lunch, I need my supper" I'm like "okay" I said "do you like coffee" he said "oh yeah sure" I said "do you drink those Mochaccino Coffee's whatever cappuccinos" he said

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“oh love those” I said “how many you drink” he said “a three a day” I was like “dude there is likely 1000 calories a day you could cut out”.

**John Barban:** Yeah you can get up five six hundred calories in one of those coffee things.

**Mark Levy:** Well here's another one, I had another guy we were just chit chatting I found a lot of my clients are talking about this all the time because they've seen me change, they're impress, they want to know what they can do, he was like “tell me why I can't lose any weight” and he started to talk about it, this guy didn't seem to be too bad and I don't know how the topic came up, and I'm like “do you drink any juice” he says “oh yeah I love fruit juice, I love orange juice and cranberry juice and all that” I was like “how many you usually drink” he says “two to three of those two liters a week”. Drink water instead and you'll be more than fine, I'm sure that this guy already lost 20 pounds.

**Brad Howard:** I know a guy who lost about 20 pounds just going from a regular soda to diet soda.

**John Barban:** Well you know why? Because those calories don't satisfy hunger at all, you can drink your day's worth of calories in no time with any kind of soda or juice without ever satisfying you're feeling and need to eat. So if you're BMR is 2000 calories today you can drink 2000 calories and never feel like you've just had 2000 calories whereas if you eaten 2000 calories your body perceives more or less that is has ingested 2000 calories.

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**Brad Howard:** How come no one ever says juice is “junk food”?

**John Barban:** It's the worst thing you could possibly do is drink juice...it's just water and sugar. Think about it; you're consuming sugar without the compensatory feeling of being satisfied and full, that couldn't be any worse of a combination.

**Mark Levy:** I can say I never drink juice, I don't drink calories I haven't done it in years. Anyone who thinks that you can lose weight while drinking calories will find it's impossible.

**Brad Howard:** Mark, tell me do you see any kind of correlation as far as your mind set between fitness and your work?

**Mark Levy:** This is one of the secondary benefits of the program and the change that had carried across into my life. It takes a lot of discipline to make a change in your life whether it's controlling calories or working out intensely in the gym. You have to work out intensely as well as regularly. You can work out as intense as you want but if you're only going in once a month it's not going to really make much of a difference and the fact that I took this so seriously and decided to apply a certain discipline carried over to my business life, my personal life...I seem to take everything with that level of seriousness and it's proven to pay off dividends across the board just in meeting clients, I want to be much more organized and structured. Being a tax accountant by profession we're very regimented in our thinking and we tend to document everything...so I would go in with the program and come back that evening, click on excel spreadsheets, do comparison analysis and just have fun with it because that was part of the pleasure of

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working out. Looking back three months ago and seeing what you are able to do and looking at it today. Same thing with body weight, I was mentioning body weight and body part measurements constantly throughout the week. So was able to, I didn't go nuts enough as putting it on a graph and try to map it out but I was able to look at it and I found that this ability to structure everything applied in your business context, it's fantastic, this is the way you should run your business, you don't just go in half assed and just off the cuff, but rather you do everything very structured, very organized.

I find the nutrition aspect is the most important because being able not to stuff your mouth all day is a power that I can't explain to you...you have to do it for yourself and then experience it. It is liberating to be able to say "I have will power, I have control over my body not to eat all day" I won't use the word hunger because I don't think we know what hunger is, I think even though I am uncomfortable because I had some sort of a feeling I want to eat, telling myself I won't eat until tonight is something that teaches about yourself, it teaches you what you need to do to accomplish goals and anybody who hasn't done this even if they don't want to follow the program, I think that it's important for them to be able to just not eat for a day and see what it does.

**Brad Howard:** Just to open their eyes.

**Mark Levy:** Yeah just open your eyes, some people do it for religious reasons spiritual reasons, there's something in history for thousands and thousands of years and you start researching and you start to realize all the literature on it but it's liberating, that being said, I don't really openly talk about it on the forum but you have to make sure that you don't get carried away with it, I think Brad Pilon really mentioned it in his book, fast once or twice a week but let's not make this a daily thing, let's not go crazy with this

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because if you do that it can get out of hand, how is that different from any other eating disorder it will just be a fasting eating disorder and I don't think that's healthy at all, you have to learn to balance it in your life.

**John Barban:** That's a really good point because before eat stop eat was released, we tested out various lengths of fast, we'd done 36 48 72 hours, we messed around with all kinds of stuff. We arrived back to 24 because of its practicality, we do tend to live our lives 24 hour daily chunks so it makes sense that way. physiologically it makes sense because you're well within the highest percentage of burning fat at that point and a few reasons came together for that number and the reason we say just once or twice a week and not true intermittent fasting which is one day on one day off because exactly like you said it becomes obsessive compulsive again and then people are like "oh maybe I fast three days and four days and five days" and it was like "whoa okay". Maybe in Richard Lanes case for him he's like "I'm going to get rid of lots of fat as fast as I can for this contest" sure you can do that every now and then. That's not a lifestyle, once or twice a week and looking at your weekly calories, that's doable and especially we really say it's flexible like if you've planned it on Tuesday and something came up on Tuesday just move it to Wednesday.

**Mark Levy:** That's exactly it and that's one of the things that I use, if I'm invited to a wedding, the day of the wedding I won't eat much that day because I know I'm going to enjoy myself at the wedding and not think about it. And the day after the wedding I'm going to really relax on the calories too and basically negate the effect of that over eating evening. On the forum I would try to tell people that, find something that fits for you and doesn't become extreme, we are all doing that contest and we're all trying to get as lean as we can and I think a lot of us really showed some interesting results. I try to explain to people that I never deprived myself ever, looking at the pictures you might



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think “oh well he probably never ate ice cream” but that’s the furthest thing from the truth...I had ice cream at least two or three times a week, I ate cake all the time, I would have donuts, I would just make sure not to eat too much of it but I wouldn’t allow myself to be in a mental state where I say “oh in the next three months I can’t have a cappuccino because that’s too many calories” I don’t want to become that person. I made sure not to let myself fall into that because what happens, again just speaking to my wife and speaking to other people, women are always going to on and off diets and what they find is that they lose the weights and they gain it all back and why did they get it all back because they felt they deprived their self too much and when that pressure came off because they attain their goal or whatever they’ve done, suddenly the flood gates were open and they just went back to their old eating habits. So it’s about developing your habits.

**John Barban:** I think that’s the biggest key point is the deprivation. You can eat in a deficit without being ‘deprived’ and that’s a distinction no one really thinks about. They just assume deficit means deprivation...I will not give up my morning coffee and whatever the sweet thing is I eat with it and I lost 40 pounds doing that.

**Mark Levy:** Exactly you lived like that; you are able to show that you don’t deprive yourself. So when people will see you eating that and ask “how do you stay in shape eating that” well it’s very simple you just made a decision that you won’t eat something else later that day.

**John Barban:** All I know is I can only hit a certain amount of calories and I am choosing to hit them with this food right now.

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**Mark Levy:** Exactly. One question I get all the time when people see my abs is “oh man you must work out your abs all the time” and when I tell them “actually I don’t do any ab work” and people don’t understand that.

**Brad Howard:** You had the most defined set of abs.

**Mark Levy:** I guess I don’t know, I don’t think you need to do abs...I did ab work in my younger days, maybe I developed some underlying muscles, I think it was Pilon who said “we all have the abs we just got fat covering them up”.

**John Barban:** Most people don’t understand the physiology of the core muscles anyways. Even physiologist who study it don’t quite understand how it works, so any trainer who says they know how it works, they actually don’t. The ab muscles work under the heavy lifts anyways so there’s not really any necessity at all to train abs directly but I guess people get a kick out of it, they just like the way it feels when the fill up with blood I guess. You just don’t have to train them if you’re doing a comprehensive work out that works the whole body, you don’t have to train them directly, I think people just like feeling them pump up.

**Mark Levy:** I think people are expected to train abs, everybody in my gym trains abs. I try to tell them “you know get under a squat rack, squat a lot of weights and tell me if you don’t feel it in your abs. Do a military press, do a dead lift, you don’t need to do ab training.

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**John Barban:** That's a specific muscle people don't understand but you're living proof that you don't have to train them. So I guess that's one message that I don't know that ever gets through to people but whatever.

**Mark Levy:** I think maybe putting a specialization module for abs might not help you!

**John Barban:** Did you know why we have that in there because people demanded it and it was easier for me to give them what I think is a good way to train abs than fight them on it. I think it's a harder message to tell people that you don't really need to this because I think they will go and train abs anyways. I at least put in a core exercises that I agree with.

**Mark Levy:** I can tell you that the foundation program was much more like a program that I recognized right away, the exercises and the way it was put together, it's more familiar it's a comfort zone. Adonis which is something completely new, even the exercises we're not all familiar with, but a lot of people got in their mind initially was that, I guess because the way it was promoted was that foundation was for the newbies, the guys who really had no experience in the gym and it's to bring them up to par with the guys that had 5 to 10 years under their belts...but I was even very hesitant to do foundation and I was emailing with John about this and I said "well he's the expert he told me to do it, I sent a couple of pictures" but I think that after going through the program I think people can see the results from the program. The foundation program is not a newbie program...not if you do it well.

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**John Barban:** Like I said any program on paper is nothing until the person puts their intensity into it. So I think following the mega-cycle as written or even just the first giant cycle as written, I think everyone can just roll with it. Any experience level, a beginner or someone who's got quite a bit of experience the way you do.

**Brad Howard:** I think what we can definitely say from you, is that you truly feel like you got this whole thing handled?

**Mark Levy:** Absolutely, for once in my life, I won't say that I understand it all because I'm far from understanding why it works but I understand what I need to do to get the results and that's already 90 percent of the battle. One thing that's interesting is that when I decided to get into the transformation contest, I already knew coming into it that I probably don't have a dramatic or drastic results that other people had. Simply because I already had lost much of the weight but it was a sense of curiosity to say if I were to apply myself how far could I go, how lean can I get, how defined can I get, how muscular can I get and it's amazing...I took pictures practically every week for three months and the transformation, my internal transformation watching them. I thought I have arrived, I hadn't arrive because the nest week I said "hey look I got a little further" and even now here I was you saw those pictures and you would say "okay I'm pretty defined" and I look at them I say "is that as lean as I can get" while still looking healthy of course.

**John Barban:** I got to tell you Mark, your pictures kind of threw it over the top for announcing the open contest. We saw you and we we're like "okay the bar has just been raised we have to do something here".

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**Brad Howard:** You came in, Allan came in and then we had to find a way to get Jason and Ron and Rich back into the mix.

**John Barban:** Well there's nowhere for guys like Pierre and Jason and Ron and you, where do they go? I mean there has to be another venue and that's what this is for.

**Mark Levy:** Absolutely and I think it would be a lot of fun because everybody is going to bring something different like I know coming to that contest, I don't plan to compete like with one of the big guys like Kidafi or Rich in terms of overall size, it's not what I want to go even if I could.

**John Barban:** Yeah I think they're going to be tough to beat as far as size.

**Mark Levy:** Exactly, I think I like to come in more with a symmetry, I want to work on proportion and I mean even in the muscle building program, calves work is none existent besides the side effect from squatting but I work a lot at maintaining the proportion between neck, arms and chest. I think it's important for symmetry.

**John Barban:** The reason why calf work is not in there because calves are so genetic, some guys have huge calves and never touch them while other guys just need to do them everyday and so as far as calves work goes it's literally if you know you are one of those guys, you do have the luxury of just skipping them or your one of the unfortunate guys who has to hit them everyday for like an extra hundred reps every day. So that's almost like a non issue that you either do them a lot or you don't touch them.

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**John Barban:** Well let's get some closing insights from Mark.

**Mark Levy:** The first thing would be, I get this comment in the gym most of the time, most of the guys are in their late 20's and the fact that a guy 42 yrs old can go in there and in less than 12months period, completely transform not only the way he looks but also how strong he is. It's never too late you can always make a change in yourself. It's not going to take a month but it's okay if it takes as long as it takes and if it takes you less time than me but if it takes you more time and that's great too. It's not a race, it's a destination, we're all going to get there eventually, we just want to do it in a way that keeps us healthy.

The second thing is basically with respect to getting control of your life. Most people are not happy with the way they look; some more than others and this is something that you absolutely have the ability to take control of. And if you choose to take control of this, the rest of life will start to line up, life will slowly start to fall in place because I think you mention it before Brad in a podcast it's the confidence that you give off when you feel good about yourself is going to have a natural effect it's going to carry across your life. My wife has always been trying to deal with nutritional issues and we always ate healthy. But she never was a person who liked to work out with weights, she works with cardio and aerobics and I actually purchased the Venus Index for her because I thought it would be a great thing for her and until she saw the pictures' she never really thought that she wanted to do this but seeing the contest pictures really gives her that confidence to say "you know what I'm going to do this because I'm curious" and that's I guess the feeling. Be curious.



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**John Barban:** And it seems the best way to do it is covertly, keep it to yourself as much as possible so to speak because so many people are going to try to hold you back that it almost comes across like effortless to other people. Unless they're right next to you in the gym, they can't really see that part either, so it's almost like it's just sort of magically happening and then one day you just look back and say "how the hell did that happen" but they're not there when you're making a conscious effort to change eating one meal for a different meal or doing some fasting or cutting calories in one spot and putting them in one spot and putting them in somewhere else. They're not there when you're grinding out every second in the gym so to them it's just you're the lucky one, they don't know how much work it took. I think that's what makes it even more impressive to people when you don't put on the face to say "yeah I'm the work out guy, I'm the diet guy" but when you keep it to yourself it becomes even that much more impressive to somebody else.

**Mark Levy:** It's like you can't be the guy who's a millionaire, who's living in the high life, he's got the cars, the boats, the money and people resent that even though they don't want to admit it but they don't realize maybe that guy went bankrupt two or three times in his life and picked himself back up and just kept going and that person deserves that success that they got, people just look at the end result. I see a lot of people in the gym, they go to the gym to socialize, that's okay if that's your thing but they tend to find comfort in the gym by being surrounded by people of their mindset. For me the gym is not that at all, for me the gym is just a tool to be used for life, the gym is not for life. Whether if going to the gym and socializing because you are not in shape and by hanging out with people in the gym with people who are in shape, you give yourself the impression that you're doing something good and that makes you feel good about yourself or going to the gym or working out because maybe you become a big body builder or muscular and that's the only place where you get some sort of positive

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reinforcement from people because people in the world don't really acknowledge you for your three plate bench press or whatever you happen to do. I see a lot of people that use the gym in that sense and it's okay if that was the purpose in going to the gym but all too often I realize it's the by product and it's the only thing they can latch on to. I just use it as a tool I go there I rarely talk to anybody, I'll do a "hi how are you" but I'm not there to start a conversation, I'm there to do my business and then get out hopefully within an hour and half and go on with my life.

**John Barban:** And that's the exact pattern that gets the results, the gym is a tool.

**Brad Howard:** One of the biggest thing you are talking about is you really kind of internalize with your own goals instead of externalize them.

**John Barban:** Yeah, are you doing it for show or you're doing it for the result. So I think we're good hear Mark that was great, Brad do you have anything else?

**Brad Howard:** No man, I really appreciate you being on the call Mark.

**Mark Levy:** Thank you so much for interviewing me and giving me a chance to share my story with everybody and I look forward to continuing to share on the forum and the next contest it's been a lot of fun. For anyone who never got into a contest they should, even the people who think that they're not ready for it, you should do it anyway because it's just a great experience and it teaches you a lot about yourself.

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**Brad Howard:** I couldn't say it better myself. All right, well, for John Barban, I am Brad Howard and that's your Adonis Lifestyle podcast.

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