



Episode 6 Transcript

Release Date: Friday, December 23, 2016

Walks, Whole Eggs & Pull-ups: Lais DeLeon's Reasonable Fit Life

Nick Collias: Krissy, she might actually snort it ...

Dr. Krissy Kendall: I recently ... We had this thing go through compliance, and he said to put a note on there that said, "We don't recommend ever having more than 300 milligrams of caffeine in an eight-hour period." I'm was like, "Uh, who said that?"

Lais DeLeon: Oops.

Krissy: Yeah. I was like, "I'm pretty sure we've never said that." And everyone here never follows that rule.

Lais: Let's not abide by those rules.

Krissy: I was like, "That's in a one-hour period, maybe. Who are we? Not Bodybuilding.com." I was like, "I will not put those words on my page."

Nick: Well, we are Bodybuilding.com. By the way, this is The Bodybuilding.com Podcast with a slight, caffeinated preamble.

Krissy: Double fisting my ...

Nick: We have here Krissy Kendall. I'm Nick, she's Krissy. She's the one with two coffees, one in each hand. They aren't both being drunk at the same time but the podcast is relatively young.

Krissy: I'm going hard this morning.

Nick: We also have with us, Lais DeLeon ...

Lais: Hello.

Nick: ... who is a fitness model, NLA For Her athlete and, how else would you describe yourself?

Lais: Yeah. I would call myself a ...

Nick: Morning person?

Lais: Yeah.

Nick: Better be because it's the morning here.

Lais: You know, here's the thing. I love mornings. I'm definitely a morning person. The problem is just waking up to be there for the morning.

Nick: I discovered the perfect way to wake up this morning.

Krissy: I want to know.

Nick: Are you familiar with the song called, "Bird is the Word"?

Lais: I am. I am.

Nick: I introduced my four-year-old to that song yesterday and he's like, "Well, you've been holding out on me. This is the greatest song I've ever heard."

Krissy: Did you introduce him via "Family Guy"?

Nick: No, no, no, no.

Lais: That's not the way to do it. That's not the way.

Nick: He's not allowed near that.

Krissy: Well, Nick knows that's-

Nick: This is just straight-up music.

Krissy: That's how we always pass it around the office, is everyone gets that YouTube clip. Whenever "Bird is the Word" goes around, that's what we pass around.

Nick: But the thing is, I discovered that if you put it on repeat, play it about five times with a four-year-old and a one-year-old ...

Krissy: You're up?

Nick: ... it's like yoga class, going for a walk. You get your caffeine. The whole body wakes up but the key is you got to dance, and you got to dance like a full-body dry heave.

Lais: I don't know. I'm not convinced.

Krissy: I'll try it. I'll give it a try.

Nick: As they say in Spain, "You got to put a little 'Chicha' into it."

Krissy: We'll try it tomorrow morning.

Nick: How do you start your day, though?

Lais: I start my day with coffee. That's first and foremost.

Krissy: Not black, though?

Nick: I'll drink to that.

Lais: Not black.

Krissy: Not black, though.

Lais: Not black.

Krissy: As we've just learned.

Lais: Yeah, as you've just learned. I'll do a tablespoon of some kind of sweet creamer. I don't think that's the worst thing in the world. Then I'll add some kind of non-dairy milk, cashew milk, almond milk, something like that.

Nick: I kind of like the cashew milk.

Lais: If I still need some sweetness, I do some Xylitol or Stevia. I need some stuff.

Nick: You got a little sweet.

Lais: Yeah, I need stuff in my coffee. I love coffee but I'm not a "coffee's got to be black and I just love it just black". No, I can't. I just can't. I've tried. I think people who drink their coffee black are the coolest people in the world.

Krissy: Okay, good.

Nick: We would.

Lais: You guys are pretty ...

Nick: We would agree with that.

Lais: ... pretty cool.

Krissy: Sweet. Hope everyone heard that.

Lais: That's something ...

Nick: That's the first time ...

Lais: ... I can't do.

Nick: ... we've ever been called, "The coolest people in the world."

Lais: You guys are pretty cool.

Nick: Yeah? That's why we have so many Instagram followers.

Krissy: I know. Right, so comparable. Our four to your million.

Nick: No, no, no. I looked this up. Krissy has 600-something followers.

Krissy: Yup. It's growing.

Lais: That's pretty good.

Nick: I've got 20, but ...

Lais: Nice.

Nick: ... they're all very influential and I also have an assumed name.

Lais: It's quality ...

Nick: I'm hiding.

Lais: ... not quantity.

Krissy: So when you ... When you add ours together, multiply them.

Nick: How many do you have?

Lais: I am approaching a million.

Nick: I'm pretty sure my 20 would put you over the top. They're like the electoral college.

Lais: Exactly. That's how that works.

Nick: We got a little off topic. I wanted to hear how you start ...

Lais: Yeah, how I start-

Nick: ... the morning. The morning.

Lais: We'll go back.

Nick: I've read you like to go for a walk?

Lais: I love walking.

Nick: This is one of my favorite things I heard about you.

Lais: Listen you guys. I will talk about walking to anybody who will listen. I am so in love and obsessed with walking. It's my favorite thing to do. I love to start my day with a walk. I do about a mile or two miles every morning with my dog. She loves it, of course.

Nick: Every morning?

Lais: Every morning. There's obviously, I haven't walked today. I'm in Boise.

Nick: I was going to say.

Lais: I'm hanging out.

Nick: We'll go get lost.

Krissy: Yeah, we'll go for a walk after this.

Lais: It's freezing here, you guys. It's not happening. Needless to say, I feel a little off my game. I haven't walked the past two days. Yesterday, I was shooting for Bodybuilding.com all day so I had to wake up super early, hair and makeup, and then I was off to my shoot. By the time I was done, I was so dead but yeah, I definitely feel the difference. I think that getting outside, getting some fresh air, getting some sunlight, getting my body moving in a super low-impact, not too intense-kind of way is a really awesome way to start my day. I love it.

Nick: Are you in headphones or are you listening to the world?

Lais: I usually listen to a podcast. Yeah, I listen to podcast or books, audiobooks.

Nick: Just get the mind woken up a little bit?

Lais: Yeah. I just figured ...

Nick: "Woked"?

Krissy: Yeah, "Woked". "Woken".

Lais: It's a good way for me to multi-task and to justify that time because I mean, walking at a leisurely pace for two miles takes up a good 45 minutes, and hour at least. I don't know. I like to make the best use of that time. Yeah, I listen to something, try to learn, make myself a little better.

Nick: Walking, it doesn't get enough attention maybe these days because ...

Krissy: Agreed.

Nick: ... everybody's thinking in terms of, "What burns the most calories? What delivers the most?"

Lais: Exactly.

Nick: It's like you're talking about a different sort of payoff.

Lais: We're talking about a different, yeah.

Nick: You do that other kind of stuff, too.

Lais: Exactly.

Krissy: I was going to ask if it started off as a way to, "I need to get steps in ...

Lais: No.

Krissy: ... I need to get cardio in or has it always been just that I need to clear ...

Nick: Your smartphone's like, "You need to meet you goal. Your step goal."

Krissy: Everything is about ...

Lais: It's a thing, now.

Krissy: ... steps or how much. I mean, my watch tells me all the time, "You need to stand up," which I agree. I need to do that sort of thing.

Lais: That's a great reminder for people who won't do it naturally.

Krissy: Sometimes it's like ...

Nick: Let's all do that.

Krissy: ... it tells me to breathe. I'm like, "Dammit. No, there's not ...

Lais: I will not.

Krissy: ... time right now."

Lais: Don't tell me what to do.

Nick: That's the hour.

Krissy: "I need to finish this assignment," but sometimes it is just nice to clear your head or to listen to something else, or to catch up on, whether it's a podcast or a book, or things like that. I have a dog, too. Just spending that time.

Lais: With her.

Krissy: Yeah, walking and enjoying what else is out there.

Lais: Exactly. For me, walking has nothing to do with fitness, nothing to do with my body. It's all about my mind. It's all about my soul and it's all about just how I feel. It's great. It was nothing to do with that and I see a lot of people who have the smart watches or the FitBits and that's the only reason why they're walking. And hey, if you need something to push you to do that, that's great. They're getting those benefits anyways but for me, it's completely about just feeling good. It has nothing to do with the cardio. It's an added bonus.

Nick: Now, was this something that came from your childhood?

Lais: Not at all. I think it's-

Nick: I used to go on walks with my mom all the time. We lived out in the country.

Lais: That's so sweet. I love it.

Nick: We'd walk our dogs. We had, like, five dogs. Now, I have zero dogs and I still go for walks.

Lais: That's amazing.

Nick: I think that sort of bred it into me because you've got to be patient out there, you know?

Lais: Yeah.

Nick: It's a great place to have a little conversation and stuff. You made your ...

Lais: No, nobody taught me that.

Nick: ... choice as an adult.

Lais: I just started about a year ago. I just realized my dog wasn't getting ... Actually, it has everything to do with my dog, where it started. She wasn't getting enough exercise, and I realized. I think somebody asked me how old she was, and she's so tiny. She looks like a puppy. I forget sometimes she's like eight-years-old. She's getting older and I want her to be healthy, and I want her to be happy. I want to make her time with me as happy as possible. I decided I was going to start taking her for walks, once in a while. I just realized, I was really enjoying that time, too. I started just around the neighborhood a little bit. Then I started venturing outside of the neighborhood. Then I found a trail that I really liked. My walks got longer and longer. It just became a routine that I loved doing.

Nick: Then you'd get your SnapChat followers out there on the walk with you?

Lais: Yeah, I do snap when I'm out there because like I said, I'll talk about walking to anybody who'll listen. I'm like the walking person of the world. I just love it and I want to tell everybody to do it. I want everyone on it with me.

Krissy: I think just exercise just in general, walking, if it's swimming whatever it could be, we always think being in fitness in the fitness world, we always associate physique or calories or some result to it. I'm doing this to burn calories to have more definition to shape my body in a certain way. And we forget exercise can improve heart health, can improve just overall activities of your daily life, whether that's getting out of bed with less pain, or whether it's being able to put away groceries. Just mental clarity.

Lais: Mental well-being.

Krissy: Better mood, less depression, all of these sorts of things. You don't have to sweat. You don't have to be in pain every time you work out.

Lais: Thank you, sister. Preach!

Krissy: Being in muscle failure to have this benefit from exercise. Yes, there's a time and a place for that, but you can also have benefits from exercise that don't require you to be in the gym all the time, every single day.

Lais: Exactly. Not everything requires you to beat your body up for the abs. Not everything's about growing your booty.

Krissy: Exactly.

Lais: Sometimes you just need to move.

Nick: Now that, I would need to just disagree with because when you walk up the hill, you grow your booty a little bit.

Lais: I agree but I'm not necessarily walking up any hills, you guys. I'm just doing the leisurely walk and enjoying every minute of it. I just love that it's not about my body and I can talk about that.

Nick: You seem like you're putting a different sort of message out there that somebody might think also, "What's a fitness model, quote-unquote 'Fitness model,' they must be burning. They must be cranking on fitness all the time and have a level of commitment and a level of almost fixation that the rest of us can't even imagine." I've been looking at a lot of the media you put out there. Looks like an all right life, to me.

Lais: I would say, "My life is pretty bad-ass." It's not that stressful. It's not that obsessive when it comes to fitness, at all. I think I'm just really happy and in a really good place in life. It doesn't involve obsessing about my body. It doesn't involve beating my body up but that's not to say that I wasn't there at one point. I was definitely in that mindset at one point, obsessed with looking a certain way and obsessed with burning a certain amount of calories. A certain cardio workout wasn't good enough until I hit a certain amount of calories or until I was sore and in pain the next day. I was definitely in that place at one point but it's not like that anymore.

Nick: How do you have it both ways, though? You still, you show up at Bodybuilding.com. You have to be photo-ready and make a video. You're putting pictures of yourself in bikinis online most days, or in workout clothes. How do you have that and not have the super intense, fixation part of it?

Krissy: Right, because it's your job and your life. Most of us, it's separate where we work and live.

Nick: We were talking to a bodybuilder names Evan Centopani couple weeks ago. He was like, "Yeah. I've kind of learned that the pain is part of it." He likes the pain.

Lais: Interesting.

Nick: He likes the show-prep, but he was preparing for the stage, obviously.

Lais: Competition.

Nick: Is that the difference?

Lais: I was trying to think about this the other day because I was coming to a realization that I'm not in that crazy, obsessed state anymore when it comes to fitness. I was trying to think of, like, how you explain where you get to a point where you're no longer in that space. I just think that I don't have a good answer for it because the way I arrived to that point in life was after going through that crazy, obsessed time in my life. I hope that's not the only way to get to a place where you find balance but that's just the way I got there. I think a lot of it does have to do with the fact that I don't compete, I've never competed, and that was never a goal for me. I think that the fact that I've built my following and my platform based on achieving a level of fitness that's attainable, that's realistic, that's natural, that's real.

Nick: Reasonable.

Lais: Reasonable. I'm a woman. I've got some fat in certain places. I don't have a full six-pack. I'm not trying to have that. I don't have huge, full muscles but I've achieved a certain level of definition that I think a lot of women can relate to, can aspire to have because they realize that while most mainstream women don't really want to be super full and muscular. They want to be curvy.

Nick: Or super lean, necessarily.

Lais: Or super lean, either.

Nick: Even though that does have a certain cachet now but it didn't.

Lais: Even some of the ones who do aspire to be super full and muscular and lean and shredded, have tried, have attempted to reach that level, that type of physique. They realize that it's not easy to do. It's not attainable ...

Krissy: Or realistic ...

Lais: ... or realistic.

Krissy: ... for where they are.

Nick: They don't feel good for a long time. There's repercussions.

Lais: Exactly so then they scale it back and they start re-evaluating their goals and who they look up to and who they aspire to be like. They realize, "This actually, I respect this more because there's more balance involved." Anybody can be extreme. It's the balance that really takes some time, and effort, and work and dedication because to reach that level of fitness through a balanced way, it's going to take a lot longer. Right? Would you agree?

Nick: Absolutely.

Lais: Doing everything extreme, you might get it quickly but all the health and mental repercussions of that are not necessarily worth it. Someone who's sticking it out for the long run to achieve a nice level of fitness that's not too extreme is actually, I don't know ... I feel like some people are starting to realize that that's actually a little bit more admirable in terms of ...

Nick: Obviously, you mentioned that you've built up a following. She has, yeah, almost a million people following what she does every day. And let me be clear. Having a million Instagram followers doesn't make you good person, necessarily.

Lais: Not at all.

Nick: Some of the worst people in the world ...

Lais: We've seen some stuff. Seriously.

Nick: But, it was interesting. There's always a story there. Everybody starts at zero. Maybe when you put your first post up, which I have here, a picture for this.

Lais: Oh my goodness. That's her.

Krissy: Ahhhh, how cute!

Nick: It's a dog. A dog in a purse.

Lais: That's my baby.

Nick: There were no hashtags, no nothing. It looked like a fairly exploratory post. For all I know that point, you were just viewing Instagram as a chance to get more MySpace followers or something.

Lais: Oh my goodness. I think at that time, I was trying to figure out, how to close your MySpace account." There's a lot of blackmail in there. It's 13 years old.

Nick: It is interesting to think of, "Yeah. You start with zero. You get to a million. Who are you at the start and who are you at the end?" Obviously, you sound very confident and affirmed in your approach but it helps to have a million people saying, "Yeah, yeah, I like that. You're doing it right."

Lais: Yeah, that's a good point.

Krissy: Yeah, your goals ... because I imagine your goal of your Instagram page at the beginning, with your dog ...

Nick: I think the second one was her in a bikini.

Krissy: ... may or may not ... may have been a little bit ... Had it always been, like when you started Instagram?

Nick: Identifying as a fitness person?

Krissy: Yeah, has it always been?

Lais: I believe that when I started my Instagram, I already had a decent following on Facebook and it was somewhat fitness-related. So, I don't think the goal with starting Instagram, I didn't know Instagram was going to take off the way that it did. I definitely don't think it was going to be where I was going to take off with my career.

Nick: I've got 20 whole people. It's taking off.

Lais: At the time, I was doing fitness. I was doing the fitness thing. I wasn't competing or doing anything too crazy but I was definitely at that point in my life, I was definitely obsessed with being lean, and doing cardio, and having muscles, and looking a certain way. I was very young and interested in that side of things. I think that that helped jumpstart. Facebook was such a community-type of platform where you talk a lot and you post thoughts and captions and things like that, which you didn't necessarily have to have a photo. Instagram was such a visual platform that it really took off for girls who were visually, aesthetically pleasing. I think that's what I started noticing when I jumped on Instagram, that all the bikini girls and all the fitness girls were getting on there and getting a lot of followers. I knew that for what I wanted to do, that followers needed to come along with that to have a platform. I jumped on and I started posting the photos. The followers kind of just came. That's just the nature of the platform. It's a very visual platform and people want to see that. People use that as a source of motivation or they use it as a source of gaining knowledge or learning things. I don't know. I think that's what it came down to.

Nick: It has a little bit less baggage for a lot of people than Facebook. Facebook is such a big conversation.

Lais: It's a conversation. Exactly.

Nick: People have their Facebook personalities. You can know somebody and you can think, "God, that's not the same person when they're on Facebook," but Instagram. Yeah, you can put a million filters on. You can do all that silly shit but it's just a picture.

Lais: At the end of the day.

Krissy: Or a video.

Lais: Now, yeah.

Krissy: Do you use that? Do you find that to be or do you keep that mostly with YouTube and Facebook? You still put enough videos?

Lais: I put a video on Instagram every once in a while. I decided just recently, actually that I was going to keep Instagram as a photo platform because you have to use all your different social channels differently. If you put the same content on every single channel ...

Krissy: They're going to check out.

Lais: ... the people don't need to follow you on every other platform. I just recently decided that I needed to restructure my social media strategy. I was going to use the stories and the SnapChat for a behind-the-scenes look on my life. Then I'm going to use YouTube as my video platform. I'm going to leave Instagram as what I think made me successful on Instagram to begin with was photos and beautiful photos with a lot of colors. That's my style. I think I'm going to move forward like that and leave Instagram as a photo platform.

Nick: How much of your brain is working on social media strategy over the course of a day?

Lais: It's non-stop at this point. It's a full-time job.

Nick: Is it?

Lais: For sure.

Krissy: I find this fascinating when I hear about this just because as someone who is not as well-versed, I guess you could say, into social media. I mean, I'm new-ish into SnapChat.

Nick: I honestly still don't really know what it is. I acted like I did a little while ago. Maybe I'll just succumb someday but I'm pretty sure I won't.

Krissy: I'd like to say that I'm a star-

Lais: I think you'll like it if you give it a shot.

Krissy: Yeah. I'm a star. I'm one of many of Mark, our audio guy, I'm a star on his channel. He has many, many followers but I do a reoccurring roll on his SnapChat. My Instagram is just mostly my dog, for the most part. I watch YouTube and I watch it almost like television. I subscribe and I have ...

Lais: That's why people are consuming it.

Krissy: Yeah, and to find out that this is people's job. It's their living. The same thing with Instagram, and to hear your strategy for, "This is how I'm going to keep this channel this way and this one. Pictures only on this one and video." It's so interesting. I'm fascinated on how this plans in your head.

Nick: You're already a YouTube channel, what I've seen of it, which looks fairly new.

Lais: It is. It's fairly new. I'm still getting the hang of it. I think what I struggle with there is consistency and with the production side of it. It's very time consuming to edit videos and do it all by myself. Not only do I have to plan content. I have to live my life. I have to stay in shape. I have to do the business side of everything, but I also have to make time to actually shoot the video. Then I also have to find time to edit. I'm definitely not a video editor by nature. It doesn't come naturally. It's very difficult.

Nick: How many cameras are in your life? You've got a phone, obviously.

Lais: I have a phone. I have that little guy over there. That's my blog camera, the portable one that's easy to whip out whenever. Then I have a videographer, I have a photographer, and yeah, it gets pretty ...

Krissy: Have you adjusted because I'll watch some people on YouTube and they're out in public. They are just talking. They're blogging. How comfortable are you with it?

Lais: I haven't adjusted and I haven't gotten there, yet. I find it really difficult to be videoing and vlogging and just doing that in public. It still doesn't come ...

Nick: Talking to a ghost.

Lais: ... naturally.

Krissy: I am uncomfortable when I have my phone in my car on Bluetooth and I'm talking because if people look at me ...

Lais: You think people are going to think ...

Krissy: People think I'm weird.

Lais: ... you're crazy. Yeah.

Nick: They do.

Lais: They do.

Krissy: I know. I'm weird.

Nick: Not to confirm your worst suspicion.

Lais: I think people are crazy when they're talking in their car, too. I do.

Krissy: Imagine that you're talking to a camera.

Lais: Exactly.

Krissy: That's weird.

Lais: It's not natural. It doesn't come naturally. It takes practice and to a certain degree, I wonder if it just takes a certain breed of person. I didn't start my YouTube channel with zero following. I didn't start it with no platform. I started my YouTube channel because my followers generally wanted to see more from me. They wanted to see a different side of me. They were asking for workouts, for routines, for recipes, for the things that I have found that have helped me so they have a shortcut,

but it just doesn't come naturally to me. I'm trying to figure out what's that missing element that I'm missing that people are able to just talk to a camera. I'm struggling with it and my followers generally asked me for the thing that they want to see. I'm actually just producing whatever they say. If they tell me that they want a skincare routine. Okay, I guess I'm shooting a skincare routine today. They tell me they want a leg workout. Okay, I guess we're going to go shoot a leg workout today because I don't know. I'm still learning. I'm still figuring it out but it is a full-time job and it is very interesting. I'm very passionate about it because it's afforded me a lot of awesome opportunities. I'm here talking to you guys on Bodybuilding.com platform podcast. I was just shooting tons of content for Bodybuilding.com. I get to shoot for magazines, and I get so many opportunities from this platform that I'm definitely super motivated and passionate about this social media world because it gives us so many awesome opportunities.

Nick: What did you shoot for us yesterday?

Lais: A ton of recipes. I think this is my calling, you guys. I think this is what I want to do.

Nick: Recipes?

Lais: I just want to shoot recipes all day and eat.

Nick: You did one other video with us that was like "[The perfect at-home booty workout](#)" or something.

Lais: Yeah, that was fun.

Nick: Switching ...

Lais: Shooting recipes is so much fun.

Nick: ... from booties into recipes.

Lais: [Recipes](#).

Krissy: You got to eat to grow.

Lais: Exactly. She knows.

Krissy: That's why I prefer to do it that way. The workouts can come later.

Nick: Eat first then grow. I like it.

Lais: Yeah, shooting recipes is so much fun. It's a lot of fun.

Krissy: What are would you say, some of your go-to recipes that you like?

Lais: I love anything that I can make in one pan, in under 15 minutes.

Nick: The old one-pot dish.

Lais: Yeah, I love anything. I like scrambles. I like healthy fried rice. I just shot that for my YouTube. Just anything I can make easy for people that I can make healthy for myself, and that still tastes good.

Nick: Give us a good breakfast.

Lais: A good breakfast? Ok, so I'll-

Nick: How many eggs are in it, is the real question?

Lais: Four.

Nick: Four. That's the right answer, right there.

Lais: Eggs and turkey sausage. There's protein involved and lots of veggies.

Nick: These are whole eggs too, right?

Lais: Whole eggs. Of course. Are we still doing the whole egg-white thing around here? Is that what people still do?

Krissy: We're trying. We're fighting it.

Nick: I've never tasted an egg-white to my knowledge.

Lais: I haven't adopted ...

Nick: I'm sure there are egg-whites in something that I've eaten.

Krissy: I love the yolk.

Nick: We have those reasonable expectations of leanness that you were talking about earlier.

Krissy: They're still around.

Lais: Good.

Krissy: They're still around.

Lais: We get all those.

Krissy: But we push for the whole egg.

Lais: Exactly. I still get those questions. "Well, why are you eating all those eggs? Those are not good for you."

Krissy: It's a crime.

Lais: It's frustrating.

Krissy: The poor little yolk. It needs to be loved. What did it do to you?

Nick: You're just going to throw it away?

Lais: Exactly.

Krissy: It's like a little planet.

Lais: That's waste. Waste, I tell you. So, yeah, definitely four whole eggs, lots of veggies, and sometimes I'll even throw in some avocado or some cheese. Something to spice it up. I like hot sauce. Yeah, just veggies, lots of eggs, and lots of protein.

Nick: This is pre-walk or post-walk?

Lais: This is post-walk.

Nick: You like to walk on an empty stomach?

Lais: Empty stomach. Well, on some coffee.

Nick: I like that. One other question about the before and after. When you had zero followers, how many pull-ups could you do?

Lais: Zero.

Nick: Zero? This is ...

Lais: 100% zero.

Nick: We've discovered the secret. You do more pull-ups ...

Lais: You do pull-ups ...

Nick: ... you get more followers.

Lais: ... you get the followers. This is the answer.

Krissy: That's what I need to do.

Lais: Exclusive, right here.

Krissy: ... I need to do to get me to 700. I need to start doing pull-ups.

Nick: So you can do 900,000 pull-ups?

Lais: Exactly.

Krissy: One for every follower.

Lais: Naturally.

Krissy: Oh, God.

Lais: I wish.

Nick: Let's talk about pull-ups a little bit. I've heard you say that you love pull-ups like you love walking. I want women who are listening to this to come away with an action plan. Number one, eat whole eggs. Number two, go for a walk. Number three, learn to do a pull-up?

Lais: Yup. I mean, I think you got me down.

Nick: Oh, man. I like this. This is ...

Lais: You nailed it. You figured me out. Yeah, I think pull-ups are a great goal to aim for. I think that the reason why women either struggle with them or try to stay away from them is because they're humbling. It's discouraging because we don't naturally have that upper body strength.

Nick: Or practice ...

Lais: Or practice.

Krissy: They're hard.

Lais: They are hard.

Krissy: They are very hard.

Lais: So hard, you guys and the problem is that when something is hard, there's certain kinds of people. You either continue to work on them because you're frustrated, or you're so frustrated that you ...

Krissy: Quit.

Lais: ... quit and you just choose to completely omit them from your program. You don't do them at all. I think most of us fall into the latter of those because it's hard, and it's discouraging. Nobody wants to be hanging from a pull-up bar in the middle of a crowded gym struggling to get up there. It's not fun. It's hard and it takes a long time. I still, I can't do that many. Maybe I can get three pretty ones before form starts to break down really quickly. I'm not afraid to admit that because I know how hard it is. People need to hear that it doesn't come quickly. It doesn't come easily but I love pull-ups because if I can do a few, I feel like a bad-ass in the gym.

Nick: What's the road from zero to three look like?

Lais: I was going to say it's progression.

Nick: Is it practicing it often?

Krissy: Any tricks?

Nick: Everybody has a different answer for this. We have five different articles that we wrote in the last two years that are ...

Krissy: "How to do a pull-up."

Nick: ... "Hey ladies, how to get your first pull-up." They all have a different ...

Lais: Approach to it.

Nick: ... method.

Lais: Interesting. I would be interested, too.

Krissy: I'm not a fan of the machine ...

Lais: Me, neither.

Krissy: ... assisted pull-up. I just find it ...

Lais: I tell everyone to stay far away.

Krissy: ... awkward.

Lais: Agree.

Krissy: It's never helped me.

Lais: Yeah, it doesn't.

Nick: That's the thing. Yes, it doesn't seem like it helps much.

Krissy: I feel like it's not. I feel like it puts me out of position and it doesn't replicate really ...

Lais: A proper pull-up.

Krissy: Yeah.

Lais: I agree.

Krissy: I'm interested. I always like to know how. If I could do zero to how I got to do my first one. Was it doing banded? Was it doing negatives? Was it doing assisted?

Nick: Flexed hangs.

Lais: I have a video on my Fitness channel actually. I was going to show you guys and you're viewers can't see it but I actually tell all my ladies to stay far away from that assisted pull-up machine because it doesn't mimic an actual, real pull-up and it's so easy to cheat on that machine because by just simply bending at the hip a little bit, you are forcing the machine to lift you up and just shoot you up. You never learn that way.

Nick: No core engagement in that pull-up.

Lais: I feel like the people who use that machine never progress out of that machine. For me, the trick has been progression. Like you said, working the negative, a lot of lat pull-downs, using the band.

Krissy: Bands.

Lais: The band. The band is the key I think, because it puts you in the actual, real pull-up position and it trains you to use the right muscles to get you up and you just learn what it's supposed to feel like to actually do the pull-up. You can buy the bands in lots of different resistance levels so you can work your way up. Then just training back. I think it just comes down to volume, training the back, learning how to truly activate your back muscles, and mimicking a true, proper pull-up with the band.

Nick: I know some strength coaches don't like the band because they say, "It helps you too much at the hardest part," which is the bottom. Then you get really good at doing the top half of a pull-up, but then you're down there in the dead hang and you're still just helpless but ...

Lais: Yeah, I think there's something to ...

Nick: ... if you use different bands, I think. I also like what you're saying. You know what? You go to reinforce those muscles a little bit, too. Simply beating your head against pull-ups once a week or twice a week, three times a week if you can't do one, probably is not going to get ...

Lais: Not going to work.

Nick: ... you there.

Lais: I definitely believe in training half of the rep and getting really strong in one part. I think that's going to help you in the other part of it. Yeah, maybe you get really good at that easier part of the rep. You are naturally going to get stronger. Then the harder part of the rep is going to continue to get easier and easier.

Krissy: Yeah. I did a lot of those scapula retractions and hangs that you were mentioning before.

Nick: Yeah, I love hanging.

Krissy: Those are to engage the lats.

Lais: Yeah, just working the different range.

Nick: Is that brachiation? I don't know.

Krissy: They're hard. For me, I will say just getting comfortable with the movement, which is why I didn't like the machine. Even if it was just bands, or if it was partner-assisted, just getting my body to do the movement repetitively, just trained. It was more of a neurological thing.

Lais: Absolutely.

Krissy: Get my brain to work ...

Lais: Activate your lats.

Krissy: ... with my lats. To work with my arms. Be like, "This is what you're supposed to be doing. Figure out a way to do it. Let's go."

Lais: I absolutely agree. That is where the disconnect lays with the girls. I think they're having a hard time really feeling their lats and really using that muscle and just training that mind-muscle connection because it is a mental thing, as well. I really believe that. I just worked with a group of girls because mostly I do online coaching, online training and I post my workouts but it's easy for someone to see someone do something and try to mimic that motion and not get it right, as opposed to having somebody right there. I just recently did a live camp in my hometown. I worked with a small group of girls. We went over form and I was just more shocked than I thought I would be about how difficult it is. It puts you back in that beginner state where you remember, "Oh, yeah. I remember. That was hard. I didn't know where my lats were. I didn't know how to activate them." I didn't know how to get my brain to send that connection to that muscle to recruit it properly. I just used my arms. It's so easy to just try to mimic a motion and not get it right. I think that that's where the disconnect lays, for sure.

Nick: I think for a lot of women who set a goal like that, they think of it as a strength goal too, right?

It's, "I'm not thinking it as a bodybuilding sort of goal, a muscle goal to do a pull up," but the one real advantage that I do see in bodybuilding-style training is that there is that focus on that mind-muscle connection where you start with reps. You learn to feel the muscle working. That can teach you so much. Yeah, I've been as guilty as anybody. I think, "No. I don't want to train like a bodybuilder. I want to be an athlete. I want to be a strong guy," but a little bit of that, just reps and focus can just totally transform someone.

Lais: It makes such a difference.

Nick: Especially in the muscle like the lats which are so asleep in so many different people. I was thinking, "She'd probably love to know about the glats, also." Do you know about the glats?

Lais: No, I don't know about the glats.

Nick: The glats are the glutes and the lats together.

Lais: Interesting.

Nick: I went and did this big Kettle Bell Certification earlier this year and one of the big takeaways from the teacher saying, "The glutes and the lats are connected through fascia across the lower back, basically. They're the same muscle basically." Your left lat, your right glute and the other one in this "X" pattern. It's one muscle, basically. If you think of those two as one muscle, that's the only muscle group that really matters, are the glats. The most important one.

Lais: Very interesting. I need to do some research. I'll be reading about these glats.

Krissy: I'm going to train my glats today.

Nick: That's the name of my band, is "The Glats."

Lais: Oh my goodness.

Nick: We have marching orders: Pull-up, walk, whole eggs. Anything else you want, aside from follow me so I can get up to a million followers? Any other takeaways?

Krissy: Push to a million.

Lais: Any other takeaways?

Nick: What are the major priorities that you want to impart to somebody when they come to you? When they go to a camp and say, "You know what, ladies, this is how you're maybe you're doing it wrong. Think about it this way?"

Lais: I think that I feel like the whole mind-muscle connection thing has really become my mission, lately.

Nick: That's a good mission.

Lais: I'm just seeing-

Nick: Mind-muscle mission.

Lais: Yeah, I'm just seeing such a disconnect when I see people in the gym, when I work with the

girls one-on-one. I think the problem is that everybody is just trying to mimic a motion and just get through it. They're trying to essentially, get the weight from Point A to Point B by all means necessary and they're not really thinking about, "Well, what is the goal here? What's the purpose? What's the primary mover? Where am I also going to feel it but where do I need to really feel it?"

Nick: They just trust it's going to work.

Lais: I think it comes down to self-awareness. Yeah, mind-muscle connection and I think that's where people who come to me and tell me that they've been training for this long and they're not seeing results. I just feel like I see it time and time again. People are just not really focused on the goal. They're just focused on, "A to B and just get through these reps. Just get through them and that means I did them. Well, I did it. I did the workout. Why is it not working?" I think it really just comes down to mind-muscle connection. I know there's a lot of skeptics out there or a lot of critics out there about the whole mind-muscle connection thing. They think it's physics if you just do the exercises and you do proper form then you're going to activate the proper muscles, but I disagree. I feel like I can mimic a motion like a champ and completely not engage the right muscles.

Nick: Absolutely.

Lais: I really feel like I can do it without ... I don't think it just comes down to proper form. I think it's self-awareness, for sure.

Krissy: I would question proper form though, without using the right muscles or recruiting the right muscles. Are you doing proper form?

Nick: Even if it looks more or less right but the right muscles aren't engaged.

Krissy: 'Cause I'm thinking to do a deadlift without proper form and recruiting the lats. People may think, "Oh, I'm working the lower back and hamstrings." But if you're not engaging the lats and you're not engaging ... Yeah, you're not doing proper form.

Lais: Proper position, right.

Nick: Glats.

Krissy: The glats.

Lais: Sorry. Correction. The glats ... so yeah, but I agree with you that I don't think you can have proper form and really recruit all the correct muscles to their full potential without having a mind-muscle connection on that. And I think training that mind-muscle connection is really the key ... doing pre-activation exercises, doing flexing, practicing flexing, palpations where you actually touch the muscle while it engages and while it contracts so you can see what that feels like. You can see, you can feel, doing ... Teaching people proper cues about how to engage and how to initiate a movement. So it's not just about A-to-B, like you were saying. That hang and that contraction, that scapular contraction is how you initiate it properly because I can lift myself up with my arms and my elbows and every joint in my body by never truly engaging my lats. And I think that ...

Nick: I like that approach because it could be easy to say, "Well, the answer is that you need a trainer to sit there and poke you in the lats while you're doing this," which might help but you can do it yourself with just a focus on muscular control which is at the turn of the century, Eugene Sandow and all the old, great strong men, they were all muscle control specialist, too. They would go up on stage and isolate individual muscles to flex for their screaming fans but a lot of those guys felt that was the key.

Lais: The key.

Nick: Once you learn to control consciously, a muscle and you can access it then you know what to do with it but until then it's just, and especially because we sit so much now. Everybody has different compensatory activities they do or they have different ways of sitting, standing and you can have a part of your body that's totally off-limits to you until you poke it into life, basically.

Krissy: Right. You don't have to do it every set, every rep. I don't have to have someone there poking my lats being like, "Are you using it?"

Nick: Wake that thing up.

Krissy: "Are you using it," but it's a good reminder or when you're teaching a new lift to a client or to a lady that you're working with, making sure that this is where you should be feeling it. This is how it should feel. Making sure that they're getting the correct movement, working the right muscles, then once they're getting comfortable with it. I mean, every time I do a pull-up or a lat pull-down or a squat, I'm not thinking of every single muscle, "Am I contracting it?" Then my head is going to explode but it's a good reminder, or if I feel like something's off. It's a checklist. Are my hips going back? Am I pushing my knees out? Is my weight on my heel? Should I be feeling it here? Am I squeezing my glutes? It's a checklist as I'm going through to make sure I'm hitting all my major points and then I can reassure myself, "Yes, I'm doing it correctly. I'm on the right track."

Nick: I like what she said about palpation. A little self-palpation.

Krissy: I feel like that's super beneficial for me, especially with muscles you can actually feel while you're doing it, like a seated leg extension. You feel your quads contracting and you feel what that feels like. If you're doing unilateral movements where maybe I'm doing a one-armed lat pull down. I always do that.

Lais: I reach around ...

Krissy: I always make sure, yeah.

Lais: ... and I feel it. Oh my goodness. That makes such a difference for me.

Krissy: I'm like, "Wait," because sometimes my angle is a little wrong on the pulley machine. I do that all the time.

Lais: Just playing around with different angles and different movements because everybody's a little bit different. We're not all unique snowflakes like we like to think but we're all a little bit different and sometimes what I may feel really well, somebody else needs to do the complete opposite or needs to do a little bit of a tweak for them to feel it. I think that that's another thing. Sticking to too rigorous of a form. Just being too strict about a certain type of form I think can also be detrimental because you're so focused on, "Okay, this is. My triceps don't need to, my elbows don't need to come past here or I need to keep my elbows at my sides at all times." Maybe you might feel it if you allow your elbows to travel a little bit more, just as an example. It's hard to say it on a podcast without my movements, being able to ...

Krissy: Look at one thing in a text book like, "I know I should be doing this," or even ...

Nick: Watching a video.

Krissy: ... watching a video or my toes should be pointed this way when I squat." You know what? It's easier because of my hips and I tend to have slightly tighter hip flexors or what not. I need to go a little bit wider or pointed out for me to hit full-deck. Well then, I'm going to do it, even though my book tells me 45 degrees. Well, screw it because I'm going to do it. It works better for me. I'm a little bit different and I'm going to make this work.

Lais: Instead of being so stuck in the, "This is the proper form. This is the way I need to do it."

Krissy: Right. That takes time ...

Lais: Time.

Krissy: ... experience, coaching possibly, working with-

Nick: Learning to trust yourself a little bit, too.

Krissy: Yeah. You're not going to take a beginner and expect them to ...

Lais: To know it. So true.

Krissy: ... know how to do all of that, but that's what is great about having the availability now, to watch videos online, to work with people online, to have that sort of virtual aspect to it if you don't have the means to work with someone in person and have that kind of ...

Nick: When you go into the gym then, are you fairly exploratory? You allow yourself some leeway and like, "You know what? I kind of want to do this. I kind of want to do that?"

Lais: Yeah, so I feel like there's three days a week where I'm super strict and I go in with a mission, and I'm doing this one particular workout. I'm getting that done. Then I feel like the rest of the week is pretty much a little experiment. It's a little project. I just go in. I have a certain muscle group or two that is the goal of what I'm going to do but sometimes, I find myself staying in one machine for my whole workout. Sometimes, even though you have your three-set or four-set usuals, I might do six to ten sets at one machine.

Nick: If you're feeling it.

Lais: If I'm feeling it. The triceps are a good example of this. I have a hard time feeling my triceps with a lot of the tricep workouts, but just a regular tricep press-down is where I feel it. I try that and I play around with it, with different rep schemes, with different amounts of sets, with different hand-positionings, different bars, a rope, a handle, one arm, both arms and I play around and I do a million different tricep extensions- I mean, press downs and that's my workout. I play around with foot positionings and different angles. Yeah, sometimes it's just a little project, a little experiment. I just go in and do what feels right instead of following some strict program every single workout and going through all the recommended tricep exercises and not really feeling it. I'll just stick to what feels right, where I can get my pump, where I can really feel it and activate the muscles. I feel like that's also something that's been really beneficial for me.

Nick: You heard it here, people. The mind-muscle connection. Connect yourselves.

Lais: Connect yourselves.

Nick: Well, thank you very much for coming in and talking with us.

Lais: Thank you guys so much for having me.

Nick: We would ask you where people can find you, but they can probably find you.

Krissy: If they haven't ...

Lais: No, no. Let's go ahead and tell people.

Krissy: ... already found you.

Lais: You guys can find me on Instagram [@Laisdeleon](#). I have also a [YouTube](#) as you've mentioned, Lais DeLeon, you can just search there, and my website, [LaisDeLeonFitness.com](#).

Nick: Great. Thank you very much for coming by ...

Krissy Kendall, Ph.D.: Thank you.

Nick: ... and chatting with us.

Lais DeLeon: Awesome. Thank you guys. This was a lot of fun.

Nick Collias: Good. Glad to hear it. See you next time, y'all.



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