

MERYL: Welcome back everybody. Part two of our conversation with Nicole Kavanaugh, Jess Lift, and we are gonna really get back into it with our, we were talking about community and, and supporting each other.

Let's pop right back in. Okay.

NICOLE: So at just Lift **our logo says just lift weights, confidence, spirit, others**. And when I came up with that, I felt like it's not just about lifting weights. This is a fully, it's a full concept that applies to all areas of your life. So lifting weights yes.

Is gonna change your body and it's also gonna change your ability to, not just from a health perspective, but when we look at that empowerment issue That we were talking about earlier and how important that is, especially for women, especially when there's something that they haven't done before, but maybe they've always wanted to, but they just weren't sure they were.

I always say when you come in, if there's something you're not confident about doing, even if you've done it before, okay, say you're doing a deadlift and you're like,, I've done deadlift, but I don't know if I'm really good at it. We're gonna teach you, we're gonna help you, we're gonna break it down. If you've never touched a barbell before, I we're gonna teach you how to pick it up.

We're gonna, someone came to the other day and she goes, how do I put plates on the bar? Let's do it together right now. **Don't feel funny about asking that question because**

we don't know until someone shows us every single thing that we do. We do because somebody taught us and then we kept doing it repetitiously until we got better at it.

Yes. So **the confidence is gonna come from lifting, understanding that you're learning something that you can feel better about because you know how to do it now.** Yes, I love this. **But also feeling good about being able to do big things.** Picking up big things and putting 'em back down again is pretty empowering.

So your confidence level is gonna come up on that one. You also have coaches that are gonna kind of rally around you. We hype you, okay? But in all the best ways, we're not, we're not there to just be cheerleaders. **We're there to educate and make sure that you're safe and successful.** But we are gonna tell you when you know, Meryl, damn, that looks good today.

You know, or I love that 25-pound weight in your hand. Yeah. Let's keep that going. Okay. Those kind of things are gonna boost you. Like, ooh, that my coach just noticed me. **My coach is empowering me to do more and to keep going.** The spirit part of it is obviously how you feel Endorphins are gonna flow.

You're gonna walk out the door, probably better than you did when you walked in.

Mm-hmm. You're, it's like I said earlier, **sometimes this is the, the one hour in the day that's gonna help people. Feel like they're just giving it to just themselves. I always say leave everything else outside the door.**

I have clients and we don't know what's going on in people's lives. Right? **So I always assume that there are big things happening in your life and you need this hour just for you. So let me give it to you, let me help you have that.** I have, I've had clients come to me and I had one who came to me and said I just wanna give you a hug.

And she was fairly new and I'm like, okay after class. And she said, I've been here every day for 60 days. And she said, and I'm 60 days sober. And that's, oh, I, exactly. And she said, this is what keeps me from popping a pill and this is what I need in my life right now to anchor me. And damn, that hits like a ton of bricks, right?

I have people that have children with terminal illnesses and this is their one moment in a day to just. Be about them because they're living a very heavy life out there. We have people that are dealing with loss. I lost my mom. I like my dog died. Yes. You know, like, they come in and they tell me things and it's like, let's just do, I have people that are trying to get out of abusive relationships so this empowerment for them in giving them just that ability to lift their spirit mm-hmm.

In **that hour can carry them through a day.** And lifting others is about coaches lifting the clients and the clients lifting each other. This is about, let's dance it out in between sets. Let's hype each other up. Hey, you like my, I like that bar. Can I try that? I like that, that week.

Can I try that? You know yeah, let's go, let's do this together. These are all things that we all need. **We need a sense of community. We need a place to go where. The normal behavior is the desired behavior.** I'm gonna quote James clear on that, because that's a

really big one in my opinion. You know, where **when you're around people that are doing the things that you wanna do and you wanna get better at, you get excited about it.**

Yeah. And you, you become better because you're gonna spend more time there. And you don't have to explain yourself to anybody. If you wanna go hang out with people that lift weights, do it. If you wanna go hang out with people that do triathlons, do it. If you wanna go hang out with people that don't drink, do it.

Okay. Like, these are the, there's lifestyles out there. And **if it fits you and what you really want to be a part of, make it happen for yourself.**

MERYL: Find your tribe. Find your tribe. I, I love everything about that. I mean, I think, again, it mirrors what we do. I, we've recognized, I mean, we recognize, I recognized it even before the pandemic.

I mean, **the work that we do with our coaches Yes. Right. Is about supporting others. It's about giving them or teaching. Right. Self-care is really important.** And I think, again, **in a culture where there's so much selfishness Yeah. And there's so much disconnectedness Yeah. And there's such a sense of individuality and not the community.**

Yeah. Because of what has been created,, in our environment. **And humans are not meant to live like that. We are social creatures.** I mean, go back and look at if you go back and look at the most successful cultures, it's all about community. The Indian culture, I mean, they didn't survive cuz we that was a whole other thing.

Right. But Indian women, yeah. Supported women. Unconditionally throughout their lifespan. Right? Yeah. When, when young Girls first Menstruated, they had ceremonies. Yes. When women had babies, they had ceremonies together as a community. The community raised the children, We don't have that anymore.

And, and, and it really has affected us, I think, look, look at our psychosocial mental health or lack thereof. So I could totally digress on that. But the work that we are doing here, I'm so passionate about in terms of. **Allowing people to understand self-care is, is so important and it's not being selfish.**

I think again, **we were taught that, oh, you, you have to be superwoman. Yes. You have to be able to take care of the kids and have a career and look good and cook and clean** and do this, and oh, and you should be able to do all that. I'm like, really? Who? Who? Some man must have thought that.

because that is an impossibility. Yes. But, then there was no time for us. Yeah. **And so we have got to set those boundaries for ourselves.** And I talk a lot about that as women setting boundaries and just saying no to other people Absolutely. And to things that they don't wanna be doing.

Yeah. And supporting themselves. So our coaches and our team is amazing at really helping people. Sometimes it's more about that than it is even just, here's my food. Right? Yes. It's really about supporting others. And it's not just women, it's the men too. And, teaching 'em that. But, and I think we've gotta start doing it with our young people too, right?

Yes. The younger community, which is what we're gonna start up. But, going back to creating that sense of community and really having women and men cheer each other on in the best way to support themselves.

NICOLE: I see it happening though, and I don't know, I, mean, between the studios, I must spend most of my time there.

Yeah. My kids are adults now, so I have, right, exactly. I have that time that. Or maybe my husband. But I, I don't know if it's because I'm in it all day long. I feel like, again, tides are turning a little bit. **Women aren't tearing each other down anymore. We're building each other up.**

Okay. You know, it's all about Yes, queen. You know, like, yeah, I love what you're doing. You know? I see, I see it in my daughter's generation. I, and **I see it in my generation, which is what place where we used to be in competition with each other and we're not anymore.** Like, we're, we're not, we're we're, I mean, I'd rather, I'd rather praise the women in my life and see them succeeding and winning than ever wanna be better than them.

Or be jealous of them. I don't, I can't remember the time I felt jealousy in my life, because all I feel is I want to lift you up and help you because I, and I get that energy back On a regular basis. Right? So **it's a beautiful circle that we create with other people that when we give it, we get it,** Now, don't I, **I know that there's a lot of people out there that.**

Are still angry and still frustrated and still not feeling that. But that's because they haven't found their tribe yet. Yeah. They're not in the right arenas. Okay. And that's why I

think it's so important to, like what I said earlier, get out there and find your people. Yeah. Get out there and get around others.

You can't do it all on your own. No. Nobody expects you to go, we don't take a child and throw them out in the world and say, go ahead, figure it out. Right. We nurture them and we raise them and we teach them, but we don't stop as adults. There's new things that we wanna do. So why wouldn't we let ourselves learn and be around people that can nurture us and help us and, and train us the right way?

You know, the mindset stuff that we do at the studio, and I haven't really touched on it yet, but every single, **we have a screen in the studio with a different quote every day. That quote is gonna be opened in the hour with the coach, and they're gonna talk to you about it and give you some.**

Background on where you can use it in your hour. It's like an anchor. Like I'm gonna keep coming back to that, that one thing. Some, cuz sometimes you need that.

Sometimes we get distracted. And we can say, oh yeah, I'm working on the best version of me today. And **that means I gotta be fully focused on me in this hour and the people around me.**

And then **when you walk out the door, we give you a little bit more before you leave and say, okay, now take this and apply it to your nutrition.** Apply What if you're struggling to get better at something? Can you get one meal better today? Do you have a plan yet? Have you prepped your food? Are you, are you winging it?

Because if you're winging it, you're probably not gonna be successful. Right. **Commit to yourself, commit to a better version of you.** Commit to living your best life. Mm-hmm. And that. Happens when we, when we do it for ourselves, we wanna see other people succeed at it as well.

MERYL: No, a and it's so true. And I just love that whole the fact that you said, well, and I and, and I love what you say about, well, we gotta teach 'em, right? Yes. I think what so many, and especially women and, and I know men too, right? **They walk into a gym and they're very intimidating.**

NICOLE: **And so they're alone. You walk into a big gym.** Exactly. You're, I mean, like, even though there's a, there's hundreds of people around you. No, they're not. Unless you're actually went in with someone, or you have friends there, and there are people that have friends at the big box gyms, but that's their community.

Exactly. it's a little cluster. Okay. And they'll see each other, they'll chat, they'll talk and they'll keep lifting and they'll move on. But you have to be a person that's okay with doing it yourself and be very self-motivated. Right. To be successful there. But that's why so many people walk into a big box gym and then where do they end up?

Back on the treadmill? Back on the step back. Cause they on the bike because they're like, I don't know how to use that. And it's not because they're, I don't, I don't even think they're worried about getting hurt. No. They're worried about worried everybody else silly. Yes. And they're gonna think, I don't know what I'm doing.

Right. And when you walk into a studio and you have someone who says, okay, this is your equipment. Here's your space. You have everything you need. It's all reserved for you. You don't have to worry about like, oh, that machine's taken, and that machine's taken. And it's, I went to LA Fitness for the first time in a long time a couple weeks ago cuz I was on vacation.

And I never wanted to go, go take a just lift class so bad in my life. I really, I mean love and I agreed in a gym, like I, I love it. But there were so many people there on a Saturday that I literally was cringing. Like, yeah. I'm like, can I, how far is the studio from where I am right now? Can I get to Boca?

Can I get to like, I gotta get to Coral Springs. I got, but I, was like, no, I'm committed. I'm here. **I appreciated what we've created that much more. Because. There's space and I have all the stuff I need, and it's already planned out. I don't have to think about it. It's already done. Yeah. And I love my people I love working out with people that we can commiserate with.**

Like, oh my God, this is so hard right now, but okay, let's go do another set. You know? It's **it's nice, to find a place where you don't feel alone**

MERYL: Yeah. In so much. And, and that's so metaphorical. I mean, it's not, not just alone in that year with number.

NICOLE: Right. I mean, I could be working out next to you and not know you at all and be.

That looks really good. Like, or, or like, how's that weight? Or Oh my God, are you dying? Like, I'm dying right now. You know? And now we started a conversation with each other and or you see the same people over and over again because you tend to come at the same time. You're naturally gonna gravitate towards 'em and you're gonna have a conversation at some point.

Yeah. And now you've got, I would say like I've got **we have 24 people in a class. I've got 23 workout buddies. Yeah. You know, along with me.**

MERYL: I know. It's phenomenal. I think this is just such an amazing concept for so many reasons. And that you know, we need probably more of these for so many reasons, right?

For the mental, for the physical for all. For just all around. And I love that. You pay attention to the small things, right? And, when I say small things, even probably like the, if someone's the form. Oh yeah. Right. **Form is so important. People can, I watch this in the gym all the time. Like people just hacking away at, at weights.**

I'm going, oh my God, you're gonna kill your back. Yes. You're gonna kill your shoulder. And I think that's the other part of this is that you, you, **if you're working efficiently, you don't have to work as hard.**

NICOLE: That's a big one right there. Right? Right. Yes, absolutely. Yeah. We don't expect everybody to have all the answers.

Okay. **We rely on people who specialize in things To help us.** Okay. If I want to do a deep dive into my nutrition, I'm coming to you. You, that's what you do every day. That's what you're good at. I don't wanna go online and learn that for myself. Right. I'd rather have an expert help me and tell me what to do.

People come in. if I had you all day in my ear saying, do this, I would do it. All right? Yeah. Okay. Great. Then get somebody that's gonna help you do that. Okay. With the, with **having a trainer. Definitely is gonna help you with your form. Yeah, but what about the workout itself? Okay. If it's already planned and it's structured so that you're gonna start to develop progressive overload,** right?

Which means you're gonna start to build over time, gradually, **we're gonna work those muscles in different ways, different weeks out of the month,** we're gonna do a strength, we're gonna do a failure week, we're gonna do an endurance week. So you've got those different modalities. There's science to it. Okay.

And we're doing that part, so that **you can just come in and do what you're being told and trust that you're working smart.** You're not working, you're not, you don't, you're not overdoing it. Right? Okay. Right. Okay. And to say to yourself oh, I'm just gonna like the people who say to themselves, well, I only do lower body.

Well, you're not doing yourself any favors. Cause you're creating an imbalance for yourself. And I know you're doing that because of the aesthetics. And then you've got this, or, and I have women, oh my gosh, I have so many women who come in and they

are used to doing lower body because from an aesthetic perspective, they want their legs and their glutes to look great and they wanna be strong.

And they've gotten very strong there. The reason they don't do upper body at this point, or they, I hate upper body. I hate that. Okay. The reason they feel that way is not because they truly don't like it, it's because they're weaker in that area. Nobody wants to do things that they feel weak at, they don't feel successful.

And then I say, okay, we're gonna build you up. And now you know what? They like up and they'll say to me, I can't believe I'm gonna say it, but I love chest day more than I love doing leg day now. You know? Yeah. And we, we turn those tides because we start to see when you start to feel strong and empowered because you feel capable.

You wanna do more of it? And now we've got the balance. Yeah. Now we've got, oh, my upper body is strong and lean and sculpted and so is my lower body. And I feel like a badass, like they'll tell us and, and we say to like, women who are picking up five pound weights to do things.

It's like, how much does your kid weigh? How much is your bag weigh? I guarantee you that purse weighs is more than five pounds. If you're capable of doing other things, you're just holding yourself back because no one's told you, Hey, I see it in you and you can do more. Let's do it together. I'm gonna prove it to you.

MERYL: Right. And I'm gonna show you and t And I love that. And I'd like and again, it goes back with the expertise. I feel like we are all sort of fighting this uphill. And I'm, and I do hope the tides are turning on this too, this uphill battle against TikTok and Instagram. Right. There's every fitness and nutrition influencer out there.

Yes. And everybody wants to look like that person. Yes.

NICOLE: But that's not what they look like. Well, of course that's not what they look, but Right. And we know that, that, but you know, in the moment you're like, I wanna look like that. And you know, listen, there's nothing wrong with seeing somebody and saying like, yeah, I wanna look like that.

But then let's, let's scale it back and be realistic and say, okay, that person is 22 years old. That person probably works out four to six hours a day. Like, and their nutrition is not, I mean, like we, we Yeah. They live in a bubble in the bubble. **And everything's been filtered. They're shooting at certain angles, they're posing a certain way.**

You know, it's all, it's all smoke and mirrors. Yeah. Okay. For the most part. That's why I love when I see influencers like that, that say Instagram reality. Right. And they're like, this is me sitting in the pose and this is me. Just relaxed. Right. And you can see I have a stomach roll and I have cellulite, and I have I, I don't have the cuts and the shadows they're not really there.

Yeah. And also we can even, that's just not reality. No. But I think that, That's common sense. I would hope that most people would understand that and we expose it more and more, but

MERYL: I think it just needs to be exposed more and more. I hate to say, I didn't think common sense is like, you know Right. The cliché not so common. Yeah, you're right, you're right. Common. Yeah. But because I see it all the time. Yeah. I mean, in this, well, I mean, I see it in the fitness world. I see it in the nutrition world. It's just ridiculous.

NICOLE: We know that the, the real experts though, will always say what we're saying. Yes. It's not reality. You know, you can look at somebody who's an influencer or somebody who's on I mean, what is their, it you, **you have to compare apples to apples.** You know, like, I mean, I look at some, like, I follow somebody on Instagram right now.

She's 56 years old. She looks unbelievable. Her body is amazing. Okay. She's always showing herself, working out. She clearly has a good understanding of herself physically. But I don't know what she's looked like when she was. 20 and 30 and 40, you know what I mean? Like, she could have always been somebody, A lot of these women you'll look at and you'll say, wow, they look so good.

They're so strong, they're so lean. You know what, those are the kind of people that have had to work to gain weight and put it on their entire life. If they stop working out, you know what happens? They lose weight and they get skinny. Right. Okay. Like, and they don't wanna look like that.

They're, they're a 98 pound person when they're not lifting. Right? Yes. And is that your body type? Because if it is, we can talk about that, but if it's, it's not your body type. If you're at 40 pounds to lose, you're never gonna look like that person. Right. Because that person has never been overweight in their life.

MERYL: Exactly. **And it goes back to your own relativity, right? Yes. What, and I think that's the, that is the biggest point, is really you gotta look at what, where are you in, like you said in your house**

We can, we can appreciate what other people look like. Yes. Yeah. But, but how you still gotta come back to yes. You live in this space

NICOLE: and the way you, the way you. What you love and what your, your taste level is changes over your lifestyle. Absolutely. So think about it like, think about, and you can go back to your real homes like that you've lived in. Think about a house that you lived in at one point, and maybe you loved it when you lived it, but you think about it now, you're like, I don't think I would wanna live there if I could live there right now.

Right. That's not where I would wanna be. Right. It's not the right space for me anymore. Right. **So your body's gonna change and you can think about how do I wanna feel in this skin and in this house, and how do I wanna build it and how do I wanna renovate it** and do what I want? You can have it all. You really can, but you just have to be willing to do the work and educate yourself.

Yes. And get with the right people.

MERYL: Absolutely. And I think that

education is so important because like anything else we, in the work that we do, we really educate to empower and that's exactly what you do, right? Yes. **Educate to empower. So you know, How you wanna move through time and space and I think, and feel and, and live your best life.**

And this is just, yeah. So I, like I said we could probably talk For hours on this, but I think we've covered, I mean, anything else that we didn't cover that you wanna add?

NICOLE: No, I **just hope to, to be able to get people to understand the, the actual complement between the nutrition And the fitness side of it.**

Because you can work out as hard as you want. You can do doubles, you could do triples, you could do it all. **But if your food is not in line with Your goals, then you need to change that component, or you're never gonna see that next level.** Absolutely. And your lifestyle is really, you have to think of it as your lifestyle.

Don't think of it as something that I do think. Something, think about it as who I am.

You know, when people look at you and they can say, I can clearly see that you or I know you, and **I know that you're that healthy person that's living in a space that's admirable because they're taking care of themselves and they're owning it.**

Then it, **it's really it, it's exciting to be who you wanna be. Yeah. Not just to look how you wanna look.**

MERYL: Right. Yeah. Oh, I love that. Thank you. Thank you. So how many locations do you have?

NICOLE: We have two. So the Coral Springs location, which was our original location just turned two years old.

Yeah. In March. And we opened our Boca location in January of this year. So we have two in, under two years. Oh. What's amazing. There's definitely our, what we're doing is different than anybody else, I think, in the space right now. It's a, it's a, it's I'm sorry, I don't mean to pause that long. No, that's alright.

Don't worry. It's, it's something that people really need and want. I have, I get messages all over the country from people following our Instagram every day saying, can we get one here? Can we get one here when, when's it coming? You know? Yeah. So I know that there's a need because listen, I'm not recreating the wheel here.

Okay. There are, there are group strength classes, but they're not done the way we're doing it. Yeah. They're doing it in either very small group in like a personal training, kind of a space where they're doing small group training. There are places that are doing strength training, but they're still, they won't let that conditioning go.

Yeah. Well you still need conditioning two days a week. So even though we're all strength, we're still gonna hit. No, you're not. Then you're not all strength. You're not doing what Just Lift is doing. We're still gonna hit you with the hit and we're still gonna do Right. The assault bike and we're still gonna, you know or there's.

A lot of power involved and powerlifting has its place for, for a lot of people, right? It's amazing, right? But for some people it's just not right for them or they just don't feel comfortable doing it or they've gotten injured and they can't do that anymore. **We do very slow controlled. Focus, more traditional weight training style.**

We do keep it very interesting for them as well, but we work it with, like, we work with cable machines and a lot of places aren't, don't have cables in their space. Dumbbells and smaller bars and all the things in between. But you know,, the mindset training along with it. And bringing that.

Yeah. Yeah. So we are unique in that way and I hope to be able to bring it to as many people as possible. We are looking to scale. We need scale. There's a next space. No, we're, we're, we're looking south. In fact, I'm looking at a space down here tomorrow. All right. So, so this area yeah.

So if you're in the plantation area, western area Cooper City we're looking for coming into that area next. Yeah, because I know that, I know there's a need. Yeah. And I know there's people that just wanna be able to just lift weights. In a group setting and we're much more affordable than a personal trainer and what you're paying per hour.

So it kind of checks all the boxes for a lot of people.

MERYL: Fabulous. Yeah. Oh, Nicole, what a great, great thing. Thank you. I mean, thank you for bringing this to the world. Thank you. I'm so glad you have me here. I am so

wonderful. I am really excited. We're gonna continue to talk off air. Like I can't wait to get to these classes.

But anyway, so I am sure this won't be the last conversation that we have on air for sure. But that's all for today, everybody. I hope you enjoyed it as much as I've enjoyed talking to you and make it a great day. This is, you're a rebel nutritionist signing off.