

Steph G (host): Welcome to Harder to Kill Radio, a top rated health and fitness podcast. It's Steph Gaudreau, your host. This show is all about finding out what it takes to build unbreakable humans and passing that knowledge on to you so you can unleash your inner badass and change the world. We have another amazing guest on the show this week, so let's do this.

What is going on my badasses? Thanks so much for joining me on this week's episode of the show. I'm just having so much fun this season and I'm really pumped to bring you yet another incredible guest. This is someone who I absolutely adore, yet someone I haven't met yet in real life and I'm going to remedy that very soon because it is ridiculous that we haven't yet met in person, but I just love what she does in the world. I love her philosophy and I think you're going to love it as well.

She has a super inspirational story she's also sharing with us today and man, it is going to help you to really get motivated to take life by the horns and get over your fear of doing things that scare you. So we're going to welcome to the show, Miss Beth Manos Brickey of Tasty Yummies and as always, as a way to really help spread the word about Harder to Kill Radio, I have a quick request and that is to hop over to iTunes and hit subscribe or whatever podcast player you use - hit the subscribe button.

It helps people to discover the show that normally would never find it and that means a lot because that way we're sharing the love and spreading the good word about folks like Beth and all the other amazing guests that have ever been on this podcast, because they are so fricking inspirational and I think you'll agree that their message deserves to be heard far and wide. Alright, with all that said, let's jump into this episode.

Super excited that you're back with us for Harder to Kill Radio, I'm really excited about today's guest because she is somebody I've come to know and really just admire and love and I'm so inspired by this woman and she's been a part of my summit and she is just putting out some really great vibes into the world. So I'm excited to welcome to the show, Miss Beth Manos Brickey of Tasty Yummies. Welcome.

Beth B: Hi, thank you so much for having me. That was a nice intro - it almost made me tear up a little.

Steph G (host): You know I think honestly, the reason why I do that is because when people have done that for me on their podcasts, I'm like, 'oh that's actually a second for me to not be so fricking hard on myself and like, you know I've actually done some good things in this business.' So yeah, I'm excited to have you here. It's interesting, I've had so many different people on the show - people I've met in real life and am super good friends with, people that I've never met people and actually the podcast is the first time talking

to them and you're sort of in between and it's ridiculous because we live about two hours apart and-

Beth B: I know.

Steph G (host): Haven't yet hung out in person and I'm sort of like shaking my fists at the sky like, 'it's going to happen.'

Beth B: I know, we need to change that. Make it happen.

Steph G (host): So I hope to remedy that soon, but nevertheless, I found you through Instagram - which is how I've connected with a lot of people - and just immediately I was drawn in by everything that you do and the way in which you do it. And you're such a kind soul and you're so passionate about what you do. So, we're going to talk a lot of the stuff that you're doing in your business and some adventures you've been on lately, but I want to, before we go any further - I'm prefacing this because normally our audio is pretty quiet. However, it's currently like 95 to 100 degrees in southern California. We're recording this on September 1 and Beth and I both do not have AC and so we have fans going and windows open. So whatever noise is in the background is in the background.

Beth B: It sounds like we're in a wind tunnel but it feels like we're in a oven.

Steph G (host): You know and we were talking about this before we started recording is that, we had this period of time at the end of August where it started to get cool and cloudy and people were like, 'Pumpkin all the things.' And I was like, 'oh no, no, no, no. This is a-'

Beth B: Don't fall for it.

Steph G (host): 'No, no. This is a trick. This is a trick.' So yeah, we're both currently sweltering with all of our pets in our houses, but nevertheless we're here, so-

Beth B: And clean because I keep taking showers because I don't no what else to do with myself and my body. I just keep going places and coming home and sweating profusely taking photos of food and take another shower, so I'm weirdly clean - cleaner than normal. I've taken an aggressive amount of showers in the last 24 hours.

Steph G (host): See you're better than me, I just keep slapping on deodorant.

Beth B: Well, it's because I keep going out and seeing people in public and like going out for drinks to get out of my house or having dinner or like going to appointments and I just don't want to be totally disgusting.

Steph G (host): I am totally disgusting and I'm owning that. I'm hiding in my house. I have not left and that is that. That is that.

Beth B: You're committing to it. I appreciate that.

Steph G (host): I am. I'm fully into the stink and sweat at this point. It's just going to happen. Oh my goodness. So, I want to shift gears away from that and I want to have you tell a little bit of your story, because I know your story. I know some of the things you've had to overcome with your health. I know some of the things that you've done before you have launched and now you've been working on Tasty Yummies for years and it's an amazing resources, so I sort of like ... give us a little bit of your story.

How did you sort of end up at this point working for yourself creating amazing content for people around nutrition and fitness and nourishing your individuality and all the things that you are passionate about?

Beth B: Sounds good. I will try to keep it concise because it's kind of a long involved story with lots of ins and outs, but the long or the short of it is that, you know, I went to school for graphic design, so I got a degree in Fine Arts. My husband and I from about 2005 on owned a graphic design and custom illustration business where we worked one-on-one with clients in the entertainment industry - a lot of music industry stuff. We did concert posters. We traveled the country selling our artwork and not only for bands, but we also started doing our own life of art prints and so we did that for years, and it was so fulfilling and I was very passionate about it and I loved it.

But when you own your own business, no matter what business you own, you get caught in the grind of working for other people and creating work to be able to have the money to live the life you want to live. And especially with a creative job, it just is kind of never ending. When you do something, you get it done, you get paid - sometimes you have to beg to get paid - and then it's onto the next job. And I loved what I did but I also started to realize I was slipping into a place where I wasn't living my life for me. I wasn't taking care for myself. My health wasn't a priority.

So kind of smack in the middle of all of that, I turned 30 years old. Mark threw me a surprise birthday party. All of these friends came - people from out of town. It was so wonderful, so amazing, but when I looked back at the photos, I was happy with my life and that my husband loved me so much to do something like that but there was also this part of me that looked at this photo of this girl who was turning 30 and I didn't recognize her. I didn't know who she was because she kind of lost sight of herself in that process of making work a priority.

And admittedly from a very vain place, I just was like, this girl is overweight and if this is the weight and the health status - you know, weight is not even the issue. It was I just wasn't healthy and I didn't look well. When I looked on those photos, I just thought, 'if I'm 30 and it's so hard for me to take care of myself and to love myself and to get my body to a place that I was proud of, what's the next 10 years going to look like?'

And so, I kid you not, it was like the day that I saw those photos - so like a day after my birthday. I was like, 'that's it. Something has to change. I need to understand what's going on.' And at that point, I'd already been gluten free for five years, I believe, so I thought I was doing the right thing. I thought I was eating healthy. I was eating gluten free and going to the store and shopping the gluten free section. And I read all the documentary ... ugh, watched all the documentaries and read as many books as I could and submerged myself in the world of Michael Pollan and Food Inc. and just kind of was like, what is going on with our food and what is going on with my health that I need to understand more deeply?

And when I kind of understood that despite eating gluten free, I was still not doing the right things and taking care of myself the right way. And sourcing my meat appropriately to nourish my body with the things that I should be getting from the meat or dairy or eggs or whatever I was eating.

So right then and there, I just like decided to kind of do like a 30 day reset and I cleaned out all the processed foods and got back to zero and just took care of myself from a place of love instead of all of the years of just running the gamut of just doing what I thought I was supposed to do. And lost about in the initial months like, it was like my body was holding onto something. I lost like 40 pounds in a couple of months and it just fell off and it was easy and effortless, because I think a lot of it was inflammation and that's when I started Tasty Yummies as just a place to share the recipes I was eating because people were totally unsure like, what do you eat when you're gluten free and mostly dairy free and not eating any processed foods or things out of boxes.

So Tasty Yummies was born - that was 2010. And I was still doing the graphic design thing and still, you know, Tasty Yummies was my hobby and it's just evolved from there. As the hobby became more of my passion and I started to see what a change it was making in me each and every year - a little bigger steps, a little different things to get deeper into my healing. Finding out in 2014 that I had an autoimmune form of kidney disease that was kind of this big opening ... eye-opening moment of there's something else that was underlying that was stalling the progress of my health and my healing. And being able to move from a place of 'okay, I have another diagnosis - another understanding of what needs to happen.'

So yeah, when we moved to California in 2013 and 2014 I just started to make Tasty Yummies my full-time passion - my job - and in that time I also got certified to become a yoga instructor. Last year, I graduated from the Nutritional Therapy Association as a certified nutritional therapy practitioner and now I'm just working full-time creating recipes and content to sort of help educate people the way that I've slowly gotten to the place where I understand my food more deeply and how to nourish myself and how to take care of myself.

And I see a few one-on-one nutrition clients. I teach yoga and host events. And yeah, it's been a - like I said - it's not a quiet, short, easy story but it's long and there's a lot I left out, but that's kind of in the nutshell, that's how I got to this place. And you know, it's still ever evolving and my health is ever evolving, but I feel pretty lucky to be able to do it.

Steph G (host):

I love how you were like, 'oh I just do ... I make recipes and stuff.' But it's interesting because Beth and I are obviously in the world of food blogging but other stuff too. I will tell you, just from an outside observer and somebody who also tries to do ... try to do the right thing, right, like educate about what nutrition really is. Yeah, we all know food porn is great, but when it comes down to it, you're not going to be able to eat the greasy stack of burgers every day that's like loaded and falling over, or like the million desserts and stuff like that that we see that's getting popular on platforms like Instagram.

And I really have so much just respect for what you do, because you don't just make recipes - you know, there's like a dime a dozen, right. You can go on Pinterest and spend the rest of your life looking at recipes, but you really do such a thorough job about teaching people the real ins and outs of nutrition and how to make this work in your day and how to customize it for whatever, you know - food that you need to omit or your personal preferences.

And so, I just want to give you props because as somebody who writes about food and nutrition, it's not easy and you do such a wonderful, wonderful job, so I want to give you a pat on the back for that, because-

Beth B:

Oh, that means a lot, because that's very ... that's what's most important to me is that when I started my website, I didn't - as easy it would've been to put gluten free in the title so it would speak specifically to gluten-free people, I have always wanted Tasty Yummies to be a community that was welcoming to everybody, no matter what their dietary restrictions are, if they even have any. Maybe you're just somebody that's eating the standard American diet and want to make a few better choices. I don't want you to be turned off from something that feels like it's a quote diet or a detox or a cleanse. I want you to feel like I'm giving you sort of the

skeleton - the bare bones - and hopefully, like you said, which I so appreciate, I want to teach people on the process and empower them to feel like they can make choices for them based on sort of the base level things that I'm offering them.

And to me that's how you become great in the kitchen and make better choices for your health is you understand what you need personally and how highly individualistic it is, if I hand people the keys and all the answers, they're not going to learn anything. They're just going to make, make, make and then feel lost when there's not somebody there to hold their hand. So I appreciate that you recognize that because it's really like my main mission, so thank you.

Steph G (host): Yeah, you know, so going back to your story about how you were gluten-free and that sort of wasn't really working for you. I'm sort of curious, could you describe to us - because I can say I eat gluten-free but I don't eat ... I don't shop the gluten-free aisle, if you will. So could you sort of explain or give some examples of things that you were consuming a lot of when you were gluten-free and how you changed that when you sort of had this big moment when you turned 30?

Beth B: Yeah, so in 2005, I went 100 percent gluten-free and I did so working with a chiropractor friend of mine who walked me through a supplement supported-like 30 day eliminations slash like - I hate the word detox in certain elements, but this was a true supplement supported detox. And then you slowly add foods back in to see how your body responds. I mean, most of us have done it on some level.

And in 2005, knowing I couldn't have gluten, it was like anytime I said the word gluten to anyone in the world, they looked at me like I had 30 heads, because the word wasn't part of the dialogue, yet. People weren't - maybe at like the really crunchy granola corner store like local natural food store they did, but other than that people weren't talking about it.

So it's interesting because when I look back at the original where I started with it, I was doing things right because I had no choice but to eat naturally gluten-free and to avoid anything that had gluten in it and just go, 'okay, well I'm not having bread anymore and I'm not having pizza or cookies or cake' because the only flours were like rice and soy flour and it was horrible. So I just ate around it and it was fine. I've never felt quicker relief. My digestion changed. A lot of the inflammation issues, a lot of what I was dealing with - chronic migraines - everything kind of got better.

But then in that time, from between 2005 and 2009 I guess that would've been, somewhere in the middle of all of that it became more commonplace and you could go to your local grocery store and find

gluten-free cookies and pizza and frozen chicken fingers coated in who knows what. And admittedly, I went a little crazy because I had felt so lost - there were no blogs, there were no cookbooks - I felt so lost and so alone that when that stuff popped up and it was filling the aisles month-by-month, year-by-year, I was like, 'give me the cookies. Give me the pizza. I don't care if it's \$10 and tastes like cardboard. I want it.'

And I ate it all. And it was all horrible and it was all overpriced. And I would switch from brand to brand and hoping that somehow I would have that magical feeling that I remembered having with those foods and all that happened was is I started to feel sick again. And I started to deal with digestive issues again. And I started to deal with inflammation issues and headaches and I put on weight and weight and weight.

And I didn't know why, because in my head - like I said - I thought, 'I'm eating gluten-free. What's the problem?' So in learning that the problem was is that processed foods are still processed foods and learning that while something may be gluten-free, a lot of times if they're making it to also work for somebody that's dairy and egg-free, it's probably filled with weird fillers and quote natural flavors and hydrogenated vegetable oils and corn syrup and who knows what else that's doing different kind of damage than maybe the gluten was doing to me.

And so that's when, you know, in 2009 when I sort of shifted my diet - 2009, 2010 - I just learned like, 'get back to basics.' And in reading Michael Pollan's work, I started to see there is something to understanding that the way that our grandparents ate worked for a reason because it was not complicated and it didn't come from a box and that whole five ingredients or less things, for the most part, is a pretty great way to approach food as you're getting started on shifting on your diet because if it's five ingredients or less, at least you can know that there's a minimal amount of things added.

Steph G (host): For sure. I appreciate that description and I think, you know, it's easy for someone to look at your social media or my social media and go, 'oh well, they have it all figured out and I'm just getting started,' and so I think people get a little bit overwhelmed and frustrated-

Beth B: 100 percent.

Steph G (host): And I mean, you've had that experience, I've had that experience, where we made some changes and maybe it was a starting point but ultimately we had to sort of listen to our bodies and go, 'hmmm, I don't know if this is exactly the answer' and continue to evolve over time.

Beth B: Yeah.

Steph G (host): Right.

Beth B: It's that baby steps thing and it's something I deal with a lot with my clients because now - you and I don't have all the answers, but we've spent for me ten, for me 12 years, evolving with my diet and my health and my healing and so I feel like - Do I have more answers than I did in 2005? Absolutely. Do I have more answers than a lot of my clients? 100 percent.

However, they come to me. I want to give them all the answers and I know I can't do that because it's overwhelming and it's setting them up - not always - but for some people, it's setting them up for failure to give them too much. But they see where I'm at and I've had someone actually say this to me recently when we were talking about working together. She just said, 'I just want to look like you and be where you're at.' I'm like, 'well, just so you're aware and I'm not trying to be like a jerk - this is 12 years of work and figuring it out and what I'm doing in those 12 years, I can't just say hey do this thing I'm doing right now and it's going to work for you and you're going to feel amazing and look your best,' because that's ... I don't think that that's true.

And the same goes for all of the work that you do with building strength and getting into the gym and lifting weights, like I'm only a year and a half into the work I'm doing and I look at people like you and other people that I greatly admire and I think, 'how come I can't lift that much weight? How come I'm not that strong? How come I can't do that?' And then I check myself and I'm like, 'girl, she's been doing that way longer and just own where you're at right now and progress not perfection, you know.'

Steph G (host): Yeah, talk to me about diet dogma.

Beth B: Ugh.

Steph G (host): I knew that would be the response but you know in a way right, if we're sort of thinking gluten-free ... if you're going to be strictly gluten free or strictly paleo or strictly vegan or whatever it is, labels help people navigate the world?

Beth B: Absolutely.

Steph G (host): Yet, right. What are your thoughts on that?

Beth B: (sighs) You and I have talked about this before because admittedly - and I'm like this across the board, not just with diet- ... it's like when something in the world becomes super popular and a thing, there's like this weird rebel tendency in me to be like, 'oh if everyone likes that, I'm not doing

that because I don't want to be like everybody else.' And not like I think I'm going to just stand off on my own and create a whole new way of approaching things, but there's just something about when everyone jumps in, all in on something like calm down, let's not all be followers.

And when the paleo thing started to kind of creep into my consciousness as something that was going on and I saw it first in the food blogging world where I'm like, 'oh whoa, a lot of people are switching from just being gluten-free to eating paleo. What is it about?' And I would look at it and try to understand it and I thought, 'well that's not for me because I'm not that sick and I do just fine on gluten-free,' but as we talked about in the strength summit, I also kind of finally got to this point when I got the diagnosis of my autoimmune form of kidney disease in 2014, I got to this point where I had a full realization that I was normalizing how sick I was. And I wouldn't accept that I was sick as I was because I think in some aspects it made me feel like I wasn't as strong as I wanted to believe that I was or portrayed as - it was like a vulnerability.

Anyways, this is getting away from the topic, but in that time I started to explore different ways to approach my eating and ultimately, the long version of the short story is that I found my way two years ago plus to eating paleo and doing so pretty strictly because that's what works for me. And even in recent months, exploring eating keto and how my body and how my autoimmune is responding to that.

But I was very adamantly against it, more because I was watching the world get so dogmatic about it. The people who were very strictly paleo would create these rules and I was watching people in the comments fighting with each other, 'that's not paleo. Don't eat white rice.' It's like, my ... the kind of gut core of me was always like, 'just shut up and do what works for you. Let's stop worrying about what everyone is else doing and if you can eat white rice or if a little dairy works for you, eat it and shut your mouth and stop judging the people that can't do it.' But I also kept my mouth shut, but admittedly it kept me very like ... I kept a very long arm length between myself and the paleo world because it just turned me off.

And then I started to shift a couple ... in the last few years where the people I really respected that were never doing that dogmatic stuff - their voices became louder and they became more active in fighting against that dogma and creating the dialogue around eat for yourself and paleo for you or whatever it is. And so, it was like I finally felt like I wasn't crazy and that I was actually one of many, many people that felt that way, so I'm very, very adamant about that.

And I'll meet people all the time. They're like, 'oh, how do you eat?' Or they'll watch me order and they're like, 'oh so you're paleo.' I'm like, 'no.' They're like, 'oh why are you not paleo?' I'm like, 'oh I just don't call myself that but I guess I am.' I just feel weird labeling myself, you know.

Steph G (host): Yeah for sure, I mean I've noticed lots of people recently disassociating themselves from the word - in this case, paleo. But it could be one of any number of dietary paradigms. You see this a lot with vegans who decide to then go in a different direction and people can be really...

Beth B: Shaming.

Steph G (host): Downright rude. It's like, 'you're a traitor' and 'how dare you' and 'this has all been a lie' and there are certain people - at least in the paleo community - who are still calling themselves paleo that are like, 'it's okay too.' In the way I see it, it's like if you don't eat for your unique body type and needs and goals, like what are you doing? Right?

Beth B: Right, exactly.

Steph G (host): But people get really upset about that stuff and for you know, I sort of sometimes limit having a blog with that name in it, but I just sort of work around it for this present moment and the majority of what I eat is still - follows in that template. But yeah, there are some things outside of that too and that's just life and that's-. How are you going ... how else are you going to be eating that way for years and years to come?

Beth B: And I think the thing is that ultimately while I personally feel, I don't feel called to labeling my diet in a day-in and day-out place - you'll see my recipes are labeled that way and you'll see things called paleo this or gluten-free that or keto-that, but so to me approaching how you approach your diet should be individualistic as well and so I don't look at the people that strictly adheres to those labels and call themselves that - I don't look at it like 'oh I feel sorry for you' or 'you're doing it wrong.' I think it's great. I think once again, you should do what works for you.

I think for me, at least for me personally, I can speak from a place of having a label and having rules slowly starts to make me feel like I'm being restricted in a way and I have this, there's like this sort of underlying, it gets to that orthorexia-like eating disorder where I feel like if I put myself in a box where there's yeses and there's no's and it's arbitrary rules coming from somebody else that next thing I know, eating stops being fun. It becomes this thing that I have to do a certain way to be perfect and if I'm not perfect, then I'm shaming myself and when I'm shaming myself, I feel guilt. I don't think food should ever have guilt attached to it.

So for me, it's just what works in terms of being able to maintain. Like I can maintain a paleo lifestyle for the long haul because I don't call it that. And I know it sounds crazy to some people, but it's for me what works to keeping me present and doing things for the right reason - if that, any of that makes sense.

Steph G (host):

Yeah, so for clients that you work with that they're sort of trying to figure out how to customize their nutrition as well, how do you - and maybe do you have those orthorexic tendencies or the tendencies to just freak out if you're not following the rules and you're not being compliant with a certain way of eating? I mean, how do you help them navigate then being on things like social media where you're either seeing ... they're following accounts where there's a very clear dietary paradigm or you're seeing lots of food that's not related and you're like 'is that clean? Is that not clean? Is it clean and dirty?'

All these words that we use to associate with the food that we eat and giving it that good-bad connotation, how do you help people you work with sort of navigate the fact that they have to go out into the real world and deal with that stuff?

Beth B:

You know I think ultimately it still just comes back to that being self-aware and sort of slowing down enough and recognizing sort of these primal instincts and needs and deficiencies and things that we each have and honoring that, but also shutting out those external things that can muddy up your approach to your life.

And so, I try to encourage people to - if they're curious after X amount of months or weeks of eating a certain way as we've worked through their health issues. If they're curious like, 'oh I saw this paleo person eating this and they did fine.' I just encourage people to try things for themselves and then make choices for them based on what's important.

So I know ... I don't even know if that makes sense, but often someone will say to me something about they want to add something back into their diet or 'oh I want to have a cheat weekend.' Quote, big air quotes - cheat weekends. I don't usually love using that word but they'll say to me like, 'oh I'm going on vacation, what can I have?' And I'm like, 'I don't know. What can you have?' And they're like, 'well is it okay if I drink? Is it okay if I eat some gluten or do this?' And I'm like, 'you have to' - and this is my own personal approach - 'you have to prioritize what's most important for you.'

So there are foods that fall outside of the paleo paradigm or the keto paradigm or drinking alcohol is quote not nutritionally sound, but I know my limits, so I know a little sheep milk dairy now and again - if I don't go

crazy, if it's quality sheep milk - I'll be okay. If I eat a gluten-free pizza that's covered in cow's milk cheese and drink a gluten-free beer, I'm probably going to be hurting for several days. So for me, that's not a good choice because I look at the results and the consequences, and I can weigh how important it is. Whereas going out with friends and having a couple of cocktails or a cocktail or whatever, that may be does better for me than a pile of junk food.

So it's for me, I think, it's trying to educate people on getting back to a place where they're listening to their body and again, closing out those external rules and just - I don't know if prioritizing is the best word, but kind of weighing what's worth it, you know.

Steph G (host): Absolutely, yeah. Now I know I am fully on team white potato, but I know you're not. So I know-

Beth B: Well it goes in waves for me. Man, my day a couple weeks ago when I put up a Instagram story about my farting problem, I don't know if it was the potatoes or what, but I'm like 'no!' It was a bad day.

Steph G (host): Yeah, and I mean that's also going to change over time too, so-

Beth B: Yep.

Steph G (host): I love it.

Beth B: It seems like weekly sometimes and that's what I like to tell people. Don't ... if something didn't work for you six months ago, don't shut it out as long as it's a food that's not - if it's Cheetos, I'm going to say, 'probably you don't need to have Cheetos so don't try reintroducing them' - but if it's white potatoes or white rice or coffee or some sort of dairy or whatever it is, just because it doesn't work for you today, as long as you don't have a full blown food allergy where your airways are constricted, give it time and you may ... things may heal to a place where you can reintroduce it again.

And again, it goes back to that dogmatic approach of listening to your body and just because something's a no now and it's a no on someone else's list, doesn't mean it's a no forever. You know.

Steph G (host): Yeah, I'm team no beans and that's just like-

Beth B: Oh, I can't do beans.

Steph G (host): That's just a consistent thing for me, so whatever, but hey-

Beth B: So sad. I miss hummus.

Steph G (host): Oh hummus, yeah, I miss it too.

Beth B: Like good hummus. We've all had our cauliflower hummuses and they're fine and they're good but it is not a beany garbanzo bean goodness.

Steph G (host): No, it's not.

Beth B: Sadly.

Steph G (host): Well, we'll keep trying I guess.

Beth B: I know.

Steph G (host): So, I want to switch gears, so I want to ask you about something that happened you relatively recently and that is this trip that you took to Yosemite and I remember us exchanging messages back and forth before you went and you sort of expressed some nervousness and apprehension almost about going on this trip, so I'm wondering if you can tell us about that experience.

Beth B: Yeah. So the trip to Yosemite was I was kind of half hosting it and half attending it. My personal trainer, who I work out with every week, he decided he wanted to take a trip to - like a fitness trip - to Yosemite, where we would be camping. There would be people attending. He asked if I would cook the food every night for everybody and teach a yoga class or two. And I was like, 'absolutely' and obviously attend. And he did guided hikes every day and we did some bootcamp-style workouts. So all that was great. I was on board. I'm like, 'I'm not a hiker per se - like epic hikes - but I can do it.' I'm in good shape. I had confidence.

And one of the things he offered up to me was that he had five permits to hike Half Dome and I didn't grow up in California - I grew up on the East Coast in New York - so I've driven past Yosemite and was aware of its epicness based on how it looked but I had no idea what Half Dome was. Like I didn't know what it was. I'm like, 'sure. I don't- ... what is it?' He's like, 'it's an epic hike.' I'm like, 'cool. Sure, just put me down for yes.'

And as it got closer, I would tell people in my life like, 'oh hey, I might hike Half Dome.' They're like, 'whoa! It's like bucket list for me.' And I'm like, 'what did I just get myself into? What did I agree to?' And so as it got closer, I expressed to my trainer Mike, I said, 'ah, I have a gentle fear of heights. How scary is this? How bad is it? How much should I be afraid? How intense is it?' And he's like, 'ah, there's some moments that are scary. I would advise you to go on the internet and maybe look at some of the videos and the photos and definitely look at the cables.' And I'm like, 'okay, but tell me more.' And he would tell me more.

And so as it got closer, I'm like, 'you know what, I'm not going to watch any videos and I'm not going to ... I'm just not going to do it because I think that that would be the breaking point of scaring me too much to not even go on the hike.' So I just said to him, I'm like, 'if I go on the hike and I change my mind or I get too scared, can I do that?' He's like, 'absolutely. There's no pressure. If you get to the bottom of Half Dome and you can't do the cables, nobody's going to make you do it.' I'm like, 'great.'

So it's a huge hike. It's a ... for us, from where we were camping, round-trip it was 22 miles we were on the trails, 14 hours. We started out like before 5 am and it's a strenuous hike, but there's definitely moments of flat and then you get to the base of Half Dome and before we even got to where the cables were, it was this rocky, stair-ish like thing of rocks and you're very high up and there's no cables and there's no handles or railing, so you're just kind of on the top of a rocky mountain and I had a full moment at this point where there was a girl that was like, 'I can't do it because if I can't, like I'm afraid I'm not going to be able to get back down if I go up these rocks.' And she started doing that thing where she was talking about her fear. And I started to freak out. Her fear was transferring over to me.

And I just told everybody, I'm like, 'I need a moment.' And I sat on the rocks and I sobbed and it was like part of the sobbing was like fear, because I was feeling what she was of 'I don't know if I'm going to get up these rocks and if I get up them, can I get back down? And what's going to happen?' And part of me was sobbing because I'm like, I don't want to not accomplish this. I've hiked at that point six or seven hours - I don't really remember, but it was a long way. And I'm like, I don't want to get to this point and not succeed.

So, this is kind of a benefit of taking a trip like this with your personal trainer who kind of every day - not every day but several days throughout the week - pushes you past your point of comfort and past your fears and past what you think you're able to do. And he wasn't aggressive about it and he always told me if I couldn't do it, I didn't have to, but he just said, 'you've got this. You have this. You can do it. You're fine.' And he's like, 'you're not as scared as you think because I've seen people more scared than you that I said should not do this hike,' so I just literally pulled up my boots and was like, 'alright.'

And we walked up the rocks and then you get to the base of Half Dome where the cables are and again, I was like - at that point, I was like 'I'm doing this,' but I was panicking because I'm like 'can I do this?' So I think I sat down again and cried again and just had a moment of like, 'now I know I'm doing this and what did I get myself into?' So you can ... anybody who's listening, you can Google Half Dome cables or Half Dome

hike or whatever and you can see some of the scenes of what I'm talking about and the sheer magnitude of the actual, the final part of Half Dome.

And it's these two metal cables, like suspended down the rocks with, every ten feet there's a wood board that you kind of can step up onto, catch your breath, hold yourself on the cables, but you're pulling yourself up with upper body strength up these cables. And I started on, you have gloves because it's really rough on your hands, and I started on and I was like, 'oh my god, I'm doing it. I'm doing it.' And it was a very busy summer day, so there was people on all the way up the cables as far as you could see and coming down right next to you, sharing the cables with you - people are descending down, rappelling down.

And my adrenaline started and I was like, 'let's do this. I got this.' And I'm laughing and I'm looking back - my trainer was right behind me and I was like, 'I got this.' And then one of the times I got to my wooden plank to pause and it was pretty early in, I started ... I had like a hyperventilation moment of a pure anxiety attack - pure panic. I was like, 'I don't know if I can do this' and 'I don't know if ... how am I going to get down' and I was thinking about all the bad things that could happen and I just looked to my left - and I'm going to try not to cry because like literally, it was ... I can't even talk about this hike without breaking down.

I looked to my left and there was a twenty-something year old - young man, blonde hair, blue eyes, just so young and fresh and happy and he saw me panicking and he looked me dead in the eyes and he's like really calmly and like an old man talking to me just was like, looks me in the eyes and he's like, 'you've got this. Like just slow your breath down.' And he was breathing in with me, because I was like I've never in my life had an anxiety attack until this moment. I couldn't breathe and he was just like breathing in with me and he's like, 'no, breathe out and slow down and you're fine and look around you and look what you're-.' He just talked me through and he didn't know me. He could've kept going down this mountain and he didn't have to stop.

I just looked around me and I'm like, 'holy shit, he's right. Like this, I've got it. I'm halfway up.' And it was the most beautiful experience of my life because as you're going up these cables, every person - I mean there was 8 year old children running up, there was people in their 60s, there was people that have never done it and were panicking, there were people that had done it three times that day and I'm not joking. And every person you passed, they just looked at you and they're like, 'you've got it. It's so worth it. Wait until you get to the top. You're killing it. Great job.' And I was like, 'dude, nowhere else in your life, do you ever get to experience something where people are just wholeheartedly loving each other enough to support each other in a moment of - for me, it was fear. For

some people it was like something they've looked forward to their whole lifetime.

So it was like a religious experience to see the least. I got to the top, fully broke down and you know, we had lunch up there. We spent a ton of time at the top of the peak and every person up there was on a high that I've never seen and to be in a place, especially with everything going on in the world right now where everybody around you was happy, was supportive, was loving each other, was just being there for each other. It was incredible and admittedly, the whole time I was at the top I was like, 'whoa, I still have to go down. Don't party too hard. Don't get too excited.'

And then on the way down, it was more of the same and I felt so excited to look at people that were scared on their way up and be like, 'you got this. It's so worth it. Wait until you see what's at the top.' To be on the other side moments - not moments, but an hour or two after. There was a group of young kids coming up when we were going down and one of the girls was really nervous and all of her friends started singing her favorite song to her and every person, every person in the general area part just started singing. They just started singing. It's the Danny song by Loggins and Messina. Such a weird - anyway, everyone started singing it and it was like, again, like the way up I'm like, where else in life do you experience something so amazing?

So it's been ... that was in July and it's now September 1 and so it's been about a month and a half and I still, every day I think about it. I look at the photos almost every day. There's moments at the gym or with work or whatever I have going on where I think 'I don't know if I can do this right now,' and I ... as cliché as it sounds and as meme-y on the internet, it's like every time I get in that place in my life, no matter what the moment is, I just think, 'oh my god. I've hiked to the top of Half Dome. I can do anything.'

My world feels limitless right now because I feel like the fear that I felt in that day and the fear that I felt of heights and the fear that I overcame for many reasons like, I don't know, it's just such a weird place to be in because there's ... for me, fear has always been a very underlying emotion that affected everything that I did and to be kind of on the weird other side of it from something, as an outsider I would've looked at and been like, 'well you hiked a mountain.' It's pretty amazing. I don't know, it's one of the most amazing experiences of my life, for sure.

Steph G (host):

Thank you for sharing it and I have not been to Yosemite myself but I've seen many, many pictures of Half Dome and I know people that have hiked it and I have also a very healthy fear of heights and I'm just like, 'yeah I don't know if I would do that.' So, you know, huge kudos to you for

working through that and you know, when you sort of reflect back on that experience and then you have to go back to regular life.

Beth B: Ugh.

Steph G (host): How do you ... when I read your story on Instagram, the thing that stuck out to me the most was yeah, you were like, 'I got over this huge fear and I kept going despite being scared and I made it.' And so that was like super great and awesome, but then the part that really stuck out to me was the impact it had on you just from the point of view of being with all these other people who you're all total strangers - they could've given a rat's ass about you and your panic attack and not cared and stuff like that. I mean, how then do you look in your every day life to find that goodness in other people or ... do you know what I'm saying?

Beth B: Yeah, yeah.

Steph G (host): Does it have to exist only in those moments when we're ... there's a catastrophe like what's going on with Hurricane Harvey or there's on the other flip side of that something so joyous and amazing that the human spirit can not help but be rejoiceful - is that even a word? I don't even know. I just made up a word.

Beth B: Yeah, I think it's great. I love it. If it's not a word, it should be.

Steph G (host): Do you know what I mean like without those two extremes of terrible tragedy or amazing overcoming these obstacles, how do we or how are you going to look for that in your sort of day-to-day?

Beth B: Oh, it's interesting because I had this big reflection on all of this, I think it was last week or the week before, I was at a New Moon Women's Healing Ceremony, where it's like we do these meet-ups on the new moon and it's women only and it's also a sound healing ceremony that a friend of mine hosts. And at the beginning, we all kind of talk about what our intentions for the new moon and what we've been dealing with in our life and I mean, it's a massive circle of women and you have people that are in the best place of their life and on the other side of the circle, someone that's in their deepest, darkest place and I hadn't been able to go to the new moon ceremonies for the last six or so months, because every time they landed I had something else going on maybe admittedly, like most people, I can go in these waves where I get very introspective and very I want to be on my own and I want to feel ... I want to deal with my stuff and self-care and be very selfish.

And I struggle with the balance in being around myself - taking care of myself, whether it's my health or my healing. And we can all attest to

when you choose to put your healing first, it can feel very selfish and it can feel very lonely, because when you go out to eat you're the one person making different choices or not going to eat because you can't or not choosing to stay out til 2 in the morning because you need to get to bed early so that your body doesn't freak out the next day.

And it's weird, I go through these phases and ever since - I don't want to get political - but ever since the change of guards and all the stuff that's going on, I try to stay involved and aware but I also just sometimes want to shut the world out, because it's scary and gross and people can do nasty things and sometimes it's easier to look away and to not see it and just to pretend it's not happening.

And in those moments on Half Dome, like the timing of it couldn't have been more perfect in the world that we're in right now, where I saw the most incredible side of humans and it was like this new resurgence for me of how important community is. And not just on a mountain and not just in this literal sense of your neighborhood, but just how I look at my health and my healing over these last 12 years and more specifically in the last three or four and I know that while so much of it was selfish and personal and things I did on my own, I wouldn't have been able to do it without the support of my community.

And sometimes that community is my husband and sometimes that community is the people in the yoga classes that I'm attending or my personal trainer or my friends or the women in this circle, but for me, it was the reminder that community and all of us together need to work together to make things better, whether it's our health, whether it's the state of affairs, whether it's like a tragedy like Harvey, it just was this reminder that we can't do it alone and we can't bury our heads in the sand and we can't just put our blinders on.

And ever since that moment on that mountain and connecting with complete strangers in a way I've never connected with them before like I feel more empowered to walk down the street and look people in the eye and be like, 'I got you. I don't know what you need, but if you need me to do something, I would do it for you.' And I don't know if they would do it for me, but right now I don't care.

And every week, my husband and I, since the election, we go to our local - it's called Beacon For Him and we work with feeding Long Beach and we pack sack lunches for the local homeless community here in Long Beach. And the people that I've met that work there as volunteers, that are there asking for help - it's just, it's so beautiful to be around people caring for other people. And whatever that is for you I think is, again like

we're talking about with nutrition and health and food, I think it's highly individualistic.

If you're more of a person that's a homebody and you find your community online and by donating money through online, whatever, but we can not do this shit alone. That was the biggest - one of the biggest take-aways from that mountain for me was lean on people when you need them because the right people will be there when you need them.

Steph G (host): Thank you so much for sharing all of that and I got goosebumps while you were talking and I appreciate your willingness to be vulnerable and tell the story and just to give the folks out there some suggestions for how to start, you know, working through these things in their own lives. It's so, like you said, so individualistic and what's going to work for one person doesn't necessarily work for another, but yeah I agree. I think and I talked about this with somebody recently, the intense inward focus on self is sometimes necessary at certain times, but yet there has to be a counterbalance to that either on a micro or a macro level and it's like what are we doing to reach out to people and sometimes the easiest way to feel better about what you're dealing with is to sort of do something for somebody who is less well off than you in whatever way that is, so thanks for that.

Beth B: And I think ... oh sorry.

Steph G (host): No, go ahead.

Beth B: I was just going to say too, I think sometimes people have this feeling of - and I'm not going to get the quote exactly right - but I think sometimes people having this feeling of when you do something to help other people, even if it's coming from a place of it makes me feel good to help other people, people have a weird guilt around that and I think like somewhere there's a Mother Teresa quote where someone said to her, 'why do you do these things for other people?' And she was like, 'because it makes me feel good.'

And I always look at that, because there's weeks that I leave the mission and I'm done packing lunches and not in a braggy sense, but I'm like, I'm proud of us. I'm proud of us that we stopped our day today and I could've done a million other things but I'm proud of us - my husband and I - that we got ourselves here and we did this thing for other people and I'm happy that we were able to give our time and our resources and our money and the food to people that need it more than we do. And it makes me feel good and I don't care if it's one of the things besides wanting to help people, if that's one of the things that keeps me going every week, I have zero shame in admitting that and I think more people need to own

that part of helping other people, because it's not a selfish thing to want to feel good.

Otherwise, we wouldn't be taking care of our health the way that we all are and all of the other things that we do to maintain our level of vitality and wellness, you know.

Steph G (host): Yeah. Wonderful, thank you so much. Well, we are to the point in the show where this is the rapid fire questions section, so I'm going to throw some questions at you and you can say the first thing that comes to your mind.

Beth B: Okay.

Steph G (host): Ready?

Beth B: Sure.

Steph G (host): Let's start with an easy one ... I always start with an easy one, so don't be too scared.

Beth B: Okay.

Steph G (host): Coffee or tea?

Beth B: Coffee.

Steph G (host): And you have a delicious recipe for, is it a mint mojito coffee?

Beth B: Yeah, a mint mojito iced coffee.

Steph G (host): Iced coffee, I'll take 12,000 of those right now.

Beth B: So good.

Steph G (host): Sounds so refreshing. A daily ritual that you can't do without?

Beth B: Ooh. My walks to the gym right now.

Steph G (host): Nice. And you often share Instagram stories of things you're thinking about and doing and hilarious other stuff, so-

Beth B: Yeah.

Steph G (host): People go check out Beth's Instagram for that. Favorite yoga pose?

Beth B: Ooh, I love these questions. Ah, child's pose. I love a good child's pose.

Steph G (host): Ooh nice, very grounding. And favorite strength training kind of thing that you do?

Beth B: Clean and jerks. They make me feel strong.

Steph G (host): Right? There's something about moving the bars in such a powerful way. I love it.

Beth B: You feel like a badass.

Steph G (host): Yeah, like you are a badass. Your favorite splurge meal?

Beth B: Oh, that's a good one. Splurge like I don't give a shit about anything or like-?

Steph G (host): No, whatever, however you would define splurge.

Beth B: That is a really hard- ... I would say probably, there's a traditional Greek dish called pastitsio that's a, it's kind of like the Greek's take on lasagna and when I do it - it's obviously gluten-free - but it's got a substantial amount - I would say an aggressive amount - of dairy. It's like got a béchamel there and there's ground lamb and there's a tomato sauce that has cinnamon and nutmegs with really warming and comforting. And you can't eat a lot of it because it's really rich and like I said, the top has this puffy eggy béchamel citro - it's literally like ... I have it once a year because it's a process to make, nobody cares about it the way I do and it is like my ultimate comfort food, for sure.

Steph G (host): I would go in on that. I would suffer any consequence that would come my way because that sounds amazing.

Beth B: Actually, I think I have the ... I do have the recipe on my website.

Steph G (host): Alright.

Beth B: I finally was like why have I not shared this with the world, like people need to know about pastitsio.

Steph G (host): Alright, it's happening. Area of personal development that you're either interested in or working on at the moment?

Beth B: Hmm, I'm trying to continue this work around fear, because it's always been sort of ... like I was saying earlier, it's been an underlying place of stoppage, for lack of a better word, for me. And now that I kind of overcame such a massive area of fear in my life, I'm trying to continue with that in other places and sort of, for an energetic standpoint and if you're talking about chakras and how energies move through the body,

interestingly fear - the emotion of fear - lives in the kidneys and as I mentioned I have kidney disease, so I believe, talking about the work of anatomy of the spirit - I just forgot her name, her book is incredible, but in that sort of ... in the theme of her work and energetic stagnancy and emotional holding ons - I truly believe that that might be the last sort of piece of the puzzle to overcoming this autoimmune kidney disease, so it's my work right now.

Steph G (host): Ooh, I love that one. And then the last question is, in your opinion, what is the most important ingredient in building unbreakable humans?

Beth B: Oh, that's such a good question. Self-love, for sure. For me, I think that's the biggest ... it's been the biggest game changer for everything I've had to work through and every bit of healing that I've done, it's all been about loving myself first and then making decisions from a place of love and not fear, so-

Steph G (host): I love that. Well thank you, you have survived the rapid fire round with flying colors. I always love that part because it's just like I never know what people are going to say. It always amuses me.

Beth B: It's so great though because I feel like if you gave those questions to people ahead of time, they would overthink it and like anything in life, when you overthink it, it just becomes way more diluted-

Steph G (host): Totally.

Beth B: And I think there's something about when your brain has nothing but a quick second to think like it's pretty honest. It's kind of like when people get really drunk and say stuff, they're like, 'I think you're telling the truth right now.'

Steph G (host): Yeah, that filter is kind of gone. Oh my gosh. Well you know, this has been such a fun episode. I just love everything that you're doing. I have so much respect and appreciation for your vulnerability, your willingness to be human and to share that with everybody and just all the things that you're creating for the world. I think we are a better place because you're here and I just appreciate you coming on the show.

Beth B: Before you continue, the feeling is so incredibly mutual and every day when you post stuff, like I know I write you like a stalker on Instagram stories but you inspire me every day and being at a different place in my strength training than you, at an earlier place, it's so - everyday I look at your stories and I'm inspired to try harder and to push in a place that ... into the places of discomfort because it's so cool to see somebody owning their badassery, owning their strength, not apologizing for it and

just like again, everything that you share with everybody and how honest and real you are - it's so refreshing because authenticity is so hard to find on the internet. So thank you for doing it.

Steph G (host): Yes, you're welcome. It's my pleasure. It's my pleasure and it helps to have other like-minded folks and you know, we all support each other in our own way and that's what makes it fun.

Beth B: Yeah, agreed.

Steph G (host): So let everybody know where they can find you online and you have basically a beautiful, amazing, redesigned website at the moment, so where can we find that?

Beth B: Thank you. I'm extra proud to send people there now. It's been years of the same look, so on the internet, you can find me at [tasty-yummies.com](http://tasty-yummies.com). It's t a s t y dash y u m m i e s and then on all the social channels, it's just @tastyyummies and Instagram's kind of my favorite right now.

Steph G (host): Yeah.

Beth B: I think, I feel like you're like me. I love stories because ... for both as a consumer of content and a creator of content, I feel like that's where the real shit's happening and people are being authentic and you can really see through who's being their true self and not curating their shit, so it's ... I love the stories and just being like, look at my weird life. This is what I'm doing today.

Steph G (host): Lots of cute dog and cat things. Walks to the gym and deep thoughts with Beth, and the occasional talk about bowel movements and farts, so-

Beth B: Farts.

Steph G (host): I mean hey.

Beth B: Just keeping it real.

Steph G (host): Yeah, you've got to keep it real. Oh my gosh, Beth Manos Brickey from Tasty Yummies, thank you so much for being on the podcast and I'm looking forward to whatever date we suggest for meeting up in real life. I might just like give you an awkwardly long hug and-

Beth B: Oh my god. Same. Just let's ... can we not do it when it's like 98 degrees because we won't be able to get apart. We'll be stuck together in sweat.

Steph G (host): We'll wait until it cools down, for sure. Thanks so much.

Beth B: Cool. Well thank you so much for having me. This was a pleasure. Thank you.

Steph G (host): And you are very welcome.

Alright that is a wrap on this episode of Harder to Kill Radio with Beth Manos Brickey. I don't know. I hope you're feeling like your heart is beaming because that's totally how I felt at the end of this episode, like 'yes, let's go conquer the world.' So take Beth's message and apply it to your life. That's really the purpose of this show is to bring you guests like her that are doing these things that are extraordinary and yet, things that you can also do with your life.

As always, you can get the show notes for this episode at [stupid easypaleo.com](http://stupid easypaleo.com) and please take a second and share this with somebody you love. Tell them about Harder to Kill Radio. Show them how to get it on their phone or their device. Download it for them. Hit subscribe. Whatever you have to do, but if you are really resonating with these guests and their messages, help us spread the word. Tell a friend, a loved one and I would just have so much gratitude for you. It really means so much and I'm so thankful that you're part of this community.

Alright, until next week when we have an amazing guest, have a great week and as always: stay healthy, happy and harder to kill.

Copyright © 2017. Stephanie Gaudreau and Stupid Easy Paleo. Inc. All rights reserved.