

Becoming a Venus: Interview with Alison Scott

part 2



With John Barban

John Barban: Welcome to the Venus Index podcast. I'm John Barban and with me is Alison Scott. This is part 2 of our interview. It's just because there are some things we want to cover last week and we never really got around to it. So we are just going to continue on with some other stuff and judging by the feedback, it sounds like you ladies would rather hear from Alison than me, so I guess this is a good idea. Actually I've Alison if she would mind even being kind of a regular guest, so to speak, and/or co-host it and she has agreed. So I think we will be hearing from her more often than just these two podcasts.

But anyways, we might as well get going more specifically with nutrition this time. I guess last time we talked a lot about the way the Venus Index concept and the workout it has affected the way she viewed training just for her body and we never really touched on diet, so I guess today we are going to cover that part. So let's just get right into that. I don't know where you want to start with that to get into how you used to eat. Now, you are like kind of have a progression from not really paying attention to food before and now all of the sudden realizing it's impact. I'll just let you run with it.

Alison Scott: Sure, well, I guess I can start with how I used to eat. Like I said on the first little podcasts that we did, I was a varsity athlete and I've been playing very high-level sports since I can remember, since before I was a teenager. These days they get nutritionist in there to talk to you when you are 13 or 14 year olds to talk about what you should be eating. And I mean



when I look back now it was so ridiculous with the things that they would tell us.

They would just tell you that you need to be eating 2,000 or 3,000 or 4,000 calories a day and then at time I didn't even really understand quite what a calorie was, but I knew that I was eating "healthy" by the kind of popular dogma that was out there. Your typical brown rice, salads and steamed broccoli and chicken breasts, which doesn't taste good very often. It's a boring food and I know I totally bought into that and even in first year university you are living on residence food. While I was playing two varsity sports, I always had to eat grilled chicken breasts and the salad, but I wasn't paying attention to the most important thing, which volume, how much you are eating. But I thought I was following all the rules, and then of course, I bought into all these things I'd been told that I needed to be eating so much because I was training so much.

And then if you go on those ridiculous calorie calculators online where type in your activity level and it tells you how much you should be eating, and it had spit out that I needed to be eating like 3,000 to 4,000 calories and I'm like, "That's crazy." When I look back, that's absolutely nuts.

John Barban: Because as a varsity athlete, you would put in highly active or whatever the highest level of activity for you.



Alison Scott: Right, and I mean, I actually was training upwards four hours or up every single day. But that's not like I was running a marathon everyday, to clarify. I mean, yes, you are training four hours a day, but that's not like you are doing the highest calorie burning exercise for four hours straight.

John Barban: For four hours, yeah.

Alison Scott: Yeah, so I mean, if you actually did run a marathon everyday, you would need a significant extra number of calories to not lose weight. I mean, that's not at all what the case was, but I mean those calculators would tell you that that's what it is equivalent to, and for some reason, the nutritionist that we saw when we were quite young would say the same thing. So that was how I used to eat. I used to eat very "healthy." I was terrified of doughnuts or whatever it was, "unhealthy" food. Everyone else around me was eating burgers and pizza all the time and I was the one with the grilled or steamed vegetables, grilled chicken breasts, and so I guess I was eating "healthy," but I wasn't paying attention to the most important thing, which was calorie counting.

John Barban: Yeah, and it's unbelievable that a "nutritionist" would come in and tell you guys that you need to eat all those extra calories. I don't



even think there is such a thing as sports nutrition. Just all there is just food and how much it you eat and whether or not it causes you to gain fat or not.

Alison Scott: I hundred percent agree. I looked at all the other girls on the varsity team when I was on my first and second year and we were probably doing the hardest and heaviest training we've ever done in our lives, but then almost every single girl in that team gained 10 to 20 pounds.

John Barban: Oh yeah, when I was a strength coach with the varsity team, it was impossible to control the way everyone ate.

Alison Scott: Yeah.

John Barban: And then they all tell themselves the lie that, "Oh, it is muscle." I'm like, "Really? You guys gained muscle faster than any guy who has been trying to their whole life to gain muscle, and all of a sudden you put on 20 pounds. Or is it more realistic that 19 of it is fat and maybe 1 pound is muscle."

Alison Scott: Yeah, absolutely. I mean I remember talking to you about a couple of those girls came into training camp and they were literally six-

pack ripped and then they would put on 20 pounds during the year and yeah, they got a little bit stronger but then at the end of the year they are smooth and they have an obvious layer of fat all over them and gone is this six-pack, gone is the ripped muscles.

John Barban: And enter the muffin top.

Alison Scott: Enter the muffin top and yet they've completely convinced themselves that it's all muscle because they've gone a little bit stronger. And like you just said, it was probably 90% fat and 10% muscles.

John Barban: Right, if it was all muscle, how come you don't have the six-pack anymore?

Alison Scott: Exactly.

John Barban: Right.

Alison Scott: So I mean, I've been lucky. I didn't really gain any weight when I was playing sports in the first and second year. I mean I was that big coming in from high school. I was doing the same kind of training then. I

mean, I probably put on a few pounds, maybe a few pounds, but not enough that it was really noticeable over those two years.

One of the funny things is that you would think that people would start making their own food decisions well before university, but I actually think that that's false. A lot of the girls and guys I knew in first and second year, their Mom has been packing their lunch, if not their lunch at least cooking their dinners for most of their lives before then. And for the first time ever, they are picking all of their food, I mean maybe before they were picking what they ate some of the time, but for the most part, I think kids all the way up to when they leave home which they usually do this can be 19 years of age and they are actually aren't making their own food choices. So it can be quite a shocking when then they are, all of a sudden, given free rein to eat poutine and burgers everyday and just to see what happens.

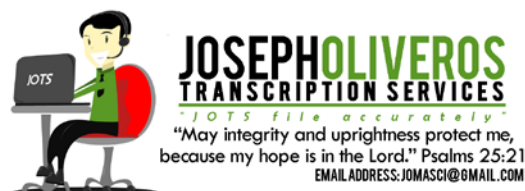
John Barban: Yeah, because, for a lot of people, that's exactly what happens, it's just French fries, burgers and pizza with zero control. I think that's consistent with most people, you learn or don't learn how to make food choices when you are growing up with your family or whoever you live with and then whenever you leave that nest, that's the true test of what you've learned or what kind of habits that have been instilled in you. Or I guess that's it when you are left to your own devices, now you find out how you actually are going to deal with food when someone else isn't in control of it from a monitoring standpoint as well as dictating the choices or the



eating pattern and all that kind of stuff. And then from there it's a struggle from then on for some people. And for other people, it's no big deal.

I think part of the problem is the destruction of cooking tradition that just doesn't get passed down from one generation to the next. Like if I think of the way my grandparents dealt with food versus the way my parents do versus me, it's night and day. Three generations later, it's not ever recognizable from one to the other, so the traditions just don't pass down anymore the way they likely probably did if we just go two or three more generations before our grandparents.

Alison Scott: I hundred percent agree and I am very lucky in the sense that my mother is a very cook from the scratch kind of idealist and a food snob and I thank her for that because I picked up a lot of cooking skills from her, and as you know I like to cook and I like to make things from scratch. But what my mother never did tell me anything about was amounts, with just how much to eat. I had both of my parents at home, but Mom is the one I guess that dictated a lot of sort of how I learned how to eat and deal with food and she has always been the person that just was able to stop. I mean I'm sure we all know people like that that just stopped eating when they are full and they just have no desire to eat more, actually my older brother is like that, too. He has been six-pack ripped since I can remember, and he and my mother just always knew when to stop. They just never got hungry, so they could have all these things in the house and just never eat them.



But I know with me, that's just not the case. I can't have things around and not eat them. I mean, in some respect I think "Well, I have to learn a little bit of self-control." But at the same time, if it doesn't work for you to have a box of cookies in the house, then you just don't have a box of cookies in the house, and that's sort of how I always learned how to deal with it. And then I knew that popular dogma of what was right and wrong "to eat," so by the time I got to university, I guess I was making okay food choices. I had completely neglected the utmost and most important thing, which was amount.

John Barban: So yeah, can you get into what you did specifically during your cut down to get into your sort of all the way down to your ideal VI.

Alison Scott: Absolutely. So it really came down to calorie counting and I mean, you helped me figure out those numbers, so it came down to, "Okay, what's my BMR? What I need to eat if I'm not exercising to not gain or lose weight?" And it turned out for me that that's about 1,200 calories a day, which is a very depressing thought because that's like three muffins. Now, what does that tell you? That you probably just don't need to be eating too many muffins because you won't get that far with it. I mean it was kind of an interesting thought because I had always been exercising so much that I've actually probably got away with eating up to close to 2,000 calories a day without putting on weight fast. I probably put on weight pretty slowly,



but I never really noticed. And then when I stopped and realized “Oh my gosh, I’m not really training that much.” I don’t have that much room to work with, so I really became vigilant in counting calories.

I actually kept a food journal for almost an entire year. I just filled the book, and then when the book was done, I never started a new one. But it was almost a year where I wrote down every single thing I ate for almost a year. And that actually helped me with the first ten pounds that I got off because then I go through it afterwards and I would go online and vigilantly count those calories using the calorie counters online and try to use estimating the way that you taught me to estimate with how to over- and underestimate your calories in and then your calories out. So that I knew that no matter what, if I wanted to be in a deficit that I was going to actually reach deficit, and then I wasn’t going to be tricked by the numbers on the box.

I did all the sort of obsessive things like weighing my food or making sure that I was just really being vigilant about counting and I mean that was the really big thing about food, it was just counting.

John Barban: Right.



Alison Scott: And then you realized little things like, I love my sweets. I love chocolate. I love all those things and you can have them, you just realize that if you are going to eat something chocolatey and it's going to suck up half your calories for the day, then you are like, "Okay, well, I'm going to try to eat something that gives me more volume and more satisfaction like big salads with some chicken or whatever on them."

John Barban: So you've got to make that deal with that volume deal?

Alison Scott: Yeah, exactly. You have to make a volume deal because like I said, I get 1,200 calories a day to play with, and that actually is three muffins. If you go to your typical coffee shop, and I mean, don't get me wrong. I love muffins and I still have them. But you realized that like, "Okay, if I have one of those everyday and that sucks up a third of my calories everyday, I'm not going to be happy with what I eat for the rest of the day." And knowing what dent it's going to put in your intake every single day is important, like for instance, I'm completely happy giving away 20% of my calories a day to chocolate because that's how much I love it.

And then with your other things where you are like, "Well, I kind of want that right now." But it's only that you kind of want it and you know that it's going to take away a quarter or a third of your calories for the day, and all of a sudden you wanted a little bit less. So really counting I think helped



me actually get in control of thinking about, “Do I really want that or do I not?” It’s sort of like a budget, right?

John Barban: Right. So you did a cost-benefit analysis?

Alison Scott: Absolutely.

John Barban: You are like, “Okay, so a 450 calorie muffin leaves me 750 calories for the rest of the day. Does that muffin deserve that much of my calorie budget for the day?”

Alison Scott: And sometimes it does.

John Barban: Exactly.

Alison Scott: Exactly, so I’m not saying that I cut out all treats, but you just really have to think about it. On some days you want it. On some days you don’t. And some days you say, “Okay, I really do want a muffin, but maybe I’ll just eat the top.” And I mean, you always hear me use this terminology and I always say like, “Oh, I’ll budget in this later. I’ll budget in that later.” And I mean that by a calorie budget. So I almost look at it as though I have 1,200 calories to spend everyday. And let’s say, I want to earn a few more



calories that day, then that's when I'll put in like a workout that I can really consider a calorie deficit and what I always tell you and whatever advice I'll give other people is that unless I can realistically and legitimately count a workout as 500 calories or more, which for me is at least a 10 Km run, then I just don't count it. Then I count it as like bonus because then it starts to kind of get into your calorie counting error. If it's only 200-300 calories that you are playing with, it's just not worth adding that in because it's just not precise enough.

John Barban: Yeah, yeah, it's like trying to measure an inch with a yardstick.

Alison Scott: Exactly. So it's like I started off with this 1,200-calorie budget. And if I want to eat certain things, then I subtract them from my budget. And let's say I've eaten all 1,200 calories that day, and I really want to create a deficit that day so I could lose some weight, that's when I'm like, "Well, you know what? I spent all those calories and that was me. I consumed those. I spent them because I wanted to, so that means that if I want a deficit, I have to go and earn some more calories." And that's sort of what a good workout was about. And similarly, you can save your calories where you can put them in the bank. And in fact, that's what we use to like sort of pay down your weight loss, if that makes sense.



John Barban: Right, yeah. And all of it is predicated on the guess of how many calories you are eating in a day off of your BMR, but at the same time that overestimation, just that automatic, and it's likely 10 to 15% more than even my most precise measurement could be.

Alison Scott: Yeah, and I mean counting is something that you keep to yourself, too. And as long as you know in your own head that it's not going to be to your benefit to lie about it, right?

John Barban: Because you are lying just to yourself. You are lying to anybody else.

Alison Scott: Exactly. I mean, when I kept a food journal, I don't even think I had told you about it. Well, you might have known.

John Barban: No, actually, this is the first time. You never told me about this.

Alison Scott: Yeah, I didn't show my friends. I didn't have it out at meals or anything like that because that was the only way I can be really accountable. I was only person that ever saw it. Then it means that if I ever lie in it, I'm just lying to myself and that's just pathetic. I mean I know



in my head that there are errors in calorie counting and I can write down that if I'll only eat an X number of calories a day, but if I actually had more, and then I don't lose weight, then just ridiculous. I'm literally writing little lies to myself in a book. It becomes way more pathetic.

John Barban: Than if you at least were lying to me or somebody...

Alison Scott: Yeah, I mean it's bad when you are trying to deceive other people about making excuses about not losing weight. But if you are trying to deceive yourself, I mean that's super pathetic. So I mean that's why I kept that stuff like on the down low and that's part of that covert nutrition that we talked about. It was really helpful for me. And then also it made me realize that you just often forget what you eat. So it made really aware of just what I was putting in my mouth and that no more mindless snacking. And sometimes I'll be like, "Oh, I don't want to eat that." It's just because then I'd have to write it down.

John Barban: I remember that. I remember you and I having a conversation and I mentioned what I had eaten for the day and I completely forgot an entire lunch meal.

Alison Scott: Oh yeah, exactly.



John Barban: I was like, “Oh yeah, besides that giant meal I had for lunch.” And it was only that evening that we were having the discussion.

Alison Scott: Exactly, it’s like “I’m doing pretty okay today!”... “Oh, no, except for that giant meal I had earlier that...”

John Barban: Yeah, like all of the six hours ago and it was like it took me a good ten minutes thinking of what I had eaten before I realized I had forgotten an entire meal.

Alison Scott: Yeah.

John Barban: So it will slip your mind more often than you think.

Alison Scott: Yeah, absolutely. So for me, it was just counting and being honest about your counting and knowing that everything is an overestimation. Like if you look up online, it says a medium apple is whatever with 80 calories. You just say it’s a hundred and you guess it was a large apple. . And then at the end of the day when I tally out my calories, like let’s say I’m thinking about it and I’m like, “Oh yeah, like I guess that comes because I’ve eaten about, let’s say, 900 calories today.” Automatically I’m like, “Okay, I’ve eaten 1,100 calories today.” Like even if

all my addition adds up to whatever, I always add at least 100, if not 200 calories, and like you said, 10-15%. Well, that's just part of the estimation, or if you guess your piece of food is 150 calories, you are like, "Okay, so I've had 200 calories." Like you just learn to boost the estimations you make.

And so what if you overestimate? If you estimate conservatively, all that means is you lose a little bit more fat in the end, like that's fantastic. And like I said you are only lying to yourself if you don't do those calculations correctly. It's only ever going to harm you. What I mean is yeah, sure, you really wish that that muffin wasn't 400 calories because that's a lot of calories, but that's what in it.

John Barban: Yeah, believe it or not, nobody else in the world cares if you can generate some conceptual lie about how many calories are in the food you've eaten.

Alison Scott: Exactly.

John Barban: Absolutely nobody else cares.



Alison Scott: Exactly, and I mean we all know the people. I mean I've been guilty of this too where it's almost like you are making excuses about why you are eating certain things like with all your friends and everyone is having pizza and you are like, "Yeah, I really haven't eaten yet today." And then you will say that out loud and you are like, "Why am I saying this out loud? It doesn't matter. It doesn't make any difference to anybody but me. I'm in control of my body." And I don't know, but I'm sure like you ladies have noticed this too. I mean if you are in shape, you have like the social blessing to eat whatever you want and not feel guilty about it because obviously you are in control of your body, right?

John Barban: Yeah.

Alison Scott: Yeah, if you are in control of your body and eat your burgers and fries, which I do now, then that's fantastic. But if you also know that you need to not have that in certain cases, like if you are 50 pounds overweight, or when I was at my heaviest and I'm sitting there and eating pizza like, of course, I feel guilty. But now I don't feel guilty about it because I've been able to integrate pizza and chocolate and all the things I love into my diet and still lose weight or still maintain weight.



You will notice that those feelings that other people are judging you or this and that are going to go away. And if you can have all those things on your way down, then have all those things on the way down.

John Barban: And you brought up a good point about people judging you socially. Can you speak to some of the sort of slings and arrows you get based on the way you eat because I guess people don't do it to me as much because maybe they know this is what I do for a living and they just don't bother me because they don't think of it. Maybe it's because I just hang out with guys who just don't care, but you've had some very interesting stories of how girls will react to you, which I find slightly shocking because it just doesn't happen to me. Can you elaborate on that?

Alison Scott: Sure, and I think I get it probably more than you do because I mean, not only am I young, I mean I'm only 22, which I actually don't think I've put anywhere on the forum, so if anyone is wondering, I'm 22. But I also look like I'm about 14, so that really doesn't help how people kind of react to me sometimes because I've often get the, "Oh, you are the naïve little girl" type response to a lot of people, like, "That's so unhealthy for you. Don't you know?" And I'm like, "Yes, I do know. I've done a lot of reading on this." And I know my facts. I bet better than most other people do, but I don't get that benefit of the doubt that I'm sure you do. So I mean, for instance, with a lot of my girl friends, I remember I was out for dinner. We were all downtown Toronto to watch a play and we went out to this

gorgeous Italian restaurant. And I had done my budgeting, and this is on my way down when I was dieting and I had budgeted up some calories, so that I could eat whatever I wanted at this dinner.

So I had done a big workout that day. I probably ran 10km. I hadn't eaten. I know I just done a good fast and I was ready to literally just eat whatever I wanted and not count that night. Because even if I don't count, there still a limit to how many calories you can really eat without it being painful. So I knew that I could eat as much as I wanted and still probably come out even for the last two or three days that I had been kind of planning this.

So I had one of those beautiful thin crust baked in the 900 degree oven for these fresh Italian pizzas and had some appetizers. I had a bit of dessert and we are having dinner with a few people that I had never met before for a friend of mine's cousin that we met in town. And they were like, "Oh wow! Like look at the little tiny girl eat. You know, I love it when a girl can eat." Then of course, the friend that I went there with couldn't help but chime in like, "Oh, but you would not believe all the other stuff that she does, too. Like I bet she hasn't eaten in like two days and she probably ran..." And she made it sound like I had this huge eating disorder and I was overtraining. It was just uncalled for and rude, and I don't know.

I mean, it just made me realize like, “Oh, I can’t even tell those people like my friends about what I do.” And this is someone who had been actually quite supportive of me all the way down, but then as soon as I started getting some sort of social feedback from other people, a sort of positive feedback, she had to like chime in and qualify it.

John Barban: Yeah, she had to take the legs out from under you just a little bit because now you are getting attention for the look and shape of your body that she is not getting.

Alison Scott: Exactly, and it was funny because this particular person had always kind of been supportive of me and it was just when I started to get that other kind of attention that she had to chime in and qualify it and somehow say that, “Yeah, but she’s really unhealthy.”

John Barban: Well, yeah, which is unbelievable.

Alison Scott: Which is unbelievable, yeah.

John Barban: Yeah, because from what I understand she also could have stood to lose a few pounds.



Alison Scott: Exactly.

John Barban: Right.

Alison Scott: So I mean I've gotten that kind of feedback too, and then we talked a little bit about picking your weight loss team wisely. And there are some people that are going to be supportive and there are some people that aren't. I mean, unfortunately, some of those people can often be close to you like friends. Just this past Christmas I was home for a week and at the same time I was searching on my computer record at home in Calgary for a before and after pictures for John here. It's actually for the blog post, so as I was looking at all these pictures and as I was putting together the before and after and my mother just happened to be looking over my shoulder at the computer and so there is this before picture and actually I put it up on the forum so you guys can all see it and I'm Asian, so when I put on weight it goes like right in my chin, like you can see it in my face right away. I'm not one of those people that can put on weight and you don't see it on your face.

So there was this before and after picture and I looked different. It's not that much weight in total, but a lot of it goes up in my face. And I was just like, "Wow! That's really noticeable, like it's just right in my jaw line." And then my Mom comes over and she's like, "Oh, but I like the before better



because you are all cute and chubby and you are like my little girl that way.” And it’s just like, “Well, that’s not supportive at all, like you are telling me that you like me better because you like it better when I still look like a little kid or a little chubby kid.” Just because it feeds her whatever it is, but it just wasn’t supportive.

John Barban: It puts you back in the world view where she’s most comfortable with her image of you, and this is something that has happened time and time again on the Adonis side where all the guys who have gone through transformations like without fail explain that as they are transforming and getting in better and better shape, they go through a couple of phases. They go from being sort of overweight or over-fat, whatever you want to call it, and then they lose weight into like normal range where they just sort of fade into the masses of everybody. So in close they don’t look big. They don’t look small. They just look normal and at that point, everything seems to be okay. And the minute they just go from there to sort of above average or exceptional, all of a sudden all the slings and arrows come out. And everyone starts it. And it’s weird because as they become more exceptional looking, strangers seem to be more supportive than close people and then close people like friends and family seemed to be like, “Okay, you are taking this too far. This is getting out of hand.” And I think it’s because you are really forcing them to stretch their view of how they have to categorize you psychologically in their mind. So they are like, “Oh.” And it cuts even harder when you maybe past them in body shape and body weight and in any of these categories.

Like for instance, if you and one of your family member or a close friend, if you are the heavier one or the less in shape one of the two of you, and then over the next 12 weeks, you become lighter than them and more in shape, now all of a sudden, they have to realize that that's how you are in relation to them. Now, all of a sudden, you are the in shape one. You are the lighter one and you are kind of forcing them to re-categorize, and it doesn't sound like a lot, but people are resistant to change, especially when it's something that's out of their control and you are changing and they are not, all they can do is try to cut you down a little bit to put you back where they are comfortable with.

Alison Scott: And you have to realize that when people do that it's really has nothing to do with you. Like the example that John just gave, if you used to be the heavier one, they are not coming to the terms with the fact that you are now the lighter one. They are coming to terms with the fact that they are now the heavier one, right?

John Barban: Oh yeah. It's completely narcissism.

Alison Scott: It's completely about them.



John Barban: Yeah. It's how your transformation makes them feel about themselves. And I guess what we are preempting here is I'm expecting quite a few of you to enter the Venus Index, the first contest, and I want to be interviewing all of you. I want all of you to make great transformation. I mean, that's the whole point. My goal is to get as many of you as possible to make the biggest change that you can. And when we are talking about this and I just know it's going to happen, especially hearing from Ali, like your story is from how girls react to you dropping the comments like Miss Olympia, and things like that. It's like girls cannot resist picking on each other and guys do it too to a bit of a lesser degree, but it seems like girls are just ripe and ready to pick on each other no matter what.

No matter what the goal is and achieving it and whether or not she's jealous or whatever it is, and guys and girls will like do it, but it seems like you guys need to be ready that along the way there are some people, and you won't know who it is. It could be someone really close to you and picking on you. Like we had a guy, and he's fiancée was picking on him and he came in second in our contest, and he looks great. At some point it bugged her. I mean, they resolved it, but who would expect that. Who would expect that from someone that close?

Alison Scott: Exactly, and just like you said, you are never going to know who those people are. You have to be ready for it, and like John said, men intend to be a little bit more like rah-rah gung-ho like good for you guy.



Whereas we all know that women can be really bitchy and they can be mean and they can be like really hurtful on ways that you don't really expect them to be and you just have to be ready for it and then also just recognize that really it has nothing to do with you. It has everything to do with their own insecurities.

We know that if you are the same size as someone or actually if you have friends that are bigger than you and then you vocalize that you are trying to lose weight and they are not trying to lose weight, but they are bigger than you are, they are going to give you all sorts of reasons why you don't need to be losing weight or that it's unhealthy for you to be losing weight. But it's only because they are insecure with the fact that they are even bigger than you and they probably will be very happy to be as light as you are and you are still trying to lose weight, like it makes them insecure. It makes them reevaluate what they are doing with their bodies. I mean, in that way you just have to pick and choose. And with the same token, it's not a smart idea to be flaunting your success or talking about your success with people that you know can't handle it, because then you are just inviting rude comments and you are inviting sort of those attacks. So I mean you have to know.

Once you know people that you can and cannot talk about it, and you can make those judgments yourself. You don't always need to test the waters and see how it reacts. I'm sure you know ahead of time a few people who

you might not want to be talking to about this. Just like if you have a friend that's really insecure about their body and you know that they are insecure about their body, that's just not someone that you talk about your weight loss with.

John Barban: Right, obviously that's the whole point of the community like everyone in there is just supportive of each other and that's just the way it's designed, that's the way we've set it up and it seems to be working fine like that. I mean even if you fall off the horse and you get back on, the community is always there. Now, that's the whole point of it because we already knew going into this when we launched Venus from all the experience we've had with Adonis, we know it's hard to find people who will support you the whole way without eventually letting their own insecurity get in the way of their ability to support you.

So I mean even on the Adonis side, we've had certain guys who sort of personally have fallen off the wagon and they made it at a certain way and then they kind of fell back a bit, but they are still supportive of everybody else. They don't let their own success or lack of success get in the way of their ability to be supportive to the next guy over who is getting somewhere. And then eventually it just sort of becomes like positive spiral where everyone sort of supports everyone.



And so with Venus, that's the whole point of the community and it won't be anything besides supportive, and it may not be obvious, but we purposely kind of have it set up that way. I guess some other way of saying it is if anyone ever is unsupportive in there, that won't last long. And no one has ever done it, and just saying it. But if anyone ever does, it won't last very long. I think everyone in the community recognizes that. So it's self-regulated.

Alison Scott: And the neat thing about the online forum is that I'm sure you ladies all know and have had experience with, it's really easy to convince each other not to work out or to fall off the wagon together, I mean. I've been in those experiences where you are like you are in the gym and sometimes you are like, "Yeah, we will do another set." And you don't really want to, but your friends are like, "Yeah, yeah, like let's do this other set." And you are like, "Okay, okay." But it's just as easy to be like, "Oh, I really feel like going home." And the other girls are like, "Really? Me too, like okay, let's go home."

John Barban: Yeah, you can talk yourself out of it if you are...

Alison Scott: Exactly and then I find when you are on a forum online like the Venus community, which I think is just fabulous. I'm just starting to get acquainted with it. I've only been on it for a few weeks now, but it's just



awesome, like it's just really amazing the kind of talk that's going on there. But because you are associated with a product that you've all literally bought into and you are all on the same goal and you are on a weight loss forum, I mean you are all bonding together but it's always in the direction of weight loss and in your goal. It's not necessary weight loss, but in the direction of Venus and your goals and your fitness goals because that's what the forum is all about, whereas when it comes to your personal friends, a lot of times that bonding that you have is sort of just general female bonding. It might not be in one particular direction or another, which is why sometimes it can be positive and sometimes it can be negative, whereas the forum because it's generated specifically with that goal that it's always going to be part of the upward spiral.

John Barban: Right, everyone is trying to move towards a certain VI to whatever degree they feel like it.

Alison Scott: Yeah.

John Barban: I mean, not everyone has to set their goal to hit it bang on, but that's the general trend is to move towards it, so the discussion revolves around that, and obviously it goes into all kinds of areas, but the general mentality is pretty simple. There is just one simple thing and that everything fits into that.



Alison Scott: Yeah, absolutely. With the comment that John made earlier about the Miss Olympia, the story is actually that after I got down to Venus the after pictures that I've put online on my Facebook page. I was kind of debating whether or not to do so, and then John, you helped me into it. You were like, "Look, be proud of yourself. You did it. Yeah, put it up there." And you are like, "You know let it fly." And I mean, you see some positive comments and you see some negative comments, not negative, but sort of the backhanded insults/compliment thing. So I got a lot of positive feedback from most of friends and then I got a few comments. I go here and there, and I was playing soccer with a whole bunch of my friends. After that picture had gone up, one girl made some, "Oh, careful. Miss Olympia over there is going to break you," or something like that.

I mean if any of you have Googled or seen a picture of the drugged-up Miss Olympia contestants, like that's quite an insult.

John Barban: Totally.

Alison Scott: I've never taken anything in my life and I'm a size 2. I have a less than 24 inches waist and I'm at my VI. And I had girls that were literally twice my size calling me this huge drugged-up testosterone man-woman. Well, that's just not very nice, is it?

John Barban: Well, and that's an example of their visceral insecurity standing next to you.

Alison Scott: Yeah, exactly.

John Barban: I mean, think about how lousy of a thing that is to do with somebody. They just spending all those work trying to shoot for this goal to get there and then somebody else comes along and just tries to find whatever comment they can to just shoot it down as quickly as possible.

Alison Scott: Yeah.

John Barban: So I guess the point of what we are saying is recognize that that's not about you, but it's about them. The community is obviously is a supportive place, but you will obviously find other people in your life that will be supportive and just try to learn to let it roll off your back because even though they are just words, they still bug and they can actually get into your brain if you let them.

Alison Scott: Yeah, absolutely. And I mean, so it all just becomes a mix of what you do in public and what you do in private. Some days are going to



work better than others, like for instance, when I'm having a day where I really feel like I'm going to ride the high and do like a big cut and try to create a big, big deficit. Sometimes with those days I'm just going to stay away from social eating events because there is too much explaining to do or there is too much this and that, but that doesn't mean that while you are cutting you never go to social eating events. It's just means that some days you will feel like it's going to work and some days you realize that it's not going to work.

For instance, when I'm maintaining weight, I don't mind having like my fridge is full, for instance. I can have all the ingredients around. I can have whatever I want around and and that works find for weight maintenance. But when I was really trying to create big deficits, for instance, I did a cut at the end of November and at the beginning of December, when I was trying to create big deficits every single day and you are constantly in that feeling of, "I want to eat". I was running 500-calorie deficits and upwards every single day and then you are always kind of in that, "I'd like to eat" feeling because obviously your body is like, "You are in a deficit. I'd really like to eat now." And so for those days, I knew that it was not a good idea for me to have extra food in the house because if I had extra food in the house, I'd probably just end up eating up to maintenance anyways.

John Barban: Right, so you preempt. You don't put yourself in harm's way, so to speak.



Alison Scott: Yeah, exactly. The way I look at it...

John Barban: You don't tempt yourself by placing the food within arm's reach. Just remove it and roll with how you know you are going to act anyways.

Alison Scott: If you can't have them in the house without you eating it, don't pretend that you can and say that, "Oh, I will just be strong willed. I just won't." Like for instance, I know I can't. Especially when I'm trying to create a big deficit, if it's in the house, I'm going to really, really struggle in not eating it. And then if I do eat it, I'm going to feel even more sort of not happy with myself. So don't set yourself up for that kind of emotional and psychological disappointment.

John Barban: If you have the freedom to do that.

Alison Scott: If you have the freedom to do otherwise. I mean it's just learning those little techniques and learning your own limitations and boundaries. Like I said we all know those people that can just stop, like my brother has been six-pack ripped since I can remember and then he just puts on muscle just by looking at it and because he has always been that way. He never works out, but he just good muscle tone, shredded, and he



just stops. I mean, I can't pretend that I can just learn to be like him and think about food the way he can. I know how I think about food. I know my relationship with food, so I just have to find the ways that work for me.

And the way I look at it is just building fences for you. It's sort of like the future you, and not for the you right now, but for the future you. So for the you in two hours, or the you tomorrow. You build fences like, "Okay well, I'm not going to have this in the house because eventually I'm going to eat it." It doesn't mean like you're going to eat it right now, but you're eventually going to eat it. And if you know that you're eventually going to eat it, then just don't have it around.

Or for instance, I know that if I don't put my workout stuff in the car at the beginning of the day whenever I first leave the house, then that'll just be one more excuse that 30% of the time I won't make it to the gym just because my stuff is not in the car because I'll be like, "Oh, I have to go back home and get my stuff and then I had to go back to the gym and then I'll go home and then I'll never leave again."

John Barban: So you preempt your future self's actual action by putting things in place that sort of you know in the next 12-24 hours will be like, "Oh good, my gym stuff is in the car, I'll just go to the gym."



Alison Scott: Yeah, but...

John Barban: And you know your future self is going to go rummaging through the fridge, even if they don't find any food and you will be like, "Oh yeah, I am just going to go to bed instead of having that late night snack."

Alison Scott: Exactly, because you know your own future self because it's just you, but in a few hours. So I mean you know that person. You are that person so you just...

John Barban: Right. And nobody can predict their actions better than you right now.

Alison Scott: Exactly, so I mean you just put those little fences in effect, like you go to the grocery store. I mean I find that's where you can do a lot about planning when you go grocery shopping or whatever. There are little tricks and tips like always, always, always grocery shop full and don't ever go to the grocery store hungry. It's just a bad idea.

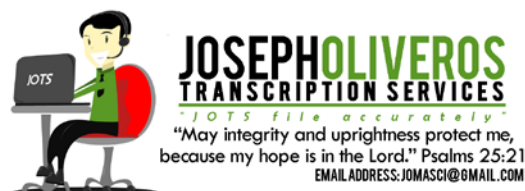
John Barban: Or you'll just come home with stuff you're allergic to because it looks good.



Alison Scott: Yeah, exactly. You're like, "I don't even like these, but oh man, the package looks good." And it's just such a bad idea because at that moment you're craving eight different kinds of snacks and you're going to buy all eight of them and then you're going to eat all eight of them, even though you really only needed one of those snacks to make the craving go away.

John Barban: Yeah, the last place you want to be when you're hungry is a room with 25,000 options.

Alison Scott: Exactly. So I mean it's just those little things. I mean for instance I love cookies. I love chocolate chip cookies especially, and so I could never ever, ever buy a box of them and have them in the house. I can't even bake them because I like chocolate chip cookie dough even more than I like chocolate chip cookies. They won't even make it into the oven if I try to bake them, like I'll have thousands of calories with the cookie dough if I ever try to bake them, so I just don't. And if I really want a cookie, then I'll go out to the place in town where I know they have the best chocolate chip cookies and I love their chocolate chip cookies and I will buy one and I will have it. And that's just how it works. Sometimes when you feel weak because you're like, "Oh, I have no self-control. What do you mean I can't have those in the house?" If you can't have them in the house, you just can't have them in the house.



John Barban: And let's be clear here, this isn't about a lack of self-control and it isn't about being a bad person, none of that stuff. All it is food and the way you know you'll react to certain foods, and whether or not you care about the effect that it has on the look and shape of your body. In this case you do care and you have forced your body and coaxed yourself and your body into a shape that you like, so all of these things are based on the idea that, "Oh, but I do like the shape." You do like being at your VI and you want to stay there. Otherwise, who cares? Eat whatever you want, and that was the sort of old way or some people are learning to recognize that the way you do or don't pay attention to your food, obviously has an effect on the look and shape of your body.

If you care about the look and shape of your body or at least you want to direct that, then obviously you need to do something about it. If you don't care what your food and exercise does to your body, then all of this is irrelevant and you just eat whatever you want, whenever you want, exercise or don't exercise, who cares? So all I'm doing is trying to qualify that all of this is with the understanding that there's a goal, a body shape goal that we obviously are shooting for.

Alison Scott: Absolutely, and I mean there are little other little tips and tricks that I guess I use with nutrition. For instance, like if you have someone on your weight loss team, like for instance if it's your significant other or the friend that you work out with or whatever it is, if you're saying,



like for instance, my heart really goes out to you ladies out there that have kids around in your house and you always have those little kiddie snacks everywhere because they're not for you, they're for your kids. I mean I live alone, so it's easy for me to control what's in my house because I'm not thinking about anybody else's needs. But I get it, like your kids want their snacks and it's hard to have those around, and it's for them, so you can't just not have them in the house, but at the same time you don't want to eat them.

I understand that's a much more difficult situation and one that I am fortunate enough not to have dealt with. But for instance, well, just tell someone and you can tell your significant other "I don't want to have one of those today." So then that puts a little bit extra accountability on you because you told somebody that you were going to do that. It's almost like if there's someone that you know that also fasts with you or even on the forums you can be like, "I'm going to fast today. And that's an accountability that you've kind of put out there and you're like, "I'm going to do this." And it's just one more extra degree of helping you kind of control when you're thinking about breaking that fast or having that snack that you said that you didn't want to have earlier, then it's just one more degree of accountability for you not to have that.

John Barban: Sure, all of this stuff is hard enough by yourself, but having somebody on your side helps. Doing it by yourself is difficult and having



someone on your side helps. Even the littlest little bit here and there, like as if I just said littlest little bit, but just having that one little bit of encouragement in the same direction might be the difference between you cracking and having something or not.

Alison Scott: Exactly.

John Barban: Or the difference between you, like skipping a workout or not. We're all like that. I mean I've been doing this for 15 or however many years and I can easily be persuaded. I had workout partners who'd sometimes they're pushing in the other direction and instead of doing an extra set we wind up at a pub having some chicken wings and beer, so none of us are immune to it. Everyone can be swayed one way or another.

Alison Scott: Exactly, like the way I like to say it is to just build fences to push yourself and steer yourself in the right direction and some of them can sound really extreme. Like for instance, when I was still in the university and I was on campus, a lot of the food establishments on campus only take cash or your meal card, so I don't have any money on my meal card, so they only take cash and I just wouldn't bring cash with me or I'd bring enough cash that I could have one coffee on campus. I know that sounds extreme, but it worked.



John Barban: Sure, and that's just you directing yourself.

Alison Scott: Exactly and I'd be like, well, because I know that when I'm studying or I'm stressed because I have whatever exam coming up or whatever it is and I'm in front of this place where I can get a cookie or I can get whatever it is, a sandwich that I really like, I'm probably going to get it even though I know I don't need it and I'm not going to be happy afterwards. I know that it's not for sure, but I know that there's a 50% chance that I'll probably get it.

John Barban: Right.

Alison Scott: I mean that's enough of a chance that I don't want to take. So I just won't bring money with me and that sounds kind of extreme, but it worked. And so I mean that can be something that you say, "Okay, I'll pack my lunch when I go to work, or I'll pack my food for the day when I'm out of the house." And at least then for those eight hours, your food is controlled. And I mean, sure, maybe that doesn't solve your problems when you come home for dinner, but then maybe telling your significant other that you don't want to have any snacks that night will help you not to have any snacks that night.



So then it's sort of like looking on big scales than on smaller scales and if you need to look on it literally like, "Okay, how am I going to not eat too much over the next four hours?" Then do that. Plan it over the next four hours. Like for instance, what I talked about a couple of times in the forums is how I use exercise to control my appetite because if I'm going to go for a run I don't eat for an hour or two beforehand because it will make my run very painful and miserable and I'll get cramps, and then I obviously won't eat while I'm running because that would be...difficult... and then afterwards when I work out it kills my appetite for an hour afterwards. So I know that a workout actually keeps me from eating for about four hours, which is that's four hours that I just went without eating, it's awesome.

And again, it might sound obsessive or it might sound extreme, but if you need to do something that'll keep you from eating for four hours then do it. If you need to think of it on a really small scale, then that's just how you have to do it. And of course, that's not going to be everyday. It's not like every moment of everyday you have to be planning to what you're going to eat or what you're not going to eat, but some days that's kind of how much your appetite has a control of you and you have to think on a smaller scale. In some days you're not going to think about food at all and go the whole day without eating or a really low cal and you won't even have really noticed. Some days when you're really busy, at least this happens to me, when I'm really busy I just don't think about food and then all of a sudden it's like 5 PM and I'm like, "Oh my God, I just did a 24-hour fast and I had no idea."



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John Barban: Yeah, and this all sounds like really heady stuff, but after a while it just becomes a lot less of an effort to pull off a lot of the stuff you're talking about. At first, it might sound cumbersome, but then after awhile it's like, "Oh yeah, right. Maybe I'll just head over to the gym and that'll get me through the rest of the day, and that's it." That's about how small of a thought it turns into.

Alison Scott: Absolutely.

John Barban: So with practice it all becomes a lot simpler.

Alison Scott: Yeah, I mean just like John said, I know I have just given a whole, whole ton of different tips and I just want to be really clear, it's not like I had to apply all of these tips every moment, every single day that I was trying to lose weight. That would be clinically insane. I'd probably go crazy. But these are just little things that I might have done for a day here and there or for an hour here and there, like at no given time was I doing all of these things at once. These are just little things that help you get through different situations. I mean, no one trick is going to work all the time, right?



John Barban: Right. And that's one of our keys is the flexibility to just go with what you've got at the time and just ride the wave. So for one little thing, and then it might be something you latch on to and it works for a couple of weeks straight just because that's the lifestyle mindset you happen to be in, so then just ride it and then if it fades and sort of ceases to feel useful and productive, it's fine. It doesn't mean that you're a failure. It just means now your situation has changed and you just move on to something else that works, but we're getting towards the end here. I think we should wrap this one up.

So Ali, thanks for kind of sharing everything that you did, I guess, from the nutrition side and sort of the social support side. And like I said before, you're going to, and you've agreed to be a recurring sort of guest, so that's great and I appreciate that as well. And I guess we're done for today. So we'll be talking about the contest moving forward, but for now, for Alison Scott, I'm John Barban and that's your Venus Index podcast.

