



INSTITUTE FOR THE
PSYCHOLOGY *of* **EATING**
The World's Leading School in Nutritional Psychology

The Art and Science of Food and Body Coaching Summit Interview
With Marc David and Gudni Gunnarsson

Marc David- Welcome, everybody, I'm Marc David, founder of the Institute for Psychology of Eating. We are in the art and science of food and body coaching online summit, where we're connecting with different expert coaches, practitioners, teachers, who have some skill in doing what they do, and we're gonna learn what makes them tick, some of their tricks of the trade, and today, I am very, very, very excited to be sharing one of my very good friends with you, Gudni Gunnarsson, welcome Gudni.

Gudni Gunnarsson- Thank you so much. Pleasure to be with you, Marc, an honor to be with you.

Marc David- Yeah, let me say a few words and brag about you, and then, I'm gonna let you jump in. So, Gudni has not only been a long-term friend for, maybe, 30 plus years, but Gudni was one of my original coaches, teachers, and it would be amazing if I could describe his work in a sentence or two, which I don't believe I can. But originally, Gudni was combining fitness work and just working on how to be in the body in a fitness way along with personal growth, personal transformation, and really, using the body, I think, as a vehicle to help us step into presence and power and consciousness, and look at some of the things we might need to let go of. Gudni is a soon to be, I think, a three-time author, author of Presence is Power. He is the originator of rope yoga and GloMotion, which is a wonderful system. Gudni, fill in some blanks for me, and tell us what you're up to these days?

Gudni Gunnarsson- Good question. Nothing really changes that much, my friend. It's still the same work. GloMotion is my baby, and it's a comprehensive, holistic life-coaching system, and it sort of applies to all aspects of your being, and my contention is that there's just light, and there's different frequency, and then what I do is, I don't exclude anything, we are just who we are is a story or a presentation, and your life is going to depend on how present or absent you are. So my coaching practice is about encouraging people to take responsibility for their life, for how they shine and how they express themselves into the field, and obviously, if their purpose oriented, so a lot of my work is about, what do you want? Primarily, if somebody comes to me, I say to them, what do you want? And they may tell me that they don't know, and I tell them that they do know, but they don't wanna become responsible for it, and that becomes the opening process. So then, when I get that, I say to them, listen, you might wanna realize that you can't want something unless you want yourself. You don't have the power of will if you're not willing, yourself. And then, this precedes in the process of you devoting energy or investing energy. You can't spend time or money, but you can devote your energy to anything you want to, and my favorite sentence is, all that you devote your awareness to will grow and expand. And if you're not devoting your awareness, it's because you have not become responsible.

Marc David- How did you get into this work? What inspired you?

Gudni Gunnarsson- It's pretty much my own sort of, let's call it conflict. You know I come from a pretty tumultuous background, and at the age of 16, I realized that if I didn't do something to reign myself in, my life would be challenging. I was very, very intense, I was an inspired, passionate guy, and whatever I did, I did full force. And so I was starting to do a little bit of drugs and some alcohol at that time, and I was afraid of myself, and I came to the conclusion that if I didn't reign myself in and create some boundaries for my own different perspective, the perspective of balance and prosperity, then my life would be in despair, literally, and so I started creating these, I would call them, patterns or framework, for prosperity, behavior, and one thing led to another. At that time, my primary sort of connection to myself and the world at the same time was my body. I ended up becoming the first fitness coach in Iceland, or private fitness coach in Iceland, publishing a magazine called Nutrition and Fitness by the time I was 20 years old, and running one of the first gyms in Iceland, and then, we met at Kripalu. At the age of 25, I went to Kripalu realizing that I was missing the connection to yoga. I was already, at that time, telling my clients that, if you don't change your perspective towards yourself, your body will never change. And so, but I still, at the same time, realizing what I knew about the body, I knew also that I was thirsty for more education, more experience, and more approaches. So that took me to yoga. Then, when I started looking into yoga, I also realized that yoga is 6,000 years old, there's not a new science in the world. And so gradually, what I did was I collected the science and the yoga and the ancient wisdom, and I packed it into the system that I now call GloMotion. And that's the comprehensive process that I can apply to any situation cooperation, individual, relationships, or whatever it because it basically gives you the boundaries the framework to sustain a prosperity based life.

Marc David- So here you are in when you do your coaching work, what kind of people do you find show up in your world, show up in your practice?

Gudni Gunnarsson- I'm blessed because people, I have a reputation. I work primarily in Iceland right now, although I have some clients in the States. My location is right now in Iceland, and I'm blessed because I have a reputation that precedes me in Iceland, and people usually don't reserve an appointment with me unless they are serious about becoming responsible. So I'm attracting people that are challenged by their behavior by their stuckness. They're challenged by the process. By the fact that they continue to create and attract pain into their lives, and they don't know how to get out of it. So today like in the States, we're dealing with a lot of burnout, we're dealing with a lot of excessive behavior, excessive absence, excessive consumption, and then also the excessive lifestyles and the executive speed. But people in general, they come to me when they are at their, it's almost like a sometimes like a last resort, where you realize and have realized for quite some time, that you're the cause of your dilemma, but you haven't even done everything else you can to try to avoid that and avoid the responsibility because you know that if you become responsible, you're going to face withdrawals. So pain, discomfort is what brings people to me.

Marc David- Yes, isn't that a good thing? And I mean, really, because I think part of being on planet Earth is at some point we will experience pain and discomfort. And then the question becomes, how do we manage it? What do we do with it? What choices do we make from there, and the world doesn't always teach us how to make good choices when it comes to hurt, pain or discomfort?

Gudni Gunnarsson- Well, the world is a good teacher, but the question is, whether we are ready to listen? So one of my favorite sentences is also I think, I can't remember exactly where I heard this the first time, but the statement goes like this, pain is unavoidable, but suffering is a choice. So the suffering that people are managing, that's profound. You look around and we look around these hectic lifestyles, and we look at people managing their suffering, not their prosperity. And that's what blows my mind again and again, I'm not operating and looking at it with judgment. This is not about judging people. It is also about looking at myself, and my own process and my own patterns and realizing what it takes to change. And that's where my coaching and language comes in. Because to will is to act, to long and hope is not to act and not to take action. And if you're not taking action, you're not willing anything then that reveals that you don't want it. So question is how much pain is required to move that into wanting and taking action?

Marc David- It's a good question.

Gudni Gunnarsson- Yeah it's a great question. It differs, people, some people go through divorce, some people go through bankruptcy, some people go through illnesses, but the point is that you awaken at some point, and when you awaken, you awaken to the fact that you're not your thoughts. In that instance, everything makes sense. But if you don't step into responsibility at that point, nothing will change.

Marc David- I wonder sometimes, we live in a world where people I find want a lot, they either want the perfect body, they want the perfect weight, they want the perfect health, they wanna have success they want a certain amount of money. And do you see that where people come in with these very specific goals that they might come into your practice with? Do you focus on those goals? Do you de-focus on them?

Gudni Gunnarsson- Well the focus is interesting and wanting and longing is hoping, again to will is to act and so and people, I will not allow people to sort of devote any energy to the fact that you know what, I'm not in the business of helping people set goals. I'm in the business of helping people become responsible and to establish their purpose, what are you here for? What's the point? What service do you wanna provide? What can you give, not what can you get. And you know the world is like a boomerang, everything reflects everything, everything you give is what you get. And so whatever you're doing wherever you are, at this point, you went there, you created it. You're the cause of your experience. And this has nothing to do with blame or shame. It has to do with the fact that your thoughts, your actions, your breath, your

nourishment, everything you've done, until now has led you to where you are now. And if you're not willing to show up for that, you can't really change anything. And so my work is really about saying to people, listen, you can tell me the story once. I'm not gonna listen to the story twice. If you're suffering, you're causing it. So, are you ready? Are you ready to do something differently? Are you ready to create a process, a framework for transitioning into a different state of being? And if they are not, then I'll tell them quite liberally, I'll tell them literally, I'll tell them, then I may not be the facilitator you're looking for. I only deal with the truth.

Marc David- What do you find is the most exciting part of your work or the most fulfilling part of your work?

Gudni Gunnarsson- The most fulfilling part of my work is to help people realize their power. When I see people become responsible and become inspired, that's really what sort of, that's what I feed off of. I am providing a service, I don't go to work, I don't work, I provide a service and my purpose, my primary purpose today, personally is gratitude, to be grateful. Because I know that gratitude is presence. I also know that awareness is to be present and you can devote that awareness. And if you're not aware, you can't be grateful. If you can't be aware, you can't be grateful. I mean, if you can't be grateful, you can't be aware. So same term. The thing is that being grateful isn't a terminology. It's not a courtesy. It's a connection to the field of infinite possibility. And so, when I see people argue for their limitations and exclude themselves from what we call the power of creation, then I go, listen, there are two ways you can live in a field of separation or you can live in a field of unity. And if you're willing to come into your power and connect to that field, then everything is at your fingertips. And people get that and they become inspired, they become lit up, and I help people, coach people into making that connection, opening their heart. And that's where prosperity lives, that's where your permission to flourish your love lives. And if you can open your heart if you want to, let's say open your heart, then that connection is available. That's what really gets me fired up.

Marc David- It's funny to me because in a lot of the coaching universe, I don't always hear that term. Opening your heart. There's usually just a lot of doing. There's a lot of sometimes it almost seems like figuring things out with my mind. So I can change them with my mind. Yeah, it just feels like it just gets left out of the equation.

Gudni Gunnarsson- I understand it and for some people that works until it doesn't. I am primarily an inspirational coach, I have nothing to do with motivation. So, fear is an option but it's not an option that I provide. I just provide the option of love and compassion.

Marc David- Do you have favorite questions that you find yourself asking, that helps you understand somebody or get to know them or gives you information about them that helps you work with them?

Gudni Gunnarsson- I can use the questions but in all honesty, people will sit down in the chair and then they will reveal themselves through their posture, through their story, through their,

how they display their discomfort or they'll just come right out and tell me what it is that they're dealing with, and what they think they wanna see in their lives. And so, you know, interestingly enough, it's a very direct process, the way I do my coaching and the first thing I would ask somebody that's sort of, let's say, in an indecisive process, I would say to them, what do you want? And they would say to me, well, I don't know. And then I would say to them, well, that's not true. You do know what you want, but you don't wanna become responsible for it. And the word responsible is such a powerful term, responsibility is not allocated that to those that have not forgiven themselves, to those that do not want themselves the way they created themselves. Responsibility means the ability to respond to any circumstance from the now. The opposite of that is disability, disconnected, separated, fragmented, in pain, suffering and managing that suffering. So I'm quick to point people to the fact that if they want something to change, they really really have to take on the reality that they have created. What I said earlier about being fortunate, most of the clients that I see have already come to that point that they have created their reality. And they're talking to me because they know I don't judge or blame, but I facilitate the process. I can help them devote their energy to what they want, rather than what they don't want.

Marc David- You mentioned the word forgiveness. And I'd love for you to expand upon that into how that fits into how you see people and responsibility.

Gudni Gunnarsson- Well forgiveness is an incredibly beautiful term. It means to let go of your obsessive compulsive thinking. It means to become present. When you forgive yourself, you're not forgiving yourself for your past, you're forgiving yourself in the now for how you think about your past. So whether you're scolding and blaming or rejecting yourself, you're forgiving yourself for your actions and violence towards yourself, for your bullying towards yourself. And that can only occur in the moment. There is no past and there's no future. So there's nothing to forgive out of the past. It's only letting go, choosing to bring your awareness to what you want versus what you don't want. So it's deciding to become present and responsible. So, responsibility is a precursor for forgiveness. Forgiveness is a precursor for responsibility. And what it stipulates so is that the moment you forgive yourself, you actually wanna be who you are, where you are, what you are, and you have this incredible connection to power, we call it empowerment. Everything else is disempowerment. So holding yourself in contempt, having regret and remorse and living in this shame that you have been addicted to for years is obviously an option. And that's what I mean when I talk about managing your discomfort or your suffering. But you also have the option of becoming responsible, a light being that can literally affect changes on a global scale if you're willing to want yourself, love yourself and forgive yourself. Forgiveness is the gateway to responsibility.

Marc David- That's a particular challenge I notice in my work. As I work with people who wanna shift their eating, who wanna shift their weight, they want their body to weigh different, they want their body to look different. And usually what's happening is sort of the promise is, well, when I look different, when I lose this weight, then I'm gonna love myself, right? I don't love this what this is now but when I get there, yes, we got it.

Gudni Gunnarsson- We refer to that as the when deceits and when never comes around. So, there's always nothing to say. It's like the saying is you always need a few more cents, a few cents more, a few pennies more. So for the never enough-fer, it's never enough. And so the point that I'm making is it. I'll tell you a little story that sort of can relate possibly what I'm saying to what I'm saying, like, a client walks into my office and says, it's good to see you, I have some challenges, and I say, well, what's your primary one? She says, I wanna lose 10 pounds, and I say that's not true. She says, what do you mean? I said, if you wanted to lose 10 pounds, you'd be 10 pounds lighter. I know who you are, I can see the power you wield and if you came to a decision, became responsible, you would immediately reduce your body weight. No, I wanna be 10 pounds lighter and I said that's okay. It's contentious. My belief is that you wanna be the weight you made yourself, and she said no. And argued with me and I said, okay, let's move this issue to the side. And three months later, she came to me and said, I got it. I understand what you mean. And I understand that I have the power to reduce my body weight, if I want to, I'm not a victim. I am an empowered being, and I decide how heavy or light I wanna be. But unless you're willing to take that power on, you're not going anywhere.

Marc David- It's easy, it seems to be a victim in this world.

Gudni Gunnarsson- It's a very popular profession.

Marc David- Yeah.

Gudni Gunnarsson- Very popular state of being. To blame somebody else. If you blame whether it's yourself or another, you have disengaged your power, you've become a victim and you are completely disabled, which is the opposite of responsibility. So disability now becomes the path, your purpose. And interestingly enough, purpose doesn't have to be positive purpose is the path you're on. So your purpose follows your awareness, everything that you want, devote your awareness to grow and expand. And if you're devoting your awareness to what you don't want, your purpose becomes not to want what you have. And so it leads you away from prosperity, and it just stains your story about despair. It blames the world for your disability. And you're, literally what's the best term? You're literally disempowered and broken.

Marc David- Yeah, I don't know if you said this, I think you did. Because in my notes, I had this great quote, and your name was after it. And it was something like it was in, I've used this in relation to people who wanna lose weight. And it's "In order to have the body you want, you have to first want the body you have."

Gudni Gunnarsson- Yes, yes.

Marc David- Which is a conundrum for a lot of people.

Gudni Gunnarsson- It is. So here's what led me to Kripalu when I did go and sort of wanted to

further my education and my experience is that I realized very early in my practice, that I could not help people achieve a change in their body, whether it was a body builder, or somebody that wanted to reduce their body weight, if they were not willing to change their perspective towards themselves. It absolutely did not work. So another story, this woman comes up into my practice, and she has an ailment in her body. And she didn't know where it was coming from. And I helped her to begin with identify the source of it. And then I said to her, do you want the pain you created? And she said, No, I don't. And I said that I can't help you. And I'm not kidding. If you're not willing to step into what you created, if you're not willing to become present to what is now, how in the world are you gonna go somewhere else? So if you don't want the body you're in, then you're rejecting yourself. And at the same time, you're rejecting yourself, you're rejecting all of creation. If there's a God, for some people, I call it The Being, The Great Being. Other people call it God. If you reject yourself, you're separating from that energy, that source. And I've never seen people shame, blame or reject themselves to wellness.

Marc David- Exactly. And it takes a lot to move people out of that direction. I find it seems to be an ingrained habit in so many humans.

Gudni Gunnarsson- There is that and it's an addiction, your story's an addiction, your story protects itself. But the main thing to realize is that that fear is lack of energy, lack of resource. So you're at some point emotionally, physically, financially, you're broke. So that means that the resources you have are very limited and you're stuck in, in the process of fear, repetitive behaviors, and hope. And hope is such a contentious energy. To hope is to long for something without taking action. So hope is a source of great disappointment for a lot of people. They've been hoping all their lives, and all of their lives have been disappointed because their hopes, their dreams become nightmares. And so people are run down by their own operation, like a company that's not selling their product, their story is being told, but nobody wants to hear. And that's really the big challenge is to get to people to say, listen, okay, the way you've operated your business, your life hasn't been working well for you. If we just step back, and look at what you've been doing what you've been selling, and realizing nobody wants to buy it, can we maybe change the story just a tiny little bit and expand the market? So we can start rejuvenating and resting and getting some energies up, so that we can change our perspective? If I can get the client to look up versus down, I says it's victory.

Marc David- You know, to me, one of the things that you do well, or that you employ is a very specific use of language, you're very clear about your languaging. You're very clear about the definitions of the important words or distinctions that you talk about.

Gudni Gunnarsson- [Gudni] Thank you, I appreciate.

Marc David- Yeah, which I find is so helpful. Because we and I'm saying the collective we, it's easy to get sloppy with language. It's easy to be saying words back and forth with each other and we're both thinking and hearing two different things.

Gudni Gunnarsson- Language is a frequency. And so it's a very, very powerful tool. And so, I'm just gonna bust you for a little lie. We were having this dialogue earlier, and you talked about you used the term that you were trying to.

Marc David- Yeah.

Gudni Gunnarsson- So, in essence you heard the term we use the term to try is to lie, you either do or you don't. And that's why I use the term you will. Will power is the source, the connection to source and we have when we have free will. We have access to that power, and we can will our lives and change our destinies. But in order to do that, you have to become responsible. So for me, I see a lot of people thinking that they want change, but they're not willing to make the changes. They're not willing to make the transition from a life of irregularity to a life of regularity. So for instance, if there's no plan that becomes the plan. So my work is to help people create patterns of prosperity versus patterns and behaviors of despair. So one of the first things I do, I say, typically, there's four different ways of being, you can be a twitch, you can be a habit, you can be a pattern, or you can be a ritual. And so many people start off as twitches. They just are compulsive, obsessive and they have really very limited control over their thinking or their process or their doing. You have habits. And some people create habits, but habits can be negative and positive. But habit means that you are habituated and then disempowered. Doesn't matter whether it's a negative or a positive. Patterns, on the other hand, are processes that you have awareness towards. You start creating them, just like a company creates patterns of operation, protocols that benefit the operation, and we know what they are and if we keep repeating them, they're beneficial and they become prosperous. Ritual is that, living in those patterns, but you're enjoying the moment and it's the highest way of being. And to go from being a twitch or a habit to the ritual is the journey. And the journey should be really, really exploited, and enjoyed at the same time. Because, we never know when this is going to end. If I'm gonna wait until tomorrow to be grateful, there may not be any tomorrow, not for me. So my point is, if you don't want yourself now, it's very unlikely that you will want yourself tomorrow. And at any time, you can step back and say okay, listen, I got it. I know it, it may take me a bit of training, but I'm going to want myself and then people will say to me, What do you mean, want myself? I wanna lock myself. And then I said to them, listen, that's an overstated... It's an overstated request. Your love, you can't love something, you can be love and you can be with somebody and be love, but you can't love another person. 'Cause you just shine your light if you love yourself, but you can't love yourself, if you don't want yourself. It just doesn't work. So, it's a simple process Marc. I'm not making light of it, but it's a simple process and languaging for me is a structure. And so, and if there is no structure, there's no discipline. If there's no discipline, there's no order. If there's no order, there is no prosperity. It doesn't exist. I'm not talking about constraints. I'm talking about telling the truth, keeping my word.

Marc David- I love it, my friend. And I'm gonna just say on that note, I'd love to wrap up on that high note. And I would love for you to share with us how we learn more about you, your world how we get in touch with you. And what should we know about what you're up to?

Gudni Gunnarsson- Thank you. Presence is Power is my primary website. I have two primary websites. One is Presence is Power, and the other one is GloMotion. And the Glo is without a W so it's GloMotion. There's information definitely on my work, and people can get gain access to a document called Vision Work, which is the first book I wrote that I didn't publish, but it's a good book. It's a great beginning into the dialogue. What I'm up to is, I'm just about to finish my third book, which is called Power of the Heart, what you see is what you get. Again, awareness is your primary resource. And everything that you devote your awareness to is going to grow and expand. The challenge is to be present enough, decisive enough, responsible enough to decide what you want and to devote your life energy, your pride now, your love to that, and it will flourish. And so all of my work is about encouraging you to define your purpose. Like there's three questions. What do you want? What's the purpose? And do you have permission to receive it? Is your heart open? Can you truly enjoy prosperity? And if you don't like yourself, love yourself, want yourself, the answer is no, you cannot.

Marc David- Very simple my friend very clear, very beautiful. So glomotion.com without a W and presenceispower.com Gudni I really appreciate you taking the time. It's been a great conversation and great to spend time with you in this way. It really is.

Gudni Gunnarsson- My pleasure, my friend always.

Marc David- And my friends out there. I really appreciate you all tuning in. Once again, I'm Marc David, we have been in the art and science of food and body coaching online summit. As always, there's more to come and I'll see you all soon.