Gina: You're listening to the Healthy in Real Life podcast, episode number 48.

Speaker 3: Welcome to the Healthy in Real Life podcast, bite-sized tips for healthy living that you can implement right now. Join us weekly for interviews and real life advice for creating the happiest and healthiest version of yourself. Here's your host, fitness expert, author and mom of two Gina Harney.

Gina: Hey everyone, it's Gina, creator of the Fitnessista blog and brand. I'm so excited that you're here today. Thank you so much for tuning in. We have a really fun episode today. I'm talking with Jonathan Aslay all about relationships, self-love, dating and some of his tips for understanding single and divorced men. Something that's completely out of my wheelhouse and I thought it was fascinating. I really hope you guys like this episode.

Gina: Before we dive into the show, I wanted to go ahead and read this week's five star review. Thank you so much. To those of you who have taken the time to leave reading ratings and reviews for the show, it means so much to me and it really helps with the visibility of the podcast. Before you listen to a podcast, you'll search for it. You'll lurk through reviews. That's what I do myself. It just really helps with the visibility. It also helps the show continue to grow.

Gina: I'm going to go ahead and we read this week's five-star review. It says, "Yay, been looking forward to this. Gina's approach to life, health and fitness is balanced and never disappoints. I would give it more stars if I could. This has become one of my fave podcasts. Thank you Gina, Jody." Thank you so much for that awesome review Jody. I really appreciate it. If you guys take the time to leave that five star review, just head to fitnessista.com so F-I-T-N-E-S-S-I-S-T-A.com/podcastreview and I'll give you a copy of my barre blast workout for free. This is the same type of workout that you would find in a boutique barre class. We do some cardio intervals. It's some of my all time favorite barre exercises and I hope you love it just as much as I do.

Gina: Speaking of workouts, I wanted to tell you guys all about Les Mills On Demand. If you have not tried it yet, what are you waiting for? I have a link for you. You'll get 21 days of their workouts for free. On their platform, they have over 800 different workouts and they're all scientifically based and derived so you know that you're getting a safe workout from a top instructor. I did Body Pump certification years ago and it was by far one of the hardest group fitness certifications that I've done. They really care about their instructor's background, how they're coaching, making sure that they know and execute proper form. Because they're so awesome at what they do, all of their workouts have great to music. That's a super exciting thing about it too. You know that you're going to get a fun, uplifting, motivating workout. If you just had to... This is a Bitly, so it's B-I-T.L-Y/yay, Y-A-Y, Les Mills, L-E-S, M-I-L-L-S. You'll get 21 days of their workouts for free. I hope you love it just as much as I do.

Gina: For today's episode we are talking a lot about self love, relationships and dating. I'm talking with Jonathan Aslay. He is one of America's leading midlife dating coaches and he's expanded into a deeper essential philosophy of what it truly means to love. After losing his 19 year old son Connor in 2018, Jonathan Aslay's grief led him on a soul searching inner journey where he became aware of an often overlooked dimension of the dating conversation. He realized that the process of dating reveals the most common emotional health issue faced by many singles seeking a partner, a distressing lack of self worth, self regard and self love. Today he's on a mission of encouraging both men and women to fully love themselves with a new book, What the Heck is Self Love Anyway? It's packed with fun, engaging spiritual and personal growth practices and his dynamic midlife love mastery mentorship program that inspires hundreds of people daily around the world.

Gina: In this episode, he is talking about his new book, his background, which is extremely fascinating, tips for cultivating your own self love practice, what self love actually means and no, it is not just frolicking in a field of daisies. It's not this woo concept. It's just really caring for yourself as a human, and positive impacts that self love practices can have on our health and wellbeing.

Gina: I really hope that you can take some of his tips and use them to create a healthier, happier life for yourself. I'm so excited for you to hear this episode.

Gina: Welcome to the podcast, Jonathan.

Gina: Hey Jonathan. Thank you so much for being on the show today.

Jonathon: Oh, I'm so honored to be here. Thank you so much, Gina.

Gina: Yes, I'm so glad that you're here. Would you mind just sharing a little bit about your story and your background with listeners?

Jonathon: Sure. Professionally I'm a dating and relationship coach, specializing in midlife, which is after baby making years and before retirement. My back story on this is kind of unique, because after turning 40 and going through a divorce a decade or so ago, I put myself on the dating sites thinking, "Oh, it's just going to be so simple. You can magically put some information in and someone's going to appear, and the right person's going appear." I'll never forget. My first date was with a nice lady, great time. Something wasn't right. A few days later, another person, great lady, nice date, something wasn't right and in one year had over a hundred internet days.

Gina: Wow.

Jonathon: Yeah. I realized that the something wasn't right was me. I started to buy books on relationships. But what was interesting, and I'll be candid with you, I was addicted to online dating. I was like a serial dater. I was addicted to talking to women and it wasn't just dating. I just like talking to women and having them share their experiences and stories. I think I was feeding off of the feminine energy. Lots of times I wasn't going out on dates. I was just making new friends. Some of the women would go, "Hey Jonathan, will you check out my profile and try to give me your male perspective on how to make it better." I'd give them some tips on how to improve it. Then three weeks later I'd get a phone call, "Hey Jonathan. Oh my God. It worked. Your advice helped. Now will you check out the guy's profile and tell me what you think about him." I realized I had a knack for profiling men. I jokingly say the FBI have profilers for serial killers. I can profile serial daters, serial monogamists, the nice guys, the bad boys, and the one looking for you. Literally my business was born after that.

Gina: That is crazy. Do you provide that service for people? Do you actually go into the dating app and help them decipher what types of people they're looking at? How does this all work?

Jonathon: Sure. It's interesting. I've got almost 20,000 hours of coaching in the last, I think going on 15 years.

Gina: Okay.

Jonathon: There's an element of... Once you see enough patterns of people's behaviors, you can start recognizing it. To answer your question, yes, I will go into a profile and look at body language. I'll look at little simple things of what was written in their essay, whether it's a man's essay or a woman's essay, to get a sense of what are they projecting out there? How are they sharing their story? Is it in a healthy way or an unhealthy way? Sadly, most people in the dating realm do a piss poor job of putting themselves out there. Men and women. Oftentimes women complain about men, but women do just as equally as a bad job. It's hard, because literally for thousands and thousands of years, your mate was someone that lived in the same village you lived in, shared the same values, you had parents that knew each other. You had blendable lifestyles. You knew someone's emotional maturity before you ever met them. Now we're in a whole different ballgame. Humans struggle trying to understand one another. We're meeting total strangers these days. That's where I come in and give some perspective.

Gina: Got it. The realm is so huge with all the different online dating sites and apps. My husband and I joke that we're stuck together. We're in this, because if we ever had to date again, we wouldn't even know what to do. This would be such a nightmare. It would be so overwhelming. We hear all of these crazy stories.

Jonathon: There's that. Here's the thing, also, 50% of all new relationships for people over 45 years old is happening through an online connection. As bad as it is, it's still the best game in town.

Gina: Yes, no, that makes sense. I thought it was interesting how you said that you found that the problem was with yourself. I know that you focus on self love a lot and you have a new book out. It's called, What the Heck is Self Love Anyways. Would you mind answering that question for us? What the heck is self love?

Jonathon: Thank you so much. I'm honored. As I shared before, I went through a divorce and then put myself back out on the dating realm. I found myself... The problem out there with me. I began doing a deeper dive into personal development, self help and spirituality. In other words, recognizing that I was the common denominator to most of the problems and challenges I had in my life. I began studying Tony Robbins, Wayne Dyer, Abraham Hicks, Marianne Williamson. Then the movie The Secret came out and I just became fascinated with recognizing that I could actually be in charge of my destiny. What I mean is not giving my power away to victim consciousness. A lot of times people blame their lot in life on someone else.

Jonathon: Self love, and now I'm going to get to the self love piece, was at first... I started a blog about what does it mean to truly love ourselves. A lot of people get turned off by the term self love. They think that's woo woo or stuff like that. Another way of looking at self love is self respect, self worth. It's nurturing that little kid inside of us that sometimes gets scared and self soothing, if you will. It's as if you had a child and something was going on with... They were feeling frustrated, is you just give them a big giant can't hug. That's what self love is. It's nurturing yourself. Through the process of, like I said, personal development, self-help and spiritual work, I've been able to navigate life with a lot more inner peace because I'm doing daily work on myself, to remove the blocks to love, as Marianne Williamson would put it.

Jonathon: Did I answer your question?

Gina: Yes. What does that look like for you? Is it journaling, meditation, exercise? What is your version of that?

Jonathon: All of the above. Meditation, a lot of people think you have to sit there in om position and go silent. I like to meditate with music and walking along the beach. For me, that's my meditation. Meditation is unique to each person. I do journal. I also have a committee of people in my life that I talk to on a regular basis. I'm basically calling myself out on my own shit.

Gina: Yes.

Jonathon: What I mean to say is, when I recognize something's going on for me, I don't go, "Oh, something happened to me." I go, "How did I create this?" Then sometimes I talk to friends to process because they can see my blind spots that I don't see. That helps tremendously. Usually whenever I'm in judgment of myself or when I'm judging other people or comparing myself to other people, that's usually when I go, "There's something coming up that needs to be worked on for myself."

Gina: That's really powerful. I completely agree. I think a lot of it has to do with your reaction to things that happen around you as well, especially when turmoil or chaos or something crazy is going on. Just being able to tune in within yourself and take a deep breath and really be able to assess the situation instead of taking it personally or attacking yourself. I always like to say to pay attention to the little voices in your head and if there are things you would say to a good friend, usually you wouldn't talk to your friend the same way you talk to yourself. Just turning that mindset around can make such a huge difference.

Jonathon: I want to piggyback on this for a second if it's okay.

Gina: Yeah, please.

Jonathon: When I went through my divorce, I had a major crash in my life. I not only lost my quarter million dollar a year job, literally the month my ex and I decided to split up. I got wiped out in the market crash of 2008. I went to bed wishing I didn't wake up. That's how painful it was.

Gina: Wow.

Jonathon: What's more embarrassing is, at one point, I lived in a $2 million home, when I was married. We sold it. Split the money. Got wiped out. I had to move in with my mom and dad at age 45. Talk about huge embarrassment and shame. Why I'm sharing this with you is the personal development work, the self help, the spiritual work, the taking responsibility, was like a vaccination to emotional chaos.

Jonathon: What I mean to say is, my book, What the Heck is Self Love, was not only birthed from the blogging I had written about self love, but it was birthed two months after my 19 year old son passed away. Anyone who's a parent listening to this or anyone can empathize with a parent's worst nightmare is something happened to your child. In literally an instant my son was gone. In other words, there was no way to prepare for it, but I did prepare because I had been doing so much work to really shore up the little kid inside of me. My life didn't collapse. In fact, when I was giving his eulogy, I said, "I'm going to make a choice not to grieve through suffering. I'm going to grieve with love." Love is the antidote to suffering. Love is the antidote to emotional chaos. The more we lean into, or at least my belief is, the more we lean into love, the greater inner peace we have within ourselves.

Gina: That is incredible. I'm trying not to cry right now because like you said, that is literally the worst thing that you can imagine. I'm so sorry that you went through that.

Jonathon: Thank you.

Gina: What a powerful message, because after something like that happening, you could absolutely expect a parent to just disappear in their grief and wallow in it. It would be completely understandable. For you to take that mindset and say, "I'm going to focus on love and I'm going to turn that around," and be able to help so many people in the process is truly incredible.

Jonathon: Thank you. Let me just say something real quick. Let me not diminish the fact that there are days I cry. It's been a year and a half now, but certainly, I went through the cycles of grief, denial, anger, depression, that sort of thing. I don't feel though as I'm suffering as many people do. In other words, they go down the rabbit hole and never come out. The other day I was text messaging my son's best friend. We were just going back and forth and I was bawling the whole time. Self love doesn't make the pain go away. You're able to navigate it in a more healthy way. Anytime we're feeling any sort of pain in life, I think self love is that way of going... It shores up that courage inside of me to lean into it rather than try to run away from life.

Gina: I completely agree. Something my therapist taught me too is just the ability to feel your feelings. If you feel sad, allow yourself to feel sad. If you are telling a story... I'm so guilty of doing this, but I'll be talking about something horrible that happened and I'll have a smile on my face. It's like, why are you smiling right now? She said, just to remember, even when I'm doing it, I'm smiling right now, but I'm not happy. It's okay to feel all of the emotion that you're feeling.

Jonathon: Yeah.

Gina: Then by not pushing them away, you're able to express them, get them out, then you can move on to the next thing.

Jonathon: Absolutely.

Gina: Yeah. Back to the self love aspect, how would you recommend that someone can cultivate a self love practice in their routine, especially when we're busy juggling kids, jobs, careers, chores? What would you recommend as like a starting point?

Jonathon: Well, I'd say start with buying my book.

Gina: Done.

Jonathon: What the Heck is Self Love Anyways? I'm going to make a little pitch.

Gina: Perfect.

Jonathon: Well part of it... Go ahead.

Gina: No, I'll add a link in the show notes too so that everyone can check it out.

Jonathon: Okay, good. Well I'll give away a couple chapters to your listeners. Whoever's listening, there's probably a button you can press right here. The reason why I said start with my book is because I take someone down the journey, beginning a daily practice of self love. The book is designed to take you down a journey and at the end I share all the places I went to, which in other words, whether it's the workshops, whether it's the books, whether it's the videos to watch, the ones that I think are the most powerful. We can waste time focusing on the wrong things. Now that's a judgment, when I say the word wrong. I'm just saying it from my perspective. I feel like I've filtered all the good stuff for everyone.

Jonathon: You ask a really important question, how do we build that into our daily life? Tony Robbins calls something called the hour of power, and whether it's one hour, a half hour or 15 minutes, beginning a daily routine of carving out time for yourself and one hour is only 4% of your day. It might be reading a book. It might be watching a video. It might include meditation. There's a lot of people that confuse self love with self care. Self care is getting manicures and pedicures and that sort of thing, which are great, but that's more self care. Self love is really nurturing our emotional side whenever we're feeling out of inner peace, if you will. It's not about the pursuit of happiness. In the declaration of independence, it talks about the pursuit of happiness. I'd like to encourage people to have a pursuit of inner peace, because focusing so much on happiness is going to get the ying to the yang. If you focus on happiness, you're going to get a corresponding yang to that or sadness. The middle line between happiness and sadness is inner peace. In other words, I believe, when we begin to navigate life from a calmer place, we actually feel joy and bliss.

Gina: I love that. Have you heard of the Daily Stoic? It's Ryan Holiday's book.

Jonathon: I've heard of it, but I haven't read it yet.

Jonathon: Okay. I just recently bought it and I really like that one because it's very short meditations. It's maybe a passage and then two to three chapters. Two to three chapters, two to three paragraphs. It takes you five, maybe 10 minutes to read it once or twice, but it's all about stoicism. Basically the ability to just remain unchanged in the midst of chaos. Not letting things affect you personally. The ability to just take a deep breath and assess what's really going on. I feel like that's helped me a lot because I can't carve out an hour during the day. I would love to, but 15 minutes and I'm good to go. I'll do a short meditation. I'll read a passage. Like you said, maybe you watch a video. Even just having that downtime, I feel like people hear the phrase self love and it's so easy to picture someone frolicking through a field of daisies. You don't really know what it is, what it means. It does sound a little woo woo. Just like you said, taking time to nurture yourself, you as a human.

Jonathon: You brought up something earlier. When we talk about self judgements, in other words, when we're crucifying ourselves or self-deprecation, that sort of thing, that negative self talk, you wouldn't do that with a little child or a friend. The point I'm bringing this up is self love is also learning to be aware of your emotions, to be aware of those moments when your self deprecating, self crucifying, that sort of thing, and choosing in that... Instead of falling down the rabbit hole, grabbing the branch right before a self love practice is awareness and going, "Ah, I don't have to do things down the rabbit hole. I can choose a different way." That's another form of self love. It's just being aware of your thoughts and feelings and making a mountain out of a mole hill if you will.

Gina: Absolutely. Like you mentioned before, I just really believe that you can't truly love others until you love and appreciate yourself. Would you mind talking about the dating bit a little bit more? It's obviously a world that I am so far removed from, but I'm sure a lot of listeners would love to hear more of your thoughts and experience with that.

Jonathon: It's interesting because that phrase, you can't love another until you love ourselves. To the extent that there's truth to that, I don't believe humans ever fully love themselves. I think that's what happens when you transition to that other state of being. Life is a practice of getting there. I think what's most important in the relationship realm, two things to consider when it comes to loving yourself is take personal... Well three things I should say. Make your actions match your words. Take personal responsibility for your choices. Choose victor consciousness versus victim consciousness.

Jonathon: In the book, The Four Agreements, it talks about being impeccable with your word, not taking things personal. There's a couple... I just went brain dead on the other two now for some reason. I know it in the back of my mind, I'm just lost. My point in sharing this is that self love when it comes to relationships, is really about showing up as an emotional grownup. Again, your actions matching your words, taking responsibility for your choices and not leading with victim consciousness. Sadly here in the United States in particular, we are riddled with victim consciousness, which makes it hard to be in a relationship with another if we're always blaming the other for our issues in our lives. That is a form of self love.

Gina: There's the book called The Happiness Project and all of Gretchen Rubin's work. I really believe in that. You can be in control of your own happiness. Once you put it in the hands of other people, you're going to be disappointed every single time. You have to be the one to stand up for your happiness.

Jonathon: Exactly, and you know what? Loving yourself is also being self reliant. In other words, recognizing your own sovereignty and going, "Okay, there's a me, there's a you, and there a me." Often times a lot of people put a relationship in the bucket that the other person is responsible for their happiness. Instead of going the relationship is a separate entity. If I show up the best I can being whole and you show up the best you can being whole, and we treat the relationship as something sacred, that's the beginning of the makings of a successful relationship. If we put our happiness on dependent upon someone else, the "You complete me" phrase from Jerry Maguire, you're setting yourself up for failure.

Jonathon: There's nothing easy about doing this work and it's just learning to navigate. Here's the thing. The older you get, you realize that all of the stuff that you thought was big when you're younger was so trivial. At some point in your life going, you know what, don't make a mountain out of mole hill and navigate life, like I said, with inner peace, I believe you're going to trend in a way that's going to be more joyful and blissful.

Gina: Yes. I completely agree. It says on the talking points here that you can talk about helping women understand single and divorced men. Please break it all down for us.

Jonathon: Well you know it's interesting. Probably 75% of the people I coach are... Anyone who's over 45 there's a good chance if they're single and dating, they're divorced. I mean that just happens to be the population is mostly divorced. Divorce is a very complicated thing. Literally depending on how long you were married, it's an unraveling of the tapestry of an old life, and coming back to, I said earlier, your own sovereignty. A lot of people get divorced like what I did, and literally, when I moved out of the house, I put myself back out. I literally moved out of the house and put a dating profile up. The body didn't even drop yet, so to speak.

Jonathon: I'll never forget. I remember about five months into dating and truly, I was actually separated. I wasn't divorced. I met a woman and we connected online through a dating site and she goes, "How long have you been divorced?" I said, "Well, I'm not divorced. I've been separated five months." She wrote me and said, "Well, contact me in 18 to 24 months and after you've had one or two transition relationships." I said, "What are you talking about?" She goes, "You're not ready for a relationship." I said, "No, I'm ready. I'm ready. I'm ready." I'm so feeling like I'm ready. Sure enough, a few months later, I'm talking with a woman who I met and we really hit it off and we dove into a relationship after three dates. Three months, it was going great until I hit my wall. I'm in the midst of a divorce. There's contention. There's children involved. There's alimony. There's child support. There's visitation rights, all this stuff. I hit my emotional wall. I couldn't go any further.

Jonathon: Why I'm sharing this with your audience... It was two years later that I realized that that woman who wrote me and said 18 to 24 months and one or two transition relationships, I needed to rebuild my life over again. If I jumped into quickly, like I did with this one woman, it turned out to be it wasn't going to work out. I needed that time and most people need time to reintegrate themselves.

Gina: Wow. That's crazy that she knew the exact timing. She'd obviously-

Jonathon: Well, I know, that cracked me up. Can I tell you something about the woman that I did date and the three month mark?

Gina: Please.

Jonathon: I'll never forget. She had been divorced for four years, I mean fully divorced for four years, and she met me.

Jonathon: She goes, "Jonathan, you're a great guy. I really like you, but I know this isn't going to work out." I go, "What do you mean?" This is right in the beginning. She goes, "You're just not ready for a relationship." I kept saying, "I'm ready. I'm ready. I'm ready." She goes, "I know you're not ready." She goes, "I have to date you with rose colored glasses." In other words, I know you're a great guy, you're just not ready. It was funny because Christmas, we dated, we met just at Thanksgiving. We had had Christmas together and she gave me a box picture frame of rose colored glasses.

Gina: That is so funny.

Jonathon: She knew it was going to end. By the way, this has been a decade later. We're still social friends with one another. She since got married. She knew up front I wasn't ready.

Gina: Wow.

Jonathon: Even though I kept saying I was.

Gina: That's so interesting. If any listeners are listening who are on the dating scene and find men who are recently divorced, give them 18 to 24 months and two or three transitional relationships and then reach out. Is that the-

Jonathon: It's a guideline, not a rule. In other words... Actually I say it's a good guideline for both men and women to follow equally.

Gina: That makes sense, because it's like you're rediscovering your life and yourself and your time and your living situation. There's a lot that must go into play there.

Jonathon: Yeah, like I said, there's an unraveling of the old tapestry, and then really investing in rewriting a new one. A lot of people don't. They just try to relive the past. There's a whole new adventure. There's a whole new journey that happens after divorce. Rather than holding onto the past, lean into the future and say, "I can rewrite my story a different way."

Gina: That's so good. Are there any first date suggestions? Once you meet someone on an app, what would you recommend?

Jonathon: I'm going to shoot a video on this for my YouTube, and I'm going to share it with your audience today. A lot of times today, we're dealing with the swipe world of dating. I mean, when I first started it was internet. In other words, at least you had a profile. They have a lot of intel in there. Now, it's literally a photo and a couple blurbs of words.

Gina: Yes.

Jonathon: In some of the dating apps women actually initiate the conversation. One in particular is called Bumble. I actually liked that the women initiate conversation because it gives them a little bit of the power. Here's a great way to get a guy's attention. It helps to create healthy dialogue and conversation. If you're first writing a guy or you're responding back to a guy, I would like everyone to follow this method. It's called NICE. N-I-C-E, NICE. You want to be nice.

Jonathon: The N stands for their name. When you're communicating, if you know their name, write their name in the text message. It really creates... When we hear our name, we feel connected to another human being. Instead of saying, "Hey." How about, "Hey Jonathan", or, "Hey Gina." By starting with your name they actually feel connected to another human being.

Jonathon: The I stands for inquisitive. In other words, be curious. Ask a question. "Oh, I see your profile, you have the book, The Untethered Soul. I think that's a great book. Are there any other books that you read that are like that?" Ask a question. Go a little bit deeper than the surface.

Jonathon: The C stands for compliments. The thing is, women get complimented all day long if they're out in the real world. They're usually, "Oh, what cute shoes. What a great blouse. What a great purse." Men get zero compliments in a day. When a woman says, "Hey, you're easy on the eyes," or, "I like that shirt," or, "You have a great smile," or, "You have great energy from your pictures." We men feed off of the compliments. It gives us the courage to pursue more.

Jonathon: The E stands for enthusiasm/emoji. What I mean to say is, enthusiasm is like putting a happy emoji there. It creates enthusiasm. It shows that you're interested, you're excited. If you want to use an emoji or just even saying, "Hey, I'm really looking forward to connecting with you." That shows enthusiasm. When we feel like someone's being nice to us, we can actually connect with them at a deeper level.

Gina: I love that. So many good tips. I'm sure everyone's taking notes. I'll put that in the show notes as well for you guys. I wanted to ask you, the title of the podcast is Healthy in Real Life. What's something that you do in your own life that's a sustainable habit that you've created for yourself?

Jonathon: Oh, thank you. I love this question. A year ago, I had high blood pressure. I went to doctors and got checked out and they gave me medication and none of it was working. I actually said, "Let me change my eating habits and see if that makes a difference." I literally... I recognized that our body is a machine. In fact, one of the chapters in my book is called Your Body is a Machine, Not a Temple. What I mean is, I started to study not just food, but study this thing called diet and food. I watched every documentary I could get my hands on Netflix and Amazon Prime. I started to change the way I view food and the way I eat. I don't call this a diet. I just changed the way I view food and eat. Within two months I lost 25 pounds. My blood pressure went from 200 over 110 to 135 over 85. I literally am at exactly where I should be for this age.

Jonathon: I changed the way I view food. I'm a big proponent. Your body is an important... This is the thing that's going to stick with us for the rest of our lives. One of the healthiest things you can do, is you have a choice. You can nurture it with good quality food like fruits and vegetables. I do a small bit of animal protein, but I cut all processed foods out of my life. It was hard for about two weeks, three weeks. Then I got used to it. Now I have more energy than ever. I'm at the weight I was when I was in college. I haven't been there in 30 years.

Gina: Wow, that's incredible. Did you just do a total overhaul at once or did you start with small changes and build from there?

Jonathon: You know what, it was really... I did it all at once, but it didn't feel like it that way. I just started..., I went grocery shopping by buying fruits and vegetables every two or three days. I started to cook. It felt like all at once, but it still felt like it was a little bit at a time. The hard part was the cravings. When I learned how dangerous most processed foods are and how we're addicted to... Basically when everybody talks about carbs and all that sort of stuff, they're really talking about processed foods that turn into sugar. That was the shift. So I just start eating apples and bananas and grapes to fill that sugar rush that I like.

Gina: Yes, I love that so much. What a great way to just make a positive change for your health and then know that that's going to help support you for the rest of your life. You have those skills and you can just go from there. Once you make the change, it's so easy to stick with it because you know how great you feel afterwards.

Jonathon: You know, someone taught me something along the way and they said, discipline and it takes discipline. I'm going to be candid. I mean it takes a level of willpower and discipline. A friend of mine gave me a great way of framing discipline. He said, "Discipline is remembering what you want." Whenever I'm tempted to go for that potato chips or whatnot... I give myself a treat day once a week. In other words, I give my little kid inside of me, whatever you want. I also remember, this is important to me, both my health, my blood pressure, but also, I just didn't like the way I felt with that extra two bowling balls that I was carrying.

Gina: Yeah, that is incredible. Where can everyone find you online?

Jonathon: Oh, well again, hopefully there's a link here that they can get a couple chapters of my book, What the Heck is Self Love? Please Google my name, Jonathan Aslay. I have a YouTube channel where I post videos a couple times a week. I'm on Facebook. If you're listening to me right now, find me on Facebook. Feel free to friend me, just tell me where you heard from me, heard me.

Gina: Okay.

Jonathon: Twitter and Instagram and all that good stuff.

Gina: Perfect. I'll include all of those links so that you guys can find Jonathan and connect with him.

Gina: Thank you so much for being here today and sharing all these great tips and your knowledge with all of us.

Jonathon: Oh, thank you. Can I give you a big gigantic bear hug? You're a great interviewer.

Gina: Thank you. Hug right back to you. I really appreciate it and hopefully I'll talk to you soon.

Jonathon: Likewise.

Speaker 3: Thanks for listening to the Healthy in Real Life podcast. For more info, check out Gina's blog at fitnessista.com.