Jonathan: Hey, what's going on everybody? Jonathan Bailor here, and we have a special treat for you because I am joined here – an exclusive – I got some exclusive time with our Master SANE Certified Coach, Wednesday Vail. She has been doing some excellent work in our SANE Psychological Explorations, and she actually had seen some of the videos that you've seen recently, and she said, "Jonathan, we should get together. I have some questions for you about these videos."

So I said, "Well, I think we should videotape this because maybe we could get something valuable out of it for our wonderful members." So hopefully, you will have as much fun here as we have, and please do know that you're getting an insider look here, because I have not seen these questions before. So, bear with me, you're getting a behind-the-scenes look. How's it going, Wednesday?

Wednesday: It's going good. I'm really happy to be here, and excited.



Jonathan: I'm ready for these questions.

Wednesday: Are you?

Jonathan: She didn't want me to say this, but I'm going to say it. She said, "I'm going to come at you like Katie Couric, so you've got to be ready."

Wednesday: Yes, today we are going to be focusing on and talking about progress versus perfection. We talk about that a lot in our SANE family, and it is a very important tool to keep us moving forward. My first question is, does it hurt our efforts to keep our eye on the prize? I'm kind of thinking of that old adage, "Don't lose sight of the forest for the trees."

Jonathan: It sounds like there is a tension that we have to deal with here, which is, if we talk about progress rather than perfection, that's fantastic. At the same time, forest versus trees, let's all agree – and we even do this in our Master Class. We say, "Think of a goal in the future." We do encourage people to not set 100-pound goals when we talk about weight separately, but let's just use it for simplification purposes here. Don't say, "I want to weigh 100

pounds less," but say, "I want to drop my weight by 30 pounds," because you're never going to weigh 100 pounds less unless you first weigh 30 pounds less.

So, 30 pounds is more conservative. But that is still exciting. It is very exciting. For most people, if you could say, "Wave a magic wand and you would be 30 pounds lighter," that is very, very exciting. At the same time, we then even shrink it more and we say, "Well, since there is nothing you can do today to weigh 30 pounds less today, it doesn't make sense to focus on weighing 30 pounds less" because if you are, one, you're going to feel like a failure, even though you're not, because there is nothing you can do today to weigh 30 pounds less. What you *can* do today is make progress toward that goal, such as by saying, "My goal for today – my much smaller goal – is to eat eight servings of vegetables and three servings of nutrient-dense protein."

But to get back to your question, if you have a vision board, and we talked about whether that is a good idea or not as a separate question, but when I say eight servings of vegetables, it's not like, "Oh, my goodness, eight servings of vegetables! This is going to wake me up in the morning, this is going to get me excited, this is going to get me going." That's a long way of unpacking a question, but am I understanding correctly that you are saying, "Jonathan, you're telling me not to focus on losing 30 pounds, but losing 30 pounds gets me really excited? It makes me want to take action. You are saying, focus on eating eight servings of vegetables today, which I can do, but it's not particularly motivating." So how do we balance motivation with practicality?



Wednesday: Yes, exactly.

Jonathan: All right. So, now that we understand the question, it's a very deep concept and I think understanding the question is key because like most things in life, in general, I feel like we, as humans – maybe you've had this experience personally, I know I have – we tend to think in terms of either/or, meaning we should either set this really fantastical, motivating goal, or we should focus on I can do right now, in the next hour, to make me SANEr. It's not either/or, it's actually both/and.

First of all, I do not want anybody to set that 150-pound weight loss goal, because that is too far off in the future. So, we do need to take a SANEr approach. I think 30 pounds of fat loss is a fantastic goal for individuals to have. I think most of us, if we lost 30 pounds of fat, which is very different than starving ourselves down and losing water weight and losing muscle tissue, would have phenomenal health benefits as well as phenomenal aesthetic benefits. And at that same time we say that, we check it off, and we say, "That's where I want to be in six months. That's where I want to be in a year." Because we know that one-half to two pounds per week is the healthy rate of fat loss.

Then also, maybe on the same sheet of paper in your SANE journal you say – you have at the top of every page that reasonable SANE goal, and then you draw out the trees – that's the forest, then you draw out the trees. "I am going to have my eight servings of vegetables today. I am going to have two cups of green tea." And maybe, if you need to, circle them, draw a line back to the 30-pound goal. Because let's be very clear. There is nothing you can do, there is nothing I can do, there is nothing any of our viewers can do, to lose 30 pounds today. Can we agree on that?



Wednesday: yes.

Jonathan: At the same time, we can agree that the idea of losing 30 pounds eventually is extremely motivating. So that is also true. We could also agree on a third thing. We can eat eight servings of vegetables today. And we can eat eight servings of vegetables tomorrow. And we can agree on a fourth thing, which is that if we can string together six months of eating veggies like that, we will accidentally reach that very compelling goal.

Wednesday: It's almost like drawing a map.

Jonathan: Exactly, yes. And that is actually a perfect analogy because we literally might want to do that drawing. We literally might want to say, "Here is my big goal, my SANE goal, and then here are the little steps I'm going to take along the way," and literally draw them back. So, it's not either/or, it's both/and, but it is so critical.

I do want to give one disclaimer here. It is so much easier to set that big, sexy, future goal. I like to think of it as mental junk food.

Wednesday: Yes.

Jonathan: Think about it. It's like sugar for your brain. You can do it. We sit here and say, "Oh my gosh, we're going to create these videos, and they're going to be amazing!" But it's a totally different thing to set up lights and actually do this. So, it's really easy to say, "100-pound weight loss, I'm so excited," and for the next 24 hours be like, "Hoo-da-doo-da-doo!" But then for the next 24 months, we're like, "Still haven't lost 100 pounds. I have no idea. What should I do tomorrow to lose – I'm overwhelmed."

We are naturally going to be future-focused. We are naturally going to want to over-index the motivational power of these future, far-off goals. So have them, that's fine, but bias yourself toward, "If I just take one step in the right direction today, and then one step in the right direction tomorrow, and one step in the right direction the day after that, I will get there," because everything around you in the media, everything around you just in Western culture in general, is about that crazy end state, not about the process you have to go through to get there. So, we want to focus on that process.



Wednesday: Definitely. Well, that is a great answer. You passed.

Jonathan: I passed. Okay, next one. Katie Couric is going to be excited.

Wednesday: All right. Is there a process for people to assess whether a goal they have in mind is a good fit for them? For example, I like to golf on weekends with my husband. I'm not a good golfer (laughs).

Jonathan: Progress very perfection.

Wednesday: I do have a goal score in mind that I would like to one day reach. I am never going to be a professional golfer. I don't want to, I don't have the time, I don't have the passion. So, do you have tips for setting goals that are realistic, healthy, and congruent with our lives and our values?

Jonathan: This might be an over-simplification, but since we are on the spot here, since I have to give you an answer – see, I told you, she is giving me the hardball questions here. First, let's just go with your gut. It's good to come to people where they are. So if in the past you have done things in terms of positive visualization, what some non evidence-based gurus would advocate is, create your perfect future. Create the ideal. So, chances are we have done that, and it is actually easy for us to idealize perfection.

So let's use golf as an example. What would be your vision board dream? Would it be to be a professional golfer, or would it be to have some other score?

Wednesday: I think just another score.

Jonathan: Okay, so give me a number that would make sense.

Wednesday: Under 100.

Jonathan: Under 100. Okay. I don't know what that means, and you may not know what that means, but that is okay. So, under 100. What we might be able to do, and let's now map that to weight loss. Let's say, 100 pounds of weight loss. That is my vision board. It's three digits, it's really exciting – 100 pounds. Start there, and then cut it in half. And then I would say, cut it in half again.



The reason I am saying that is not to de-motivate you. The reason I am saying that is because I think we can all agree that if you want to lose 100 pounds you have to lose 50 pounds first. That is cutting 100 in half, for all the math geniuses out there (laughs). Then, if you want to lose 50 pounds, you have to lose 25 pounds first.

The reason that can be extremely helpful is, you can actually continue that process until it, in fact, takes you to the next action that is so important. You can take 100 pounds, take it down to 50, divide that in half and take it down to 25, divide that in half – 12. Divide it in half again – six. And then what you might be able to do is say, "Let's look at the research, let's talk to the SANE Certified Coaches, let's look in the Ignite Program, and let's say, "What is a

reasonable rate of fat loss based on my goals, based on my lifestyle?"

So, let's say it is one-half pound per week, because I am not willing to go 100% SANE, I have other things going on. So, one-half pound per week means that I could achieve six pounds of lasting fat loss, without feeling hungry, without feeling deprived, without feeling starved, in about 12 weeks. That is a pretty reasonable goal. I think that is pretty achievable. And if we could achieve that in 12 weeks, what we could do is say, "Do it again." And then do it again, do it again, do it again.

So the smart way of creating a goal is, you have to start somewhere. I think where you start is with your far-off fantasy. Then I want you to cut in half, and I want to cut it in half again – not to de-motivate yourself, but because – it's kind of self-evident but sometimes we need to make the self-evident point – if you want to be at a level 10, you have to be at a level five first, and in order to get to a level five, you have to be at a level three first.



It ties back to the first question. It's fine to have that future, far-off goal in mind, but our immediate-term action after watching this video is to take that future, far-off goal, cut it in half, cut it in half. And then try to look to research, to SANE Certified Coaches, to things in your Ignite Program, to say, after cutting it in half twice, about how long should that take me? I think that would give you a good starting point.

Wednesday: And then just repeating until you reach satisfaction, and then it is time to create a new goal.

Jonathan: Exactly. Along the way, I think what we will find is, the reason it is also good to have these small goals is, it makes course-correction a lot easier. There is a concept in software, which is my background, which is, you call something a beta, a minimum buyable product, instead of taking ten years to try to create the perfect new piece of software, and then you release it into the market and you hope it goes well. That's a big bet. You had better hope you made all the right assumptions.

Whereas, if you say, "Hey, if my goal is to create a word processor, instead of doing mail merge and all these fancy things that Microsoft Word has, for example, let's just release something that puts words on a page – no bold, no italics, no underline, no different fonts – and let's see if people like that idea." That is kind of what happened when word processors came out. People said, "Wow, this is interesting." Okay, cool, so now let's build on it.

We're going to do the same thing here. If you can't even judge success until you are one year in the future because your goal is so long-term, it is very difficult to course-correct. It is very difficult to learn, and it is very difficult to adapt. So, break these goals down into smaller bite-sized chunks, and now we have given you a process to do that – divide in half twice – even after dividing in half twice.

I would love for you to have check-ins monthly. I don't want you to have a check-in daily because that is a little too aggressive, but knowing, "Hey, I set this goal, and it is a month later. How close or how far away am I, and what course-corrections do I need to make so that next month I can either do the same, or do better?" I think a one-month learn, repeat cycle, focusing on, again, minimum buyable product for lifestyle changes is very empowering.



Wednesday: Yes, I totally agree. And I also like the idea of check-ins, because if you are checking in, if you have a goal of weight loss, maybe at your next check-in, "Hey, I think my actual goal is to reduce my insulin-resistance," or refining the goal to actually be congruent.

Jonathan: Yes, I think it is so important that, especially when it comes to weight loss, the more we educate ourselves, the more we learn, the more we interact with our SANE Certified Coaches, the more we will see that weight loss. Golf is a good example, or any sport. You can't just lower your score. That doesn't exist. What you can do is, you can work on putting. You can work on driving. You can work on mechanics, which, when combined, result in your score becoming lower.

This gets back to process versus results goals. Your weight is a result. You can't control your height, you can't control your bone

density. There are certain things involving age that we don't have as much control over as we would like. But what you can control are the processes and the results, such as your weight. When we define process, you might think that is just what I put in my mouth, but the process of, for example, lowering your basal insulin level – that is something which is actually much more under your control than your weight.

So focusing on that, focusing on your A1C levels, focusing on your triglycerides, focusing on your energy, focusing on these kinds of health markers – these are things we can measure, these are things we can work with our physician on. There is no human being on the planet that if, hypothetically – and I'm not saying they should do this – they eliminated all carbohydrate from their diet, their A1C levels would change – always – period. That's just the way the human body works.

So, if you are thinking, "Man, I just can't get my weight to move," we can help you formulate other goals that you can always make move, and the irony is that when you make those things move, your weight will – maybe not as fast as you want – but will, inevitably, follow as a result.



Wednesday: This actually leads into my next question.

Jonathan: Unplanned!

Wednesday: I know. Wow. I have quite a few people that come to me, I am working with them, and they say, "Wednesday, I saw a lot of progress at first, but now I have stalled. I don't see any progress no matter what I do differently. Why am I failing?" That makes me really said, I don't like to hear anyone think that they are failing when they are working hard.

Jonathan: Absolutely.

Wednesday: My question is, is this an example of results-based thinking and not progress-based thinking, kind of the brain tricking us?

Jonathan: I think it is both. The idea of a plateau is one of the most commonly discussed concepts in weight loss. And not only weight

loss. Think about this even with careers. People hit that middle manager level and they think, "Okay, I am just going to stay at middle manger level."

Wednesday: For the next 30 years.

Jonathan: For the next 30 years. Or you will even find this from an income perspective. You start to earn money, the tax rate changes, and you think, "Okay, if I earn more money, my tax rate just goes up, so it doesn't matter." There sometimes seems to be power in keeping people at these various levels.

There are two things that are going at play here. One is that, unfortunately, life, and especially biology, is not linear. So, what we may perceive as a plateau is not a plateau, it's just that your body doesn't work linearly. So, this idea of, "I am going to lose one-half pound per week and that will continue forever," on some level – this is just reminder, we already know this – that can't be true, because if it were true you would weight zero pounds eventually.



So, what has to happen in life is, your progress has to go like this – almost always. So even if you are a sprinter, you are going to start out, you are going to become really fast, really fast, and then Olympic athletes are trying to shave hundredths of a second off of their time.

Or even in academics, to go from an F to a C is so much easier than to go from a C to a B and to A, from an A to an A+. It's getting harder and harder and harder.

Wednesday: A++?

Jonathan: A++. So many pluses. 100%.

Wednesday: 110%.

Jonathan: So the act of hitting a plateau is results thinking, and by focusing more on progress you can do two things to help overcome that. One is, you may not actually be at a plateau. It may just be your

body saying, "Things don't work linearly. I need to take some time, for whatever reason."

We don't know why, for example, if somebody is battling cancer, it may seem like things are going well and they're in remission, and then it stops working that way, and then they go back into remission. We just don't know. I don't have a good answer. But what I can say is that we do know that the body doesn't work linearly. We do know that there are a lot of people who go SANE and they experience what we call a delayed waterfall effect, where they don't see results, don't see results, don't see results, and then a couple of months in, they change nothing and things just – weight, fat, just seems to literally melt off.

Wednesday: All the results.

Jonathan: Right, all the results. This happened with my brother. This happened with Kerrie Brown, who a lot of people know, where she literally had to intentionally eat some inSANE food, because after doing this for six months she was actually losing too much weight. The same thing happened to my brother. What might be happening there is, there is a tipping point in your body where you're either fat-adapted or you're not, you're either hormonally healed or you're not.



It is a spectrum, of course, but imagine that in your body there are physical brakes and we're trying to fix them, we're trying to fix them, we're trying to fix them – boom! And then eventually those connections are rebuilt. The floodgates aren't open, the floodgates have closed, but once this healing has happened, now results can go on to the next level. What might be happening with these plateaus is, some initial weight loss could involve water weight, it could involve some of the easier fat deposits on your body that your body is more ready to get rid of, and then it might just take a little bit more time.

So three things: One is, in general, weight loss is going to go like this, so we have to keep that in mind. That is also why we want to refine our SANEity as we go and get SANEr and SANEr and SANEr over time, because just like if you want to get better and better at

math you can't keep doing the same multiplication tables over and over again, you have to go from algebra to advanced algebra to precalculus to calculus to get the same level of results. So weight loss is naturally not linear.

There is also the concept of what you might think of as a plateau is not actually a plateau, it is just your body taking time to go through its next process of unclogging, let's say.

And then the third thing is, and arguably the most important, we talk about those last ten pounds. Are they real, in the sense that if someone is saying, "I'm stuck, I can't see my abs," is that a plateau, or is that your body saying, "Look, this is a natural healthy body composition?" So, if you want more than what is natural and healthy, then you might have to do unhealthy things, which we don't encourage, but people do it all the time. What are anabolic steroids? What are these stimulant prescription medications that people go onto? These are unnatural methods that do allow human beings to get unnatural results.



So, weight loss is not linear, weight loss does come in diminishing marginal returns, and we need to be sensitive to the fact that what we perceive as a plateau, we need to get very specific on. Is it a plateau, or if I am a natural healthy body composition for an 18-year-old male, is that very different than a natural healthy body composition for an 86-year-old female?

Wednesday: Yes.

Jonathan: I think that is a really important point.

Wednesday: I think that's what we're talking about here today, that psychology behind it, that focusing on the perfection, those shame-based expectations that we're trying to live up to, the ideals that are not achievable – taking that step back and healing the mind connection to the body.

Jonathan: Absolutely. There is another paradox that we talked about earlier which is, we talk about, don't stress yourself out, don't pursue perfection, and those are both 100% true statements. But let's look at physical fitness as an example because it is sometimes

easier to understand physical fitness. If you want to get stronger, physically, I think most of us get the concept that if you want to build your biceps muscle up you can't just go and do one pound of weight, one pound of weight, one pound of weight. You have to do one pound, and then two pounds, three pounds, four pounds.

To improve your results, results and dedication are linked, so with SANE we're not saying, don't put in effort. What we're saying is, put in effort on the right things at the right rate. So, if we have gone pretty SANE for six months, and then we're saying, "You know, I'm not seeing results anymore," what you are probably experiencing is, you have gone as far as you can if you're still going to eat three servings of sweets and three servings of starch per day, and only seven servings of vegetables and protein when it's convenient. And that's not bad, and if you are comfortable with that, that's cool.

However, if you want to go from being able to curl 10 pounds to 20 pounds, but you're unwilling to lift any more than 10 pounds, you're never going to get to 20 pounds. So, if you're at six months, there are ways that we can say, "What is the next level of SANEity for you? Is it to focus on optimal food groups versus normal foods groups? Is it to look at the amount of sleep you're getting? Is it to work with your primary care physician to see if, "I've done this for six months. If I am on medication, maybe we need to adjust those levels a little bit because maybe I'm much healthier now." I don't know.



And while it may seem scary to think, "Oh, I have to lift 20 pounds," when you're six months in, and you have built up that success, at that point we talk about step one, step two, step three, step four, step five. Step five is terrifying if you're at step one. But if you're at step three, now we can give you the tools necessary to go to the step four because you've built up your SANE muscle, and now you can put it into action.

Wednesday: I love that SANE muscle, because they're not jumping from lifting 10 pounds to 20 right away. They're probably going to do 12, and then 15.

Jonathan: Absolutely.

Wednesday: So I really like that answer.

Jonathan: Woo-hoo! I win. Perfect! I mean progress!

Wednesday: The last thing I wanted to talk about is the homework that you gave to ditch the scale.

Jonathan: Okay.

Wednesday: I think it's sad and fascinating how obsessed our entire society is with that number on the scale.

Jonathan: Yes.

Wednesday: I meet people that are perfectly healthy, and they are so fixated. I personally had a terrible experience and addiction to my scale. It took me years to break that addiction. I literally broke my scale – or, my husband did. I wish I had pictures, but too bad. So, why do you think there are so many feelings of shame and judgment tied up in that number?



Jonathan: I know we're on the clock so I can't give you the full one-hour answer to this that I probably could, but I personally think that it is the last socially acceptable form of misogyny that is permitted in Western culture.

Wednesday: I wish we had an hour for this.

Jonathan: So maybe we'll have to do a bonus, but when you think about it, the number on the scale is an approximation for size, and when you think about a lot of things involving weight, as it is presented in the inSANE calorie-counting world, there are all these things about portion control, reducing the size of your plate. I don't know if that really answered your question, but that is my long, rambly explanation.

Wednesday: It was a beautiful answer, and that is one of the things that makes me so passionate about SANE is that feeling of empowerment, freeing ourselves from our worth as a human being is based on a number on the scale, or even based on our body, because it's not. If we look at great human beings throughout history, how much

does Stephen Hawking weigh? I don't know. Is he valued because of his body? He is valued because of the contributions he gives to our society. Oprah, Michelle Obama – people like this. Is it their body that makes them worthwhile human beings? No. I love that about SANE.

Jonathan: Yes, it's hugely empowering, too, because I feel like, at the same time, I want to acknowledge this, it's not going to help you to be the best human being you can be to be diabetic.

Wednesday: No.

Jonathan: Right, and it's not going to help us to be the best human beings we can be if we have horrible sleep apnea and can't sleep through the night. So the unique challenge and opportunity that we have at SANE is that a lot of excess weight – 100 pounds, 50 pounds of surplus fat on our body – and I want to focus on fat because we actually want you to build muscle which will make you weigh more, but will help you with everything else in life.



In order to do the things you just described, in order to be the most beautiful, in the true sense of the word, which is a beautiful human being – no one is going to look back on our eulogies and say, "Oh, their abs were so appealing, and I just loved the arm definition. I'll never forget Grandma's arm definition. That's the thing that I loved about her the most."

But in order to be around for our grandkids, when our time on this earth is up and people are remembering us, so that they remember us in a vibrant, healthy state, we do need to heal our bodies, and just like a healthy body doesn't want to have cancer, it will actively fight not to have cancer. A healthy body doesn't want to have hypertension. A healthy body doesn't want to have adult-onset diabetes. It will fight to prevent these things. If we can focus on progress versus perfection, if we can focus on taking small steps every day to improve our health, our body will change, and it will change in ways that we will like.

I think it was Thoreau who said that happiness is like a butterfly. If you chase it, it's just going to evade you, but if you sit calmly, it will land on your shoulder. I feel like that is some of what we try to do at SANE. We're not saying, "Forget about the butterfly, it's a lost cause." What we're trying to say is, "There is a more SANE solution, that the butterfly *can* rest on your shoulder, that you *can* have a healthy, natural, fantastic body that enables your mind and spirit to do all the things it was intended to do, but to get that result you have to take a different approach. You have to think differently about these things. That's a lot about what we're covering here.

Wednesday: Yes, and it's all about optimizing the body we already have.

Jonathan: Yes.

Wednesday: I love that.

Jonathan: Excellent. Well, hopefully you enjoyed this very first session. We have more in store. Wednesday has some more hard-hitting questions for me, so we'll be back with you in a bit.