

E03: Adaptive Lifting (Transcription)

00:00

Intro (Marcia): This is Disabled Girls Who Lift. We are reclaiming what's rightfully ours one podcast at a time. It's Marybeth, Chloe, and Marcia bringing you the thoughts and unpopular topics to you get out of that ableist comfort zone.

00:15

Music Jingle

00:24

Marcia: Thank you for coming; this is episode three of Disabled Girls Who Lift. We're coming at you and talking about how we adapt our training to do our powerlifting and, for me, strongman as well. Again I'm Marcia from South Florida.

00:42

Chloe: I'm Chloe from Iowa

00:44

Marybeth: Marybeth from California!

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Marcia: And so each of us have had to do different things to adapt our training. I think we're going to start with Chloe to give us a little background and what she's up to.

00:57

Chloe: Yes, um, so I am a powerlifter and I use uh what is called Rex's grip strap for deadlifting. What it is it's an old-school style strap so it's not quite a figure eight strap. It's if you were to basically take a figure eight strap and cut that in half. He actually has his own website, it's Rexsgrip.com and you can kind of check those out. So I used that just for deadlifting because I'm missing my index and middle finger and it allows me to hold onto the bar so that really... That's the only thing that I have to change in my training. I mean I use it for like pull-ups and stuff too but as far as competing, it's just on the deadlift.

01:54

Marybeth: So visually how does that Rex's grip strap look attached to a bar, attached to a pull-up bar? 'Cause, not, not everybody knows what a figure eight strap is... So what's a figure eight strap and how is that different to a Rex's and how does that support you when you pull a bar?

02:11

Chloe: That's a good question. So I actually haven't used a figure eight strap; I've just have looked at them online on like powerlifting equipment websites, but with the Rex's grip strap I'll try my best to describe it. We almost might need to, like, post a video.

02:31

Marcia: Yeah we probably will

02:35

Chloe: So, um, okay the strap goes around my wrist and then it kind of comes down to like a point and and I use that to wrap it around the bar, um... And I'd do the same thing for pull-ups, it's just, it's just taking that strap and hooking it around--I don't know if I want to say hooking--wrapping, just wrapping it around the bar, and then just kind of using my, um, my ring and pinky finger to hold onto the bar, whether it's the deadlift bar or pull-up bar.

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Marybeth: Wow. So it essentially replaces some of the fingers that are missing when you are pulling or pushing.

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Chloe: Yeah, there's like...

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Marybeth: But you don't use it in the bench press and you don't use it in the squat

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Chloe: Correct, correct

03:29

Marybeth: Okay

03:30

Marcia: If you're just doing like accessories or like you know doing kettlebell or dumbbell or something or...

03:37

Chloe: Um, with, if I do dumbbell rows I sometimes, I can do just, I can do it without the strap but I prefer to keep the strap on because I'm not trying to drop a dumbbell on my foot.

03:47

Marybeth: Yeah

03:48

Marcia: Yeah... That's not a great idea.

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Marybeth: I'm sure you don't want to test the strength of those fingers more than we already have.

03:53

Marcia: Yeah

03:54

Marybeth: But it is a good use for grip

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Chloe: Yeah

03:59

Marybeth: And so far that's been the only device that you've used?

04:03

Chloe: Um I played around with the harb- the Harbinger--am I saying that right--Harbinger...

04:10

Marcia: I'm not sure, I know what you mean you mean though, maybe Harbinger, I don't know

04:15

Chloe: So when I was in physical therapy, when I had like a SI injury, they're like, "We really want you to use this hook, we think that, this like, the strap's good but there's some like shifting compensation in your back and they thought if I used a hook that that would eliminate that. Um, the hook really didn't work for me. I played around with it but, it just, the best thing I've found for me is that Rex's grip strap.

04:42

Marcia: The hook's gonna just slide down your wrists though, isn't it?

04:47

Chloe: Well I think so, and I mean Marybeth will probably be able to touch on that more than me, but um, like so, I have a right hand whereas Marybeth does not. Um, and so the strap--sorry the hook--almost like interfered with my hand too much...

05:05

Marybeth: Yeah

Marcia: Oh....

05:06

Chloe: It just didn't work, yeah...

05:10

Marcia: Right. Um, Marybeth, I think it'd make more sense if you talked about your stuff...

05:16

Marybeth: Yeah! And then in lifting Chloe, I'm just curious, like, have you had a change anything with your technique, your stance, um, to accommodate for that or--is it--is it solely the grip that needs assistance?

05:31

Chloe: Um I think it's mostly the grip that needs assistance. Um, if if you ever watch my squat videos, my upper body looks really uneven under a squat bar. Um, I haven't found a way...

05:45

Marybeth: No you're just jacked all throughout...

05:47

Marcia: Can't tell the difference, just too many muscles...

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Chloe: Yeah so the macrodactyly that I have through my right limb I think actually kind of affects like whether I can get that right arm under the bar or not, but I haven't had to like add any kind of assistive equipment for that.

06:04

Marybeth: So is the right side tighter than the left would you say?

6:07

Chloe: Definitely

06:08

Marybeth: Mmkay, and you go through any physical therapy to assist with that or...

06:15

Chloe: Um so for like recovery um okay, so since my--right hand--right arm is affected, my left side of my body gets really beat up, especially my left bicep. So for recovery methods I... I go to like two different practitioners; I go to one guy that does dry needling and like some tissue work-- he's a chiropractor. He's great. The dry needling is what has helped my left bicep the most, and then I also go to a woman, she's a little different. She does a lot of work on your fascia, like myofascial release, and she's great, she's been able to kind of help me get my body, I guess, in better alignment because my body wants to pull over to my right side since it's more developed there.

07:16

Marcia: Right, yeah that makes sense. And, it's, it's kind of something that everybody needs to do already is pay attention to their body and take care of themselves and take the extra steps, but then now you have like the extra thing where it's like alright one side of my body is this and the other side is this, and like...

07:31

Marybeth: Exactly, it's been a constant struggle for me because I've, like you know, just living a daily life I've learned how to use my dominant right hand for everything--opening doors, putting my clothes on... I don't have any fingers on my left side so it's what a lot of people call the "nub," which I absolutely hate... Don't ever call it that.

07:54

Marcia: Mm.. yeah that's not cute

07:55

Marybeth: Everyone treats their disability differently but a lot of people do call it that you know, but yeah it's been a constant struggle for me because I do have very disproportionate sides, like even from my left shoulder all the way down to my left "wrist," it's just half the size of my right side. So powerlifting has helped in that way, but I've had to actively work so much harder on my left side, during accessories, or any unilateral movements as opposed to bi-, or you know, this one always pulls less weight on a dumbbell than the other. Um, so it's it's been tough, so when I do get under a bar that is equal weight on both sides, under a squat, or under a bench press, it's been something to work with. So, I currently don't use the hook for the squat and the bench just like Chloe. I used the Harbinger hook for deadlift only, but prior to that I was using a regular wrist strap so that I could do single-arm deadlifts only, and with as small of a hand as I have on the dominant side, it was surprisingly just strong enough to like, as long as I kept my hand very centered and my body as centered to the bar, I was able to fuck around with, uh, with physics and just get the--220 found--225 pound bar off of the ground with one hand in competition.

09:42

Marcia: It's pretty nuts.

09:45

Marybeth: So yeah, training through that was using a lifting strap and then switching it up to hook grip which a lot of Olympic lifters use, where you put the thumb inside of your four fingers and kind of just grip as tight as you can, and mess up your thumb a little bit, but it keeps it stuck to the bar and it was painful, and I will never do that again. I will never do single-handed deadlifts again as much as I can help it. So now I use Harbinger hooks in powerlifting, which yeah it has a strap that attaches to my wrist because it, I do have a very very small wrist and I don't have fingers or a hand to kind of hold it in place, so chalk is very very important and tightening that strap as much as I can--sometimes I get my partner to assist me to tighten it as much as I can with the chalk--so that it doesn't slip off. But there is some like movement in my, I guess, wrist where I would have to grip it as much as I can, and although it's the same device that Harbinger sells I only find myself lifting comfortably with the one that I got three years ago. I've bought all these new hooks that are you know, I don't know, they, I feel as though they're built differently. Either the velcro is not as strong, so I've been using the same hook for the last three or four years while stitching it back together, taping, whatever I could do to to stay lifting.

11:38

Marcia: Have you tried tacky spray also, maybe instead of chalk?

11:43

Marybeth: No I haven't, and I've been trying to do it as like raw as possible so that if I were to have to compete they wouldn't be like, "No, you can't do that, no tape." Like, I've avoided using any tape on the inside because I know they would check for that, but chalk helps in that I sweat so much too with a strap-on... A strap-on, hah..

12:08

Marcia: Hah...

12:09

Marybeth: We are adults... Yeah I sweat so much that chalk prevents it.

12:12

Marcia: Yeah I don't know, Tacky Spray is like a strongman thing and we use that when you need like serious grip more than chalk can do, so that's the only reason why I thought of it.

12:29

Marybeth: Yeah, and is it clear or does it...

12:32

Marcia: It's clear and it'll, it, you have to buy like Goo Gone or something else so that you could really have to like wash it off, like soap and water will get some of it but you have to get like some Goo Gone or something like that to really clean it off your skin.

12:48

Marybeth: Okay, I'll definitely try that. And I wonder if it would keep the strap like on my wrist for the rest of the day or if I'm able to remove it immediately after that.

12:58

Marcia: I'm not sure, yeah something to play around with.

13:01

Marybeth: Yeah and then another device that I use--I mentioned this before--is the Haulin hook, so that's actually one that a current bodybuilder-powerlifter uses; his name is Chris Rudin. It has both the hook and the strap--I only found that essential in weightlifting because we are pulling the bar over our head and we are locking that out over our head, so that's more of a safety concern for me. So keeping the bar as close to my body as possible... It has been helpful, but I don't think is as strong or as heavy-duty as a Harbinger hook when I need to, within one movement, just pull a bar off of the ground.

13:50

Marcia: Right

13:51

Marybeth: Yeah but I can definitely say the importance of chalk is essential. Um, and I know Marcia will cover a little bit about this but programming for me has also been essential, like, I would not go into a competition without a coach who has experience in my field or is open to listening to how I've done it before with my accessibility needs, with my hooks, and which comp- which federations are accommodating for my disability. But, the first, the first coach that I'd ever worked with was Bryce, oh god what is his last name, I was gonna say Walker... Bryce Lewis. Bryce Lewis from TSAthlete, so The Strength Athlete. He went through all means to find the best possible assistance, the best possible resources, and found ways in which I could use the hook in accessories but then also deadlift single-handedly back in the days. And then as that progressed and we've kind of bounced back information, and it's been you know, trial and error for I think all disabled athletes, I have been coached under Ed from Prometheus Strength who has kind of just guided me on how to best, uni-, bilaterally, you know work both sides and make both sides stronger. So I think that's very important finding the right coach who's open to that and willing to work with you in so many different ways.

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Marcia: Yeah definitely. Is, is that why you switched or was it just convenience or whatever?

15:58

Marybeth: Uh, there was a little competition that was going on I think there were some sponsored athletes that were chosen and I was one of those runner ups that were still taken under his wing, you know at a discount, and then there were some other miscommunications at that time that just prevented our relationship to go further. But I have all the love in the world for him still and how much he's grown as an athlete and as a coach and how his business has grown, but I've moved on to my very close friend who started the barbell sport club in Berkeley with me, so watching him grow as a coach under Chad Wesley Smith has been immensely helpful.

16:53

Marcia: Oh yeah, you are over there.

16:56

Marybeth: Yeah... *sings* California...

16:58

Marcia: Have you bounced around with coaches and had trouble finding people who got it or...?

17:08

Marybeth: It takes, yeah it takes very long conversations because I am always gonna be the first of their kind unless they are specialized in that--it's very rare to find a specialized powerlifting coach of disabilities but it was also new for me so I was open to doing whatever it took...

17:35

Marcia: I'm wondering if it's been the same for Chloe...?

17:39

Chloe: Um, so I haven't had a coach for a long time, but now that we're talking about this I just remembered the only coach that I have had the, when I first started powerlifting, he was the one that found the Rex's grip strap for me. He um, because when I came into his gym I was like, "Yeah I wanna get big and strong." We were trying to figure out whether I could deadlift or not. He's like, "Oh like, here, try this." 'Cause he's a strong man, so of course they have a bunch of different straps and it worked out perfectly so I am I'm grateful for that. I'm glad that we talked about this. I kind of forgot that that happened.

18:19

Marcia: Wow, yeah, it's funny how that works.

18:21

Marybeth: Yeah, and I mean I think that's how it starts too. They're like, 'Oh yeah, I've seen somebody online, use this. Let me link you to that person or...' Yeah, so I started talking to Chris Rudin who had been using the Haulin Hook, and then later on when I got into weightlifting, like a coach that just happened, or a weightlifting athlete that happened to be a coach in my gym was like, "Hey, I used to use this for my clients with disabilities. You can have it."

18:49

Marcia: Wow

18:50

Marybeth: Vincent Som, thank you so much for that Haulin Hook. I was able to compete in weightlifting for the first time because of it. How about you, Marcia?

19:02

Marcia: Uh, well I don't... When I first started powerlifting I had a coach and I was with a, that was like 2011 or something. I did my first powerlifting meet without like, like a LA Fitness gym bro. Like I didn't have like the shoes, I didn't have a belt, like every time I got on the platform the announcer was like, "No belt, no problem!" Like I was like totally like bodybuilding.com workouts. So I went to that meet and like I got adopted basically.

19:34

Marybeth: Oh my god, what was our first ever, I want to know this... What was our first ever program online that we--like a cookie cutter--program...

19:43

Marcia: Pyramid, pyramidschemebodybuilding.com

19:47

Marybeth: I used Bart Kwan, from Barbell Brigade's, intense leg program, or whatever, because I only squatted for a bit.

19:57

Chloe: That's funny. I um, I didn't know what I was doing, I was just picking exercises off the internet, probably bodybuilding.com, my first coach but...

20:06

Marcia: Yeah, that's my first coach, that's my first real coach. So yeah, I got, I got pretty much adopted by like these really old-school powerlifters, they mostly competed USAPL, and were um... like Dr. D, Damian Fronzaglia's like IPF like bench champion, like he's a pretty big deal. And then I pretty much like got into their crew and they just taught me everything, so at that time I wasn't a physical therapist yet. So they taught me everything like percentages and how you program and rep ranges and all that stuff, and they did my programming for a couple years and then I started writing mine and I'd show it to them and then they'd like critique my program, so they basically told me--taught me--how to program and then I programmed myself powerlifting for a while. When I switched to Strongman I was like, 'Alright, well I don't know any of this stuff,' so I got a coach, actually from Virginia at Iron Asylum Gym, Sean, so he kind of showed me how to take the Strongman portion and program it because I couldn't really conceptualize it. Because like I said in the last episode, Strongman is like really open and flexible. Every event, every competition is totally different, so you have to adapt how you train to each event. You know, if an event has an axial press then you have to you know, start learning how to clean that, and then you have to find, 'Okay, what are my weaknesses for cleaning this?' Then those are my accessories, then also I want to squat so when will I squat in the week? Like it's a whole different deal. So he helped me a lot with that. After I worked with him for a bit I went back again to programming myself, because honestly for me it's just easier. I program--I know some people are into RPE but I can't do RPE because everything always feels like shit to me. It doesn't work. For a Spoonie it's not gonna work, everything feels like shit.

22:07

Marybeth: So does that mean your percentages change, say if you need to do 60% of 5x10 or 3x10, like so you change that still based on how you feel?

22:20

Marcia: Um no. So that would be closer, I think--I'm not an expert on how the RPE works--that would be closer to doing it by RPE, is that the number, like you don't set the number, you set the RPE. I think it's how it works.

22:34

Marybeth: Yeah

22:35

Marcia: I'm talking out of my ass, I don't know. But so for me, what I do is I set--I don't do straight percentages--I'll do, if I do a percentage squat this week, the next week I'm gonna do something light, and I flip-flop. And then even for that I'll set, okay if I'm doing 75% squat what is the bare minimum that I can do? And if I show up that day and I can only do the bare minimum, then that's where I leave it. If I feel okay then I'll do more, and that's kind of how it goes, but there are some weeks still that I still have to, you know, I have a perfectly laid out program but I don't feel great so I have to adapt and say, "Okay well I'll bench with this, and then I'll do that instead and flip it around." Like it's constantly fluid and changing based on how I feel. And for me right now, if I had a coach I don't think... It wouldn't work, it wouldn't work. I'm not sure if there are a lot of people who are familiar with chronic illnesses or autoimmune disease or how that person feels from day to day and how much it changes... It's, it's not easy to conceptualize.

23:38

Marybeth: Yeah. So are there any aids or tools that you use throughout training or throughout competition that assist and get you to point A to point B?

23:50

Marcia: I do so. I don't, you know I have all my fingers and all my toes and all that good stuff, but I can't actually feel them. So especially...

24:01

Marybeth: Hey, fingers and toes are overrated.

24:02

Marcia: Overrated, they're so dumb, they're fucking useless. [laughter]

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24:42

Marcia: Yeah, no but I can't feel them. So like for example a yoke, like a yoke carry... If I just put the yoke on my back, I get up and try to go fast, I have no idea where my feet are. Like I'll look at the video and be like, "Why was my hand open?" Like I don't, I don't know at all, so what I figured out--and this is really because I'm a therapist and I like studied a few things, otherwise I don't know how I would have came up with it--but I wear ankle weights on carry events.

25:11

Marybeth: Damn...

25:12

Marcia: Yeah, so people...

25:14

Marybeth: So that you can feel your feet and know where they are...

25:15

Marcia: Yeah, so people see it and, you know, I'm not like, I'm not petite or anything you know, I'm pretty beefy-looking, I look strong. So people see me put ankle weights on, they're like, "Oh man, she's making it even harder, you guys suck!"

25:27

Marybeth: That's the secret to your big ass legs, alright, shiet.

25:31

Marcia: Just like, “No, actually I don’t know where my feet are.” So that’s definitely been a big help. So otherwise I would cross my feet, I’d trip, I wouldn’t pick my toes up, I’d be on the floor. And and that’s how I was my first couple of Strongman events, I would literally hit the ground often. Frequently.

25:51

Marybeth: Wow. I wonder if, I wonder if anyone has, has tried that style of training.

25:58

Marcia: I’m not sure because it’s not really something you would think of as a regular person. I know it because I’ve learned--so when, if you can feel where your body is without looking at it, that’s called proprioception--and because of my neuropathy and my nerve damage, I don’t have it. So in lifting, I don’t know where my feet are and then also in everyday, like if I go down the stairs, like I have to concentrate because I’ll miss a step and roll my ankle easy. So I know that, you know in therapy if you have a stroke patient, or you know, brain injury patient, they always teach you like, “Oh, put weights on so you could teach them where their body is.”

26:39

Marybeth: Ah, that’s awesome. And other people would see that as a hindrance in training or competing because why I add more weight to your body.

26:50

Marcia: Yeah, they’re not entirely heavy, I mean two pounds maybe, or one and a half or something, but that’s definitely a big help. Um, I also have issues with dysautonomia and kind of like a pots deal, so anything where my head has to go down and up, like there’s a chance that I could black out or just be dizzy. So for that I use a combination of compression socks, I have a Rehband soft belt, which most people in Strongman use anyway, but I use it lower, like I pull it down to where my diaphragm would be and kind of use it like a binder, and then I also take a salt tablet. So that kind of helps with all of those things, and it’s still not even 100%, some days are better than others, but that’s kind of something I have to do every time I train, especially like anything overhead, deadlifts, anything where I have to go down and up...

27:49

Marybeth: That’s amazing. And of course these are all things that work for you uniquely, and for somebody else it might be something else.

27:58

Marcia: Yeah, exactly. It’s you know, a lot of people do have some similar experiences and these are things you could play with but there’s no right answer for anyone, not at all. I also do uh drink like Gatorade while I’m working out and stuff like that, try to stay hydrated, blah blah blah, which anybody should do.

28:24

Marybeth: Yeah, exactly. And do you do you prefer in with all these conditions or does it even matter to you like are you just rolling through it, but do you prefer powerlifting over Strongman since there’s less movement, less running, or do you love the adrenaline that you get from--I mean I get adrenaline from powerlifting too--but from Strongman like, the shit that you need to go through.

28:50

Marcia: Yeah. I think for... When I switched it was a little, it was a lot. There was a lot going on for why I stopped powerlifting, but the first thing is I had to figure out my body. Um just like I said this was pretty new for me, this is like,

it's only been about four or five years since I've been like this, so powerlifting is like you need to hit these numbers for a certain amount of weeks and then you'll be ready, you know. In Strongman it's like I have the strength already, I already know what the events are, I'll know what the weights are before I show up, so before I even start my training cycle I know if I can do it. So it's kind of where you start it's like a totally different thing. And then as far as powerlifting go, I also had like some personal shit, like I like I was very, I used to do a lot of USAPL and I'm like so fucking over them, that was my last, that was my last meet. Yeah so that was kind of a part of it also like okay I'm tired of this federation, like is this what powerlifting is now? Does everybody think it's cool? I was like, 'Aah,' and then on top of that I couldn't perform so I was just like, "You know what, we'll chill." But so for that part of my life, that's where I'm at, but now I think I'm ready for powerlifting again.

30:07

Marybeth: Yeah. And we'll go back around to Chloe too, but Marcia, what are your words of advice to someone in your situation wanting to go into Strongman for the first time, or powerlifting for the first time?

30:22

Marcia: Strongman, as a total newbie to strength sports, is is not gonna be easy, and I think if you go into that understanding that if you want to compete and even if you do do the beginners class, which I call novice, and usually it's lighter weights, like even if you go into that understanding that I might be able to lift something and that's okay, like you'll be fine. There's a lot of ego in this sport and people need to be strong and not just squat, deadlift, and like overhead, but you have to be strong and agile, and strong and have endurance to like lift something for a minute straight, and strong and like be able to remember where to put your hands because if you have a medley you gotta switch here, then you do certain stuff where you gotta step over the axle. Like so there's there's a lot more to think about for Strongman, and I feel like the people that get discouraged out of the sport, it's because they went into it thinking it would be like, 'Oh this is fun.' Like it's it's gonna be work. It's not gonna be easy and that's okay, as long as you start out with the right expectation, you'll be perfect, and that goes for anyone.

31:42

Marybeth: Yeah. And it's it's a pretty intense, it's it's one of the most intense raw sports in our field right now because you see people pulling these pickup trucks, these semis, these boulders, and visually it's easier for the outsider to be like, "Oh my god that person is strong!" Whereas for powerlifting they're constantly like, "Oh, how much is on that bar? Okay, I think that's the size of a car, you know..."

32:10

Marcia: Um, "What does she weigh? What's somebody her size supposed to do again?"

32:15

Marybeth: Like, "Oh no, she doesn't look 140 pounds." Whatever.

32:21

Marcia: Yeah. Yeah, that is a little trickier. The only thing I--mmm, well I guess you get a little bit of both--but I will say for Strongman, I don't know if like the wave of self-care and like mobility and all that has totally hit completely. So I will say to anybody new or not needs to be wary of like, are you warming up, are you cooling down, are you stretching? I don't, I feel like that hasn't totally hit--you know if you go to a powerlifting meet, people are like rolling around on the floor, people like have their own bands, you know...

32:58

Marybeth: How much time do you have between events? Like, so so we obviously have a lot of rest time between our three events. Do you, or do you just go continuously?

33:12

Marcia: Well it's, it's very funny because it's um like you have to get super hyped and super amped to do something for like a minute, and then you'll probably chill for like an hour, and then start all over again. Yeah it depends on how many people are there, but because you have to wait for everyone to do the same event, the same way you have to wait for everyone to do the squat. And the difference between that is, you know if you're at the powerlifting meet and you know they're almost done with squats and you're gonna be up next with bench, like you would be warming up already and the warmup would be available to you.

33:52

Marybeth: Yeah

33:53

Marcia: Usually for Strongman, like next thing isn't ready yet. And you may or may not even be able to fully warm up on the next thing.

34:02

Chloe: What?

34:03

Marybeth: Totally. And at most, how many events do you usually do in one competition?

34:08

Marcia: It's usually four to five, and most, yeah. And most events will follow like okay, there's an overhead, there's some sort of deadlift, you know there's some sort of thing that you're gonna have to carry, and but again it's totally up to the meet director and what they want to do.

34:25

Marybeth: Yeah so I mean just taking into consideration how many events you do in one day, that is a full day of lifting to your max, and for powerlifting like we kind of guestimate, "Oh this might take six to eight hours," but for you it could be a 12-hour day where you're constantly hydrating, constantly compressing, constantly um you know, taking salt tablets... We'd probably take two pre-workout scoops, you know, to keep our energy flowing, and then all the ammonia tabs that we inhale or whatever it is that we use, we still have a cap and we're exhausted by then. And then for weightlifting I was like, "Oh my god, I was done in an hour?"

35:07

Marcia: No way!

35:10

Marybeth: It was... yeah, that fast. Yeah. Chloe, do you have any words of advice for anyone that's going new into your sport with your similar situation?

35:26

Chloe: Um. It takes a long time to get strong, um and uh I think I want to say this but I don't know 'cause it might kind of come off maybe a little ableist.

35:39

Marcia: Say it.

35:40

Chloe: Okay. Okay well I was just gonna say that you're more capable than you think you are.

35:50

Marcia: I'll take it.

35:51

Chloe: Uh yeah, yeah. Mental strength takes you pretty far, I think, I think that kind of covers what I would want to tell new people.

36:00

Marybeth: Yeah and that's important because I mean everybody grows up in different environments and everybody has different physical therapists, different physicians who tell them otherwise. You know, everyone thinks that something's liability, everyone thinks that you need to be extra careful and stay in your little bubble, but those are really great words of advice to someone who's constantly told that they can't do this. Like, you should probably just stick to you know, building puzzles or reading a book, and while that is a very fun and safe thing, you know if you want to do what you see on TV, why the fuck not?

36:45

Marcia: Yeah, whatever you want to do you deserve to be there. There's no reason you don't, you can't show up.

36:51

Marybeth: Yeah exactly

36:52

Marcia: And I've definitely had doctors tell me things like that--you know I tell them, "Oh well you know, I have my nerve pain, my muscles twitch," and they're like, "Oh well you know, maybe you should just do a little less weights, uh maybe do more yoga, relaxing things..." I'm just like, "What the fuck are you talking about?" "I'll do both, thank you."

37:14

Marybeth: But definitely, I mean we're also not advising you to just, stand in front of a 300-pound bar and try and pull it you know. We have trusted the process for a very long time, we started from a 45-pound bar or even less, like I stayed away from the benchpress because I didn't think that with my lacking a full hand that I can balance it on you know my bare bones without grip, and I was able to do it after some assistance. You know just trusting that process but then also sticking to the basics and not training with a bro I think was the best advice I can give to myself for joining is: not lifting with people or not training with people who don't know what the hell they're doing, just looking at YouTube videos or Whatever... Starting with the main breathing drills, you know everything that's essential in in lifting heavy weight without even using your arms, without using your legs, your your core is essential in lifting. So...

38:29

Marcia: Yeah that's a pretty big deal. And as your neighborhood friendly physical therapist I endorse that statement. [laughter] Yeah. I think, I think that is a pretty good review of how you can adapt, and obviously people have other things

that they're up to and that they're doing, and if you have questions or if you want to share what you've been up to we'd love to hear it. We want to hear it.

39:00

Marybeth: We want to hear them. Yeah and luckily we've been able to meet, through this community, other differently-abled athletes doing amazing incredible things, and while our community started off as just re-posting you know, what we find on Instagram, it's grown to be so much more than that, we find we found so many different resources and different federations that are open and willing to please people like us, on top of seeing what devices other people use... Like like I already mentioned Chris Ruden and how I garnered a lot of knowledge from him and how he built his strap or used several straps actually on one hand, and in more conversations with him recently, like three years later he's like, "You know what, I'm actually taking a little bit of a break because the strap that I put on, and then the strap that I put on the top of that has kind of deteriorated my my wrists, and it hurts and it's painful and sometimes it's bleeding, and it's not something that we want to do for the rest of our lives, you know constantly be in pain, but seeing how much that we can lift at a given moment is incredible. And then other people like Kristy from North Carolina, her Instagram is @will.lift.for.food, she's found so many different ways to like put together a chain and rope and different devices. You can check her out on how to Crossfit or how to you know deadlift the same way that we do, but if she's missing a larger proportion of her arms then she has to find that extension. So it's just incredible what we find, the people that we find. Do you guys know of any athletes?"

41:03

Marcia: Yeah, I would say on the like Spoonie end, Kresenda @eds_athlete, I think is her current name, is a great one because she has Ehlers-Danlos which is like a connective tissue disorder, she also has a lot of other things going on, but I mean sometimes she just post things and you're like, 'Oh shit, you're right.' You know she should posted one video like, oh you should probably take videos of your setups because I was wondering why my knee hurt, and you know she's posting a video of her set-up and she's bending over to lift the weight, and her knee is hyperextending like 10,000 degrees, and it's like, 'Oh well. There you go. That's why my knee hurts after I do this.' So sometimes it's good to just kind of find somebody going through what you're going through because you could just get ideas from them or give them ideas, and you know, I mean we're all humans and this is not, it's not, Instagram is not a TV show, you're not just watching it, you can interact with everyone. So I think that's also a big part of it, so I've talked to her a lot. I also have another friend, @christypicklesmilan is her Instagram, she has RA, so she has a couple of hand and foot deformities she has to work around. So I love talking to her and bouncing ideas back and forth with her as well. Those are probably the only two I can think of off the top of my head.

42:26

Marybeth: Yeah and it's interesting that you say that you know people's knees go out of proportion 100,000 degrees or... But um also realizing that when you watch a differently-abled athlete in the gym or in powerlifting, they're gonna look differently than you, when my, because my proportions are different from you know, someone with full hands, full arms, my back is gonna look different, my shoulders are gonna look different, and that's you know we do the best that we can to keep all grips on the bar but... Ugh it just frustrates me when I'm just trying to work out and get everything in two hours and all these people come up and ask like, "Uh, shouldn't you extend this or..."

43:19

Marcia: No

43:20

Marybeth: Like this is how I've been doing it, this is what works for my body, for this, for this lift, why the fuck try and fix that, why try and correct that because it works for you? We get lots of mansplaining it's frustrating.

43:40

Marcia: Yeah. I definitely deal with that a whole lot, and luckily I don't go to a commercial gym and I don't have to deal with it as much anymore.

43:51

Marybeth: Yeah exactly. Chloe have you met anyone in your time?

43:56

Chloe: Um anyone like similar to me or anyone that's been mansplaining to me?

44:02

Marcia: We already know the answer to the second!

44:06

Chloe: Um similar to me no, that's why I'm glad like I've been able to kind of see some other people on Instagram, but yeah I don't know anyone personally. It's kind of a bummer.

44:21

Marcia: Well that's okay, we're out here.

44:26

Marybeth: We exist. Bitches... That's gonna be our next shirt.

44:35

Marcia: Yeah actually

44:36

Marybeth: We actually don't have any apparel, or have any shirts but... Well, great. That like like Marcia mentioned, if if there's anything that you all want to cover, discuss, or include in regards to how you train with your adaptation or otherwise, let us know. We will link as much as we can. It's it's just amazing how relevant this is becoming you know, seeing more differently-abled athletes on the cover of magazines, seeing us in football, you know the NFL, people who are actively trying to get us represented it's almost beautiful. Not only are we covering like other athletes, we're also seeing--um, I don't know Chloe, if you know her but @stump_kitchen on Instagram, she is a cook on YouTube and she works very closely with The Lucky Fin Project. And it's almost incredible how they build that community centered around people with limb differences, especially at a young age, and how you follow a youth channel that normalizes this, and how she cooks and cuts, and learns, teaches kids how to cook without a hand, sometimes uses her full arm to mix baking ingredients, it's hilarious. It's just like awesome how it, she gets everyone so comfortable in their own skin. And then we recently had a photoshoot with Getty Images they reached out to Chloe and I and wanted to actively represent people our community--in the disabled community--and how they lift and go throughout their day, under The Oath Project, and just the work that they're doing has been truly incredible. So, if you own a business, be active about that shit. Don't just talk about how much of a feminist you are, actively represent people like us, people you know, I love the work the work that I've seen in recent times.

46:55

Marcia: Definitely agree, and we'll know if that shit's not authentic, don't just check us off. Alright, ladies anything else? Okay, disabled girls out!

Outro 1 (Marybeth): Thanks for listening to Disabled Girls Who Lift!

Outro 2 (Chloe): Don't forget to follow, rate, and like us on Spotify, iTunes, and Player FM. You can also find us on Instagram @disabledgirlswholift