



**Episode 35 Transcript**

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### ***Taylor Chamberlain: Born into Bodybuilding***

**Nick Collias:** Hi, everyone. Welcome to *The Bodybuilding.com Podcast*, Nick Collias flying solo without a co-host today, but we do have [Taylor Chamberlain](#) over here. She's a Bodybuilding.com athlete, newly-crowned IFBB Bikini Pro competitor. Recently married, as well.

**Taylor Chamberlain:** Yep, July.

**Nick:** Okay. And a rampant YouTube vlogger. You're all over the place, sharing everything all the time. On our site, she's in many different photos, she has a video and an article on the site called "[How A Flexible Dieting Bikini Competitor Really Eats](#)," and hopefully by the time this comes out, you'll have a forthcoming Bodybuilding.com ad campaign as well, right? That's what you're here shooting?

**Taylor Chamberlain:** Yep, very excited about that. Shot that yesterday, so I'm excited to share with you all what that's really about.

**Nick:** So, today are we gonna get to film some workouts with you downstairs, as well?

**Taylor Chamberlain:** Yep, that. A live workout, too. Glute workout. So, yeah, it'll be good.

**Nick:** Cool. Now, I wanna talk to you about a number of different things, but first and foremost, I've been watching a bunch of your videos and one of the things that kept sticking out over and over again ... I guess, two of the things, were your parents.

**Taylor Chamberlain:** Yeah.

**Nick:** They competed in bodybuilding shows when you were in your teens. So, what, they were like late 30s, early 40s, somewhere in there?

**Taylor Chamberlain:** Yep, yes.

**Nick:** And you trained with them after school, your husband trained with your dad. There's this whole culture of fitness that you grew up in it sounds like. I have two little boys, who are two and five, and I'm kind of ... It's fascinating to me to watch how they interpret and interact with fitness. They don't know anything else, other than ... My two year old has these little kettle bells, that you just lift and throw around.

**Taylor Chamberlain:** Yes. Oh, that's awesome. So young.

**Nick:** He has this little six-pound medicine ball and lifts it with this huge grunt, like he's lifting the world.

**Taylor Chamberlain:** He's starting young.

**Nick:** It's just fascinating, but it's also they get that it's play. But, it's like play that they've challenged themselves. They get that in a way that I feel like adults struggle to. It makes me think like how are they gonna remember this ...

**Taylor Chamberlain:** Exactly.

**Nick:** ... down the road? And I wanted to ask you what your earliest fitness memories are, or just how you remember ... yeah, your house like that growing up in that project?

**Taylor Chamberlain:** All right, so growing up, obviously, my parents were very healthy. They started the bodybuilding thing, but even long before that, I remember being in the daycare, 'cause my mom would teach aerobics.

**Nick:** Oh, like in the gym daycare?

**Taylor Chamberlain:** Yeah.

**Nick:** Oh, okay.

**Taylor Chamberlain:** I have memories of that, four years old, being in there. So, I always kind of grew up in that environment. My dad has always been really, really healthy in terms of nutrition and everything. So, he showed us eating a handful of nuts, instead of maybe choosing the fast food. That sort of thing.

**Nick:** Even as kids.

**Taylor Chamberlain:** Yeah, even as kids. So I just kinda grew up sort of a health nut, and that transcended into where I'm at now. So, my earliest memory of being in the gym ...

**Nick:** So they were like pretty gym-focused people? It wasn't like, we're doing aerobics in the living room at home?

**Taylor Chamberlain:** Yeah, no. They were very gym-focused. But, we also ... I grew up in Colorado, so we would do family activities outdoors a lot. You know, bike riding, hiking, snowboarding. All of that. So, I kind of grew up in a very active household, I would say.

But, my very first memory, I'm trying to think. Oh, gosh. Well, I remember we used to go on vacations a lot to Arizona or Hawaii, stuff like that. And they would take me along in the gym, so we would be laying out at the pool and then in the afternoon, we kind of would go as a family and go train together. So, I think when I was 13, maybe 12-13 years old, that's when I first remember going in the gym, and my mom and dad kind of showing me the ropes. I just fell in love because I loved the way that I felt afterwards, like my heart rate was up, and the endorphins came, and I felt strong. I kinda just got addicted from there.

**Nick:** Right away.

**Taylor Chamberlain:** Right away, yeah. And you think, you know, sometimes when your parents push something on you, it kind of makes the child not want to do that sort of thing. But, they were never like that. They kind of just showed me the ropes, and if it was my decision to go work out, then it was my decision. I think that's why I loved it so much, is because it was just a part of us.

**Nick:** Sure. Did you feel like they were kind of giving you access to their secret world?

**Taylor Chamberlain:** Yeah. Definitely, definitely. So, like little exercises. I mean, it was all so new to me, and I just thought it was so cool you could train your body to look a certain way, feel a certain way, mentally, emotionally. All of that.

**Nick:** And were you a really sporty kid, too? Or was this really just ... the gym ritual was sort of the introduction?

**Taylor Chamberlain:** Yeah, the gym ritual was definitely an introduction. I mean, none of my siblings and I, we don't play sports. I used to dance and cheerlead a little bit, but it was never soccer or volleyball or anything like that.

**Nick:** Okay. And had your parents ever competed before this show that they did when you were like, what? Was it 15 or 16 that I heard you mention?

**Taylor Chamberlain:** Yeah, so they competed. They started when I was a junior in high school, so I was 16 years old. Just kind of watching them both go through that, you know, the cardio and the disciplinary ...

**Nick:** Right, did they have to sit you down like, this is gonna suck for all of us? Or was it just like-

**Taylor Chamberlain:** They, they're very-

**Nick:** Everyone's fully enthusiastic?

**Taylor Chamberlain:** So enthusiastic. Like, I don't even think that they knew what they were getting

into at the time.

**Nick:** Right, nobody ever does, we hear.

**Taylor Chamberlain:** Yeah, but they just ... They're definitely go-getters, and they see a goal and they push through 'til the end, and I really thought that was cool to see them go through that physically, but also how they grew so strong mentally, and how they were able to not let it faze our relationship, like our family. I thought that was really cool, because obviously, competing, you're so focused on the end-goal that sometimes your relationships can fall to the wayside.

But, not with them. They were really good examples of how if you wanna get to a goal and even if it's hard, keeping your priorities straight, keeping your family together and not letting it get in the way of relationships.

**Nick:** Right, sure. Yeah. Our normal co-host here, Heather Eastman, has done some competitions and worked with people who've done them and she loves to talk about these gym widows that you know ... widows and widowers, where people, they don't see their family for weeks and weeks. But that wasn't your experience, sounds like.

**Taylor Chamberlain:** No. Yeah.

**Nick:** So, you, as what? A 15-year-old, 16-year-old, watching this, did you think even at that time, "I wanna do this"?

**Taylor Chamberlain:** I did, I did. I saw them compete. And you know, going through it, I was like maybe I don't wanna do it. But then i saw them get on stage and I was like ... something in me, I knew I would ... Yeah, oh yeah, we were cheering and getting teary-eyed, because you see that person work so hard. And to see them up there is just ... it's an incredible thing. To me, it's far more than the physique.

**Nick:** Yeah.

**Taylor Chamberlain:** So, definitely at that point, I knew I would compete, but I wanted to get through college first and get all that done so I can fully focus on that.

**Nick:** And did you tell your family at that point? Like, I'm gonna do this?

**Taylor Chamberlain:** Yeah, I did. And I did so much research.

**Nick:** What did they say?

**Taylor Chamberlain:** They were like, "Yeah, you can probably even do it, you know, when you're done with school and just make sure you get everything else in line before you do it, because I want you to put your full energy in it."

**Nick:** Sure.

**Taylor Chamberlain:** So, I definitely did a lot of research after that. Lots of magazines, 'cause social media wasn't around.

**Nick:** Right.

**Taylor Chamberlain:** But, yeah, that's-

**Nick:** Yeah, 'cause you're easily what? 24?

**Taylor Chamberlain:** 25, yep. I know, I look pretty young, but yeah. Yeah.

**Nick:** But, interesting though, right around this same time, though, your parents lost their business. Had this whole dramatic kind of change in fortunes.

**Taylor Chamberlain:** Yes.

**Nick:** Right around the same time, right? Was it in the middle of the prep or after?

**Taylor Chamberlain:** It was actually in the middle of their prep. My dad, oh, this is a story that I totally forgot, and I've never told anyone, but my dad, he was about to go on stage, and he got a call from his financial ... I think, his controller, and he was like ... He got a call and he said that their company is going down and that there's nothing that they can do from here on out. And, the cops thought it was like some sketchy thing, so they were looking for my dad. My dad was like, "All right, well, I'm gonna go do this thing, and I'll call you back."

**Nick:** This is like he gets ready to walk on stage?

**Taylor Chamberlain:** Before he gets ready, yeah.

**Nick:** Full on in the spray tan.

**Taylor Chamberlain:** Yep. Right next to Phil Heath back there, 'cause he was the guest poser, so he was like, "I'm gonna do this thing, I'll call you right back." So, he went on stage and posed and yeah. So, it was all happening in the midst of their prep, so I think that's something that's really admirable, that they were able to finish that goal, you know? Even when their world was turning upside down.

**Nick:** Right, yeah. Do you think fitness and bodybuilding was something they could rally around in that time of diff...

**Taylor Chamberlain:** Yes.

**Nick:** What did it mean to them? What did it mean to you watching it? Because, you were experiencing this as well.

**Taylor Chamberlain:** I actually didn't know anything was going on at that point until like after their competitions. Maybe it was some sort of constant thing that was something they could control at that time, just because everything else was going crazy around them. But, I think that that was something that was special to them, and that they had wanted to do for a while, so they wanted to see it through to the end.

**Nick:** Sure, sure. How do you feel like all of this influenced the way that you built your own fitness life after that? Because then you go to college, you get busy with life and stuff, and it can be easy to sort of, okay, just go out on your own way. But, you have this life that has fitness still at the core of it.

**Taylor Chamberlain:** Right.

**Nick:** Was it just did it feel inevitable, like this is just a part of me I can never turn off? Or how did all of this translate?

**Taylor Chamberlain:** I guess, since I've been growing up, I've always been so healthy, so the fitness, being active, and fueling your body with more nutrient-dense foods has always been a part of me. So, even in the busiest times in school, I would always make time for the gym, and make time to meal prep because it just makes me feel energized and makes me feel on track and it makes me feel good internally. Just, you know, getting that sweat on, and fueling my body properly. Especially, when you're using a lot of brainpower.

So, yeah, it's been a part of me for a long time, so I feel like maybe it is something I don't think I could go back and live an unhealthy lifestyle, because I know how good it feels to live a healthier lifestyle.

**Nick:** Sure. Sure. Now, you did though, have a time as well, when you were kind of taking it *too* seriously.

**Taylor Chamberlain:** Yeah.

**Nick:** And all of this didn't keep you from doing that, necessarily. Like, that's a part that's a very common chapter.

**Taylor Chamberlain:** Right.

**Nick:** I don't know. You're pretty open about this in your videos, that you got really restricted, really unhappy in your eating. How do you look back on that now and explain that?

**Taylor Chamberlain:** So, at the time, it was when we lost our house, our cars. We had to move several times. We went to a brand new school in Arizona, and I remember, we had to do the lunches where the school funded you. So, it was just a really huge transition in my life, from going to a certain lifestyle, to going ... to having your friends ripped away from you, and having everything ripped away from you.

**Nick:** No control.

**Taylor Chamberlain:** No control. I feel like throughout that all, the nutrition and the fitness, the research kind of was taken a little too far, to where I only could eat certain foods, because the magazines told me I could. And I had to do cardio twice a day, and it didn't matter what got in my way, I was going to do it, and I was going to eat at noon. You know, that type of thing to where it was so restricted that-

**Nick:** Totally ritualized.

**Taylor Chamberlain:** Totally ritualized. And I, you know, I pushed away friends and new friends and I just kind of stayed in my little shell, because it was the only thing that I really could control. My nutrition and my fitness, when my world was just spinning out of control. So, I feel like looking back, I now realize that, that's probably what caused it, and that's probably what made me so neurotic about it.

**Nick:** Sure. Do you feel like that was a necessary thing you had to go through in order to find your appropriate limits on the other side?

**Taylor Chamberlain:** Honestly, yes. I believe that we're put through experiences, that God puts us through experiences that help you in the future, and that help you grow as a person. So I feel like, it has definitely created who I am today and that's why I show that this lifestyle can be with balance and you should eat nutrient-dense foods, but please don't be afraid to go out to eat with friends, and don't ... Fitness and nutrition should *enhance* your life, rather than make it something miserable that you're going through.

So, I feel like that, going through all of that, it's definitely helped me spread the message that I want to today.

**Nick:** Sure. And did your parents, their experiences with fitness, with getting serious about things like nutrition as well, help you pull out of that as well?

**Taylor Chamberlain:** You mean the?

**Nick:** About your super-restricted eating phase?

**Taylor Chamberlain:** Yeah. They were never controlling. I mean, they never sat me down and was like, "Taylor, you have a problem. You're too restricted."

**Nick:** Right. They were trusting that you ...

**Taylor Chamberlain:** Yeah, they knew like, my dad is very ... he's very like, "I'm here for you" type of person, but he's never going to push you a certain way, or he's never going to sway your opinion or sway who you are or what's going on.

**Nick:** Sure.

**Taylor Chamberlain:** So, they were just kind of there for me. And I think that meeting my husband now definitely helped me get out of that ... just, moving away from that place where I was, and so unhappy. Definitely helped that too. Saying 'yes' a lot more, and creating more friendships helped me recover from all of that.

**Nick:** Sure, sure. And now you've kind of landed in flexible dieting as well, which is something you've talked about on our site and on your social channels a ton. How did you end up there and become ... build your skills there? Because, there's a certain skill to it.

**Taylor Chamberlain:** Yes.

**Nick:** I found on your videos, I love you when you're like, "Oh, here's my macros today, blank, blank, blank on leg day. Then it's on this." Like, you've got the numbers first in mind.

**Taylor Chamberlain:** Yes, I do, I do. And I think that the numbers are great and they're really great for people who have like an end-goal. It definitely helps you get from this place to this place. But, I really do like, as a whole flexible dieting, just being able to switch out foods, and not restricting yourself to brown rice, and chicken, and broccoli. Because, there's so much more to this life, and it is ...

Nutrient-dense foods do matter. But, you can also still see results while eating processed foods, while throwing that in. That's something that I've experimented with. It's something that I've experimented with my clients. And it just, I think it makes you sane and it makes you be able to live out this lifestyle in the long run.

**Nick:** Right. Sure, yeah. You bring up a good point though. It doesn't *have to be* a nutrient-dense diet.

**Taylor Chamberlain:** Yes, yes.

**Nick:** There is a still a lot left up to you, and this is something we talked about with [Dr. Bill Campbell](#), who was on the podcast a couple of weeks ago, that yeah, you can do it right and wrong. You can do it totally personalized, and the benefits, as they are, are really more long-term than short-term, is what he ... He did a big study where he was like, "Okay, let's look at the scale, let's look at body composition."

In the short term, not a huge one. But, over the long term, especially in combination with lifting, it can be really profound. What do you ... What does lifting add to this, do you feel like as well? Like, for flexible dieting without versus flexible dieting with. Like, okay, yeah, I go to the gym at least three times a week and lift.

**Taylor Chamberlain:** I think that lifting, in general, definitely helps boost your metabolism. It helps you gain that lean mass, which then again, helps boost metabolism. So, maybe, you know, if someone wasn't really into lifting, and more into like cardio, their body may respond differently to a ton of nutrient-dense foods, whereas someone who's lifting and in the gym, might respond a little bit better, especially ... Processed sugar, even after a workout, has been proven to be actually something good for you. So, I think lifting makes a huge difference in this flexible dieting lifestyle.

**Nick:** Yeah, it just seems to be the magic ingredient, is what he was saying. There's just night and day with it and without.

**Taylor Chamberlain:** It is. Yeah, yeah.

**Nick:** So, now were you fairly comfortable with flexible dieting at the point when you said, "All right, now I'm going to set foot on stage, I'm going to, you know, go get my pro card," those sorts of things?

**Taylor Chamberlain:** It's definitely ... When you're competing, you don't want any error. And flexible dieting, even if a package says this is X-amount of macros, you don't truly, truly know. There could be some human error in it. So, when I'm competing, especially towards the end, I do eat a little bit



more nutrient-dense foods, because when you're not eating very many calories, your body is very sensitive to what you put in it. Personally, I try and stick with foods that I cook on my own. Just regular 'bro' foods. Asparagus, chicken, all of that. Just because there's a lot more volume, too. It fills you up a little bit more than say, like, a Pop-Tart, or a waffle.

So, that's kind of what I stick to, in terms of competing, but when I'm in off-season, I have a lot more calories to work with. There's no reason why I can't throw in a couple rice crispy treats, and cereal, and all of these foods that are deemed *unhealthy*.

**Nick:** Sure, sure. So, yeah, you are in off-season now. Is that idea fairly new to you, or have you been thinking "in-season/off-season" for years?

**Taylor Chamberlain:** Oh, gosh. I have been doing ... I've been competing for ... I think this is gonna be my fourth season, so this will be my fourth year, I think. So, I've competed in six or seven shows. I think this is my second or third off-season.

**Nick:** Okay, but this one lasted a while. I saw a video where you say, "All right, I've been doing it since July." Seems like everything changed all of a sudden when you're a pro, right?

**Taylor Chamberlain:** Yes.

**Nick:** How different is that in the approach that you have to take?

**Taylor Chamberlain:** So, the pro physiques are ... they have a lot of lean mass, especially the bikini girls, so that's something that my coach and I, we wanted to boost calories a little bit quicker. Maybe even add a little bit more body fat mass, because that will really help you gain that lean mass that you're looking for. So I think this off-season has been a lot different in terms of eating more than I ever have, and trying to have that goal every single day in the gym of gaining lean mass in those areas that I really need to improve on.

So, yeah, this off-season has been really good for me, especially mentally, because I've been able to kind of ... I think the longer you compete, the less you worry about being so scheduled and neurotic with it. So, this off-season I've been able to travel a lot more, and eat foods that I normally can't fit into my macros, and feel strong and sleep good. It's just been really good for me physically and mentally.

**Nick:** That sounds great. Sounds like you feel great.

**Taylor Chamberlain:** Yes. Yeah, I do.

**Nick:** Is it hard to think about then looking forward to, oh my gosh.

**Taylor Chamberlain:** Yes.

**Nick:** I feel pretty perfect right now.

**Taylor Chamberlain:** It honestly is. But, I know that every single prep, I learn something about myself and I gain strength mentally more than anything else that I do right now. So I am looking forward to it. I'm looking forward to getting back on that stage again, I'm looking forward to making

my pro debut, because this is a whole different level and I'm really excited to see it through.

**Nick:** Sure, sure. You had a really interesting video just a day or so ago, where you said, "You know, guys, all right, this is it, I have this big photo shoot at Bodybuilding.com coming up. I'm not doing a photo shoot prep. I'm not coming in shredded, I'm coming in just feeling great." How hard of a choice was that? And like, yeah, walk us through your thinking there.

**Taylor Chamberlain:** I think that a couple years ago, my mindset would've been a lot different. I would've came in here doing my cardio and cutting my calories.

**Nick:** Just pushing it.

**Taylor Chamberlain:** Pushing it. Right. But, I realized, at the end of the day, people will look up to you, regardless of what you look like. You know, your message is still the same, and I also want to show females that you don't have to look a certain way to get to your goals. You don't have to withdraw food, and you don't have to do the crazy amounts of cardio and all that.

This is actually really important to me, this shoot, not coming in super shredded, because I feel like it gives a different perspective to, especially, younger females, who are heavily influenced by what they see on social media and what they see on Bodybuilding.com and everything.

So, yeah, it was really important to me. It wasn't necessarily hard. Now, I think mentally, I'm in such a great place and I'm happy, so I do things because I love my body, not because I hate my body. So, that's definitely been something that's been shifted a ton.

**Nick:** Sure. What have you heard from your fans and your followers as you've been embracing this sort of epic bulk? Are they like, "This is so great."

**Taylor Chamberlain:** Yeah, they actually, they say that they look up to me for showing them that it's okay to gain some body fat. Like, it's going to be okay. Your relationships will still be the same. You will actually probably feel a lot better. So, I think that it has paved a way for them to not be afraid to eat. Not be afraid to just go in there and lift and feel good.

**Nick:** Yeah. Feeling good is maybe underrated.

**Taylor Chamberlain:** Yes, definitely, definitely.

**Nick:** Feeling good, lifting. Yeah, that sounds great. So, we've got ... you've got a show coming up then, in what? March, April?

**Taylor Chamberlain:** May 20th.

**Nick:** Okay, so still a while.

**Taylor Chamberlain:** Yes. Still a while.

**Nick:** So, you still get to feel good for a little while.

**Taylor Chamberlain:** Three more weeks of feeling good. Then it's back to the grind.

**Nick:** Perfect. And then, we can follow you on [YouTube](#) the whole way through, right?

**Taylor Chamberlain:** Yep, YouTube.

**Nick:** How do we find you online?

**Taylor Chamberlain:** You'll just go on YouTube search engine, just type in Taylor Chamberlain. I'll be doing an entire bikini prep series for my first pro show, so that's gonna be really fun. And then I also have an [Instagram](#), @taychayy. So those are my two main outlets on social media right now. So you guys can find me there.

**Nick Collias:** Great, thank you very much, Taylor Chamberlain, for coming and talking with us.

**Taylor Chamberlain:** Thank you for having me.



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