

MICHAEL ASHFORD

A Man On A Mission

Michael Ashford is gifting the world inspiring stories on his *Fit Dad Fitness Podcast*.

“I want dads to be healthy, active, and involved in their kids’ lives, and I think fitness can be the foundation for that.”

Michael worked for a few years as a reporter and editor at a small-town newspaper in Kansas.

“I left the journalism world because I wanted to start a family, and the hours and pay at a small-town newspaper weren’t the greatest. But I never left the passion behind.”

Embracing the power of storytelling in a different way, Michael moved from using his website to podcasting as he highlighted everyday dads who were figuring out a way to make both fitness and family top priorities.



“As I became consistent with the show, I was surprised to find people planning their days around it. I got messages from listeners who said, ‘I listen to your show every Wednesday on my drive into work. Some said, ‘I listen to your show every morning as I’m working out, and it motivates me.’ That was wild to me.”

Michael initially set out to interview sports figures and other well-known fathers.

“Interestingly, the stories from everyday dads who figured out a way to make fitness work resonate most with people. Those everyday stories are where the true magic is.

“I’ve found interview podcasts work best if the host asks questions and then gets out of the way. Everyone has an incredible story to tell, and it’s up to the host to ask the questions that reveal it.”

A former long-distance runner in high school and college, Michael, too, is an everyday father with a compelling story.

“I continued running after college, but I was pretty inconsistent with it. Honestly, I was just getting by on good genetics.

“Before we had our daughter, Alexandra, I took my wife and son on a work trip with me to Ocean City, Maryland. My son Luke, who is 11 years old now, was eight or nine months at the time. My wife took a photo of me and my son on the beach. When she showed it to me, and I saw myself in my swim trunks, I thought, ‘I’m just getting by. I’m not doing everything that I can health-wise to make sure I’m at my best to

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guide this life that I am responsible for—my son, whose tiny hand is in my hand.”

Returning home, Michael started to work on himself.

“I joined a gym and went full bore six days a week.

“After several years of consistent exercising, changing my diet, and focusing not just on building muscle, but also on cardiovascular health, strength, and mobility, I felt really good... and I wanted other people to experience that. So, the idea of personal training emerged.

“I had gone from journalist to marketing director in the software space, and I thought I could coach people on the side to help them feel as rejuvenated and energized as I did. I feel better now than I did in my early 20s.”

Michael and his wife, Kim, got certified and started personal training businesses.

“My main goal was to help other dads discover the benefits of good health. Whether they admit it or not, fathers have the supreme struggle of juggling and balancing all their commitments, responsibilities, hobbies, and interests. Of course, this applies to parents in general, but I know fatherhood best. You have your job, kids’ school programs and sporting activities, helping out around the house, and co-raising your kids, not just doing the fun stuff. For a lot of dads, health and fitness take a backseat.

“There’s also a common mentality I call ‘the dad’s noble cause’: ‘I’m so busy providing for my family that I just don’t have time for me.’ I call it that because who would question it? In reality, though, what good is all that stuff you’re creating for your family if you’re not around to enjoy it? You’ve got to take care of yourself, so you can provide for your family well into old age.”



BEFORE AND AFTER

Michael used the motivation of his young son to transform his health and fitness



MICHAEL

listens to



MIND PUMP: RAW FITNESS TRUTH

The hosts look at the mythology and pseudo-science that pervades the fitness industry and present science-backed solutions.



CREATIVE ELEMENTS

Jay Clouse dives into the nitty-gritty of how the world’s best creators make a living from their art and creativity.



UNTHINKABLE WITH JAY ACUNZO

An exploration of what it takes to create work that resonates in the business and creative worlds, particularly in innovative projects and companies.

“What good is all that stuff you’re creating for your family if you’re not around to enjoy it?”



FIT DAD FITNESS Podcast



Nearing 400 episodes now, the four-and-a-half-year-old *Fit Dad Fitness Podcast* is the longest-running show dedicated solely to helping fathers pay attention to their health and fitness to improve themselves and their family life.

And at a time when people's emotional and mental health may be at risk, Michael isn't resting on his laurels.

He felt pulled in the direction of topics beyond fitness that also have an impact on our well-being.

"In the summer of 2020, there were protests and riots about social and racial justice issues. I'm 37 years old. My generation and younger never experienced anything like it, particularly the George Floyd murder.

"Added to that, we were going through a presidential election that brought out the very worst in people. I was thinking, 'We're better than this—but we don't know how to have conversations with one another.'

"As if this wasn't enough, we were in the middle of a pandemic that none of us had ever dealt with. We were trying to figure it all out, and everything became politicized and polarized. I kept thinking, 'This should have brought us together, but it is tearing us apart.' So I asked myself, 'What can I do?'

"I decided to start a podcast called The Follow-Up Question to show that we're not as divided as we seem to be. We just don't know how to talk about our differences. I'm exploring what it would take for us to find common ground, if that's possible."

With his podcasts, Michael Ashford is using his talents, skills, and experience as a journalist to search for answers that can help us have sound physical, emotional, and mental health. His mission is a worthwhile one. 🗣️



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UNDER THE RADAR

Christine's Independent Review Of A Health & Fitness Podcast
You Probably Haven't Heard Of... But Should Be Listening To



THE WARRIOR WELLNESS PODCAST

A podcast for military members, veterans, and first responders focused on fitness, health, nutrition, and biohacking is a rare find. Hosted by former Army Captain Stephanie Lincoln, *The Warrior Wellness Podcast* aims to introduce America's heroes to lifestyle habits and hacks that will help them live healthier, happier lives and be fit enough to do their important work.

The conversations include one with Dr. Pat Boulogne, chiropractor, acupuncturist, and



author of the book *Why are You Sick, Fat, and Tired?* If you think it's normal to feel lethargic and have unexplained aches and pains, then this discussion is for you. It focuses on the importance of finding and treating the cause of your unique health problem instead of chasing or masking symptoms or ignoring important signs that may become chronic or even fatal diseases.

Among the guests on the show, you'll also find Danny Vega, a carnivore/keto influencer and coach. He and his wife share a passion for their "Fat-Fueled Family" teachings, wherein they teach other parents how to transition their children to a healthy, whole-foods diet.

From a life coach who invented a technique to help people easily achieve a consciousness shift to a retired-Navy-SEAL-Commander-turned-leadership-and-mindfulness-coach, *The Warrior Wellness Podcast* delivers advice for every aspect of a healthy life.

Everyone can benefit from taking a listen. 🎧