



Wil Graham Interview - Biggest Loser Winner

Interview hosted by Simon Lovell for
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Simon Lovell: Hi everyone. It's Simon Lovell here, author of The Lunch Box Diet and also from ihealthpod.com, the new podcast for health. I am very, very excited to be on the call with Will Graham, winner of The Biggest Loser 2010. Wil, welcome to the call.

Wil Graham: Hi Simon. How are you doing?

Simon: Yeah, I'm good, thank you. I'm really excited about this call, not only because obviously we've got The Biggest Loser currently airing at the start of January. Depending on when people listen to this, it may have already aired. But you have already gone through that process. So, how are you now, first of all, before we talk a little bit about where it all started? What are you getting up to now?

Wil: I'm in a really good place now Simon. I'm very happy. I've got a really good job. I'm working and I'm more involved in fitness and nutrition. I've even got my own show starting on the Active Channel at the end of January, 2012. So things are really, really looking up. But the whole thing has changed not just my life physically, but the direction that I'm taking has changed as well. So I'm really grateful. I'm so glad that I put myself through the show. [laughs]

Simon: Excellent. Let's move back a little bit, because not everyone who is listening is going to have seen the show and seen you on that. But I'm sure a lot of people listening would have done. Let's go back to about six months before The Biggest Loser show started. Where were you, emotionally and physically, then?

Wil: Oh, six months before The Biggest Loser started, I was in a really low place. I felt completely helpless. I was about 30st. I was 29st 6lb the last time I weighed myself. That was in January, 2010. The show started filming in August, 2010. So I went up and down between there. I just felt like life had started and finished without me even noticing. I just felt like that was what I was supposed to be doing. I was supposed to be overweight. I was supposed to feel depressed and unhappy.

Although I felt like food was my best friend, it was probably my worst enemy as well. So yeah, I was in a really bad place, Simon, really bad.

Simon: What do you put the main things down to that caused that?

Wil: Well, for me, I think my situation might have been a little bit different to some other people. But the trigger was probably very similar. I was a really fit and healthy teenager. Then, when I hit 19 or 20, I put on a lot of weight over a really short period of time. That was for a combination of reasons. It was because I changed my lifestyle. I went from studying and playing sports all the time to working really antisocial hours and doing a job that I thought I could just...it was doing birthday parties for Laser Quest. [laughs] I used to join in with every birthday party.

It was fine to begin with. But if you have 10 parties, that's 10 slices of cake and 10 hot dogs. It all piles up. So I put on weight really, really quickly.

Simon: Sorry to interrupt. So essentially, you had an environment change. Your environment changed and, as a result, the weight changed.

Wil: Yeah. It was two factors. It was the environment change of my day-to-day life going from school to work. I also became very depressed, because I lost my gran. My nana actually passed away. I didn't realize at the time, until I went through the show and had the counseling and everything that they provide you, that that was a trigger for me. So yeah, it was environment and also depression as well that made me put on weight very quickly. I put on over 10st in about a year and a half.

Simon: What kinds of things were you eating during that time? What would be the average day for you?

Wil: I was eating everything. I was like a Hoover. I would get up in the morning. I'm not exaggerating. I would have probably a whole loaf of bread with butter. I would make six or seven slices of toast and I would eat bread with butter as it was cooking. I'd have a full tin of beans and probably five or six eggs with that. That would just be for breakfast. I would probably have cereal and crisps as well. Then I would be snacking throughout the morning on whatever I could get my hands on, whether it was chocolate bars or more crisps or biscuits.

I would have a massive lunch, sometimes two. Where I worked for the last eight years before the show, they had a canteen. I was probably their best customer. I would go down and, if they had chili con carne and spaghetti Bolognese, I couldn't choose. So I would just have both. I would have a dessert as well.

Then I would snack for the rest of the day. I would go home and order a couple of family sized pizzas or something like that. I would eat those on my own as well. So, I was in a bad place. I think, as well, I used to drink a lot of pop, like Coke and Cherry-Aid, probably four or five liters a day.

Simon: Not many associate that with putting on weight, do they, with the drinks? People instantly think it's the food.

Wil: Yeah. Oh, it's definitely both, Simon, because of the amount of sugar in Coke and things like that. It didn't hit me, again, until the show. You have to keep a diary and things before you go on there. They actually poured the amount of sugar I was having from soft drinks into a bowl. It overflowed out of the bowl onto the table and onto the floor. It hit me like a brick in the face. I thought, "Oh my God. I'm actually killing myself." I had no idea. I didn't care. Or maybe I didn't know, but I just didn't care.

Simon: First of all, what exercise were you doing during that time?

Wil: Before the show I had a gym membership. If I'm very honest with myself, it was just a card in my wallet. I would go to the gym. I actually remember going to the gym with some friends. I wanted to brag and say, "I'm doing something about my weight. I'm going to the gym." I was crazy, Simon. I actually took a Snickers bar and ate it when I was on the treadmill once. I was in a really bad place. I used to kid myself and say I did exercise and this and that. But, if I'm honest with myself now, even going up and down the stairs was a bit of struggle.

So I didn't really do anything. When you get to the way that I was, obviously I'm not making excuses, but when you are as heavy as I was, you probably can't do exercise anyway. Your blood pressure would hit the roof. You would end up doing yourself more harm than good.

Simon: So where was the tipping point for you in terms of the show coming about? Where did you hear about it? What was the motivation for you to actually want to do that?

Wil: The honest answer is I don't know. I didn't know about The Biggest Loser in the UK. I always watched the American show. I always watched Australian show. I was a religious viewer. It sounds like a contradiction. I feel silly for saying it. But I would watch it whilst I was eating my takeaway or my kebab or whatever it was I was eating that night. Then I would think, "Oh, they are so lucky. I wish I could do that." For me, there was a trigger and a realization. The trigger was that my brother had a son. To begin with, I started thinking, "Well, hold on a minute, I'm not going to be around to see my nephew grow up."

That manifested into me thinking, "Well, what if I actually wanted kids myself? I can't have children." Number one, I wouldn't find anybody, partly because of the way I looked. But it was more so because of the way I felt about myself. I really hated myself.

I decided to do something about it. I just said, "Right." I tried every diet and failed. I went to NHS and I was approved for surgery. It normally takes six to 10 months to get approved and get funding for an NHS operation like bariatric surgery.

For me, I went at the beginning of March for my consultation with my GP. They refused me for a gastric band initially, because they said I was too heavy. I think my BMI was over 60. So they said it wouldn't help me. I would just liquidize food and stuff like that. But I got the funding within four weeks for a gastric bypass.

So what they were going to do was remove 90% of my stomach and then, after I lost a bit of weight, I would go back and have a full bypass. So I got approved for that at the very beginning of April, on the Friday. I went over to my parents on the Sunday, just to tell them, "Look, I'm having surgery. I'm going to change."

My mum and dad hit the roof. They said I was being lazy. I was like, "I'm trying to help myself." They said, "But you don't need this. This isn't for people like you. You are being lazy. You can change."

Genuinely Simon, to get away from them, I went to use their PC and a banner came up for The Biggest Loser. The rest is history. I applied. I didn't expect to hear anything. About four months later, I got my date through for the surgery. I had to choose either way if I go onto the show or take the surgery.

I thought, "You know what? I'm going to go on the show and give it one last try. If I can't do it without surgery, then I'll have it afterwards." Very luckily for me, it worked out.

Simon: It's one of those sliding doors moments. Have you seen that film?

Wil: Yeah. [laughs] I have seen that film. Yeah. It was totally a decision point for me in my life. I'm glad that I made the decision I did. But I know that surgery is the right choice for some people as well. Just luckily for me, it wouldn't have been the right choice. I'm so glad that there was that voice in the back of my head, which probably sounded a lot like my mum's. But I'm glad I took a chance, because, if you can do it, you should.

Simon: Definitely. So, we were talking about the darker side. Now you hit the show. You are in. You are exercising. We have seen that on the telly. It's intense. Obviously the training was hard on screen. What about some of the things we didn't see when the cameras weren't rolling?

Wil: I got to be honest with you, watching and to go back was pretty difficult. But one thing that really hit me was the fact that they don't show you the half of it. What they do show you is that everyone is working hard. What they don't show you is that you get up every morning at 6:30, seven days a week, whilst you are there. You work so hard. You're interviewed for hours and hours every day as well. But, you are in that gym six, seven, eight, nine hours a day minimum on top of doing challenges. You've got temptations.

It is emotionally and physically draining. It's hard enough for somebody, who's an athlete, to do the amount of exercise that we were doing. We were all super morbidly obese. So, without looking for the sympathy vote, it's that much harder.

When you find it difficult to get up in the morning without aching from exercise, because you are overweight, it's really difficult to really push yourself to get out of bed and know that you're going to be filmed crying and vomiting and being shouted at and told you are the only one who can change.

It's not for everybody. I'll be really honest. A lot of people said, "I don't know why you did that." It was just right for me. It's not the path that everybody should or would want to take. But for me, it was perfect.

Simon: Some people listening may be thinking, "Well, they had trainers all day. They were working out six, seven hours a day." Someone may be in the situation now, sitting there thinking, "I'm overweight. I've got this body and I need to

change it. But I haven't got that time on my hands." What would your advice be to them?

Wil: I think the advice I would give to them is probably the advice that I have given to a lot of people since I realized I should have listened a long, long time ago. You need to really think about that word selfish. You need to think about whether or not it has to be bad. You sometimes need to put yourself first. It's all very well and I totally understand some people have jobs and families. I was lucky that my job was quite understanding and I didn't have a family, who were relying on me.

But people get through things. I would much rather have gone through what I went through and come out the other end knowing that I'm going to be around a lot longer to support the people that I can than have not done it, because I'm scared of change, which is a big thing.

I'm certainly not saying that everybody should do it or everybody should apply. But, if you have got it in your mind that it would benefit you, then really, really think about whether or not there are reasons why you shouldn't do it. Ultimately, health and fitness are the most valuable things in your life.

You are no good to anybody if you don't have them. So, be selfish. It's not a bad word. Make choices that will benefit you and your loved ones in the long run.

Simon: Fantastic advice. So, tell me what the toughest challenge of all was, during the show, and why.

Wil: The toughest challenge of all for me and probably the most rewarding as well was one we did at RF Cranwell. My dad was in the Army. His dad was in the Navy. They probably wanted me to go in one of those. I never did, because of my weight or for whatever reason. But, we had to go to RF Cranwell and complete what they call The Ultimate Challenge, which is something that all pilots have to go through before they can pass their initiation to join the RAF. They must've wondered what was going on.

There was a bunch of really, really overweight people. There were seven of us left at that point. We were going to be doing exactly the same as what they did. Obviously we did it a lot slower. It was a lot harder for us. But that was definitely the toughest challenge.

We had to drag a trolley, which, in total, I think weighed about 300 or 400 kg, between the three of us. We had to drag it for miles and miles. In between there were obstacles and things like that. For me, that really, really stood out, just because it was physically demanding. But, fundamentally, if you didn't envisage yourself finishing, there is no way you would do it.

For me, I had a little bit of an agenda in my mind as well that I could maybe one day be fit enough to do things like my dad and stuff like that. So, it was the

toughest one and the most painful. I had blisters, not even for days, but for weeks afterwards. But it was so rewarding.

The feeling you get when you finish something that is beyond your comfort zone is unbelievable. Unbelievable. Six months before that, I wouldn't even have been able to walk to the bus stop. [laughs]

Simon: Definitely. Can you remind people what your starting weight was, before you started the show?

Wil: Yeah. Before the show, I was 29st 6lb. Even though you are not fit, you have to prove your fitness to get on the show. So I actually, luckily, lost a little bit of weight before I started the show. But, when you are over 24 or 25st, you can gain a stone and lose a stone in a couple of days anyway. So, I started the show at just under 25st. 24st 7lb I think I was.

Simon: When you were talking about that challenge, you hit on a couple of keywords, which were comfort zone. I think that, especially when people first start exercising, they don't want to take themselves out of that comfort zone I think almost because a lot of people think that it's dangerous, don't they?

Wil: Yeah. Oh, yeah. Yeah.

Simon: What would you say to someone that is going into the gym at the moment, just going on the cross trainer at a normal pace, watching the tellies or working out at home and not really getting their heart rate up? What is the little point of no return that you think is great for just getting people over the edge and actually realizing that you do need to push yourself out of your comfort zone to develop?

Wil: I can say this completely honestly, because it used to be me. If you are at the gym and you are going through the motions, you are not increasing your heart rate, you're not sweating and you are not finding it difficult, then you might as well just go home, because you will be burning exactly the same amount of calories being at home as you are in the gym. I really do believe in self visualization and setting yourself targets. I think that, for people who are starting out at the gym, if you have got a lot of weight to lose for example, don't go there and think, "Well, I've got 10st to lose." You're never going to lose 10st.

But, if you break it down into one stone or even half a stone, and you focus on that first goal, and then you reward yourself for that goal when you get there, the next one will be that little bit easier and a little bit more rewarding. Genuinely, before you know it, you're halfway there.

Then a couple of weeks or months later you are within grasping distance of your goal in the first place. So, be realistic with yourself. But also be honest as well. If you're going there to lose weight, then make sure you are losing it whilst you're there. Because otherwise, all you are doing is wasting your time and money and

you will hate yourself all that little bit extra for doing that. So, be honest with yourself is the best advice I can give.

Simon: What about people, who, when January comes or whatever time of year, go on a fad diet and don't want to incorporate exercise? I think a lot of people do that, don't they?

Wil: I did it a lot of times. You wouldn't believe it. I used to go on a cabbage soup diet and this diet and that diet. If I'm really honest with myself, they all worked at the time. Any diet will if you do it for a short period of time. But the problem is, when you stop, your body is used to such a small amount of calories or it is in starvation mode, that all you're going to do is put back on the way to you have lost, unless you are very lucky. Some people might be. I don't know.

For me, a fad diet is exactly what it says. It's a fad. There is no way that you can benefit in the long run from doing something that is making you use your body in a way that it is not built to be used. So, I think January is a perfect time of year to really start.

Just make changes. Make one change at a time. Continue with that change until you are comfortable with it. But, if you go on an extreme diet, the rebound is just as extreme afterwards.

Simon: It has got to be sustainable, hasn't it, something that is healthy, something that you can maintain and just continue doing on a long-term basis?

Wil: This is it, yeah. You have to do something that is sustainable. It's not about the quick wins. It's about the long-term benefit. There is a massive difference between losing 10 pounds in a week to fit into that top or that dress or whatever it is for some people, for one night. That's fine, if that's what you want to do. But a long run, you need to be honest with yourself and think, "Am I going to keep that 10 pounds off?" Think of the long-term and put yourself first. Just make those changes that are going to benefit you and that aren't going to be too impossible to keep on going with.

Simon: Definitely. What would be your average day of eating now? What would you do nutrition wise?

Wil: An average day for me is probably balanced luckily. I still love my food. I have to be honest, I do watch what I eat, probably about 80% of the time. A typical day during the week, I will get up. I will have a banana. I'll go to the gym and do my cardio. I come back. I have something like muesli, not a massive portion, but not a tiny one either. I'll eat enough to know that I have the fuel that I need for the day, usually with milk. I might also have some egg whites or, depending on how hungry I am, some nuts.

I have a snack during the morning. It's usually fruit in the morning, because the sugar keeps you going. I do like my coffee as well. I have to be honest. For

lunch, I have something light, maybe a jacket potato. I prefer sweet potato now, to be honest with you. It tastes like you are having something a bit naughtier.

Simon: It does, doesn't it? Yeah. Definitely.

Wil: Yeah. It does. I love it. I genuinely love sweet potatoes. I wish I knew about it years ago. [laughs]

Simon: It is. I think, once people change from normal potatoes to sweet potatoes, they are very surprised that actually how much better it tastes, especially with a few herbs and some black pepper and just mixed all up into a nice little combination. It's tasty, yeah.

Wil: Oh, it's immense honestly. Super foods are super foods for reason. So yeah, I'll have maybe sweet potato with either tuna or I might have a bit of mayonnaise or something like that. It really depends, or chicken. Then I have another snack again probably, if I'm very honest with myself, later on in the day, not for any other reason but that it keeps me awake, because of the sugar.

Simon: Yeah, because of your blood sugar. Yeah, definitely.

Wil: Yeah. Yeah. Then, for a meal in the evening, I probably lay off the heavier potato and pastas in the evening and have something like fish with loads and loads of vegetables. I absolutely love them. There are so many vegetables that I'll make and I'll eat them all until I am full up.

Simon: What would you say to someone, at the moment? Obviously, for example, my diet is very vegetable and protein-based. But a lot of people have this taste bud thing, don't they, where they even think about vegetables and they don't want to eat them. What would you say to someone, who is not including vegetables in their diet?

Wil: I would say they are crazy and just give it a go. Please, just give it a go. It's not because I'm saying vegetables are amazing. They are. But that's not what I'm saying to you. Basically, they do taste nice. But more than that, they make you feel better. The following day or two days later, if you continue to eat things like vegetables you will start to enjoy them, because a tame vegetable is very different to a vegetable that is cooked a certain way with pepper. I'm a real stickler for chili. I love chili. I don't know why.

Simon: Oh, I love it. I love all hot food. Even my housemate Paris got me a massive bag for Christmas of these chilis, jalapenos, hot sauces. Honestly, you can take a normal vegetable, a normal vegetable combination and you can completely transform the taste just by adding some different flavors in, like chili, can't you?

Wil: Yeah. Oh, I love it. I love it. So, anything with spice I think makes the vegetable not just bearable, but it makes it tasty. I've got to be honest, before I

would always eat my meat first. I'd be like, "Oh, I'll leave the vegetables until last, because hopefully I will be full up and I won't have to eat them." It's the first thing I go for now, because when you get to appreciate... parsnips as well are another thing for me. I just love them with garlic. There are so many combinations that you can have. Just give it a go, because I think you'll surprise yourself.

You don't have to have mashed this or mashed that. You don't even have to have it raw all the time. There are so many different things you can do with vegetables. They are amazing, genuinely.

Simon: So, how did it feel on that final weigh-in?

Wil: Oh, to be honest, right up to the point where I found out how much I had lost, I didn't know that I had won. I'm being very, very truthful here. I wasn't in it to win. The only thing I wanted to win, the only person I wanted to beat was myself. When Davina said to me, "You have lost this much," I was just over the moon. I went completely numb. Then I went from being numb, to being just ecstatic. My family was there. They were in tears. I was in tears.

All of the other contestants were really, really happy for me. I just thought, "Wow, I've done it. I've done something I never thought I would be able to do. I am a more reasonable weight."

It wasn't even about the money, Simon. It was just the fact that I had changed my life. It didn't hit me until I knew that I had won, that I had actually changed it.

Simon: When you finished the show, obviously you then go into a new routine completely. You have obviously been in isolation essentially for all this time on the show. How was it getting going into normal life and implementing what you had learned? Did you find it easy?

Wil: Yeah. I was really worried about that. No. Well yeah, I did actually. But I was really, really worried about it. When you are there you think, "Well, there is a list and you've got an advisor and you see a doctor and you've got the other contestants, who help you as well." But afterwards, actually I was really well-equipped. I haven't always lost weight, every single week, because I don't need to particularly. But, I've always had an awareness for what I'm eating. I know that, first and foremost, food is a love of mine. I love food. But it's also fuel.

If I want to feel good and I want to have a good day, then I need to make the right choices. Like I said before, probably 80% of the time I'm really, really good. The other 20%, I'm being very honest, I will eat what I want.

If I want a slice of cake, or I want something that I know is not really going to benefit me, but I'm being sociable or I'm at the cinema or whatever it is, I'll have it. I'll just need to work that little bit harder when I'm in the gym next time so that I can enjoy it again. There will always be a reason to have something. If you stick to a diet 100% of the time, then my hat goes off to you.

But if you can't, it's not the end of the world. You can get back on it afterwards. Have your cheat day or have your good time. Just crack on. I found it empowering, to be honest, the first time that I went out and I had a dessert, even though I had known I had eaten what I needed that day.

The next day I got up. I didn't feel bad. I went the gym and I got back on my routine. I think I'm fortunate to have gone on the show and been equipped the way that I was. But I'm in a place now where I can take some of the credit myself, to be honest. It's still a choice that you make every time.

I've obviously got the ability to be really overweight. But I won't do it. I trust myself to know that I'm happier the way I am than the way I was. That just keeps me going.

Simon: Aside from obviously the weight, which is fantastic, once you got out, what other things did you start to notice had changed, like, for example, obviously your confidence? What else just fell into place and you were like, "Oh my God. This is amazing"?

Wil: To be honest, about everything changed. I had been overweight all of my adult life. I just felt like the world owed me something. I felt that people were judging me. They probably were. But only half of that was because of the way I looked. The other half was because of the way I acted, because of the paranoia that I had, because of my size. But after the show, and after reaching a normal weight, it's really amazing. It sounds silly. But the big things, obviously for me are that I can spend more time with family and friends, because I don't make excuses. I'm not ashamed of how I look.

But the little thing and probably the more important thing is that I can get on a bus. I can sit on a bus seat. If the bus is packed someone will come and sit next to me. Before, if I ever was on any form of public transport, if mine was the only seat and the person who came on had not sat down all day, they just would not sit next to me.

Like I said, that was 50% because of them. But the other 50% was because of me. I made them judge me by the way that I acted and just the aura that I gave off. Everything. Shopping, when I would go shopping before, I would not look at the close. I would look at the sizes, because I had to take a five, six or seven XL and there aren't many shops that do clothes that would have fit me. It's horrible.

So you go in and you wear the same clothes over and over again. Whereas now, it was really alien to me. I actually bought something from ZARA, that's for really skinny people. I went there, and obviously I'm not a medium now, I'm an XL in ZARA, but I'm an L in other shops. I can pick what clothes I want to wear and it's really empowering and it makes the sweat and the tears worth it. It really, really does. I wish I'd known I'd feel this good, because I would have done it years ago.

Simon: You've obviously, probably, found now, as I teach people, that once they lose weight, you get a shift in terms of helping other people. Then that gives you a sense of satisfaction as well. Obviously you've inspired a lot of people, can you tell us a little bit about that and how that's really helped and how you can shift from it being about yourself to other people?

Wil: Yeah, for me one of the things I'm most grateful for from doing the show is the fact that I have been able to do a lot of charitable things and I've been able to help a lot of people who are in the same situation as me and the way that I was before. Facebook and Twitter is just outstanding. I wish I'd used that more because I'm so touched by the well-dones and the congratulations and things like that.

But I'm also really grateful when people come to me and they ask me about what I did to change because they'd love to be able to do it for themselves. It's a really nice thing and I'll give you a really quick example.

I spoke to a mum and her son quite a few months ago, nearly 10 months ago now, and they were both really overweight. Her son was 15 and he was 28 stone and she was 26 stone. Just from speaking to them and from them knowing that they can come and talk to me and I know how they feel... I know how hard it is.

They've lost a lot of weight. Her son's 18 stone now. He's still heavy, but he's able to do what everyone else his age does. She's down to 20 stone.

She's still doing the things that she has to do as a mum as someone who works and things like that. So on a personal level I just feel really grateful that I'm able to pass on the things I've learned to people that will benefit from it.

And hopefully they'll benefit from it in a way that I would have benefitted from as well if I'd had known that I could go to someone.

So I love it when people approach me. It's not just about the well done. I also get people coming up to me in the supermarket and say to me, "You should have cake in your trolley." And I don't mind that either.

[laughter]

Wil: Because it means they care. But I don't put the cake back. But it's really, really amazing to know that I can help people.

Simon: Right. So tell us, just quickly, what your seven-day exercise routine is at the moment and also a good workout that you really enjoy that someone could quickly get into.

Wil: I've got to be honest, one of the biggest things I thought I'd never say but I really stand by is cardio and resistance. I don't think one should go without the other. So for me a typical day, Monday through Friday, I will go to the gym every weekday in the morning before work. It's just a habit that I'm in. It sounds a bit

excessive but it's just because I enjoy it more than because I feel that I need to do it. There's no excuse. You can make time if you want to change. So I go five days a week in the morning and then I'll go two or three times in the evening.

And I'll make sure that every morning I do something cardio based, spinning or an ab circuit. Then in the evenings I'll do something more resistance-based.

So I'll do things like resistance circuits or power bag classes. I'm really lucky that [audio skips] were really well equipped. For me though, running or even starting out walking is the best standard exercise you can kick start with, simply because anybody can do it.

When I started, Simon, I was too heavy to go to the gym because the treadmill was only 26 or 27 stone. You can walk in your garden, if you've got a big garden. You can walk around the block. When you feel comfortable and that level of fitness is there a little bit more, you can start to jog for five seconds or ten seconds and just build it up that way.

So I really stand by jogging, I think it's a great, free and a really useful exercise to get into the habit of doing. I can't do it without music though. So if you're going to jog I'd recommend you get an mp3 player or something.

Simon: Oh, tell us what your power songs would be, or your album. We need to know this.

Wil: Do you know what? You're going to think I'm weird because it's almost a bit of schizophrenic. I listen to quite slow music when I jog.

Simon: Really?

Wil: Yeah, there's a reason for it. It's because the beat means... James Morrison...

Simon: Oh, I went to see him live in Bath, absolutely brilliant.

Wil: He's awesome, isn't he?

Simon: Mm-hmm.

Wil: But if you listen to his music, it's actually -- if you [audio breaks up] it, all of his music is the same as running at about 10 kilometers and a half. [audio breaks up] into the beat. So I'm into a lot of soul music. But if I'm going to really, really blitz it, if I'm doing a cardio blast... I love my boxing as well, by the way, I absolutely love it. If I'm going to do a cardio blast I've got to say the best music for me is definitely hip hop music. Just, again, because of the beat. It keeps me going and it just keeps me interested as well. I sometimes forget that I'm in a gym and I'll just try and think I'm Eminem and stuff like that.

I obviously get funny looks, "Now, remember, there are people around me, you need to stop it." But yeah, I listen to a lot of [audio cuts out] music when I work out. And when I'm running I'll listen to, probably, James Morrison, anything soul-based, Otis Redding, just because that music keeps me calm.

It's probably not the same for everybody because some people prefer really, really fast-paced music to go with [audio cuts out] ...

[crosstalk]

Wil: But for me it just keeps me constant.

Simon: For me it's dance music. So I probably wouldn't listen to anything slow depending on the type of workout. So I think, yeah, you are right, everyone's different. But it's quite interesting to hear your thoughts. And thumbs up to James Morrison, he's great.

Wil: Oh, he's awesome. Yeah. I like dub step music, actually. I feel like I shouldn't be listening to it because I'm 30, but I do like dub step music. I'm starting to get into it. I'd never buy dub step, but when it's on and you're running, that's another one that just... If you're there, you want a strong finish, something really dance [audio cuts out] is really, really good to get out a strong finish.

Simon: On the night plus thing they have the power song thing, don't they? So you just hit a button and it's a "when you need it" kind of song, which is like Bat Out of Hell or something for most people.

Wil: Yeah. [laughter]

Simon: What would you advise be to someone who's finding it really hard to just get started?

Wil: I think my advice to someone to just trying to get started is, again, it's about putting yourself first. If you're ready to make a change then don't wait to do it. For me, it sounds quite harsh but I just wasn't ready to make the changes that were offered to me up until last year. There was no point in anybody telling me anything because I just didn't want to listen. I wasn't ready to change. I was scared because being overweight was my identity and all that sort of thing.

But for anyone who does want to change, just do it. Don't think about it, make those changes. Put yourself first, think about the end result, and keep envisioning yourself the way you want to be. If the way that you want to be. Because if you get [audio cuts out] every time you compare yourself, periodically, to how you want to be and where you are, you're just a little bit closer. And it becomes a little bit easier.

You have to put yourself first. You have to be a little bit selfish. And you have to start making choices that are going to benefit you tomorrow rather than feed your stomach today.

That's the biggest thing. I wish I'd done it years ago. I really do, Simon, because if I had I wouldn't have wasted my 20s feeling sorry for myself and hiding away from everybody.

I'm lucky, I will make up for it, don't get me wrong. But I wish I hadn't done that. And for anybody who listens to this and thinks, "I'm ready to change," if you're ready, do it. Don't waste another day feeling unhappy. Start achieving, believe in yourself, and go for it, because you'll do it. You will do it. I really, really believe that.

Simon: That's fantastic advice. You were saying, just then, that you're not going to waste any time and you're quite assertive about that. And that's great. So tell us and everyone that's listening about what is happening now. What is Wil Graham moving forward into 2012? What impact are you going to be making?

Wil: I've been really lucky. I've been quite picky, not in a rude way. But I have been asked to do a few different things since the show ended back in March. But I made a decision to only do things that would benefit myself and other people. So I'm going to be doing a lot of work for Unicef and they've asked me to be UK ambassador. I'll be doing events for them, things. The first one I did was actually The Royal Parks Half Marathon back in November. They were a great charity.

I'm also starting to write for Workout Magazine. So I've got a monthly column with them. That's basically just my opinion as someone who -- I'm not a fitness expert. I'm a fitness user. And there are a lot of experts out there, personal trainers.

But I'm actually someone who's benefitted from it and I actually will continue to benefit from it. But the biggest thing, the thing I'm probably proudest of is the fact that I've also been given my own show on the access channel. That was cool, Wil Graham No Excuse [audio cuts out] at the end of January.

It's going to be a weekly show and I'm contracted until the end of April, which is promising. Then I'm basically going to go and meet people who are struggling with fitness and nutrition and I'm going to help them. Initially it may be overweight people, but it will also be people whose situations are different.

I come from a background, we were not well off. I still [audio cuts out] knowing what I know now I can help people equip themselves to make choices that will benefit them with fitness and nutrition. That's a big thing [audio cuts out] be doing next year. So I can't wait.

Then, on top of that, I've also been asked to go back on the next few Biggest Losers and stuff like that as a motivator and stuff. Yeah, there's so much happening next year. I really, really can't wait for it. I'm genuinely excited.

On top of that, I do some motivational speaking and I'm hoping to go on a circuit for that, definitely in UK, but potentially in North America as well. I'm in talks for

that at the moment. So there's just a lot going on. And I've still got my day job because I've got bills to pay.

[laughter]

Simon: Wow, that's some amazing stuff you've got going on. You're going to just rock on in 2012. Well, it's been a fantastic amount of information for everyone. If anyone's listening and hasn't been motivated by that I would be incredibly surprised because some of the information there is just awesome.

Finally, wrapping up, if you could put together your ultimate lunch box, five vegetables, one source of protein, and some dressing, what would it be?

Wil: OK. Five vegetables, it would definitely be broccoli. I'd have some sweet potato in there.

Simon: Boom, active carbs. Great.

Wil: Parsnip, is that too many carbs? But I just love them. Spinach.

Simon: Yeah, lot of greens. One more.

Wil: And I think probably my next favorite one... Am I allowed to have lettuce?

Simon: Yep.

Wil: I love lettuce. So I'd probably have lettuce.

Simon: It'd be a very leafy box, but yeah.

Wil: In fact, I'll swap the lettuce for beet root. I like beet root.

Simon: OK. Love it. Then what would your protein be?

Wil: My protein would definitely be turkey.

Simon: And what about your dressing? Any kind of pepper or hot sauces or cheese?

Wil: I'm into my spice, so it would definitely, 100 percent, be a hot chili sauce with some pepper.

Simon: Awesome. Great. That was Will Graham's lunch box, right there. So you get making that and then I'll have that tomorrow. Awesome. Well Wil, thank you very much. We're looking forward to seeing you on screen again. And with your new program.

Any websites you want to tell people about or how they can get in touch with you?

Wil: Yeah, I'm on my Twitter. So that's wil--graham. I'm also on Facebook, feel free to look me up, it's just Wil Graham, again. And my website is basic but it's wilgraham.co.uk. So if you've got time I'd love for you to have a look. And please feel free to get in touch. I would really love to speak to anybody who has any opinions or advice or anything at all. Please feel free to get in touch.

Simon: Great. And guys, if you want to comment in the comments box below. Also, I'm sure Wil will pop on the lunch box type page and also the iHealth pod page and be involved there as well. Again, Wil thank you very much for your time and to everyone that's listening.

Wil: All right. Thank you, Simon. And guys, trust this man. What he's telling you is right. [laughs] I wish I'd known, genuinely, it's amazing. Thank you so much for having me, Simon. Have a really