

EPISODE 173**[INTRODUCTION]**

[0:00:11.2] AVH: Alright, Leo Vassershteyn is the owner of and personal trainer at Iron Lion Gym in Mill Valley California. He has degrees in Psychology and Exercise Biology from University of California Davis and he is very passionate about functional, primal movement and health. He is a regular contributor to Paleo Magazine, offering up lessons on how to move and build strength with functional primal methods and you may recognize him as the guy that's always swinging those crazy maces around.

He gave me a quick lesson on those things at Paleo FX and let me tell you, they're both more difficult and more fun than they look so if you have a chance to train with him or try your hand at those maces, you should definitely give it a shot. Like I said, I managed to catch up with him in May and talk a bit about primal movement and as usual, Leo has lots of information and lots to say.

He definitely speaks his mind. We both have some opinions on running it seems. Anyway, we'll get into that, if you enjoy this interview with Leo, you can catch up on all of his articles in Paleo Magazine if you subscribe either to the digital or print issue and subscription start at just 14.95.

You basically can afford not to subscribe to the magazine and get all of these awesome articles on health and fitness and the latest nutrition research. Not to mention hundreds of amazing recipes. You can find out more and subscribe at paleomagonline.com and here we go, here's my interview with The Iron Lion.

[INTERVIEW]

[0:02:05.6] AVH: Alright, we're here at Paleo FX, we're at the Paleo Magazine booth, I'm here with Leo. He just did a primal movement patterns demo for folks and tell us a little bit first about what you were doing?

[0:02:19.4] LV: Okay, it wasn't really that structured, what I like to do is I like to pick a random volunteer to abuse in front of a crowd.

[0:02:26.7] AVH: Including me for a little bit.

[0:02:28.0] LV: Yes, including you for a little bit. You know, I just like to take a look at their movement and see if there's something that we can extrapolate for a lesson for everybody else in the group.

[0:02:41.6] AVH: Tell me generally high level, what do you mean when you say primal movements?

[0:02:47.8] LV: Okay, well first, I want to address the fact that you know, when we commonly, like if you were to type in your Google search, finding movement patterns, you get the push, pull, twist, gate, squat, hinge and all those and really, those are not primal movements. I would say the squat is and the gate is. Those are the only two on that list.

[0:03:10.4] AVH: What's gate?

[0:03:11.2] LV: Gate is like walking and running.

[0:03:12.3] AVH: It's just yeah, propelling yourself.

[0:03:14.4] LV: Propelling yourself locomotion.

[0:03:15.6] AVH: Okay.

[0:03:17.3] LV: There's a lot of work to be done within the context of that but I'll explain the importance of that but all those, the other five which are not gate and squat are not really primal movement patterns, what those are, are compound exercise patterns. This is the bench press, pushup, it's your pull-up, it's your row, the twist is like doing those things on the ground when you're sitting on the ball and for some reason are called Russian twists even though I've never met a true Russian that does that.

[0:03:46.6] AVH: Yeah, you take that personally right?

[0:03:48.6] LV: I take that very personally, that's more of that rocky four shit.

[0:03:53.1] AVH: Okay, alright. Yup.

[0:03:56.0] LV: Yeah, but the reality is that what true primal movement is, it's the developmental path of the movement of modern homosapien. You know, when I started off saying is what makes humans unique in the animal kingdom. What's the main difference that we have from say monkeys.

And that's our brain. Our brain is much larger and because of that, head volumes is an issue, that's why childbirth is painful but –

[0:04:25.7] AVH: Yeah, why is it so painful though?

[0:04:27.0] LV: Because we have big brains. They have big brains for our bodies. Now, I mean, lots of animals have big heads but they don't have big brains necessarily, they just have thick skulls, that's where the crazy started.

But because of that, when a monkey's born, 90% of its brain is melamine, meaning that the fat sheets around the neurons and the nerves, they're already programmed to do what they're going to do, it's a lot of instinctual behavior, automatically clings onto its mommy. Figures things out on its own.

Our brain is like you know, is like an open source operating system. You know, we're born with just some basic programs and one of those programs is motor learning. We don't come with a motor program, we come with a program that's supposed to learn movement and at the base of that program –

[0:05:23.2] AVH: That's why we for example, we aren't born learning how to swim.

[0:05:28.4] LV: Exactly.

[0:05:29.1] AVH: We have to be taught that.

[0:05:30.3] LV: We're born with a brain that can take up that information and learn it. Now, what we see is around six months, baby starts sitting up and learning to crawl. Now, the thing is that their muscles are so weak the only way they figure out really good strategies for staying stable because they don't have a muscular skeleton system that can have compensation patterns yet.

It is true that you know, they say that the longer your kids crawl, the better and it's because crawling really allows them to learn contralateral counter balance which as we saw in our movement demo so people have trouble with. You know, you got a question.

[0:06:11.5] AVH: Yeah, I was going to say so, the first – I mean, kind of the first step with learning some of this primal movements though is having your movements already evaluated and figuring out where you are to begin with, is that right?

[0:06:21.8] LV: Exactly. The squat is a really good diagnostic tool. I find the squat and the single leg hinge, like the single leg single arm deadlift, I really like as a screening tool, the windmill, the kettle bell I think is a great one, the Turkish get up. In fact, all time, like Ukrainian strong man circus gyms, that's –

They used to use the Turkish getup once that was available after the 1920's. They started using that as a way to screen potential people to want to become and join their little troupe and work out with them.

[0:06:56.1] AVH: What makes this tough though is if I want to have someone evaluate my movement patterns before I look on this and approve it. I can't necessarily just walk in to any gym because a lot of coaches don't know the problem.

You walk into a gym and see somebody teaching, somebody having to do a squat and not all the time but, sometimes right? How do you find somebody who is knowledgeable that can help you?

[0:07:17.7] LV: I would look – you know, I look for people that study FMS.

[0:07:22.9] AVH: Okay.

[0:07:23.2] LV: Functional Movement Systems, you know, Greg Cook. I think that somebody's like an FMS level two so they cannot just put you through the functional movement screen but they could do the why balance test on you.

[0:07:35.0] AVH: What's that?

[0:07:36.5] LV: The Y Balance test, that's the level two screen on the FMS, it's basically where you're bouncing on one foot and searching different check points around you, floating like – it tests the mobility, balance, motor control, things like that so it's not – I mean, finding people that can test those is more than one thing.

But also finding people that can extrapolate the meaning from that because you know, one of the things I ask is if somebody scores a 21 on the FMS which is like a perfect score, it doesn't mean that they don't have pain, it doesn't mean that they're super strong, no.

What it means is that they're movement literate. The FMS is like you know, they have reading test for literacy, well, the FMS is like a literacy test for your movement.

[0:08:23.3] AVH: Okay.

[0:08:24.5] LV: It just means that hey, if I show somebody how to do something, they're going to be able to reproduce it well, it means that their motor control system is well developed. You know, they're able to have good body control and good body awareness.

[0:08:38.6] AVH: At your gym, when you have people coming in, asking for help. Do you see certain patterns, things that are recurring that are issues, or is it all across the board?

[0:08:47.2] LV: Absolutely.

[0:08:48.3] AVH: Okay, what do you see the most?

[0:08:49.9] LV: For example, overwhelmingly, with people that are right side dominant, if they do the single leg, single arm deadlift and this is the version of it where you're standing on your left leg and holding the kettle bell with your right hand and vice-versa.

Overwhelmingly, their worse on the right leg. The one case, we have one gentleman who is really good, he is a really good mover and he was doing that test, did it perfectly in the left leg. What I mean by perfectly, is his body turned into a see saw from his heel to his knee, to his hip, to the top of his head was a straight line. The floating leg, right? He's got his right leg up and from that right heel to his head, it's a straight line.

That's what we look for. Does it automatically without me having to coach him. On the left side, there is a little bit of a lag between lifting on the right side, there is a bit of a lag between lifting his left leg and doing the movement and also a little bit of thrust rotation running the top.

We see that overwhelmingly. You know, when people are used to throwing with the right hand, and used to doing right hand dominant activities, their body has a rotational bias to the left and they're not so good stabilizing that way. Also, the actual plains of the body cross through the mid-section.

The right hand corresponds to the left leg and vice versa and that's where gate is important. So, when we walk, we counter balance, right? One of the things that we see happen when people are very deconditioned when they're older, they'll stop counter balancing to walk, like everybody's seen like the old guy that shuffles and moves his left arm forward and moves his left leg forward, and moves his right arm forward and when you know, we see when kids are just learning how to walk, they exhibit that when they're cruising and then they learn to counter balance and that's why the crawling phase is so important.

Because like my son, he didn't start walking till he was 17 months which is on long end, it's almost a year and a half but he almost instantly counter balanced when he walked.

[0:11:01.8] AVH: He was crawling, running around and crawling and playing outside with you all the time, right? That's why he was crawling so much.

[0:11:06.3] LV: Exactly that. You know, my mom's serious because he's raised by cats, he has like two cats around him when he's doing cat behavior and there's something to that.

[0:11:14.3] AVH: For those of us who are not old and are not young and we're kind of in the middle and we think we're relatively healthy, whatever, we're moving through our lives with a couple of aches and pains. What are the biggest problems, what are the things we're doing wrong, how are we walking wrong, how are we sitting wrong, what are we doing that's contributing to this kind of chronic pain?

[0:11:32.7] LV: Alignment is important and the biggest thing I see is people walking like ducks with their feet turned out, that's a huge problem. You know, somebody who is saying in the workshop, not everybody's the same, people have different hip joints, people have different this and that. Bull shit. No, we are all the same, we're all the same skeleton, we have the same amount of bonds in our hand, same amount of bones in our feet, the way those bones choose to range.

A lot of it is developmental. Like there is variance. I will agree that some – not every trochanter and epicondyle are shaped the same. Not every hip joint like acid tabulate shaped the same but the way that hip folds and rotates is developmental. If you look at babies, they do like – if you look at toddlers, they pretty much all move the same, they all squat the same, they all run the same, they all, you know, and what I see is like the more you let them move like with my son, you know, the more he moved, the more he just gravitated toward running with his feet straight.

He's almost three now, runs with his feet straight, when he was two, it was not the case. You put him in a clunky shoe, he'll turn his feet out again. But when he can use his feet, he likes to run with his feet straight. Also, kids like to squat with their feet straight.

You know, not at first, not all the time, it's not 100% necessary but I think that we should be able to squat with our feet straight and with our knees kind of lined up over the second and third toe.

Where we saw this and this is really interesting is we had somebody who is a yoga instructor in the demo there.

You know, I always like taking the people to think that they're really good movers and picking them apart.

[0:13:12.3] AVH: See what's flexible and.

[0:13:13.7] LV: Yeah, super flexible and their trainers and you know.

[0:13:17.2] AVH: You just like taking people apart don't you?

[0:13:18.5] LV: Yeah, but it's fun to knock egos down a little bit but what we saw that – I see this a lot. This is partly because of bad coaching like you know, in the paleo community, we hopefully are all starting to know that this dumb idea of the knees shouldn't pass over the toes is a bunch of nonsense.

I'll debunk that by telling you where it came from was that when all of the certifications formed, it was before NASM was ACE and NSCA and all of that. They were looking for university backed research around exercise. Back then, there really wasn't any. There's not much even now. It's a young science, you know, just when I was at UC Davis, it was not too long ago, they were telling us that animal fats are bad for us and that that's what gives us high cholesterol and makes us fat and this was like –

This was like 2008, still pedaling this crowd. Exercise biology major, this isn't even movement related one, this is biology. Also, there's no class in the university that's going to teach you how to squat and how to deadlift.

[0:14:25.1] AVH: Unfortunately because we'd all go to that class, that's a great idea.

[0:14:27.6] LV: We'd all go to that class and then we get a bunch of crappy instructors because what I saw with one guy, he actually had a perfect squat, he just had his knees shoved out way too far apart because he was coached to do it that way.

I think that there is a difference between what people do at the elite level and what we should do for our health like you know, what people do at the elite level is sustainable, they'd be able to do it well into their 40's and 50's and even 60's. If they can't, then that tells you everything you need to know right there about what their practice is doing to their body.

[0:15:04.6] AVH: You contribute to Paleo Magazine and you show us all kinds of different movements and exercises we can do, can you talk a little bit about – and also if you follow Leo on Instagram which you should – he always is doing some cool stuff with cool equipment but talk a little bit about some of this, I guess, to the rest of us, A-typical movements and also equipment that you use?

[0:15:26.2] LV: Equipment, okay, you know, one of the things that a lot of people in the paleo community would gravitate toward is CrossFit. You know, yes, it's closer to primal movement than going to the gym and working on novelist machines and reading People Magazine while you're in the elliptical.

But, it's not really primal movement in the sense that first of all, everything is on the sagittal plane 100%. You know, you don't find.

[0:15:50.4] AVH: Just for the listeners, that's forward and back right?

[0:15:53.0] LV: Forward and back, yeah. Also, there's very little movement that's contralateral or unilateral. Using one side of the body, that's that I don't do it, we're saying that there's not enough of it. Also, a lot of compression based modalities versus distraction which compression is compression of the joint surfaces and distraction is pulling apart the joints here, this is like, when you swing a kettle bell for example.

Your shoulder experiences distraction. If you are doing a pullup, your shoulder experiences distraction. I think the company that as far as the fitness brand that I think is doing the right thing is On It, it does a lot of stuff with the club bells which what's more primal than a giant club right?

That was the first type of blunt force tool that primates used and it's based on something that's just age old in our evolution. The other thing they use is may spells which is really cool and those are just heavy maces and those have been around since ancient Hindu times, the Indian deity Hanuman is depicted holding – They have like this ornate decorated maces.

[0:17:00.8] AVH: But did he use it as – well, I mean, he didn't use it for exercise but have people used this piece for exercise or was it ever for anything else?

[0:17:08.8] LV: No that's actually what it was originally for is for conditioning the body for holding melee weapons and the Persians would use the wheels which are the older version of your kind of like Indian clubs. So, Indians would use club – in India, they use clubs and in Ancient Persia, the use wheels and they use it to condition the wrestlers and they would train them for combat.

Even Romans were known to train with weapons that were twice as heavy is what they brought to combat. That's why baseball players use weighted bats and everything. This is an age-old practice but the really nice thing is when you use heavy maces and clubs, you're not only working on rotation of the spine with a lot of this movement which is very important to have but also rotation of the shoulder.

One of the things I brought up today is that the hip joints and the shoulder joints and ball and socket joints, they're synovial, they move in all directions, why are we training our ball and socket joints like they're hinge joints? When you're doing mills with a steel club or 360 swings with a mace, you are using a lot of rotational power of the shoulder and restoring a lot of that rotational ability and thoracic mobility.

Also, you know, there's a lot of unconventional kettle bell work that starts to incorporate a lot of that. Some are big proponent of using kettlebells but not the way the CrossFit does because I don't know if there's a single physical discipline that they haven't butchered yet.

[0:18:42.6] AVH: Right, we're getting in to it.

[0:18:45.0] LV: Get right into it. But, the idea is that first of all, kettlebells, when they originally – the farm boys did our heart style kettle bell stuff, they never did two hand kettle bell swings. That's actually relatively new from when you know, Povel Setsunin westernized the kettle bell swing and that's not to knock the two-hand swing. I think it's great but I think that what's going to tell you a lot more about how somebody moves is if they swing with one arm and can they switch mid-air. That's something a lot of people have trouble with and when I knock on CrossFit it's the whole overhead swing and there's a lot of debate about that.

I am a proponent of the Russian swing so I think if you could swing it to your eye level, it's time for either a heavier kettle bell or you should try to snatch it because snatching it you can actually position your shoulder in a really good stable position where even if you have it land in there pretty forcefully, your shoulder is still stable like one thing is for certain and everybody agrees on with the American swing is that you have to have precise timing and ability and control.

And even then, it's a little bit dangerous so if you do it under metabolic load, you're putting yourself at risk and you know as far as which one is superior, Russian swing they test it on force plates could produce as much force as a max effort dead lift and the American swing does not even come close. The only reason you're able to go over your head is because that kettle bell is really light.

[0:20:13.5] AVH: Interesting.

[0:20:15.0] LV: So the other thing that should follow is if you do a proper swing, that kettle bell should slightly flip up at the top of the swing. It should follow the path of your arm and your wrist. If it droops down it's because you're lifting it over your arms and your shoulders too much. The other thing I see a lot around here is people squatting their swing. Too much knee bend and that comes from the American swing. You know there has to be a lot more articulation with the hip.

And even there should be a little knee bend as you receive the kettle bell and then the hip and the knee should straighten even as the kettle bell goes back and you should lean over it. So, a good 20, 10 degrees then propel it forward and you become more efficient that way but these are now we're talking about exercises. When we get into primal movement, one thing that's going to determine it is the screening tool is right.

You want a trainer that is pretty well versed on this stuff and part of it is getting down there and crawling. Say you've got somebody with knee issues, hip issues, back issues, they can't crawl and if you think about if you work with older clients, they have grandkids that they need to keep up with. So, a couple of the movements that I really like for restoring these patterns is movements that allow you to go through that whole infant, child, toddler developmental path.

But adapted to a more mature nervous system like crawling on your hands and knees is going to be too easy for us. It's not going to do much but the bear crawl where you lift the knees off the ground and then you try to keep your knees tracking in alignment with the same alignment with your toes as you would if you are standing on top of it. So, over the second and the third of the toes and keeping your hands in alignment and keeping it evenly distributed between your arms and your legs.

And what you will notice there might be some A-symmetry so if your left leg moves with your right arm and vice-versa, the left arm moves with the right leg so they should move at the same time, it should be smooth. You should be able to balance a glass of water on your back while you are doing that and until you got – and before you could do that, you haven't mastered it and it's something that is challenging for both de-conditioned people and 40 to 50 year olds.

Like that person I was saying like, when I like to call people out because they are having trouble keeping their knees in which is bear crawling and then with that correspondence is that if people's knees tend to rotate out, that's dysfunction in the hip flex. So that is one of the things that we are looking to restore by keeping that alignment and actually by squatting. I see a lot of people squat with their knees way out even if their feet are straight.

And the problem with that is then you are having inefficient hip flexion so in an ideal set up and I am not saying that everybody should go and do this, I am saying that everybody should go and work toward this, you should be able to squat with your knees retracting over the feet and with your feet straight and what that requires is that your core is communicating with the hips is communicating with the feet.

So, the hips and the knees and the ankles are all folding at the exact timing to the exact extent of mobility and even if you have somebody with really long femurs, part of it is that pelvic tilt. There's a lot of components to it, the sacrum is a huge component to it but I am not saying that you can't have your feet turned out while they are working toward this but as a goal, you do want to get everybody squatting in the same way.

[0:23:53.7] AVH: Okay, so talking about squatting, if our listeners are maybe into CrossFit, maybe they are into power lifting, maybe they are into yoga whatever, they like what they like and they are going to keep doing it but they want to work on their mobility and they want to maybe have less pain. They want to have better movement in the sports that they do, how do you suggest they incorporate primal movement or maybe some of these kettle bell stuff, maybe some of these unilateral stuff, how do they incorporate some of that primal practical stuff into whatever they are training already is?

[0:24:28.1] LV: Well it's incorporate into it is exactly what I would do and I am not saying that you should stop doing what you're doing by any means. You know if you love your yoga, if you love your CrossFit absolutely do it. My thing is I tend to not be too dogmatic about anything. I like to borrow from everything and my goal when I am training is always better movement but if you want to stick with your system, one of the things was when I took Kelly Star for that workshop on mobility.

You know the CrossFit mobility one, you know he's got all of these things, like smashing this and stretching that. The people are asking like, "Hey how do we get people to do this?" and his thing is spent 15 minutes a day smashing this or stretching that or accumulating time in this position. His first video was just a 10-minute squat of spending 10 minutes in your block squat. So that's how you do it because you have your workouts and you have your training that you do.

And you have your work that you do around that. Part of being healthy is taking more opportunities at movement. So, say you're going to work like one place to do it is in your warm up. Warm up with some bear crawls and some Cossack squats and I love Cossack squats. That's another one where they reveal a lot of A-symmetry.

[0:25:45.2] AVH: Explain the Cossack squat.

[0:25:46.6] LV: The Cossack squat is a side lunge expect you go all the way down to the bottom of the squat. So not a half lunge but the way you do it is you stand with your feet straight and then you step out wide. That one is individual for a lot of people and what your flexibility can also determine how wide you can go but generally if you go into your squat and just kick one leg straight out. So, where a lot of people mess themselves up is they have their squatting leg right underneath both legs.

Right underneath the tank let's call it that and you actually want that foot out slightly. Just like on the squat, you're a little more than hip distance apart. So, you want that foot slightly off from where the hip is and then you just kick the other like straight out lock out knee, toe point is straight up in the air and then you want to try to get as upright as you can with the torso on that position. I've seen there's one guy that is following on Instagram it's like kettle bell beast or something.

I see him do a socks press where you do a shoulder crunch from the bottom of the squat. I see him do a socks press from the Cossack. That's pretty impressive stuff but that's the thing is somebody like that gets that point knot from doing yoga and doing CrossFit or even doing hard style kettle bell stuff. That's a totally unconventional route but that guy decided, "Hey I'm going to see if I can do this" and he worked towards it.

So that's the kind of spectrum and movement we should rejoin. So where I think a lot of people run into pitfall is that they are doing too much conditioning work and too much working out and not enough training. So, you got your workouts where you're just trying to challenge yourself metabolically, you are trying to get a sweat on, trying to breathe hard and that's all good but those workouts should be with skills that you're either good at or have mastery.

And then there's the things that you suck at or the things that you don't know you suck at. There's things you know that you don't know and there's things that you don't know that you don't know. I think that people should take the time to really explore those things and I think doing things like overhead squats with kettlebells and socks presses, those are challenging but they are challenging because we have huge leaks in our movement ability. I throw myself into this, I can't do the middle split. I can't do –

[0:28:16.4] AVH: Yes, most of us can do that. Why can't you do a middle split? I know.

[0:28:20.6] LV: I know, I suck. I failed at life that's why.

[0:28:23.3] AVH: Well you could work towards it right? Okay do you believe because I am actually interested in this because I have some flexibility issues, I am good at some things and not good at other things, do you think anyone could get a split?

[0:28:34.5] LV: Yes.

[0:28:35.3] AVH: If you work hard enough, you can get a split.

[0:28:37.5] LV: If you really dedicate yourself, anything can be accomplished. Here's what I brought up earlier is I said can somebody with slow twitch dominant fibers become a power lifter? Absolutely. Can somebody with fast twitch dominant muscle fibers become a good cyclist? Yeah, you can become good at anything. Can you become elite at anything? That's doubtful. That's where you have the genetic outliers. I think that we talk too much about those genetic outliers, right?

[0:29:09.5] AVH: Yeah because they're fun to look at.

[0:29:11.4] LV: They're fun to look at. We like extremes but the thing is that when it comes down to our lives and our fitness, it's about balance. It's not about extremes. So, athletes are specialists. We are not supposed to be –

[0:29:26.4] AVH: They're not always the healthiest people either.

[0:29:27.6] LV: No they're not and some of them are and people like to hold up the ones that are as like the examples. A guy that I was listening on a podcast thing [0:29:37.8 inaudible] with Tim Farris a long time ago, that's a lot of what they are talking about is these outliers and it's a fun conversation. You know they talked about a guy in his 60's who had a bad back and was really stiff and decided he wanted to do the middle splits and he trained and he trained and he

trained and he got it. And there is, what Povel said, there's a lot of freedom in being able to move like that.

[0:30:00.8] AVH: Okay, so going back to the idea of balance and we do have to get going here soon but okay, the split. That's a cool thing. That's fun to look at and to aim towards but that's not necessarily a practical level of flexibility to have. So, talk a little bit about what you were talking today about primal movement for longevity and health. So, to make everyone the best moving pain-free version of themselves.

What are some benchmarks for what normal people should be able to do that are healthy range of motion, healthy movements, not intense because most of us aren't going to get the split or don't want it, what are some movements and feelings we should be able to accomplish?

[0:30:39.4] LV: Okay, so the overhead squat. That's something we should all be doing.

[0:30:42.6] AVH: With what kind of weight though?

[0:30:44.5] LV: Even with a PVC pipe it's fine or with a bar, whatever. I think obviously the more you can low that, the better that pattern is. There is not really a lot of faking when it comes to overhead squats especially if you narrow the grip. The more you narrow the grip the less faking there is. So, I think what I would say is do it with your feet straight. Overhead squat with the feet straight, and the back not rounded.

This is some clean global extension with the whole system. Also getting up and down off the ground. That is a huge one so one of the things that many coaches like to torture their poor clients with is burpees.

[0:31:23.9] AVH: I love burpees. I do.

[0:31:25.7] LV: You love burpees so you're probably good at getting up and down.

[0:31:28.3] AVH: Pretty good so far yeah.

[0:31:29.2] LV: Yeah, so that's an indication there. So, if you dread burpees it's because you have a huge leak in that skill or in that pattern. So being able to get up and down off the ground I think is an important skill to have. I also am a big fan of the Turkish get up as a screening tool and that's another one that people dread if they are not good at that but I think that anybody who's decent at it should be able to do half their body weight assuming that they're at a healthy weight.

[0:32:00.6] AVH: And with the kettle bell or any kind of –

[0:32:03.5] LV: It doesn't matter.

[0:32:04.8] AVH: But is it tougher? Like if you are doing a Turkish get up with a long bar or some extra weight you have to worry about.

[0:32:10.7] LV: Absolutely.

[0:32:11.2] AVH: That makes it tougher right?

[0:32:12.2] LV: That makes it tougher.

[0:32:12.8] AVH: Okay so having the kettle bell is going to be easier. You can be able to do more weight.

[0:32:15.9] LV: Yes, it would be more practical. The kettle bell will crush the forearm pretty nicely.

[0:32:19.6] AVH: Yeah, that's my problem and I wanted to impress you Leo because I was working. I've been working on my Turkish gaps a lot. I really like that movement, it feels really good and I am not a globo-gym, it isn't the best but they have kettlebells up to 70 pounds but they're not good real kettlebells. They're like some other weird ones but when the weight gets up to 50 pounds or more, it is so uncomfortable on my arm that if I could do the weight, I don't want to anymore because it hurts so much.

[0:32:43.5] LV: Yeah so, my goal at one time 100 pounds. So, most kettlebells that run in the kilos they go up to a 106, they're 48 kilos, a beast we call it. So, I was right on the cusp and my friend John Wolfe who's the Program Director at On It back then he still had his gym in Salinas called Wolfe Fitness Systems and I came over there for a workshop and I said, "You could do that right? You can do the beast" he said "Yeah" and I said, "Is there some trick to it or am I just being a pussy with my risk?"

He's like, "Yeah you know you've got to toughen up" and John was very nice about telling me that I was being – but you can either use the guard or you just have to Russian up.

[0:33:19.6] AVH: Okay so you are telling me to be tougher. Okay that's legit because when I do a squat, when I squat I kind of make fun of people who use that big padded bar on their shoulder. I make fun of those people.

[0:33:27.1] LV: The sissy pad, yeah. We call it the tampon.

[0:33:29.3] AVH: Alright, I tend to think that they are – well I see a lot of men using it. I'd be honest with you.

[0:33:34.1] LV: I know because more men often need it, yeah.

[0:33:36.2] AVH: Need it, okay we don't need to go there. Let's just say that I should toughen up and just build a nice callous on my forearm and work on those Turkish get ups.

[0:33:43.9] LV: We say in Russia that there are two types of pain. There's stupid pain which many CrossFitters have experienced.

[0:33:50.9] AVH: Unnecessary pain is what you are saying, yeah.

[0:33:53.0] LV: Yeah and then there's character building pain which is the kind of pain that you get on your forearm when you are doing Turkish get up.

[0:33:58.7] AVH: Perfect, okay. I love it. Before we go, tell us how we can follow you on Instagram maybe find your gym, how do we find you online?

[0:34:07.8] LV: So my Instagram handle is leo_the_iron_lion.

[0:34:14.6] AVH: Okay, we'll write that on the show notes so it's easier for you guys.

[0:34:17.5] LV: Leo The Iron Lion.

[0:34:17.8] AVH: Leo The Iron Lion, got it. Okay.

[0:34:19.3] LV: And my gym is Iron Lion Gym in Mill Valley, California.

[0:34:22.1] AVH: Awesome so people can come and visit you and you can tell them all the things they are doing wrong.

[0:34:26.3] LV: Yes, I would love to tell you all the things that you are doing wrong and I would also love for you to come visit me. The other thing that I would like to touch on before we leave is the other important skill is running and sprinting so that's the whole gate thing and a lot of people turn to endurance activities and stuff for the indignity of those because they've lost the ability to sprint and the explosive. So that's all that counter balancing crossing midline kind of thing that people need to be good at.

So, with the running training that's why I am a big proponent of the intervals and the wind sprints and things like that and I think it is much healthier to train that way and so just to wrap it up, there's the calling, the getting up and down off the ground, the squatting, the lifting heavy things, flowing that's a primal movement pattern and that's where the mases and the clubs are really good and then there's the running and locomotion and stuff like that and jumping.

So those are all I think, it doesn't encompass all of it because we only have so much time on the podcast but those are all the skills to work on if you want to be a fully functioning homosapien.

[0:35:30.6] AVH: Okay, got it and the indignity of long distance running Leo, I just love that you tell us how you feel.

[0:35:37.7] LV: Nobody should suffer the indignity of jogging.

[0:35:39.6] AVH: We all know how you feel about CrossFit and jogging and hip mobility and that's great. That's why we have you on here now we know how you feel. So, thank you very much for your time. I appreciate it and folks, definitely check out Leo The Iron Lion on Instagram because he has lots of cool fun exercises and movements and you'll be inspired so check it out.

[0:35:58.1] LV: Thanks for having me.

[0:35:59.5] AVH: Alright, thanks Leo.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

[0:36:00.5] AVH: Okay, that was Leo. Next up for the podcast is a very exciting interview with one of the most popular paleo bloggers in the world, Michelle Tam from Nom Nom Paleo. She has a new book out called Ready or Not which is a great cookbook that's laid out in a way I've actually never seen before. It's really unique. It's offering a bunch of delicious paleo cooking and recipes for families, using leftovers, meal prep options.

Basically, the recipes are laid out and organized based on how much enthusiasm and time you have. So, if you want to spend all day making this amazing meal or if you don't really feel like it but you've got to eat, there are other options. It's really cool and really interesting and of course, it has that signature fun colorful feel that all of Michelle's work has. So anyway, next week we are going to catch up with Michelle, talk about her new book, hear what she's up to and it's really fun.

So, you'll have to subscribe to Paleo Magazine Radio on iTunes to make sure you catch it. Thanks for listening.

[OUTRO]

[0:36:57.3] AV: Paleo Magazine Radio is brought to you by the Paleo Media Group and is produced by We Edit Podcasts. Our show music features the song *Light It Up*, by Morgan Heritage and Jo Mersa Marley, and on behalf of everyone at Paleo Magazine, thank you for listening.

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