



Legendary Strength Podcast

Frankie Faïres on Biofeedback

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Logan: Welcome everyone, this is Logan Christopher with the [Legendary Strength Podcast](#) and on the line with me today is Frankie Faïres, who I have to say I owe a big depth of gratitude for introducing me really into the biofeedback method of training, which we are going to be talking a whole lot about today, and all the great things that it can do for you. Thanks for joining us, Frankie.

Frankie: Thanks so much, Logan. I appreciate you having me on.

Logan: For people who are not familiar with you, can you give a bit of a background on yourself?

Frankie: Sure. I am very much sort of reluctantly in the fitness world. That was never my intention as a child or a young man and I just kind of stumbled into all of it, especially this idea of biofeedback training, the biofeedback-based training.

Talking about how it is all of this started, I don't know how far back to start but I'll start with why I got so interested in it. My father was an amazing athlete. When he was 17 years old—he's I think almost 59 right now so this was a ways back—but he can run a hundred yard dash in ten flat, had great hand-eye coordination, and also in the same year he run the hundred yard dash in ten flat, he also ran the mile in 4:19. To be able to do those two things was pretty cool. Needless to say, I got none of that.

But that wasn't really the transformative experience that what got me interested about biofeedback-based training. What it was is that my father, when he was in his mid-30s developed something called chronic tophaceous gout. For those of you who aren't familiar with gout, it's just uric acid crystals collect in the connective tissue and they sort of deform your tissue from the inside out. He had it really bad. It looked like he had antlers growing on his heels, on his elbows, and he was just debilitated. He was just kind of a giant of a man that I saw just laid waste to by disease.

I was always kind of a fearful, apprehensive kid. I'm like an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure so I'm going to make sure that I never have to deal with that. And at sort of the behest of one of my mentors, I got into corrective exercise really before it was corrective exercise.

There is this book by this author by the name of Pete Egoscue and I ended up buying a couple of his books. The first one was [Pain Free](#). The second one was [The Egoscue Method of Health Through Motion](#), I think I'm saying that right. I opened it. I wasn't all that smart in fitness yet. When I was reading the first two chapters and then like wow, this is really smart, this makes a lot of sense, but it was a little bit over my head. You know how we all react to things when we're a little bit over our heads. We humble ourselves and I thought yeah, this is it. This is what's going to save me from being in pain later. What Egoscue really focused on was symmetry. You've got to make sure that you are balanced from side to side, from front to back. If you do that then you're not going to have these pain issues. So I did that.

I remember looking at the second half of the book. The first half of the book was sort of all concept and theory and the second half was application. I remember being just so impressed with the first half of the book and then I opened up the second half and it was just a bunch of static stretching and isometrics, things that I was very familiar with sort of from martial arts and I thought man, this isn't going to do anything for me.

But I never knew that not only would it do something for me, it would do something to me and it started a chronic pain process or I believe it started the chronic pain process. That happened now, about ten years ago. From there, I developed this pain process and then I spent every last dime I could trying to get out of pain first. Then when that wasn't going to work, then I made some more money and then I tried to learn my way out.

During that time, I saw some of the best soft tissue therapists in the world, some of the best, what are really sort of all the educators in the world, and none of it really worked. There was some progress but it really doesn't. The biggest catalyst for this was when my last therapist, who was also my teacher, just gave up and said, *"You know, I don't think I can help you anymore. In fact, I actually hurt you and in good conscience, I just can't keep treating you."*

Man, that just took me to an all-time low and I was really thinking some purposeful ways to exit this life but I made a promise to myself. I had this insight. Frankie, you tried to buy your way out of pain. You tried to learn your way out of pain. But if you're going to earn your way out of pain, earn your way out of this life rather, you're going to have to try and figure this out for yourself. So what I did is I went back to a lot of the source material and I uncovered some things. It's like oh yeah, that makes sense and that's where this stuff really started to germinate.

The first time I saw any use of biofeedback, although I didn't know it was that at the time, it was from a Tony Robbins demonstration. You of course know who [Tony Robbins](#) is. Tony was having people imagine something bad and then do some sort of a twist test to where you just see how far you can twist and then imagine something good. Everyone was just amazed but this is the effect that thinking has on our body. I know you're really into that. It's not just that thinking that has a big effect on our body, but everything our body does, or everything your body has done. Everything that is done to our body has an effect on our body and we can measure that.

Later when I was at Z Health Certification in I-Phase, the instructor, Eric, was doing basically the exact same thing Tony is doing except he had us doing it reaching our toes, thinking about something good, thinking about something bad. In that Z Health, what they really focused on at the time was gait testing. If you walked better then it's good for you. If you walked worse then it's not good for you. The problem with that is it's not so easy to self-assess.

So I started testing supplements. My good buddy, Marty Lotspeich, was still using gait but I said you know what, I'm just going to try this range of motion testing or this flexibility testing, and sure enough I was really sensitive. It typically worked for me and just over time, I started that applying to more and more things. Of course, we get the idea pool toward testing supplements. I don't know if you've ever been to an applied kinesiologist or clinical kinesiologist but they do muscle testing. The only issue with that it kind of requires someone else to do it to you. The thing that I love about the range of motion testing is that it's something that that someone can use themselves. It's an autonomous assessment.

Over time, it was this realization of well, why aren't I testing that? Why aren't I testing that? Why aren't I testing that? And there are probably some things even from time to time now that I think why am I not testing that and it's just inserting that question into daily life and really paying attention to how your body reacts to what it is your body is reacting with. So that was sort of the genesis of it.

One of the last things I applied it to was the weight room. There was an order that emerged to whenever you start applying these tests to the weight room. It just so turns out that whenever you test everything in the weight room that it generates a personal record every single time. You know, Logan—I mean you're really educated in the fitness world—it wasn't thought possible to have a personal record every time you train. The Russians and the Eastern block scientists had these fancy periodization schemes. Some of them were cybernetic or instinctual or autoregulatory and it was all based around getting a PR once a cycle, or every competition, or twice a year. It was very infrequently. It wasn't really even considered that more could have been done every single time.

But it just so happens that when you do test everything, that it can. I think that's because the body, if we cut ourselves or if we hurt ourselves over time, it repairs itself. I think that it just speaks to the body's power and I refer to it as our birthright is better. It just so happens that we can get a whole lot better than we ever thought we could. So that's the short answer, Logan, right?

Logan: Yeah. I think that was a very good overview. I do want to clarify for people listening that when you say you can do more in the gym each time, one of the important things about the formal progress is we're not just looking at the maximum amount of weight lifted. If people do that, that's fine. That may be your goals but if you're only looking at that factor then you're only going to be shortchanging yourself. You're not going to be getting the great results because our body doesn't progress in a linear type of manner. So we track progress in basically three different factors. You have the intensity, volume and density.

Frankie: I agree. You know fitness people have a chance to really focus on the Russian definition of intensity, which is percentage of one rep max and only putting load on the bar but we have other athletes that focus on volume. How many reps can you do? That's another thing, right? Or they're really sort of density. Then you have runners and such that base their progress on how far they can go.

The problem with all of those things is that they're all a little bit too narrow. That's fine if you're only going to compete in one thing but you can get better in one thing by training all things, more so than you can just training that one thing. The way that I like to put it is that better is greater than specificity or better is greater than specific. That's sort of a big paradigm shift for people.

Logan: I had an [interview with Adam Glass](#) last week and we talked quite a bit about that topic, just the whole variation of movement, what you can do, and by doing more things that's going to open up your body and you're going to be able to do more. So more is better.

Frankie: Yup, absolutely. Adam, of course, is our top student. He's just really our messenger and he's a great interview.

Logan: We had quite a good time. So let me ask you now, are you in pain still or has it gone down? What sort of results have you got by following this?

Frankie: Whenever I started off with my protocol, whenever I was at Z Health before I was using these sorts of things, I started off probably on an average of a 6 ½ out of 10. Understand what I mean, a lot of people when they talk about chronic pain, what they're talking about is it hurts when I do this. To me, that's not chronic pain. Chronic pain is it hurts, meaning you're never free from it. Whenever you wake up, whenever you go to bed, it's there. My range would go anywhere from a 4 ½ all the way up to a 10. I spent about 4 years in Z Health and it did get down on average from a 6 ½ to a 4 ½, with my range still being high 7 and 8s and as low as 3 and 3 ½, something like that. Most of the time right now, and it just hasn't been enough time, most of the time, I average ½, 1, 1 ½, somewhere in there. It generally doesn't get worse than a 5 or a 6, and then there are some times I don't feel it at all.

You said something very interesting. You have to understand I have one of the most crazy pain cases that have ever presented, beyond something's that's called neuropathic or there's a problem in my nervous system. I don't believe there's a problem with my nervous system but I did some really dumb stuff for a really long time.

We can talk a little bit about the nervous system. One of the things that really separates us is that we are not what's considered neuro-centric. The reason why this testing works is because it's the nervous system. You're tapping into the nervous system. But you have to understand that the nervous system taps into the rest of the body. The nervous system follows the rules of the rest of the body. The nervous system doesn't make sense unless you understand it and the context of the rest of the body.

Have you ever seen Silence of the Lambs, Red Dragon, and Hannibal, all those sort of Hannibal Lecter movies, right? There's one where Hannibal—and this is kind of gross—but Hannibal basically eats the guy's brain while he's alive and the guy doesn't feel it. It's not because he's anesthetized the brain. It's because the brain doesn't have any sensory fibers. The brain serves the body. The limiting factor for getting better is most often the body. Sometimes it's the brain. Sometimes it's the mind but it's often the body.

The way in which body tissues change is a lot slower than changing someone's mind or those sorts of things. So the older a person is, the less responsive their body is so it takes a longer time to sort of get the range of motion back, suppleness back, get them out of pain, that sort of thing. So the longer someone has been in pain, the longer it takes them to get out of pain. A lot of times that people have had a pain process of less than six months, with the right movement it can go away instantly. But once

you get into a pain process that's matured about a year or more, it takes a little bit longer to sort of re-shape the body to where we're no longer feeling that pain. Does that make sense?

Logan: Yeah, it does. So do you believe in the future you're going to completely resolve your pain issue by continuing on in the same direction?

Frankie: Oh yeah.

Logan: Of course, taking feedback into consideration.

Frankie: Yeah, I remember the time when I knew that I would never have pain. I was at Denny's. I was eating some so-called "shitty" food and I was looking through a [Wikipedia](#) entry that just so happens that when I first read it or when I first heard about the information, it was recounted to me incorrectly. They didn't share the data correctly. Like I said, when I went back to what was being referenced and I read about it, it was like oh...

I just knew. I knew right then at that moment that I could get out of pain. I knew it was going to take time but I knew that I would get there and with better questions, I would get faster results. That's really the limiting factor of the mind. Just like me, I knew about testing for a while but I wasn't testing everything. Why wasn't I? It's because I didn't think to. I had a belief systems that were going against me, that sort of thing, that was sort of the relative limits that my mind put on me.

Logan: Speaking of belief systems, a lot of people, hearing about this or looking at it for the first time, it flies in the face of a lot of their past training, not having to work so hard in order to get everything. Can you go into a bit of detail? We talked about the range of motion test. You use that in order to sort of guide what's good for your body and what's not. How does that work?

Frankie: Basically what you're asking for is the physiological mechanisms behind the range of motion tests. It depends on if I'm going to the lay person or if I'm talking to someone who's a bit more educated in fitness, but we'll start with the laity first. I'm often asking people, *"When you feel good, do you have more strength, more range of motion? Or do you have less strength, less range of motion? Are you less flexible? And if you feel good, you have more of those things."* I said, *"Well when you feel bad, do you have more or less?"* *"Well, I often have less."* I'll say, *"Would you agree that every single thing that you do or that is done to you, that it makes you better or worse?"* They're like, *"Well, sure."* I said, *"So wouldn't it make sense that if you did something that wasn't good for you, that you would lose range of motion or you would lose strength?"* They're like *"Yeah, that makes sense."* That's sort of the laity of explanation of why this stuff works.

If you want to get more technical, the nervous system, if I had to give a simplistic definition of the nervous system, the nervous system is an organ system that allows for conscious and unconscious sensation and motion. One of the things that the nervous system does is you'll hear about the nervous system facilitating things, allowing for things to happen, movement for example. The nervous system facilitates movement.

But it also inhibits motion. A lot of people who have had sort of a superficial understanding of strength training, they'll talk about how the body keeps itself from displaying its full strength. That's an example of governance or inhibition. The body, to protect itself from hurting itself by expressing its full strength. If it expressed its full strength, basically the muscles would rip the bones apart. That's how strong we

are. Once we get our mobile connective tissues and our more rigid tissues up there, we can get quite a bit stronger because then the body doesn't inhibit it as much.

So whenever we do something that moves us into a distressed state, the body starts to put the brakes on us. It puts the brakes in terms of a lot of things, a lot of different what are called motor quantities or movement quantities. Included in those are flexibility and range of motion.

In general, you do something that's good for you, your body facilitates that motion. It allows for more movement. You do something that is more distressful rather than you stressful to the body, the body starts to inhibit it. At least two of the sort of the proprioceptors involved in that are like the Golgi tendon organ or the GTO, and the muscle spindles. There are more than that but a lot of people really tune in to this idea of proprioception and so this is a proprioceptive process. This is the nervous system process.

Logan: Okay, I think that was a pretty good explanation and I hope everyone listening to it understands how that works. One thing that I'd like to talk about is the idea of corrective exercise. How important is corrective exercise?

Frankie: Well if you're doing exercise that is incorrect or if you're doing it so you can hurt your body, then corrective exercise will be very important. But if you're doing exercise correctly, I don't mean in perfect form, I mean exercise that is correct for you. Your overhead press should look nothing like my overhead press because Logan doesn't look like me. We both have one head, two arms, two legs, all that sort of thing but we have inherited and acquired totally different bodies. So everything about exercise should be personalized to us. When it is, all exercise becomes corrective.

Logan: Yeah, that was a big takeaway I got when I first started learning from you. Every exercise can be bad for your body or can be good. It's really going to depend on your body and hence the testing to figure out what really works for you.

Frankie: Yeah, if you're having to do a bunch of mobility work, stretching work, or foam rolling or soft tissue with all this stuff, then consider that what was done before, that may have not been very good for you. We should leave our workouts feeling better than when we came in. If food is medicine, movement is medicine. Everything you do has the potential to make you better. Just test it and it will. And it's not only just feeling better, but stronger, more supple, faster, all of these diffuse movement quantities.

Logan: Can you talk a little bit about your experience because obviously, you've been doing these testing for a long time? One thing that I found is after a while of doing the whole range of motion testing, I could begin to feel within the movements themselves whether or not they would test well.

Frankie: Absolutely. Listen, the end goal of this—I think I've written an article about it—is not to let testing replace your intuition. It is simply to inform it. It is to reconnect your sensations to your motions. I think had we never been told there's only one right way to do things or you have to do it this way, I don't think we would have become so disconnected from our sensations. I don't think we would have become so unnaturally counterintuitive. I think we are all naturally intuitive and we all naturally know what's good for us.

But through listening to sources other than ourselves, we sort of tune out that inner wisdom. I don't want you living your life every two seconds touching your toes. You don't have to try to be aware. How do we pick out our clothes? How do we pick out our food? Yes, you can test it but there's often that, not

to give too much for the auditory cues here but there's is that inner voice, there's that inner knowing, there's that inner feeling, if I want to talk more kinesthetic about what it is that we can do that would make us feel better.

Gavin de Becker says that experience informs intuition. I think that what he said. The testing just simply informs you of things that you may be missing. Because like me, how many things are not thinking? How many things are you just doing knowing that it's good for you but since you know that it's good for you, you're not even thinking if it might be good or it might not be good? Just because it's good right now, doesn't mean it's going to be good tomorrow or an hour from now.

You talked about the non-linear relationship of progress but that's just non-linear relationship with physiology. We're always sort of going up and down and in multiple directions, just hopefully trending towards better. If we're always doing the same thing, always doing the same thing is not getting better. It's a guaranteed ticket to worse, guaranteed.

Logan: One thing that really sort of grabbed me about the whole idea of listening to your own body's feedback is in strength training, what we're doing, some people are just doing to look better, get stronger but really the way I saw it was a greater body awareness and control. So actually being able to better listen to your body goes right hand in hand with that and I think it's going to allow a better thing. Because not only are you getting better at doing exercise and lifting more but you're becoming more in tune with your body, which in some ways is an even more important thing to have. So I think there are some benefits, just besides you can lift more and you won't get injured doing this.

Frankie: It's that reconnection. I refer to it as sort of the upward ascending spiral as opposed to the downward descending spiral. If you are reconnecting your sensations with your motions, you're becoming more primal. You're cueing into that important part of you, that inner guide.

This has been substantiated through motor learning. Whenever acquire skills, we sort of prune away what's unnecessary, or with better motion comes better sensation which yields better motion, which yields better sensation, and you just get better and better. If you've been doing this for a while—and I think you're going to attest to this—where you are now versus where you started is very different. I think you must aspire to always be very intuitive and self-driven but it's those little blind spots that we don't know about that can make all the difference in the world.

Logan: Absolutely. So can you tell us a little bit about the *Gym Movement 2.0* for people that are interested and going much further with this? Like what I said in an interview with Adam, this is foundational for everything that I do. I don't always talk about it because there's a lot of other things to talk about but it's such an important thing just because, like you said, it informs your intuition. It gets you better in tune with yourself so that you can make better decisions for yourself. As you said, everyone's individual in so many different ways so you really need to listen to your body as a tool to allow you to get whatever goals you're going for.

Frankie: Yup. This is more about how to do things, not necessarily what to do, although we show a lot of what to do. It's over four hours. Our first product was 37 minutes. People when they first saw it, they said this isn't enough but a few people really got it. They said oh, this opens up everything. I take that as my failure. It was our failure that we didn't sort of open the door wide enough.

So this time, we created basically a training documentary. If I'm teaching someone individually, I teach them a little different than I would anyone else but most people I teach through a very similar method. It's sort of lecture and lab. There's some whiteboard time and then there's okay, let me show you how to apply this. In the first one, it wasn't really any of the theories, the concept behind it but we've included a lot of that in there and just all kinds of different examples.

Basically, we had broken down movement or broken down exercise into these broad categories. Then hey, have you tested this? It's just a compendium a lot of different things that we talked about. How to test towards fat loss, how to test towards muscle gain, how to modify all of these exercises that you're already doing so that you're not shaping yourself after exercise but you're shaping your exercise after you. When you do that, you have less likelihood to get hurt, more likelihood to have progress like you've never had before.

Logan: Yeah, like the one clip in there where they had a thing, Frankie is not dancing in this. I laughed pretty hard at that. Because that's the point. It doesn't look like exercise that most people would be doing but for you, that's the perfect exercise to be doing at that moment and it works really well for you but it looks kind of off to other people.

Frankie: Yeah, man. It looks funky. A lot of things that Adam does too looks kind of funky and Logan, you do some amazing things with your body but a lot of those things you've adopted. You have this encyclopedic knowledge of movement but a lot of things you've adopted come from a former time. So when people see [kettlebell juggling](#) or weird side pressing or [hand balancing](#) or anything like that, it looks, well what muscle does that work?

But the thing is it makes you better. And showing those things, the silly things that I do, just helps people to say, "*Hey, I don't need to do that silly thing but it's okay to do my own thing*" and that's really what I want to take away to be. Look, I don't want you to get better because there's something wrong with you. I want you to get better because you can. The way that you are going to get better is by doing your own thing. What the movement is all about, what we're all about, what you're all about is hey man, let's do our own thing but let's do it together.

Logan: Yeah. Like you were saying, I got [the original product](#) and I had a lot of questions after that so I went and trained with you guys in person and still, like our movements, it's evolving and getting better all the time. So this is by far the most comprehensive teaching of that, even better than training with you back then although that was several years ago. At this point, I'd say it's pretty clear and easy. I have to say I've been doing it a long time but watching through all the videos again, and I did go through them all, I relearned a couple of things I had forgotten and have added some small tweaks that should help me get better as I move forward.

Frankie: Yup. I'm really happy that you said that. We have come a long way. Of course, if you're a living system, you're always adapting, you're always growing. We have a saying, "*The first rep is the worst rep.*" What you went through was our very first certification and I liked it. Yeah, it was real nice. In the three years since then, the product that we put out which is a distillation, which is the sampling of that, is even better than what it was then. So now our level one course is really, really cool. We're working on it man but we're not trying.

Logan: It's just naturally getting better. Well, so I will have [links to this course](#). It's a bit higher priced than some other things but the value is definitely there. It is worth it because like I said, this is one tool you need to learn how to use. We'd spent years learning how to use it even better and so it's a distillation of all that information that will give you so much to work with. Then you can apply these other things and ideas and it all comes back down to this foundation.

I'm also offering a bonus with this. All you have to do is order through the link on the website, send me your receipt, and I'll hook you up with that. That's like a \$197 value, some additional information as far as the biofeedback training, as well on how I specifically use it myself just to give you more data to pull from so that you can better work for yourself and get the goals you want to get.

Frankie: That's cool, man.

Logan: So thank you very much, Frankie. I had a lot of fun on this call.

Frankie: Thanks, Logan. Man, I appreciate you having me. Glad I got to talk about it.

Logan: All right, thank you everyone for listening. If you have any questions, be sure to shoot them to me and look forward to next week's podcast. Thank you, everyone.