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Lawrence: Lawrence Neal here, and welcome back to HighIntensityBusiness.com. This is Episode 245. Today's guest is Brian Murray. While figuring out what he wants to do when he grows up, Brian has spent the last 25 years getting further and further outside the exercise box. He holds a master's degree in exercise physiology from Auburn University. He has been a business owner, speaker, columnist, featured guest on Fox News and CNN, and authored the book, Stop Trying to Lose Weight - You're Making Yourself Fatter, which I thought was a very tantalizing title.

Lawrence: Currently Brian is the founder and owner of Strong Women Rock and the designer, consultant, and director of clinical research for ViiV Fitness, producer of the ViiV-Rx isometric exercise machine. Brian, welcome to the podcast.

Brian: Hey. It's great to be here, Lawrence.

Lawrence: It's great to have you on the show. I thought we would start off by talking a little bit about your background and your history in exercise. As you know, this podcast is very centered around high intensity training. We are a podcast listened to by many high intensity training advocates, and not only business people but people that just love HIT and practice it in their own life, and then also the business owners and the personal trainers. So I'd love to hear about your exercise history and how much of that has been influenced by HIT and other modalities you've come across.

Brian: Well, really, how do we get into anything? It's by accident. That's kind of how it was. I never had any real aspirations for it as a young person. It

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was just one of those things that happened. I had an interest in something and I just kind of went down the road and kept pursuing and pursuing, and eventually I discovered the Super Slow and got into that. From there it just kept progressing and just kept evolving and here I am today, doing what I'm doing now.

Lawrence: So when you say Super Slow, does that mean that you explored all the Ken Hutchins materials and were you certified or anything like that?

Brian: Yes, I did get certified, explored all that. I thought it was the next step for me. I was already going in that direction, but when I found Ken's book and met some of the people who were already involved in there, I was like, "Yes, I'm home. This makes sense." And from there just kept evolving and tinkering and discovering and it was a fun ride, and here I am today with what I'm doing now. It's just kind of been a natural progression.

Lawrence: You've got this exercise device that's fairly popular at the moment, which is the ViiV machine. Do you want to talk about the machine, what it does, how it works?

Brian: Yeah. The ViiV is an all-in-one isometric exercise machine. You can do many different exercises on it, and I highly recommend people go to the website and check it out, but Bluetooth capability. It's all wireless. Biofeedback, which is something relatively new with isometrics. You know, isometrics have been around for a long time, but now we've got the ability to actually record and see how we're progressing. So the ViiV, I think it's a desperate need. I've said for a long time that isometrics are where

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everyone's going. They just don't know it yet. I think it's here at the right time. But yeah, a lot of capability with this machine. Solid as tank, very user friendly, easy to use, doesn't take up much space. It's a very, very small footprint. I'm really excited about it. I'm very, very excited about it. You can do a lot with this.

Lawrence: So I'm sure some listeners would have probably checked out the device online. I've obviously read a bunch of articles, watched a few videos, and I can see that you can do a large number of isometric contractions on the machine. Do you want to just cycle through the different exercises you can do on this device?

Brian: Yeah. The major ones. I'm sure a lot of people in the audience here are familiar with what we call the big five. Of course chest press, leg press, a pull down or core pull as we call it. Another exercise that I really like that I actually think is the most important out of all of them is what we call a vertical lift, which is a strong range deadlift. You also have the overhead press. It has the capability to perform a compound row. If you wanted to you can also do a calf exercise. You can also do an abdominal exercise on it if you'd like. It's going to give you the capability to do pretty much anything you want, but in terms of those major compound exercise movements that we're so familiar with, plenty of capability there.

Lawrence: Cool. You really intrigued me in the buildup to this as you were talking about these five-second contractions, which I definitely feel myself having some sort of cognitive dissonance when you said that. But do you want to just describe your experience with it, the workouts you've been doing and

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those of your clients or the people that have been using it, and the type of results they're getting?

Brian: Yeah, I understand. It sounds weird. It really sounds weird, and it was for me too when I initially started to go down that road, but yes. To give you a history, it's been almost 17 years now that I have been using these very, very brief isometric contractions, very brief workouts. We're talking five seconds of your best effort, and I have typically over the last almost two decades now used only about three or four exercises. We're talking workouts that are 20 seconds or less sometimes.

Brian: What I have found is the results have been really nothing short of incredible in terms of how it changes a person's life. You're going to get the same benefits, exercise-related health and fitness benefits, all the benefits that we know of. You're going to get the same thing from just this brief amount of exercise, and that's what I have experienced and I know that it's hard to believe, but that is what I have experienced, that's what my clients have experienced, and that's why many of them have just kept going with it. I've worked with one woman for 20 years, and you don't keep doing something if it doesn't really work. But the results that I had published in my book that you had mentioned earlier, all those results were achieved using motionless exercise, and we're talking three, four, maybe five exercises at the most, all motionless, and the fat loss results documented in that book are very eye-popping.

Brian: The purpose of that book too, it wasn't just a fat loss book. It was to prove to people how little is actually necessary. I'm a big fan of Ellington

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Darden and all his books and he had shown people how little it actually took to achieve the results that they had achieved in all of his books. Mine, to my knowledge, my book just took it way further than that, just showing people how truly little it really takes to make those kind of physique changes.

Lawrence: Yeah. I've got so many questions around this. First thing I want to say is when I first looked at the device and saw a number of the demos I thought, this is excellent. Because I love the idea, because we know that timed static contractions or an isometric contraction will yield the same results as dynamic movement with resistance, and we know that intensity is obviously the main variable.

Lawrence: I do a lot of timed statics of isometric contractions myself. I don't have access to a decent neck machine where I am, so I tend to do a lot of neck work that is isometric, and so that's cool with me and I look at the device. I can see all the different movements you can do. You listed out some of the protocols earlier, some of the exercises, and I think wow, you can get so much return with this machine, so I think that's great, and I'm thinking in my head that you're going to be going for more of a Ken Hutchins inspired timed static contraction duration. I think it was probably him or some others in the HIT community who popularized the cadences that most people follow, which would be perhaps something like a 30-second contraction at 50% of your maximum, and then a 30-second contraction at 75%, and a 30-second contraction at 100%, so you're getting a 90-second time under load and you're gradually building up that intensity.

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Lawrence: So that's what I was thinking in relation to your device, and then you come along and say you've been doing five-second contractions. How is it possible that you're able to stimulate all of the, recruit all of the muscle fibers and fatigue them in such a short space of time? Or is that not the mechanism you're going for here? I'm quite confused and I'm hoping Brian that you can clarify some of this for me and help reconcile it in my head.

Brian: Yeah. Boy, this is loaded here. You mentioned the timed static contraction. Traditionally it's been a 90-second kind of thing total. In my opinion, I think the first 85 seconds are a waste of time. They're unnecessary, and the reason for that is basically a natural reflex that is hardwired into all vertebrates and it's called pandiculation and every person does it every morning when they first wake up.

Brian: They stretch and they yawn, and that reflex, and there's a reason you never think of it. Because it's a reflex, and I don't know how I thought of it, but I guess I got a cramp one morning when I was stretching and yawning and I wondered what that was. But anyway, you contract your muscles incredibly intensely during that reflex, and the purpose of that reflex is to give your brain feedback on the state of your myofascial system because you've been at rest for a very long period of time. Also, the purpose of that reflex is to energize the body, increase alertness, and prepare you for vigorous, fluid movement.

Brian: So, of course there's no chance of getting hurt with these very, very intense brief contractions but no, I'm not a big fan of the graduated effort

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levels. I used to practice that, but number one, it was very tedious. Very, very difficult for people to really stay engaged for that length of time. It was something that even if they did stay engaged, they didn't really want to, and when I started to discover and evolve and trim things down more and more and more, people loved it more and more and more. And so I don't know how you can convince someone that, especially a client. How can you convince them when they like doing something so brief compared to something so long and so tedious?

Brian: It's been my experience that over all these years I've continued to hear people say, "Oh, I always feel so good after I do this," and it makes perfect sense because you should feel energized after you finish this workout. I know I'm getting a little bit off track here, but you mentioned the stimulus perspective to this, and is that really what I'm going for with this? Not really. I think we're kind of, we're isometrics. Believe me, it's going to move people past this old stimulus exercise response equation that we've been using for the last many, many years. This is more about in my opinion, I think your workouts are going to become more about energizing you and feeling good. Not beating yourself up. Not trying to attain a workout hangover. Not being stiff, sore and spent.

Brian: I think it's more about getting energized and what I've seen is it only really takes one second. Honestly. I know five seconds is hard to believe, but quite honestly to get the benefits it really only takes about one second, and what I have seen in clients that I've worked with for a long period of

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time is they increase their voluntary activation, and this has been demonstrated scientifically as well.

Brian: So you do become a better recruiter. You do become a more efficient recruiter. You do become a quicker recruiter. What I have seen is initially people who may take 10, 15 seconds to really ramp up to their maximum level, it doesn't take too long before they can actually achieve maximum peak force within about a second and a half, two seconds. Anywhere between one and two seconds. I know in myself I can see that I can peak out within one second to one and a half seconds.

Brian: Most people in the audience are probably going to think, "Well, how can you fatigue the musculature enough to really get any benefit from that?" Well, if you're increasing your voluntary activation, which means when you really need to turn on the jets you can do it sooner and you can do it more forcefully, then that's in my mind just a different way to get to the same place, and it's a more enjoyable way. It's a less injurious way, or potentially injurious. A less time consuming way. Boy, I know I'm touching on a lot of things here.

Lawrence: That's fine.

Brian: You may need to rein me back in here as far as if I'm getting off track, but I don't believe that we need to be focused so much on the musculature anymore, because when you think about it, you've got to look at further upstream from the musculature. I think this is a lot more to do about the nervous system, and if you think five seconds is hard to wrap your head

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around, try wrapping your head around this. I find people are doing the best when they're only doing it once a month. I find personally I do best when I only do it once every two months. I know that's not a great thing to be talking about on a high intensity business podcast.

Lawrence: Not at all.

Brian: The keyword here is business. Okay. Business. Once a month, once every two months. How are you going to make money with that? But I could talk about that down the road. I do see potential in this, but no, it's more about the nervous system in my opinion. There are so many sites further upstream from the musculature where fatigue occurs, and let's be honest, nobody knows yet where the source of fatigue is.

Brian: I remember just poking around and I was on a chat room of exercise physiologists, and there were four or five different physiologists arguing back and forth about where the fatigue was occurring, and it just occurred to me. I was like, nobody knows. Nobody knows. It's all speculation. We're so focused on the musculature, but I did see, I do have an abstract. I've saved it for years because I thought it was really interesting that at the site of the neuromuscular junction, the muscular side recovers much faster than the neurological side does, and that kind of makes sense because the muscles have a blood supply and the nerves don't. So that I thought was very interesting. I can't really talk much more about that and dazzle you with much more science on that, but based on what I'm seeing in real life, I do think there is something to this.

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Lawrence: Do you know, I thought it was absurd when I first read Body by Science, Brian, and Doug was saying, you know, a full workout in 12 minutes a week. Then I managed to get that down to six minutes a week, but asking me to wrap my head around 20 seconds every two months. Now that is a big ask.

Brian: Yeah.

Lawrence: But I am intrigued, but highly skeptical and I'm sure you totally appreciate that.

Brian: Oh yeah. I love it.

Lawrence: This is interesting to me. Okay, here's a good place to start. You've talked about the results you've got and your clients have got. What kinds of results do you mean in terms of, are we talking about improvements in muscle mass or strength and bone mineral density? Can you just elaborate on the results you've seen?

Brian: Really, all of that. Of course what I documented in my book. You can obviously see differences in the musculature, in the fat loss, those kinds of things, but yes, bone density. Absolutely. I mean, you're not going to find a better way to get at the bones than this, and a safer way, but let's talk about how it changes lives. I know the aesthetics are important, especially to a lot of people listening, but let's talk about the masses. Let's talk about the people out there. What's really important to them? Is it important for them to feel younger next year? Yes. Is it important for them to feel like they can do something that they haven't done in 20 years? Yes.

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What I'm experiencing, the results I'm experiencing, just real life stuff. I've actually had people tell me, and this is after two or three, maybe four months of this type of training and we're talking once a week, basically a 20-second workout. "Brian, I'm doing things I haven't been able to do in 20 years," and that's pretty powerful stuff.

Brian: So in terms of just their physical capacity, how much they're able to do, some of the things they're able to do, feats of strength that some of these older women or older men or it doesn't matter. They're coming to me and telling me that they are more capable. See, that's what's most important for me is that I really love to hear these stories from people, but for the things that are important to our audience right now, yes. The aesthetics part of it does come with that. I actually had a woman tell me, and she was lifting weights three times a week. She was involved in yoga several times a week. She asked me, "Well, can I lift weights and do this isometric program at the same time?"

Brian: And I said, "Sure. We could start out doing this." I said, "Eventually they might cancel each other out," but I said, "We'll cross that bridge when we come to it." Well, each week she would come in and say, "Brian, these weights I'm lifting are just getting ridiculously light and I'm having to lift more weight." Well, I said, "Yeah, you know, I kind of hinted that that was going to happen," and so after a while she said, "I just quit. I'm not lifting weights anymore." Just like, "I don't need to. Everything that I'm doing is easier." She said, "My yoga teacher tells me that all my poses, I'm holding them much more steadily and I'm holding them longer."

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Brian: She was just blown away, and then one day she said to me, "Brian. You know, my butt has lifted. I looked in the mirror. My butt has lifted." I was like, "Yeah, all these things can happen." And people talking about firmness and body shape. All the results that you can think of. I mean, I can't even remember all the stories, but anything that people are trying to get from exercise they can achieve with this, but I think what holds a lot of people back is they're just stuck in what they've been told is necessary, and that's where I come in. That's why in my intro, I've been trying to get further and further outside the box and prove to people how little it actually takes.

Brian: One of my favorite Mark Twain quotes is, "Most of what we know just ain't so," and I think we get stuck in this box of it has to be so many exercises. It has to be so many minutes. It has to be a certain rest interval. It has to be once every seven days or once every 14 days. It can't be abstract. It can't be fluid. I wrote a blog post back in I think it was 2009 that my vision for the future was, I said, "regular exercise will be very irregular," and what I always envisioned was, and this has been my own personal experience with this, is it would almost be like going to put gas in your car. You just do it at very irregular intervals when you need gas, and so I envisioned this with working out.

Brian: It would kind of be like, and this is how I judge when I need to do it. When I kind of feel like topping off my muscles so to speak, like topping off your gas tank, that's when I feel like I'm ready to go. I feel like smashing something. I want to push against something. I want to exert myself.

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That's how I know when I'm ready to go, not because it's a seven day interval, that kind of thing.

Brian: That was always my vision for the future, and so I've experimented with everything in terms of rest intervals. I've gone as long as four months. I've done three, I've done two, I've done once a week with this just to see how I did. You name it, I've tried it, but I've had enough time to get away from that box. I've been so far outside of it for so long that I've kind of forgotten what it was like, and I just live my life. I'm a very active person, and that's one other thing I want to say is that just because I'm advocating motionless exercise does not mean I'm advocating being motionless. That's actually very unhealthy. You need that. Your nervous system needs that. It's nutrition for your spine. You've got to move.

Brian: So I'm a very active person. I move a lot. I do a lot of body weight stuff. I love to climb, I love to hike, I love to do Hindu pushups just for the fun of it. I'm very close to being able to do a one-arm pushup and a one-arm pull up. I like to do that stuff for fun. So I move, but the reason I do the isometrics, the reason I'm on my ViiV and I'm doing these very, very brief workouts, and I'm not even crazy about the word "workout," but that's another story. The reason I do this is to change the trajectory of the aging curve, to keep myself as close to my youthful peak in terms of my maximum muscle contraction capability. I'm trying to keep myself as close to my youthful peak for as long as possible.

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Lawrence: Do you not think that your results might have been conflated by the fact that you're trying to do one-arm chin ups and Hindu pushups and things? Because those are obviously very intense activities too.

Brian: They are, but I do them so infrequently. I don't do them everyday. This is kind of how I operate is it's like I just kind of do stuff whenever I feel like it. But no, actually, I really don't. Let me put it this way. I've told people this over the years, and I think I may have even written about this, but it only flows one way. In terms of your maximum strength capability, and this is just my observation. I'm not going to dazzle you with science on this, but my observation with myself and clients. There's nothing you're going to add into your fitness program, like let's say I'm not going to add yoga and it's all of a sudden going to make what I do with my maximum contraction workouts better. But the maximum contractions that I do make everything else that I attempt to do a little bit easier and better.

Brian: So I don't think that it's conflated at all by that stuff, number one. Because it's not like I'm doing it all the time, so you can't necessarily say that my skill is improving with that kind of stuff. I just haven't experienced that and I haven't seen it in clients and I really don't get that sensation in myself.

Lawrence: Well, I mean ... Oh God, I just had so many questions crop up in my head as you were talking. What sort of reaction are you getting from the high intensity training community about this?

Brian: Oh boy. Yeah, so I will say this. Most of it is positive. Very positive. People are thinking about it. It's on their radar. Like I said, a long time ago I said,

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"This is where everyone's going. They just don't know it yet." I know it's hard right now to ... We're right at the beginning of it. We're right at the beginning of this period of time where it's going to start to grow and there is a reason, in my opinion, why it's going to grow significantly-

Lawrence: Why?

Brian: But the reaction's been positive.

Lawrence: Elaborate on that for a moment?

Brian: Why?

Lawrence: Yeah.

Brian: Okay. Simply because we are mimicking that natural reflex that's hardwired into all of us, pandiculation. This brief isometric workout mimics that natural reflex. I'm not saying it's exactly the same. I'm saying the characteristics of a very, very brief, intense isometric workout are strikingly similar to that natural reflex. So basically what we're doing is, the popular word now is "biohacking."

Brian: We're basically biohacking this natural reflex and what you get from this is a very pleasurable sensation. Pandiculation is governed by the limbic system, which is kind of a lower brain system but it is concerned with emotion. It's concerned with homeostatic drives for food, for sex, things like that. So when you satisfy those drives, you get a pleasurable sensation, and the same thing happens with this type of workout. So let me ask you this. If ... And I'll tell you a short, quick story.

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Brian: I asked a client one day. I'd taken her through her introduction and I took her through four stations, five seconds each. She gave it everything she had, and at the end of it I asked her, "How do you feel?" And she says, "Euphoric, just like after an orgasm." And I was like, "Okay." Well, how are you going to argue with that? Something that makes-

Lawrence: That must have caught you off guard.

Brian: Yeah. Well, truth be told, I've heard that before in the past, so it didn't really shock me, but how can you argue with that? How can you present two different options to someone, one that's going to be a little more tedious, time consuming, uncomfortable, possibly painful for a few days afterward, and then this other option that gets them great results and they feel good from it? That's why in my opinion I think this isometric concept of these very, very short duration workouts, these very, very intense contractions, why it could possibly grow rapidly.

Brian: Now to what extent, I have no idea. Maybe it'll be a fad. Maybe it'll be a flash in the pan. I don't think so, but I think this is the natural evolution of things. I mean, I've been standing at the finish line for years, waving my arms, just waiting for everyone to catch up. This is the end of the line in strength training. Believe me, there's really nowhere else to go from here. But yes, this is why I think it's going to really begin to flourish, but we are at the beginning of it. I think in the next five, maybe ten years it will start to become much, much more mainstream, and then I'll be talking to you. It'll be like, "Hey Brian, I'm totally on board now. Remember back when we

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talked a long time ago and I was having a hard time wrapping my head around it?" That kind of thing.

Lawrence: We'll see.

Brian: I think you just need to give it time. You just need to give it some time, but keep in mind, I'm not trying to dissuade or discourage or sway anyone any which way. Whatever you want to do, that's great. If it's working for you, that is great. I'm here today. I thank you for the opportunity. I definitely wanted to just share with people my experience with it and share some thought provoking information, something to think about. This could be a great adjunct to whatever you're doing.

Brian: So back to your original question, what's the response? Lot of positives. I do get a lot of negatives. Some people who are skeptical, which is great. I love to answer questions, but then there are a lot of people in between who are like, "You know what? This makes perfect sense, but I'm not quite ready yet." That's kind of what I'm receiving.

Lawrence: I'm just trying to understand some of the logic. When I think about myself, if I get up in the morning and I stretch, I'm not one of these people who does an elaborate stretch like reaching far up into the air and all of that. But I would think that that's not, in my opinion or in my view, it doesn't feel like that's a max contraction of the muscle. That feels like a very different mechanism versus when I actually maximally contract during an exercise. I feel like that's different. Is it not?

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Brian: Well, yeah it is different. One of them is an involuntary contraction. The other one's a voluntary contraction, but the involuntary contraction is still very, very intense and I know in myself, if I can get a spasm out of it, it probably was pretty intense. But yeah, that's why I say they're not exactly the same thing, but they are strikingly similar. They do share some characteristics there, but you do have to remember too that the pattern of pandiculation is not always the same. For example, if you've been sitting at your computer for a long time, a lot of times you'll kind of stretch. You kind of pull your arms back, pull your shoulder blades back together. You may even yawn. So that's a little bit different pattern than when you're laying in bed, or you may pandiculate with your legs, and maybe your arms later. It can actually vary between individuals, but the same basic reflex is there.

Brian: The one thing about pandiculation in all my research about it is it's very hard to study, so there's not a ton of study on it. There's more study probably in animals than humans, but here's an interesting thing about pandiculation is actually in quadriplegics, they have actually seen them still pandiculate even though they cannot move a limb. There's still a yawning response, and that blew my mind because that tells you how hardwired it is into our physiology.

Brian: So is it necessarily a max contraction every time you do it? No, not necessarily, but those two things, the type of exercise we're talking about and this reflex, there are some striking similarities between these. The one thing that is common is the pleasurable sensation when it's done. That's

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one of the things that the reflex does is it gives you that pleasurable sensation when you're done. It gives you that sense of wellbeing. That's what it's for. And the same thing, at least what I'm experiencing with people that I have worked with over the past 17 years. They're getting the same thing as well, so I hope helps.

Lawrence: Yeah. Okay, so just to make sure and see if I understand this correctly, do you think then that you're almost, due to the brevity of the contractions, you're almost bypassing or not necessarily maximally fatiguing all the motor units in a muscle, but instead going past that straight to the nervous system where like you were saying, we don't quite know what we're fatiguing there, and you felt like that's kind of what's happening here? Because I mean, I'm just so used to understanding that we recruit these muscle fibers. It takes time in order for us to recruit the slow, intermediate, and fast twitch, and then once you recruit the type 2B, that then all the wonderful things happen. Right?

Brian: Yeah.

Lawrence: And we're seeing obviously a lot of research coming out around myokine secretion. You've talked about some of the results you've got with clients, but I'm still struggling to wrap my head around ... Maybe it's one of those things where I would need to try it to really understand it. I'm still struggling to wrap my head around how such a short time exercising could be optimal.

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Brian: Right, so let's talk about voluntary activations. This has been demonstrated experimentally. You can measure someone's ability to maximally contract before isometric contractions, and then you can measure after a training period of isometric contractions. When you have them go as hard as they possibly can and then you electrically stimulate the musculature to see how much more they could actually go, how much further they could actually go, what you're seeing is you're seeing an increase in what they can voluntarily activate.

Brian: So really to me that speaks more to the nervous system. Because one thing you're not seeing with this type of exercise is you're not getting soreness from this, which we all know or at least maybe all of us have heard this, that soreness is not necessarily an indicator of something productive. It definitely indicates some damage, but is damage necessary in order to improve your ability to move through your life and be active and keep your structures safe, have better shock absorbers in terms of muscles and things like that?

Brian: In my mind, if you're able to go from, let's just put it this way, zero to 60 more efficiently, what difference does it make whether or not you're going through a fatiguing regimen, so to speak? Ramping up, going through the type 1s, the type 2s, the 2As, the 2Bs, all that kind of stuff. If you're able to increase your voluntary activation, to me that says you're getting whatever you need, because that's what's going to make a difference in your life.

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Brian: The way I think about it is take the 68-year-old woman with osteoporosis. Well, not even osteoporosis. Take the 68-year-old woman who's out for a walk and she falls, and thank God she's been doing this isometric strength training. Has been on the ViiV for several sessions and she has to catch herself. Well, if she has an increased ability to voluntarily activate musculature to catch herself, she's automatically in a safer position. Do we know if she's increased the cross sectional area of her type 2 muscle fibers? No. Does it really matter? No.

Brian: Now I know it may matter for people who want that evidence, but that's basically what's going on is you are becoming more efficient. You're becoming a quicker recruiter, a more synchronous recruiter, a more effective recruiter and your ability to produce force is increasing, and you can do it much more quickly.

Lawrence: I know you touched on this earlier about maybe the lack of controlled science around this. Is there anything that comes close to showing the validity of these very, very brief contractions in the literature?

Brian: Yeah, definitely. Go back to the Henninger studies, which I've seen referenced in many places. John Little's books. The Henninger studies, and it's a pretty thick read. There's a lot of information, or you can find it online, but I believe-

Lawrence: What's the abstracts on that? Like, give us the Cliff Notes, if you remember.

Brian: Oh.

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Lawrence: Well at least in the studies that you think are the most valuable.

Brian: Well, the Henninger studies, I think one of the things that stood out to me was what they found was I think it was a one-second maximum contraction performed like everyday made muscle grow at the fastest rate or something like that. I can't remember. There were about six or seven different highlights of that study, but all of them back what I'm talking about. It all backs it up, but there's a lot of scientific literature out there about isometric training. Of course you're going to get a ton of it regarding range of motion, which I think is a non-issue, but there's a ton of it out there and you just got to go digging for it.

Brian: But in terms of what I am talking about, I don't see a lot of research done on this type of training. You know, five seconds, four stations, two stations, whatever, 10-, 20-second workouts, and the results from it. I don't see a lot of controlled studies on that. That's one thing I'm hoping to do with the Viiv is get this into university settings where because now they're going to have an ability to tightly control something in terms of the exercise especially.

Brian: But no, I'd love to see muscle biopsies. I'd love to see blood work. I'd love to see MRIs. I'd love to see all kinds of stuff around this, but again, this is way ahead of its time. Even though isometrics have been around for hundreds of years, the ability to measure it hasn't been around that long.

Lawrence: Well, it's my understanding that obviously you've got the likes of [ARX](#) are measuring. You can do an isometric protocol in their machines and they

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show force output, but give you biofeedback in that respect. But then you've also got MedX I think have some of the functionality as well as some of the Super Slow systems and RenX machines. So the technology is around. Is that not fair to say or have I got something incorrect there?

Brian: Oh no, the technology is around. Absolutely. I mean, MedX back with the medical machines. They were measuring isometrics back then. So yeah, that's the earliest one that I remember. There may have been some other more crude stuff before that, but I don't remember that. But oh yeah, the technology is there, but it's relatively new, and there hasn't been a whole lot of demand for it so there's not a lot of awareness of it, but definitely the technology is there. But yeah, there needs to be some more research with this. I would love to see there be some more research with this, but on the other side of things, I don't necessarily care that much about it because when you're talking about building a business, the scientific literature is going to be important to a small number of people, not necessarily the masses. The masses want to just come in, "Tell me what I need to do, I want the results, and then let me be on my way and let it improve my life."

Lawrence: I think it's important to some of the practitioners obviously because they, well, they should be following an evidence-based approach to how they train their clients and so they would want to perhaps see ... I mean, I know it's a big ask because it doesn't even exist for a lot of the high intensity training practices really. I mean in terms of very, very well controlled experiments, but yeah, it would just be interesting obviously to them for a

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body of evidence to grow in this particular way of training. I'm also thinking, don't you ever miss a full range of motion, like a dynamic exercise? I know you said you do do some pushups and chin ups and things, but don't you ever miss just sitting on a classic MedX or Nautilus piece and going for a full range of motion to failure?

Brian: Oh my God. You're asking me if I miss having my joints irritated by trying to move through a full range of motion with weight against them? Hell no. Hell no I don't miss that.

Lawrence: Joints irritated?

Brian: Yeah. You know.

Lawrence: I don't feel that.

Brian: Oh, Oh, well-

Lawrence: Go on. Elaborate. Elaborate. What's your experience been?

Brian: Well if you've had previous injuries and things like that, moving through a full range of motion can be irritating. But the other thing is, and one thing I love about this isometric stuff is that the joint issues are gone. It's gone. Here's the other thing about the isometrics. To answer your question, no, I don't miss it because I move everyday so I'm still getting full range of motion or movement for all of my joints. But here's the other really cool thing about this is that this removes all of the negative connotations that people typically associate with exercise.

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Brian: It's uncomfortable. I get sore. I get sweaty. All the negative connotations are removed. There's only upside with this. There's no downside. Other than just a couple seconds of pushing and pulling against something, there's really no downside to this, so that's another reason why I think this will continue to grow, and people will become more aware of it. But no, I don't miss that stuff at all. I do not.

Brian: Now, here's one thing. There came a time, 2008, you know, the economy crashed and I started losing a lot of clients and eventually I made the decision to close my business, scale things down, and go in another direction, so at that time I had sold all of my MedX machines. I had no way to lift weights anymore, and I was amazed when I first started trying to figure out other ways to keep myself strong and fit and stuff like that.

Brian: I was resorting to just good old fashioned pushups and pull ups and body weight stuff. I was amazed how much I couldn't do with my body. I was amazed how few pull ups I could do or how few pushups I could do as a result of all these years of lifting weight. So no, I don't miss it at all. I certainly don't miss working on those machines. I don't miss the expense of those machines. I don't miss any of it. I just feel so liberated.

Lawrence: Are you saying that using the protocol you use on your device transfers a lot better to the body weight stuff than machines? Because I personally have found that not to be the case and that if I use machines to train I can still go back to body weight and yeah, okay, there's obviously a skill aspect at play, but I can still perform body weight exercises pretty well, or

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at least relatively well compared to most of the population. Is that what you're saying, that you found superior transfer from-

Brian: You know, Lawrence, I think it would be unfair for me to say definitively that I do feel that's the case, that the isometrics would be superior in terms of transfer, because I have no way to prove that. I really don't. All I can go on is how I personally have felt over the years. I definitely don't have any scientific proof for that, so I don't know. I think it would be unfair for me to say that one way or the other, but all I can tell you is I never feel incapable. I never feel like I can't do something. I'm an active person.

Brian: Now, of course, you know what I mean. Not do something that's within my capability. Not way outside my capability. It's not like I can go flip an 800-pound tire repeatedly, but I just never feel like I'm limited. I don't feel like I'm limited in my life in terms of physical capability. If I want to go climb a 14,000-foot mountain, I can do it. If I want to swim, I can do it. If I want to, whatever. Well, I mean, whatever I would want to do, I just feel like I can do it.

Brian: So again, the purpose for me of this type of workout, or as I think of it like a preventative, rejuvenative treatment, is to keep my ability as close to my youthful peak as possible for as long as possible. That's kind of how I look at it. I don't feel my age. I feel young. I feel like I can do what I used to do when I was 20 years old.

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Lawrence: Wow. Cool. You know, I thought before this episode, Brian, that I've done a lot of controversial episodes before, but I think this has probably topped it.

Brian: Alright! Good. That's what I was aiming for, Lawrence.

Lawrence: How much does the device cost exactly?

Brian: It's \$12,000, and there is ability to finance. We've got a really good company we're working with on that, and if you think about it, and boy, we could go on and on and on about how this changes the business model for people. I know it's changed the business model for me. I've got my device in a 300 square foot office space, so my overhead now is just teeny, teeny, tiny. But, you could potentially down the road if you ever wanted to go in this direction, eliminate all that exercise equipment. I can tell you that the day I sold my last piece of exercise equipment, I have never looked back. I was so excited. I was like, "I'm done. I'm done with all this stuff." But you could replace all of that stuff with this device and have everything you need going forward for decades.

Lawrence: One of the things I wanted to ask you as well is I remember having a conversation with a friend of mine at the Resistance Exercise Conference earlier this year and we were talking about some of the other machines available out there, a lot of the motor driven options and isometric options. And I was saying to him, "What's your thoughts about some of these machines? What will you invest in?" One of the things he said is, "I just think that some people like to see weights go up and down. They like

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to see that on the gravity-based machines. It's like a marker of performance and it's something they enjoy." And I know that might be somewhat irrelevant. Well, I don't know if it's irrelevant. I mean obviously the client experience is pretty important, but what do you think about that? In terms of some people's preference. Maybe some people just like to, and that's obviously an argument against a lot of the newer technology in exercise that's coming out is maybe there's always going to be a place for these gravity-based machines for people that just enjoy the process of that observation.

Brian: Absolutely. I totally agree with that. I've received those comments from potential customers that I've talked to. Just like, "Brian, I like making weights go up and down." I'm not going to argue with that. If that's what you like to do, please continue to do that. Keep in mind that my appearance here today on the show is not necessarily to ... I'm not necessarily trying to sway people one way or the other. I'm definitely relaying my experience, but I think it's great. If you want to make weights go up and down and you like that and that makes you feel good, I say great, but what I will say is if you are more open to trying something a little different and maybe just kind of adding it in, I think you will be quite surprised what you can gain from this.

Brian: Let me just go on a little tangent here. Lifting weights will never get you close to your true strength capability, and the reason is because you're moving weights through a range of motion. You have to use an amount of weight that's lighter than the weakest part of your range of motion. And

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yes, you're going to keep going until you fatigue the musculature and you cannot get past that in the range of motion, but I was amazed when I went from lifting weights, even negative only, to going all out for five seconds. I was amazed. The sensation is completely different. The amount of force that you can exert is so much greater than what you could ever do with weights.

Brian: So I get it, and I totally agree. If you like making weights go up and down, that's fine. Just keep in mind, you will never come close to what your true capability is, and you can only do that with isometrics. You've got to get into the right joint angles and you've got to voluntarily give it everything you've got, and that's how you're going to get close to what your true capability is, but with weights, you're not really going to get there.

Lawrence: Not sure if I agree with that one, Brian, but one thing I do want to ask you is, so people that might be interested in device internationally, do you ship it internationally? How does that work? Is it available to all countries?

Brian: Yeah, definitely. We had one go out to the Netherlands last week. So yeah. Yeah. Yeah, definitely. We've got some going to Canada and we're getting inquiries from all over the world.

Lawrence: One of the things I want to say for those listening to this is I don't normally say this or I have to say this, but just so people understand, there is no affiliate arrangement between me and Brian. Brian reached out and I was very lucky that he reached out because I was very interested in having him on the show to talk about his experience with strength training and

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obviously the ViiV to learn more about it. But there's no kind of affiliate payment or commission I am paid. I want people to hear this podcast and then obviously explore it Brian through your website and really make up their own minds regarding your product and then be able to make an informed decision. I just want people to know that upfront.

Lawrence: But Brian, I really appreciate you coming on the show. This has been very interesting. I've definitely had moments where I've had to stop myself from kind of just shutting off. Not shutting off. I mean obviously I'm listening to everything you're saying, but I guess it's human nature to sometimes want to shut off when you don't agree with something you're hearing, but I've tried to keep open minded and I realize that this is something I probably want to explore further on my own or as I continue my own exercise journey and to see, because I am intrigued. I mean, this is quite removed even from conventional high intensity training, you know?

Brian: Yeah. Yeah, definitely.

Lawrence: So, yeah. Interesting stuff. What's the best way for the listeners to find out more about you and the product?

Brian: Well, go to ViiVFitness.com and check things out. If you have any questions you can reach out to me via email and I'd be happy to chat with you about it. I'd love to hear from you and hear about your experiences with isometrics if you have any. Yeah, that's probably the best way. If you don't want to go that way, you can reach me at



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Brian@StrongWomenRock.xyz and if you want my phone number, I'm 770-508-0850. Give me a call anytime. Love to hear from you.

Lawrence: That's a brave one there, Brian. Leaving your phone number.

Brian: Hey, hey, I know this is a very inflammatory subject here. I love to answer questions and I love to hear what people are doing out there.

Lawrence: I'm very interested to see how the listeners may react to this one. I know there's going to be some aggressive reactions and that's totally fine. I'm sure you're expecting that.

Brian: Oh, I guarantee it.

Lawrence: Awesome. Alright, and for everyone listening, to find the blog post for this episode, please go to HighIntensityBusiness.com and search for Episode 245. Until next time, thank you very much for listening.

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