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Lawrence: Lawrence Neal here and welcome back to highintensitybusiness.com. This is episode 252. Today's guests are Luke Carlson and James Fisher, Ph.D. Luke is the Founder and CEO of Discover Strength, a fast-growing personal training business with currently five facilities in Minnesota. Discover Strength offer a variety of strength training sessions facilitated by educated and expert trainers. Their personal training studios are among the highest volume and revenue training facilities in the U.S.

Lawrence: James Fisher, Ph.D., is a course leader and senior lecturer in sports conditioning and fitness at Southampton Solent University in the UK. He is regarded as one of the leading researchers in exercise science, and in particular, resistance training. Gents, welcome back to the show.

James: Thank you very much for having me, Luke and Lawrence.

Luke: Yeah, it's my pleasure, Lawrence. Always good to join you, and it's a pleasure to join you along with James.

Lawrence: I agree, and as I was saying to both of you on email a while back, I relistened to the episode we did years back, episode 46 I believe, which was a roundtable we did together, and I just thought it was so enjoyable. You guys have a great relationship and great chemistry and it was just a lot of fun and very entertaining as well as really informative. I was kind of going through some of those older episodes to remind myself of concepts I'd learned way back in high-intensity training and also the business stuff from you, Luke. Hence, why we are now sort of doing a part two, I suppose, of the roundtable with some slightly different topics to discuss.

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Lawrence: The first thing I kind of wanted to talk about was the current state of high-intensity training. I wanted to keep this question quite open. Luke, how do you feel right now about the current state of high-intensity training globally?

Luke: I think there's actually kind of a dichotomy that exists. I think high-intensity training among the lay population, studios, boutique fitness, really worldwide I think is growing and it's stronger and more prevalent than it's really probably ever been. I would say in the athletic world, where high-intensity training really got its roots... I mean, high-intensity training was college football in the U.S., NFL football in the U.S., college basketball, even NBA basketball. It is all but died out, so I think that's fascinating that there was a time in the U.S. in the late '90s where over half of the teams in the NFL were using high-intensity training, a pretty pure form of high-intensity training.

Luke: Now, you're hard-pressed to find a strengthening-conditioning coach that even knows what high-intensity training is or has heard of Arthur Jones. Interesting that one end of the strength training world has adopted high-intensity training. The other one has just moved away from it, and maybe things are cyclical and maybe it'll come back, but that's kind of my summary statement of what I see.

Lawrence: James, I think someone's doing some DIY by your office there and--

James: Yeah.

Lawrence: So you might need to-

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James: Apologies.

Lawrence: Move. That's okay. Is it possible to move where you are?

James: I am walking to another room as we speak and I'm just trying to see if there's any availability. I'm going to position myself down a dark and dingy corridor stairwell, so this is going to be fun. I think that's a really interesting response by Luke about the sort of lay population versus the athletic population. From an academic perspective, I think that the high-intensity training or sort of low-volume, low-frequency high-effort approach is gaining more traction in the literature again because of its application in different population groups and the idea that it will improve exercise adherence, which we think is a priority or which we know is a priority for exercise. That's really positive.

James: What I would say about the sport side of things is I think with more people like Jeremy Loenneke challenging how much what we do in strengthening and conditioning actually improves sports performance, I think that high-intensity training might start to come back a little bit in a sports and athletic performance side of things purely because I think once we start or if strength-conditioning coaches start to realize that what they're doing is not massively impactful to actual sports performance, then they might return to an idea of, "Well, really all I can do is prepare the body physiologically. Prepare a muscle to be able to produce force and prepare a body to resist impact of injury. I can do that with simple low-volume low-frequency training and by using a low-volume low-frequency approach I

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can mean that the athlete can spend more time recovering or doing specific drills." There would hopefully be a return to this approach.

Lawrence: Do you think... Using an example to talk about this briefly, I use the Premier League as an example first, and then maybe for Luke's benefit and the rest of the listeners we can use an American football reference, but I'm thinking I was watching videos of like the England team training before the matches against Montenegro and Kosovo for the Euro 2020. I'm looking at their training and they're doing a lot of powerlifting, related strengthening and conditioning. They're doing all these agility drills, which I don't know whether they're that important or whether you can just break football down into its specific drills and that's probably enough from a skill perspective based on what I've learned from speaking to people like you, James, and Doug McGuff and so forth.

Lawrence: I was curious. If you took let's say a team in the Premier League and let's say one of the top five, do you think that if you took them and you applied a pure high-intensity training approach with regard to the strength training, the strength and conditioning, that you also look at all of their skill-based training and you made that really specific and you improved that, do you think it would have a massive impact on the performance of that team in say the Premier League, for example?

James: Well, I think the reality is if you took out all strength and conditioning and all supplementary work from a Premier League football team who are the most physiologically gifted people in football and the most technically gifted people in football, then you would see almost no change in their

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performance. Let me put it like that. I genuinely think the strength and conditioning... I mean, Mark Asanovich at one of the REC Conferences years back presented a pie diagram that had as a final sliver of what impact athletic teams' performance as being strength and conditioning. It was really impressive to see a strength and conditioning coach say that because basically what he was saying is, "I do... My role is so little compared to everybody else's or compared to these other factors, environmental factors and team factors and so on and so forth."

James: I think this is it. A strength and conditioning coach has just got an ego way above their station and they're perceived by the skills coaches as being a central part of developing things, but actually, I think they need to come back to the basics, come back to the fundamentals. I think that most sports teams, Premier League, NFL teams, whatever, could refine their strategy down to, or should, refine their strategy to, "What's the minimum I need to do here?" Rather than, "What's the maximum I can do here?" Then, they can get rid of some of the skill-specific exercises they do like Olympic lifting if they're doing Olympic lifting and things like that and so forth.

James: The big problem in all of this is that we measure markers of performance. If you're a soccer player, we would measure maybe 10-meter or a 20-meter sprint, a 30-meter sprint if you're a certain position. We might measure vertical jump. We might measure hand-eye coordination or agility or things like that. Then, what we do is we say, "Oh, well, all of these things make you a better football player." Well, they don't, not really. I mean, they might do, but we don't know that they do. What's more likely

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to make you a better football player or soccer player is playing football or playing soccer.

James: I'm a pretty athletic guy from sports performance and from strength training and whatnot, so I've probably got a relatively good reaction time and agility time and acceleration time and things like that. Maybe not Premier League level, but all of those things combined don't make me a football player. It's that simple. I think that we need to have a better look at what we're actually doing. The strength and conditioning coaches need to have a better look at what they're actually doing for their athletes that's productive.

Lawrence: Fascinating [crosstalk 00:12:17]-

James: Hopefully that answers the question.

Lawrence: No, it does and I'd love to hear... Luke, you've obviously got experience working at a high level in sport and you've got a much better understanding, obviously, of the NFL. Do you feel like it's exactly the same situation there was well?

Luke: Well, I mean, I guess my comment would be and that James referenced just a few minutes ago, that as people like Jeremy Loenneke publish research that question the actual performance enhancement value of strength and conditioning relative to injury prevention and so forth, that maybe the approach that strength and conditioning coaches at a higher level of sport will start to adjust. That is assuming, and this might be

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wishful thinking, that they're ever going to read Jeremy's research or they're ever going to read any research.

Luke: I just don't know if... I think that strength and conditioning, at least in the U.S. at the highest level of team sport, is so much more about tradition and trend than it's about, "Hey, we're actually looking at any academic research." I just don't know if that research will ever actually be employed. That's suggesting Jeremy's research is wasted. I just am not optimistic about it.

James: I think a less interesting point and one of the conversations that I had over this past weekend in Madrid was the qualifications leading to being a strength and conditioning coach and they're so industry-based and experiential and, even to some extent, dare I say it, lacking academic credibility. To move through the ranks, you go through internships and assistants and then to become a head strength and conditioning coach. Actually, nowhere along the line is there a need for a high level of academic credibility or even the academic process that you may have been through to get there might not be as rigorous or as critically minded as maybe it could have been.

James: One of the conversations that I had with multiple S&C coaches from around the world was that there is potentially a greater need for these industry-based qualifications and accreditations to be delivered by academic institutions with an emphasis on good research practice and good scientific rigor rather than, "This is what we've always done so this is what we'll continue to do." So...

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Luke: Yeah, I agree. One of the problems in the U.S. is that ultimately the sport coach is hiring the strength and conditioning coach. If I'm a coach of an NFL team and I'm 62 years old and I'm old school in my thinking, I want to hire someone who is going to do what I'm comfortable with, and what I'm comfortable with may be completely antiquated and not evidence-based. You learn plenty quickly with how strength and conditioning coaches are getting paid in the U.S. right now. I mean, it's normal for a college football strength and conditioning coach to make 3, 4, 5, \$700,000 a year.

Luke: If you're in that situation, you do not tell your head coach, "Hey, we should be strength training differently because the preponderance of research really says, 'X, Y, and Z.'" You just say, "I'll do anything to keep my job." I mean, \$700,000 is crazy. It was just 10 years ago where that same job was making \$125,000, which is still good money, so things have shifted and I think money has influenced strength and conditioning coaches' willingness to jeopardize their job for the integrity of what they do. The outcome is that we're continually exposing athletes to antiquated strength and conditioning approaches.

Luke: Meanwhile, like this is not all depressing, meanwhile, on the other side of the coin, I had mentioned that I think we're going in the wrong direction in the strength and conditioning world, but I think we're going in the right direction in the rest of the lay community. I think that the lay media has picked up on so much of the important research. You can't go a week without reading some lay article about a benefit of resistance exercise. I've always summarized it this way, that Arthur Jones, and I tell this to Jim Flanagan all of the time, I said, "You and Arthur had no idea how right you

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were going to be when you told people in 1972, 'You should probably be strength training.'"

Luke: Frankly, in 1972, when they said, "Strength training is probably more important than going on a jog", they just had no idea how prophetic that statement or that construct was. It's seemingly every week that goes by we see some other research-based benefit of strength training that even 10 years ago it was never even an underpinning of why someone would strength train, I mean, cognitive function or mitigating cognitive decline or cognitive impairment. We talk about that now in 2019, we just didn't 15 years ago. I think there's more rationale for the average person to strength train than there ever was. The highest form of strength training 15 years ago was high-level sports. You went to school to study exercise science so you could potentially work with higher level athletes.

Luke: When people found out that you worked with a professional sports team, that was prestigious. Now, I think that's maybe some of the least important work being done in our field, and the most important work is working with someone who's 62 years old and needs to combat age-related decline from a physiological standpoint, from a cognitive standpoint. Obviously, I'm preaching to the choir with both of you and your listeners, Lawrence, but this is a new phenomenon that we actually have this research. The lay media is actually picking up on this research and putting it out there and I think it's to the benefit of the studio operators that this stuff is out there.

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Luke: When I say research, I'm not just talking about the benefits. That's important, but we're also actually having more of the research around this minimal dose approach, and I think they go hand in hand. When you see the benefits, I think it's natural for both researchers and practitioners and even government agency to understand, "Okay, we're finding more and more benefit. What is the appropriate dose and dose-response relationship? What is the minimal dose approach?" I love to... When I talk about this, when I'm giving a presentation, always talk about all of these benefits. Then, I shift it to James' paper that he did about a year and a half ago with a number of other people, A minimal dose approach to resistance training for the older population; the prophylactic for aging.

Luke: Okay, so we realize that this important and it's basically the fountain of youth, but we also realize no one is doing it. I love [crosstalk] to say that strength training is largely lost on the population that is actually interested in it. 22-year-olds are into strength training, but we don't have that many 65-year-olds in Europe, in Brazil, and in the U.S. engaged in resistance exercise, and my goodness, that's probably where most of the benefit is. I think it goes hand in hand, learning about the benefits, and then learning about, "Okay, what could the minimal dose approach be?" Even Brad's paper was picked up in The New York Times a year ago, but hey, maybe 13 minutes of strength training per week is all you need if you work really hard.

James: I think those are really good points and the only thing around that is I think that there's still a little bit of a disconnect between strength training and minimal dose. That's surely because some of the populations and some of

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the researchers that are doing strength training with their clients with their population groups are experts on the population group and not experts in strength training. I think it was The European College of Sports Science in Vienna, Luke, where we heard people present on yoga versus strength training for women... a certain trimester of pregnancy.

James: We asked the question, "What type of strength training did they do?" They looked at us blankly and said, "Well, you know, they lifted weights." We said, "Yeah, but what was the details?" They didn't know because they don't know that there are details. They don't know that there are minutiae, there are intricacies to lifting weights. I think that's a really big problem because this person was clearly an expert probably on yoga and probably on pregnancy, but less so on strength training. We see this [crosstalk 00:21:04]-

Luke: What a great point, yeah.

James: We see this issue that people know a lot about cancer, so they say, "Well, let's do strength training. Where do I go to find out about strength training is Essentials of Strength and Conditioning by the NSCA, or here's Progression Models in Resistance Training by the ACSM. That's their text... On strength training, they pluck out, "Oh, look, all I had to do is three sets of 10." That's what most people do, but I think the more we connect this minimal dose approach to it the more we can... I mean, as an example... I can't remember her name now, Liu-Ambrose, presented at your conference [crosstalk 00:21:45]-

Lawrence: Teresa [crosstalk 00:21:46]-

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James: Teresa, of course, sorry. Teresa Liu-Ambrose presented, but she doesn't know enough about the minutiae of strength training to say, "Oh, well, we use this volume approach. We use this load and we do this many repetitions to this intensity effort, with this [inaudible] form, blah, blah, blah, blah, blah." Because really, we are actually... I mean, that's what high-intensity training is. It's kind of picking at the minutiae. To some extent awesome, but on either side of it, most people are probably going to say, "Well, I don't really care about that. I [crosstalk 00:22:19]-

Lawrence: It's still material, though, isn't it? In strength training, if someone's doing really, really low intensity, then it is a material difference to what we would consider high intensity and the outcomes are totally different, right?

James: Well, I think the outcomes are completely different. I think a lot of the studies we can look and we can probably then put to one side, not necessarily in the trash can, but certainly next to the trash can to say, "What they did isn't really strength training as we know it. What they did is their interpretation of it." This is where actually more and more practitioners should be more involved with exercise prescription and are put in a better place to deliver exercise to people with clinical conditions because they know the exercise side of it better.

James: As long as they've got a good understanding of the condition, they can deliver very, very good quality exercise, whereas in the past, what we have seen are people who are experts in the condition and know very little about exercise. In reality, isn't that what we see from most medical professionals? So...

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Lawrence: Yeah.

Luke: I'm not as depressed or discouraged by everything James just laid out because I think it just lends more of a need for James' line of research specifically. I think it goes, "Hey, we find out there's more and more benefit", the next logical step is, "What's the right prescription? What's the right prescription? What's the right prescription?" I think naturally there'll be an interest in that. It is utterly shocking that it takes so long to develop that interest. I mean, it doesn't even seem to be on a lot of academics' radar, as James just stated, but eventually people will turn to James and say, "Okay, we need you to continue to refine the exact prescription."

Luke: In terms of the the minutiae that we talk about in high-intensity training, I think it's important because I don't want to spend years of my life and years of my career suggesting that certain elements are wildly important if they're not important. One thing that I always share is an incredibly scientific approach to resistance exercise. So far, it turns out to be a pretty uncomplicated approach and I wish it was more complicated sometimes, but I want to make sure that I'm rooted in a scientific approach.

Luke: Frankly, for many, many decades, we've overcomplicated so many elements of strength training. When I say "we", I mean the broad strength and conditioning community. I think Jeremy does a great job of talking about this in his ACS on paper. That's just a couple of weeks ago, literally published a few weeks ago, James, right? I mean, he talks about all of the textbooks that have been written on periodization in strength training and

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maybe it's all made up. Frankly, we don't have people on term studies on it, and so we are really extrapolating and really making a lot of assumptions.

Luke: I also would say the same is true of high-intensity training. We have entire factions of high-intensity training that have studied certain elements of how to do things, and we frankly have no evidence to say that those things are valuable or productive, yet most of or much of the high-intensity training community, when they define high-intensity training, or worse yet, when they define evidence-based training, they include that element when that is not an element of evidence-based training. It's just an element of the folklore of high-intensity training and we probably don't fully understand how valuable or maybe not valuable that particular element is.

James: Yeah.

Lawrence: Yeah. Excellent points from you both. This is probably a good time to segue into the next topic. There has been some bit of history of conflict within high-intensity training, different factions attacking one another. Personally, I've withdrawn from that a lot. I don't really engage of any of it social media anymore. I just feel like it's energy that could be better spent elsewhere, but I know it does provide some sort of entertainment for people as well sometimes. How do you both feel, starting with you, James, about the infighting in high-intensity training and the negativity?

James: Well, I find it quite interesting, first and foremost, and a lot of it's built on kind of a historical interpretation of exercise and high-intensity training

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and in conjunction with maybe a business philosophy. If somebody's... I'm not having a stab at Super Slow, but if somebody comes from a Super Slow background and that's what they've done and that's what they were taught, then they have an allegiance to it, maybe above and beyond other repetition durations and so forth. If somebody was trained in a certain way by a certain person and they vehemently discouraged certain exercises or movements or tools, then that person probably has an allegiance to that.

James: Learning is really, really difficult and staying up to date with research and things like that is really, really difficult. To give people the benefit of the doubt, I think most people believe in what they are saying and are trying to do right by the client, which is admirable. I think a big problem is that we attach ourselves or a lot of people in the high-intensity community attach themselves to something, but actually, when the foundations of it are shaken, they should say, "Yeah, maybe I don't need to stick as rigidly to that as I've believed previously." People are less willing to do that in high-intensity training, maybe because they're so used to resisting the rest of the strength training community and defending their stand. They just naturally defend some of the minutiae of this [inaudible] such as the tool they use or the rep duration or whatever else it might be and so forth.

James: I think it's a tragedy. At last year's Resistance Exercise Conference, Luke said, "Don't let the small things divide you and you should let the big things bind you." I think that's absolutely right. We're all on the same page, irrespective if we're in different sentences. We're certainly not that far apart from each other, so...

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Lawrence: Yeah-

James: That's kind of my take on things.

Lawrence: Yeah. Luke, what was your view on that?

Luke: I echo everything James said. I guess I would just qualify that if a small thing really, really matters, then yeah, you got to fight for it and you have to truly make it a foundation of everything that you're doing. If we find out the small thing does not matter or matters so much less than we ever had assumed, then we have to be able to let it go and put it in perspective. I think if we're going to be critical of high-intensity training, which was kind of your maybe original question, which I don't mean to loop back to, we probably do a poor job of keeping things in perspective from an application standpoint.

Luke: I think that perspective is important, and by perspective I mean, what are the different elements, the variables of exercise prescription that are important? Where can you have flexibility? Where should you not have flexibility? I think we've struggled with that and actually been probably dogmatic about certain elements that are... James, is that fair to say or not?

James: Yeah. I think completely, I think completely. I think that one of the key things in this community is that as I think this community attaches themselves to an intelligent approach. I was talking to somebody the other day about Resistance Exercise Conference and I was saying, "One of the great things is these are people that a majority of the people there want to

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learn. They want to read research papers and they're intelligent people, so you can talk to them at level."

James: The flip side of that is some people in the community are looking for validation for what they already do, so they will sit there and here that 60% of things that they have said maybe challenged their existing beliefs or they maybe don't see a relevance to it. Then, they hear that sentence that supports what they already believe and they go, "Yep, there we go, that's it, everything I'm doing is perfect", and they walk out the door. I would like to see more people more willing to learn or more willing to kind of challenge things.

James: Jim always tells the story of Arthur said to him, "Don't ever 'yes' me and don't second-guess me." What he means is don't be the yes man, don't be the person in the room that just agrees with everything I say because that doesn't serve any purpose. It doesn't serve any function. Every year I think at the REC I say, "Don't come here to have your existing beliefs validated. Come here to have them challenged, and then if you leave and can reaffirm them based on the arguments that somebody else provided, then you're in a better position. Or, if you changed them based on the arguments somebody else provided, you're in a better position.

James: I think it's really interesting that we have these infighting or internal debates in high-intensity training, when actually we should actually really all be able to move closer and closer to the same sort of thing. Whether those internal differences are business differentiators or not, I don't know.

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Lawrence: Yeah. James, that was really well said. Thanks for that. I want to talk a bit about the future of high-intensity training. I'm sure we've all spoken about this. Luke, you and I have probably spoken about it in the past. It's impossible not to repeat ourselves at this point, and I was talking about this with someone recently. In fact, I talk about this quite a lot and it's, why isn't high-intensity training more successful? We've touched on this a little bit in terms of the popularity, but people are always very interested in, why aren't there more businesses that are doing this? Why hasn't it taken off like Orangetheory or SoulCycle or one of these things or CrossFit?

Lawrence: My answer is, more often than not, a combination of the fact that it's really hard and requires a lot of discipline, so there's less people willing to do that. Then, secondly, it's the skill required to actually grow the business. Luke, I'd love to hear your perspective. Why do you think it has not grown from a business perspective as much as some people would have hoped?

Luke: Great question. My answer's going to be a lot of speculation, my opinions, so I want to make that totally clear. It's just my opinion of what I've observed. I think the good news is that it's growing now at a greater rate than it ever has grown before. I think that's positive. I think there's research to support the idea that it will continue to grow. I think the idea or the advent of the studio or boutique segment... If we look at the global health and fitness club industry, about a \$50 billion industry, the fastest growing segment within that overall industry is boutiques and studios.

Luke: Frankly, 20 years ago, there was a million high-intensity training practitioners that had personal training studios. Well, guess what? No one

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ever heard of a personal training studio. I remember in 1999, I met Steve Ritz, who's been on your podcast, and he had a strength training studio, a high-intensity training studio in Minnesota. I went to his place and he called it a studio. I had never heard the word "studio" before. I thought studio was like for dancing. I'm like, "What? A studio?" It didn't exist. Now, studio and boutique, I mean, those are the buzzwords. You can't go to a health club conference that doesn't say, "How do you combat the studios? How do you combat the boutiques? How do we give boutique or studio-like service and boutique and studio-like experiences in our big health clubs?"

Luke: All of the health clubs are trying to be more like studios. Well, the fact that studios are becoming more popular I think lends to the growth of high-intensity training. It's just one of the many different concepts that will take place in studios. Now, I'll actually say I think somewhat controversially, Lawrence, is the reason a lot of those other concepts have grown... I mean, frankly, some of those concepts involve a high level of intensity. I'm not a CrossFit advocate, but CrossFit is intense. It's not intense in the definition of we're training to muscle failure and we're keeping constant tension on a muscle to muscle failure, but it is intense from a heart rate standpoint, from a time and intensity continuum standpoint. I mean, you are busting your butt for a short period of time.

Luke: I think that's maybe the greatest thing that CrossFit has brought to the exercise community as a whole, that the idea that you don't have to go to the health club and get on an elliptical and just take it easy for 45 minutes. The average 42-year-old could go and work hard someplace, which I think

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lends to everything we're doing with high-intensity training, it's just a more controlled way. Here's the controversial statement. I think when we built Orangetheory Fitnesses and CrossFit gyms, I think people that built those businesses understood how to be a human being and how to connect with a customer and how to have a personality and charisma and character that creates relationships. I think we've told the wrong story in high-intensity training.

Luke: I think high-intensity training, we made high-intensity training about Arthur Jones. We made it about Ken Hutchins. I mean, I had a great friend who lives in California, a female, and she had trained at Discover Strength for many, many years living in California. She said, "Hey, find a place for me to train out here." I sent her to a place and she went in and she literally went in for a free introductory workout the next day and wanted to become a customer because she's bought in. She understands how it works. She sent me a text message the next day, and this is about the fittest looking woman you've ever seen, and she said, "They kept talking about some old guy in Florida. I don't know who it was." I said, "Well, what was the name?" She said, "Ken Hutchins." She said, "I didn't want to hear any more about him so I decided not to become a client."

Lawrence: Wow.

Luke: I just thought, "Oh my goodness. This is the classic"... That's not the minority, that's the majority. In a nutshell, can you make the customer the hero of the story and not make your company the hero of the story? We've made the personal training studio the hero of the story. We've tried

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to make Arthur Jones or Ken Hutchins or... By the way, I am not picking on Ken Hutchins or definitely not picking on Arthur Jones, just don't make us the hero of the story. Make the client the hero of the story, and Orangetheory has done that and CrossFit has done that.

Luke: Frankly, Nike and every other successful brand makes the customer the hero of the story. I'm not buying Nikes because Michael Jordan is truly the hero. Nike has found a way to communicate to me that I could be the hero, that I could be Michael Jordan-esque, and that's a horrible example because James has seen me play basketball. I could be... I could channel [crosstalk] the competitive drive persona that is Michael Jordan. In a nutshell, that's where we've gone astray and, frankly, we actually have generations of high-intensity training practitioners that that's how they were taught about the business. Sit someone down, talk to them about Ken Hutchins. Talk to them about the science right away, and that's just the wrong approach in my opinion.

Lawrence: Yeah, I totally agree and I can't believe that's still happening. James, you were laughing so hard, so what was Luke's performance like on the basketball court exactly?

James: Oh, Luke had a very respectful performance on the basketball court. I... Yeah, I was partly laughing because he said Michael Jordan, not Kobe Bryant or LeBron James or someone like that. He's just aging himself right there, so... I have response that differs a little bit. Again, I think it's a fantastic question and I think it's something that really anybody in the business of high-intensity training should look at and reflect upon and

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should definitely take heedance of everything Luke's just said because if there's a blueprint or a template for how to be successful in this business, then Luke and Discover Strength are it. That more people don't emulate that and replicate that in some form or another is just shocking, although, I should caveat all of this with I am not in the high-intensity training business. I'm in the academic and research business.

James: I have a different take on things, or slightly different take on things, and this comes back to the old adage that a little bit of knowledge is dangerous. I think we're in an era now where information is more accessible, so I think more lay people go online to get information or go to a magazine to get information and they think that because they have a Men's Health subscription or, even worse than that, they read the Men's Health blog or the Muscle & Fitness blog or Flex Magazine blog or whatever it might be, they know about training. I think this is party why high intensity training has never really taken off in the UK, not with the kind of market that it needs to really be successful, and that's actually because... If you're in the UK, then I apologize in advance, and that's actually because it's not America. The UK is actually the most arrogant nation on the planet.

James: We call ourselves Great Britain. That's the prime example. Everything else beyond that is that anybody who walks into a gym in the UK thinks of themselves as an exercise professional. They don't want a personal trainer. They don't want to be walked through a workout. What more people should want to do, and this is what I think we see more in Europe and where high-intensity training is successful, is people don't want to be

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an expert in that. They don't have the time to be an expert on that and they're not going to commit time to be an expert on that. What they want to do is walk in the room and have somebody meet them at the door, say, "I am an expert on this. I have studied on this. I know the best thing for you. Let me take over. I'm going to walk you through a workout and I'm going to say goodbye to you at the door again."

James: People that are smart get that and that's why maybe it's not just the trainers, but maybe it's the clients of high-intensity training facilities that are really, really smart people because they kind of get that, "I don't need to be an expert on this." They also know that there's not that much more about exercise to get. It doesn't have to be as complicated as we see it in all the other formats. I also think the other exercise types like CrossFit have their role models. CrossFit is exercise, absolutely, but it's a sport. It's anything where you have a competitive element it has to be a sport, and people enjoy sports. We've already talked about basketball. People will do CrossFit because they will love the competitive element.

James: We did a study with the participants and their clients at Discover Strength a few years back and in comparison to people that do group exercise classes and CrossFit and things like that and we found that the people who do CrossFit rank social affiliation as very important. They basically see it as a team sport and the same camaraderie as we see when we sit in the locker room at a basketball game. That's why they do it. Now, that's fantastic. That's great. They probably don't care that they're going to break their back or dislocate their shoulder or a list of the things at some point because they're doing it for the fun, for the social affiliation of it.

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Whereas, actually the people that do high-intensity training rate health very important, rate health factors like weight loss and ill health avoidance as very important.

James: They don't go there because they want to grab a cappuccino in the coffee bar afterwards. They're not there for whatever else it might be that you see at these health clubs. They're there because it's exercise to them is a tool. It's a purposeful tool that can be minimized to the most efficient thing. I think that we don't need to reminiscence or recant stories on Arthur or Casey or anybody else around high-intensity training. We just need to say, "This is about an efficiency, this is about a productivity that brings you all of these health benefits."

James: Unfortunately, like I said, some population groups don't want to hear that, generally, young people who will spend hours and hours on social media and the internet and magazines and blogs and things like that, and older people who now have a recognition and acknowledgement of their own mortality who realize how important their health is and things like that probably will not participate in those kinds of sports and those kinds of exercises and will hopefully at some point find high-intensity training because it suits their lifestyle and it suits ill health and injury risk avoidance. That's my take on the question you asked.

Lawrence: Yeah. It's a great take and I never thought about it like that in terms of UK population being perhaps less open-minded than Americans when it comes to this stuff. I haven't thought about that at all, actually.

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James: Well, I think about it in respect to the business that you're about to open [crosstalk 00:45:13]-

Lawrence: Well, exactly [crosstalk 00:45:13]-

James: And I think about it in context of if I were to open a business, and it's very easy to sit on the sidelines and say anything like this, but I think that I would target specific population groups. I would certainly not target anybody in the 18s or maybe even 30 category unless it's very, very busy business executive-type people who don't have the time to commit to thinking that they learn about exercise and reading blogs and stuff like that. Half of the students I have, Luke often Skypes in and sometimes he says to my students, "I hope you realize the benefits of having a lecturer like James Fisher." Well, they don't.

James: They don't because they read so much on exercise and they read so much on sexy exercise and people that run sites like Brad does that they don't think that my way is the best way or necessarily that any way is the best way. They probably chop and change to what they think is the best way based on what they read this week or last week and what bodybuilder's at the forefront or what CrossFit guy won or athlete or whatever it might be. I think high-intensity training will appeal and will always appeal to certain population groups or certain cultures, like I said, Kieser Training and now fit20 and so forth are incredibly popular [crosstalk 00:46:50]-

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Lawrence: Yeah, fit20 [crosstalk] are blowing up in the UK now, so they're showing there's something [crosstalk] they can get traction with with certain populations.

James: Right, right, so again, I'll be interested to show what the demographic is because my bet is that it's probably a little bit older-

Lawrence: Oh, it is, yeah.

James: And because they're people that have a little more money that can pay for the personalized element. People that don't pay the personal training don't pay for it probably because they either think they already know it or they don't have the money to pay for it, in which case, you guys don't want them as clients and that's fine anyway. Again, it comes back to information. Those guys will spend a lot of time reading around it and that little bit of information is dangerous. It's the old Dunning-Kruger Curve, a little bit of information is going to be the downfall, so-

Lawrence: Yeah. Luke, I'd love your perspective. I appreciate that. Well, actually, I don't know. Maybe you do have insights into data that would perhaps show differences in people's interest in this type of training in the UK versus the U.S. Have you got a view on that at all?

Luke: Yeah. I don't. I don't have any data and I should just qualify my statements. I do think it's worth it to share some of the story, so like telling the story about Casey or Arthur I think is really valuable. It's just not what we'd lead with, and I think we've mistakenly led with it. You don't lead with protocol. You don't lead with Casey and Arthur. You've got to lead

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with a person and care about the person or client in front of you. We're all the hero of the story. We're the hero of the movie made about our lives. I mean, we're that main character, so that's I think how the business has to position it.

Luke: The thing that I think we've gotten wrong, this is so important, what we've gotten wrong is really smart people in high-intensity training continually say, "High-intensity training will never be popular because it's too hard." People want a quick fix and they want something a little bit sexier and I just think that's dead wrong, and frankly, I think CrossFit proved that wrong. Probably the top three most popular exercise trends or fads or movements that we've seen in the last 30 years is CrossFit, and it's literally based around incredibly hard work.

Luke: It sounds like I'm a CrossFit fan and clearly I'm not, but we were just wrong. High-intensity training has not failed to spread or proliferate due to intensity. It's just not the case. It's the story that we've told our clients and how we've connected with our clients. I just don't buy into that whatsoever. I think we need to abandon that and focus on some other things.

Lawrence: Even if you take all of the people that do CrossFit or some sort of resistance training, it's still a really, really tiny percentage, so you're still getting a selection bias. Does that not still suggest that there's the vast majority just aren't prepared to do the hard work? I mean, I know-

Luke: Yeah, but I [crosstalk 00:49:54]-

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Lawrence: Luke, you've had people who fill a questionnaire in, say, "Yeah, I could go even harder more often than not." They either say stay the same or go even harder, but again, I'm just worried, or not worried, but wondering if that's, say, a selection bias.

Luke: My assessment is if humans want to exercise, generally, you can compel them to exercise with a high level of intensity. That person that I'm tell you about, our client who constantly tells us, "I want to be pushed harder", they can be more intense or they work with one of our new trainers and say, "Whoa, that wasn't intense enough", that person did not come out of the womb just a badass. They weren't intense. I mean, they're 62 years old and they have progressively got to that point. We've probably classically underestimated how intense that person can really be, so it's not something germane to that person.

Luke: We're not attracting intense people, it's just they can be brought along and become intense in their approach to training, but the selection bias comes in and that basically, I mean, worldwide, globally, health club penetration as stayed for 25 years at about 17%, between 15 and 18%. 15 to 18% of the population belongs to a health club, and despite everything we've tried, that hasn't moved. We continually are getting the same people to try different types of exercise. I agree with you there, Lawrence. Why can't we get the other 80% to engage? Why can't we penetrate the other 80%? Great point.

Luke: I don't have the answer to that. I mean, that's what the health club world has been working on for literally decades. We continue to either market

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through or fight for the same small percentage. Should we be looking at the Blue Ocean instead of fighting over a small Red Ocean? From a marketing standpoint, I don't know. Sometimes I think it's maybe wise to go after the 80%, go after the Blue Ocean. Sometimes I think... I say, "No, go after the less than 20% because they've already said they want to exercise. Just show them the light and show them a different way to exercise." I think there's two different conversations. I think it's, how do you exercise once you engage in exercise? Have you even made the decision to exercise?

James: I think that's fascinating, and just to come back to the idea of intensity of exercise, because obviously CrossFit has shown that people are willing to exercise hard, the study that we did with Luke's clients, what we looked at, people that exercise through a very, very high intensity of effort, like I said, they didn't rank social affiliation as important. Actually, what we didn't ask them and what would be really interesting to get into is the idea of working that hard with a trainer because what we do know is that people don't work that hard when they don't have a trainer.

James: At some point in this area, people are going on a journey and they're embarking on that journey with other people by their side. If you do CrossFit, people are openly willing to say that the affiliation is important to them, that they're part of a team. It's the old adage of the first rule of CrossFit is you must talk about CrossFit, but in high-intensity training and in Discover Strength as the model is that you have a trainer there who's taking you on this journey, who's taking you through this journey and who is there with you every step of the way. I mean, one of... Luke, correct me

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if I'm wrong, one of the strict rules for even group workouts is that you're always for the client at that point of failure. Is that correct?

Luke: Absolutely, yeah.

James: Right, so even if you're training multiple people, you will be with that client when they reach the point of failure, and then you'll move to the next client when they're reaching failure on the next exercise or whatever it might be. Well, that's embarking on a journey with a person. That's going through. That's having that affiliation. That's having that motivation. The motivation is the driver. People can be motivated to work hard irrespective of age or respective of gender or respective of other factors. We need to find that driving force, whether that is a personal trainer, whether that is a team of people exercising with them. CrossFit somebody said is quite enlightening. What it actually shows is if you get enough people together in one room, then you can create a tipping point where they'll actually do really, really dumb things.

James: My wife used to go to CrossFit and she used to go because she is a physiotherapist, so I can recall her coming back from a session one morning. She said, "Everybody was encouraged to do a headstand against the wall and then do an explosive like pushup from the wall and catch themselves on their head again. The first guy did it and hurt his neck, and the next guy did it and hurt his neck. Then, the next guy did it and the next guy did it and hurt his neck." Faith said she was watching this and she was like, "Why did the second guy even do it?" All that happened is there's like this mass brainwashing, this mass encouragement that if you

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get enough people together and you kind of rile them up enough, they'll do some really stupid things. Really, the second guy should have said, "Hold on. He just hurt his neck. Are you sure I should be doing this?"

James: The comical part of the story is that Faith always says when they got to her, she said, "No, I'm not doing it. I'm just here to hand out business cards." I think that... This is it, this is the reality that people will work hard as Luke said during exercise. People will work hard. They need to find that motivation, and if people want to work hard, if people want to work hard, maybe some people shy away from high-intensity training because they don't want to work hard.

Lawrence: Yeah, great points said by both of you there. I wanted to discuss something else, which I guess the three of us haven't actually spoken about yet, which is this kind of growth of the motor-driven machines which have come out over the last few years. I guess in the case of [ARX](#) I think it's probably been a decade now. I'm not quite sure when they first opened or first started selling machines.

Lawrence: I'm just curious. When you look at these machines, and I guess I would put this to Luke first, and you look at the gravity-based machines, do you think that we're moving away from weight-based or gravity-based machines towards these motor-driven machines once they, I don't know, perhaps become a little more financially feasible for businesses and that kind of thing? What's your take on how that trend is going?

Luke: I think we will all be driving in autonomously-driving automobiles before the majority of the resistance training population is strength training on

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motor-driven units. I just think that's how slow some of this goes. If we look historically, I just read a book a year ago exactly. I didn't try to read the book, I was forced to read the book and in the book... The book is about all different topics and one of the topics was exercise. They said, "If you want really good results from your exercise, you have to have a New Age approach to exercise. That New Age approach to exercise is kettle bells." I thought, "Well, hold on. Kettle bells were popularized in like the late 1500s in Russia."

Luke: When we talk about progress, we're talking about progress in our little world from 1971 and the advent of the Nautilus machines and maybe MedX. Is there an improvement on MedX? Is it [ARX](#)? Is it a motor-driven unit? Can we find a way to maximize eccentric loading? I would still say we're looking at the entire global health and fitness club industry. Or if we're just looking at people that are actually engaged in exercise worldwide, will there be a movement toward more people using motor-driven machines? I do not think we're going to see a seismic shift to that.

Luke: I do think that within 50 years we're all going to be in autonomous cars, I mean, 100%. Our grandchildren... James' son at some point... Well, James is probably raising his son to be a race car driver, frankly, because James is into it, but are kids' kids, Lawrence, your granddaughter or grandson will laugh at the idea that we used to let humans drive cars-

Lawrence: Oh, I agree [crosstalk 00:58:31]-

Luke: Like, how haphazard and unsafe does that sound? In terms of are we really going to move toward more intelligent forms of resistance, I just

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don't think we have any foundation for that. We've moved in the wrong direction over the last 20 years rather than a productive direction. Now, among high-intensity practitioners and people that are really into this, we may see a shift toward that. I think we might see an open-mindedness to it. Right now, our issue is that the personalities take over.

Luke: This is a small kind of cultish field and with social media and how small are... When I say field, I mean the subsector of our field. We wait until one person weighs in on what they think of this equipment, and then if we really subscribe to what that person says, that really informs our opinion. We wait and we listen until that person weighs in and we say, "Okay, this is my opinion now on that particular topic." When you only have a few of those voices out there, I think it shapes whether or not we're going to accept new technology. I just think we're a ways away from it.

Luke: I am encouraged by it. My few sets I've done on the [ARX machine](#), I think it's fantastic. I think it's great technology. I think it's something we should continue to explore. Do I see a movement towards this in general? No, and if you question that, walk into any health club and walk into a resistance training area and things are moving more prehistoric than toward anything that resembles progress.

Lawrence: Just a quick followup on that. I get tons of questions about [ARX](#) and Phoenix. I'd like to just give you the floor for a moment to just kind of opine on your views on the machines.

Luke: I've never used the Phoenix. If I haven't been on it, I can't comment on it. The sets that I've done on the [ARX](#) have been absolutely awesome. I wish

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I could train on it on a regular basis. I'm not going to say it's superior to anything else, but I think it does present variation to what we've actually... It represents a breakthrough in how we have actually resistance trained. I think I've only lived through a couple of breakthroughs, so it was me personally using barbells and dumbbells, me being exposed to variable resistance machines or machines with cams or four-bar linkage systems that could change strength curve.

Luke: It was then being exposed to X-Force for the first time in 2008 when X-Force first came to the U.S. and launched. I think that the actual change to how we strength trained and now it's [ARX](#). I think there's value in [ARX](#). I would not go on the record and say, "If you trained for 26 weeks twice per week on [ARX](#) versus X-Force only versus on MedX or Nautilus only that you would produce a statistically significant difference in muscle strength and hypertrophy." I may have hopes or wishes that that would be the case, but I'm not convicted anyway. Let me tell you, if I were convicted, all Discover Strengths in the future would buy that particular line of equipment. I just don't have conviction in any direction there.

Lawrence: Yeah. What about from a... Sorry, James. I will let you chime in in a moment, but what about from a business perspective? Thinking about studio owners listening to this, they might be evaluating [ARX](#) versus Phoenix versus fill in the blank.

Luke: I think everyone's got to understand their model. What's their business model? I think there's a value to [ARX](#) if you want to be the business owner... I look at this like you are the chiropractor, excuse me, oh, you

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could say chiropractor. You are the orthodontist, you are the dentist. The business is one or two people. It's you and maybe some other support staff. You are going to see client after client after client, and I'm using the analogy of the dentist because the dentist is generally generating the revenue. They are the revenue producer. We say things in the world of fitness, in the world of personal training, not just high-intensity training, all personal training. We say, "Well, man, you don't want to trade time for money."

Luke: Trading time for money is exhausting. You want to have other online platforms and other ways to make money and I think trading time for money is a brilliant idea if you're trading enough money for that unit of time. You just do not see attorneys and dentists and surgeons complaining that they're trading time for money, and that's exactly what they're doing. They just charge accordingly, so I digress. That's your model and you're not going to have more personal trainers and you don't need more square footage. Nothing wrong with 250 square feet and the [two ARX units](#). Maybe a set of dumbbells for a little bit of variation.

Luke: I think you could have a really strong model there, but it's not for me to suggest what people's models should be and I think we should not look toward there only being one model that can be effective. I think there's a lot of different models that can be effective. I see viability there. I think there's other options that are viable also.

Lawrence: James, do you have a view on the different modes of machines out there at the moment?

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James: I think Luke has some really interesting points over that and from a business perspective, I would never challenge Luke on any of that. I completely agree that we see very little forward progress in this industry and what we have seen is exactly things like X-Force and then things like [ARX](#) and so forth. X-Force didn't really revolutionize exercise or change the world or anything, did it? I just can't see the same thing. I can't see it happen with [ARX](#) either, which I think is a little bit of a shame because I quite like it, but I think that the reality in all of this is these are tools.

James: The reason Discover Strengths don't need X-Force or [ARX](#) is because they use a tool, and when you... I don't mean to suck up to Luke with this, but when you take an expert in a trade, it's not about the tool that they use. It's about the way they do the job. As long as you've got a tool that's still of sufficient quality to do a good job, the job's done. Having a chain saw compared to a hand saw might make the job a little bit more efficient for somebody who's less capable to do the job, and maybe that's what these tools are about. Maybe that's what X-Force can do if it can't drive people to concentric failure, then it can accentuate the eccentric phase.

James: If you have [ARX](#) then you have a lot more metrics available and maybe that's a bit of a buzz. I personally really like that. I would love to train on [ARX](#) regularly and have those metrics available and know what I'm delivering this workout compared to last workout and maybe hopefully see progress or not see too much regression as I got older and things like that. Is it a necessity to strength and muscle mass increases? No, I don't think so at all and I think, like Luke said, building a business around certain tools, the idea of 315 with X-Force, with the idea of using specific

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ARX machines to fill a particular space and preach an even smaller than Big Five workout, a Big Three workout using ARX, then why not? Again, it comes down to business model rather than productivity of the exercise type. I don't think that these things are really going to change the industry in the... that we know it.

James: It'll be more interesting to see things like ARX... look at that in microgravity environments. There's constant talk of a manned mission to Mars, but the biggest offset for that is the time it would take and the amount of bone and muscle mass lost along the way. It blows my mind that big organizations don't look at isokinetic training for things like this. I guess some big part of it is the size of the devices and potential vibration from those devices, but I don't know.

Luke: Does Great Britain even have a space program, James? [crosstalk] I mean... Let me on a serious note comment if I may on two things that James said there. There's one thing I think he said that is actually of just tremendous value. If there's something that I think could catch on with ARX, it's the data. If I've seen a trend in studios and boutiques and fitness in general, it's there is an addiction to be able to understand numbers and improvement. It's an addiction to understanding improvement. If you look at like Orangetheory Fitness or even Myzone, which really came out of Australia, and so many clubs utilize Myzone technology, I think the exerciser wants to understand, "Did I improve?"

Luke: You can almost put any metric in front of them that shows constant improvement and that's what we become addicted to. It's improvement

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and maybe to a lesser extent it's competition, but maybe you could say it's competition with oneself, which is another way of saying improvement. I do think we get addicted to that. I don't think you could scale a business that only did manual resistance training because you just can't track any type of progress. The thing I've seen in all different studio and boutique concepts, including our own, is people want data around improvement.

Luke: I think the true purist high-intensity training practitioner, and I maybe put myself in that category, is we're all about the process. Like we say, "Who cares if you're improved? Just get to muscle failure." I just don't think humans are wired that way. We actually want to know that we've progressed and I think that we want to see that we've progressed on every aspect of life. Maybe that's an advantage of ARX and I think that's something that all strength training technology should look at. I know MedX is actually looking at ways to do that right now which I think is interesting, which is a different topic for a different day. I do think that is noteworthy.

Luke: The other comment I'll make is we've seen businesses succeed and fail with every conceivable exercise tool. We've seen companies that have a brand new Nautilus in the mid-70s fail. We've seen other businesses in the mid-70s with all Nautilus equipment become wildly successful. We talk about... You've had them on the show on the podcast, Gainesville Health & Fitness Center. Gainesville Health & Fitness was largely a Nautilus club. Hundreds of Nautilus machines and then eventually hundreds of MedX machines. Now, it's a million MedX machines and X-Force machines and

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they've been wildly successful, but there's also been companies that have X-Force and are not successful.

Luke: I haven't seen an association or a correlation and definitely not a causation between the type of exercise tool and success of the business. Why is this important? I think so many small business operators in our little world have looked for the perfect tool and there's just no association between the right tool and performance of that business, so maybe stop thinking about the tool. I do see an association between the quality of the workout and the success of the business, and somehow we've assumed that if you have the right tool, the quality of the workout improves. I don't think that that is always the case. I don't think... This is going to sound... It's an overstatement. I don't think the tool matters when it comes to success of the business. I think we've seen enough evidence of that, but I do think the quality of the workout matters.

Luke: A thing that I... This is a selfish note. I have had... I don't know. Everyone asks me, "What are you guys doing from a marketing standpoint? How much money do I need to spend on marketing to get each studio to over a million dollars?" I think you need to spend like almost no money on marketing. The big I think like misnomer about Discover Strength is we spend a ton on marketing. We spent almost no money on marketing, and then when people really pull back the curtains and they find out what we're doing is we're just obsessed about the workout. Maybe our approach to workout is a little bit different, but it is the workout. It is not the perfect cam. Love talking about cams, but it's not the perfect cam, it's just the workout.

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James: Yeah. I mean, I'm going to weigh down on this a little bit because I love MedX equipment. I love the nostalgia of Nautilus equipment and some Nautilus machines are actually fantastic and some MedX machines are actually fantastic. There are some that I am not such a big fan of, which I've probably mentioned previously and I'm not going to get into. We know that the equipment is not the answer because high-intensity training people have attached themselves to equipment that is as old if not older than a DeLorean. We still look at MedX equipment, that most high-intensity practitioners look at MedX equipment or derivatives of it maybe with the Super Slow cam or whatever as being the best piece of equipment that you can buy.

James: The MedX have now come back out and said, "We're going to make MedX equipment again. This is great, we're going to bump 10 grand onto the price tag, but it's going to be MedX equipment again." People should really look at this and go... This is the dumbest thing on the planet because there has been technological progression that can do this. I was at a gym last week where they have Matrix equipment from about 2005, and Matrix equipment in 2005 put on a device where it counts the number of reps you perform and it counts your time in the load. Well, that's not a difficult thing to do, but it's a metric that a person using the resistance machine can make a note of at the end of their session and take away with them.

James: Well, a lot of high-intensity practitioners around the world add on some sort of visual display so that you can see forced production through [inaudible] motion or reps counted or whatever else it might be. We can

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move these devices into the current era with some technology, and that's what I'd really like to see MedX do as they develop the equipment again or as they start to sell the equipment again. We don't need to. We don't need to because it's not about the tool itself, it's about the workout. It's about the outcome of the tool, so I mean, I just thought of this. That wasn't me necessarily having a massive stab at MedX or Nautilus equipment, but I just think that we know that the tool is certainly secondary to all of this.

Lawrence: Yeah. Absolutely fantastic points from both of you. I really appreciate that. I guess one final question and then we'll probably wrap up. Looking at [crosstalk 01:13:40]-

Luke: Lawrence?

Lawrence: Yes, so go on [crosstalk 01:13:40]-

Luke: I got to say one thing. I'm so rude. I got to say one thing-

Lawrence: No, that's fine.

Luke: I don't want your listeners to misinterpret this. I'm obsessed with equipment and, frankly, James I think is downplaying how much he's obsessed with equipment. If you want to know what James and I talk about late at night when we're eating out together, we literally say, "Okay, here's the deal. You have a home gym. You're allowed 10 machines only. What 10 machines would you have? They can be from any era." Okay, 10 machines, only from 1971 to 1980. What would they be? We sketch it out

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and we argue and we say, "That was a bad decision. We should have done this."

Luke: We're acting like, "Oh, the strength curve doesn't matter and the machine doesn't matter. I would never attach myself to that." When it comes down to it, James has a lot of bicycles. James is really into cars. He may be rather... collect like really fast cars, but beyond that, we'd want to collect exercise equipment. We're into it, and James, I hope it was okay that I added that.

James: No. You're absolutely right and well around the point. When are you're going to get your spot?

Luke: Fair point.

Lawrence: Look, guys. I'm just looking at the time and I'm thinking it might be ideal to wrap up and perhaps we can do a part or two to cover off the rest another time. Any kind of parting thoughts from either of you?

James: Well, I mean, I think there's a bright future for the high-intensity training community as far as business goes, as far as the lay population goes and with clinical populations. I think there's obvious connections with potentially GP clinics or the like and I think that the caveat around everything else that we've said is that the tool is certainly secondary to delivering a good workout and having the right trainers there. There's a bright future from that perspective in high-intensity training. It's just about finding the right business model, and of course, that's easy for me to say. It's nothing to do with me, so-

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Lawrence: Well-

James: You know?

Lawrence: Yeah. No, I agree, but Luke, I wondered if you wanted to kind of elaborate on that and provide maybe a resounding kind of inspiring final thoughts for the business owners to be and the existing owners to feel inspired?

Luke: Well, it's funny that you say that because my closing statement was going to be that whether you requested it or not. I think that we [crosstalk 01:16:14]-

Lawrence: Good. I'm glad.

Luke: Have never... You could not have a more ripe environment for everything that we do. If you're an investor and you care less about high-intensity training and you are only interested in money and return on investment, you're a venture capitalist, the market conditions are ripe to be involved in high-intensity strength training. We have a confluence of factors that we just don't see in other industries. We have a growing Boomer population. We have more people turning 60 right now worldwide than we've ever had in any time in history. This population is also maintained, or excuse me, retained by health clubs and boutiques and studios. They have the disposable income to buy our products and services.

Luke: We were right in that we were interested in strength training. Like I said in 1971, we would have never guessed that strength training would be as valuable as it is. Every week, a new study comes out that supports the efficacy of what we do, and not just the benefit, but even our approach to

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it. I just think we have a confluence of all of these variables that come together that say, "Wow, a strength training business right now is a really, really viable business." The news is better than we ever thought and I think that what we should do going forward is this. We need to do the one thing that the global health club community and the global academic exercise science community has failed to do, is we just need to interact with each other. We need to apply what James and James' colleagues have done in our exercise businesses.

Luke: I go to all of the health club conferences worldwide and no one at those health club conferences is saying, "Hey, exercise science community, what are you guys doing that we could apply in our businesses?" That communication is just not there and I think the high-intensity training practitioner has a great opportunity to do that. Let's apply what James and his colleagues are learning and uncovering in our businesses.

Lawrence: Yeah. Excellent way to wrap this one up, then. Thank you to both of you so much for taking the time to do this. This has been really enjoyable, and James, best way for people to get in touch with you?

James: Yeah. Most people probably know me through social media already, but if you don't, then find me or feel free to email james.fisher@solent, that's S-O-L-E-N-T.ac.uk. I will get to your emails when I can.

Lawrence: Eventually, and [crosstalk 01:18:44]-

James: I'm actually pretty good.

Lawrence: I know you are, you are [crosstalk 01:18:47]-

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James: The thing is, most of my students and other academics force them way down the wayside because when somebody sends me an email, and having listened to this podcast, it's probably on an area that I'm insanely passionate about, and so I prioritize their email, so [crosstalk 01:19:01]-

Lawrence: You are good. It's just I was thinking of the context, having just come back from your conference and all of the work that I know you'll be doing on that which you said [crosstalk 01:19:08]-

James: Well, yeah [crosstalk 01:19:08]-

Lawrence: In it off-air. Luke, yourself, best way if people want to find out more about?

Luke: They can definitely shoot me an email, luke@discoverstrength.com, and of course, they can check out our website, also, discoverstrength.com. I'm easy to email as well.

Lawrence: Yeah, and also do you want to mention, obviously, the events you've got coming up and-

Luke: Yeah [crosstalk] The Resistance Exercise Conference is frankly the best way to connect... I mean, a great way to connect live with myself, other high-intensity training practitioners, James. We have an unbelievable lineup this year of presenters and I think it's really... Really, our focus is the gathering of like-minded evidence-based strength training practitioners. You can check out the website and link up to that website as well.

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