

EPISODE 172

[INTRODUCTION]

[0:00:11.7] AVH: Hey everybody, today we are talking with strongwoman Aimee Rose, all about well, being a strongwoman or a strongman or a strong person just being strong and awesome in general, which I think we can all agree is a universal topic.

I was able to attend Aimee's Intro to Strongman workshop at Paleo f(x) in the spring and I tracked her down to chat with me about her work, the fundamentals of strongman workouts and why they are so awesome and fun, and dare I say primal. I mean, think about it, you're picking up massive stones from the ground, you're carrying them from point A to point B, you're like pushing cars, it's pretty awesome and we talk about empowering yourself in the gym like this can have so many positive effects outside of it as well.

Aimee is a competitive strongwoman and spokesperson. She's based in Ottawa, Ontario where she founded Love to Train, a holistic training facility that delivers health and wellness programs to people of all ages and abilities. Aimee has a pretty incredible story. After struggling a lot of her life with scoliosis and food sensitivities, doctors actually labeled her physically disabled when she was a kid. But she decided to take her health into her own hands, challenging herself to learn and compete and she got in to bodybuilding, strongman, and even an Ironman. Now, as a coach, she helps apply these same techniques and knowledge that she gained to help other people find their own strengths.

Without further ado, let's chat with strongwoman Aimee.

[INTERVIEW]

[0:02:10.3] AVH: All right, I am at Paleo f(x) at the Paleo Magazine booth and I'm here with Aimee Rose who just finished an Intro to Strongman demo. Can you talk a little bit about what you did?

[0:02:20.7] AR: Yeah, I ran them through a conventional strongman event or strongman training events. So I broke that down in phases as we started with the overhead pressing events and explained the differences between like how a long press is so much different than a barbell clean and press. I'm at least so we had have some yoke, we had some farmers carries and we had some keg carries, which was a lot of fun this year and a hand over hand rope pulls and we finished up with some stone over bar for reps. So, yeah people had fun.

[0:02:49.7] AVH: I feel like it should have been called Intro to Strongwoman really because you're [inaudible]. Also, there were a lot of women there. Women are attracted to this sport. Do you think that that's something that's becoming more popular? Do you think women have always been kind of into it? What's the story there?

[0:03:02.6] AR: I think there is a niche for both. That would be the answer to that. So that might be something that I'll pitch to the promoters, to Paleo f(x) next year. But there is a huge draw to strength training for women because it's a means for them to empower themselves. So I do have enough coming eBook called *Discover Your Strong: The Entrepreneur's Guide to a Stronger Body, Mind and Business*.

It's talking about how strength training at the core and really immersing yourself in strength training is such a powerful vehicle to empower yourself and strengthen yourself in your entrepreneurial realm.

[0:03:37.1] AVH: You're based in Ottawa, shout out to Ottawa, great city. You have a gym there and you do some strongman stuff there, right?

[0:03:43.7] AR: I do and I don't. Though I do have the – it's a private training facility for trainers and for clients. We tend to get the weekend warriors so a lot of pain management, although I do have the implements on-site and I do work with clients because I have them. It's just about restoring function and that kind of really pulls into my personal story of being, I was deemed disabled, scoliosis and discovered strength and movement, one movement at a time and strongman is just another element of that.

[0:04:15.8] AVH: Did you get into competitive strongman at all? Or was it always just kind of just a fun thing for you, like seeing how strong you can get?

[0:04:21.6] AR: Yeah, competitive, won some stuff. I did well kind of out of the gate and so I ventured into endurance sport. Because I was disabled and I was told that strength would not be a part of my future, I didn't really venture there. I didn't want to injure myself because the medical systems said that that would be what would happen.

Thankfully the medical industry has really like, has moved forward from that point. But yeah, so I did marathons and Ironman and adventure racing and I met Elliott Hulse, actually just at a course that I took and he told me that I was a good fit for it just based on my physiologies. "Yeah, so you've got traps, you should really think about this sport." So I did. Four months after having done the marathon, I did my first Strongman competition and I came in first place. Yeah. So it just kind of stuck from that.

[0:05:09.9] AVH: What's your favorite movement?

[0:05:11.8] AR: I'm good at stone lifts. So we tend to like the things we're best at but I just love everything about Strongman. It's a completely weird and abnormal way to move because I mean, as coaches, we're brought into a gym and we do everything so conventionally. You know, we're locked into machines, we focus on technique and body alignment and all of a sudden you're throwing your body underneath like a 500 pound yoke and you're running with that for distance or for time.

Or you're wrapping your body around an atlas stone. So you're lifting something with around and back which is like a big no-no for anybody in the lifting industry and you're loading this thing for like as many as you can over a bar. Aside from being just really cool, it's really empowering because you really find what you're capable of doing.

[0:06:05.5] AVH: It's cool though because some of the movements are maybe weird or atypical in the general fitness industry but there's something very primal about it too. Because it's not, as you were saying sort of in your demo, it's not this perfect situation. It's how you can make it

work. You need to lift this thing, you need to move this thing, you figure out the best way to do it and there is something really primal about that.

[0:06:25.7] AR: Absolutely, and I'm glad you brought that up. I come from way northern part of Canada, native reserves and my father's aboriginal. So I grew up fishing and hunting. Those were things that I did so the outdoors is very much a part of who I am and how I grew up. Doing things in nature and moving your body in atypical way and doing things like Strongman, which is also based on like traditional farm land activity.

So like a yoke for example is like a steel bar, you put across the Oxen and then you carry the bales of hay to the farm. I don't really know the story of what it is exactly but – and the farmers who want to get workout on the land so we would carry this thing by themselves, right? There's a lot of function to that and it's really appealing and I also love this concept of being both fight and flight. Right? So not only am I strong, I am fast but I'm able to run for long periods of time.

[0:07:20.6] AVH: Well rounded.

[0:07:20.7] AR: Well rounded, absolutely.

[0:07:23.1] AVH: Yeah, that's important. If someone wants to get into strongman, they look at it and they think it looks fun, it looks cool, they maybe don't have much of an athletic or lifting background, what are some things that they should know or be aware of when they're getting into it?

[0:07:38.7] AR: There's not much to know. Like anything structural integrity is important when you're looking at things from a competitive standpoint. But if you're just looking to get – to really spice up your workouts at home, if you grab odd objects and walk over — if you have a baby you know? If you carry that baby on your hip all day, well that in and of itself as a Strongman exercise because you're carrying weight for a period of time. So those are things you're going to do. Like pushing and pulling your car is something that you can do. It's a lot of fun, it's actually quite easy.

[0:08:10.7] AVH: Now I really want to do that.

[0:08:12.9] AR: Yeah, well its super safe. I do this with my clients all the time and it's just like you know, just outside and they drive in and I meet them outside and they push and pull their own vehicle.

[0:08:21.9] AVH: That's so cool.

[0:08:22.6] AR: Yeah.

[0:08:23.7] AVH: So your clients who are doing that kind of work with you, are they – what's the demographic? Is it everybody, is it men, women, old, young? Or is it a certain kind of person that's it.

[0:08:32.0] AR: Across the board. I'm really lucky in that respect. So I do have an endurance background so I do have Ironman athletes, but my style of coaching is very hybrid training. So I consider myself a hybrid athlete. I first handled the benefits of being a hybrid athlete. I think it's very important to be well-rounded and to be functional at life and wherever person's at, that's where they are and then we just make them better and we make them even better.

[0:08:56.0] AVH: Right. What are some other ways that you, besides awesome Strongman stuff and some endurance things, what are some things that you look — what is a day in your life look like? How do you eat, do you do any kind of meditation stuff, do you do any other things to kind of find balance and healthy living? What does it look like?

[0:09:14.1] AR: Yeah, so I have a very structured day. I do like to run a couple of businesses so that if I don't do proper time management, I don't get any me time in and I'm also not efficient at being efficient in business. So I do have my wakeup times. I wake up at 4:30 every day. I see anywhere between five and eight clients a day right after that.

I do have my window afterwards where I do some meditation, I'll do my workout. I do count macros so for me, I'm very serious about my sport. So in order for me to be serious, I need to be able to collect enough data, which is counting macros for me and seeing how that impacts

my performance, how it impacts my productivity at work. So again it ties into the book that I'm writing.

So being a strength athlete, it forces you to create the structure that you need so that you're more efficient at life. Because if you're coming in and you have a deadlift, I don't know, a max deadlift scheduled and you miss it, well you can blame just about everything you've done or haven't done towards that missed lift. If it's something that you enjoy you're going to want to make that lift.

[0:10:23.6] AVH: Yeah. How many times a week are you doing strongman stuff?

[0:10:27.9] AR: Almost every day.

[0:10:29.4] AVH: They're different.

[0:10:31.0] AR: Yeah, I love periodization. So I love programming something. I do work with somebody on that level, because it's just fun to get some different vantage points on that. So I could be training as little as 10 minutes a day, right? I'm going to do some metabolic conditioning stuff, so if you do like a car push and pull for example right? So you do like some [inaudible] every minute on the minute, you do so many pulls or pushes for a certain distance well that's your workout.

[0:10:57.8] AVH: If you're pulling a car around a little bit, you probably done for the day after that. You don't need to do much more.

[0:11:01.1] AR: Yeah, so that could be a day of training. But if you're doing squats or if you're doing deadlifts then that would be something that would be programmed and it might take you a little bit longer. Some workouts are short, some are long.

[0:11:11.3] AVH: Do you do any powerlifting or bodybuilding stuff to supplement your other training?

[0:11:17.6] AR: No.

[0:11:18.4] AVH: So you aren't playing with dumbbells, you're not playing with –

[0:11:21.4] AR: Oh yeah, sorry, I do. I play with everything in the gym. It's just strongman equipment is like, it's a part of the equipment that I use, it's part of the tools that I use.

[0:11:32.3] AVH: There may still be some people who are looking at Strongman stuff and think it's cool but might be a little bit intimidated. What do you tell people who might be secretly like lurking in their homes like wanting to try it, but are kind of scared to go out and make that first step, what do you tell people?

[0:11:46.1] AR: It's like anything, you know? Action is always the first step towards anything and if you don't try it, you'll never really know. So yeah.

[0:11:55.9] AVH: Just take that step.

[0:11:57.1] AR: Take that step. It doesn't have to be – I mean, the thing about Strongman is just like anything in the world. It's highly sensationalized. I mean we see these like beasts on TV, these genetic freaks of nature that do these amazing feats of strength and we always feel like we need to be like that person that we see. But if you just look at what they're doing and you look at what you are able to do, that's where you start.

[0:12:21.1] AVH: And maybe not comparing yourself to other people. Don't watch whatever that one on Netflix is like Ryan Shaw and I'll be like, "You know, that's what we are doing."

[0:12:28.7] AR: Yes.

[0:12:29.0] AVH: Maybe don't go out and try to be like them tomorrow.

[0:12:31.9] AR: Yeah, you may never be Eddie Hall that's for sure, yeah.

[0:12:34.9] AVH: Yeah, you probably won't weigh 400 pounds so you won't eat 20,000 calories a day but you can start where you can start, and you can improve from there.

[0:12:42.1] AR: Yeah, so I do keg carries where you could easily do with the gallons of water. So if that's something that you have in your office, right? So we talked about metabolic conditioning, you have a lunch hour, you could grab one of those gallons of water and literally run up and down that – well not the stairwell, but just running up and down the hall and do that every minute on the minute for 10 minutes then you got your lunch time workout done.

[0:13:05.1] AVH: That's pretty awesome.

[0:13:05.9] AR: Right.

[0:13:06.3] AVH: Tell me a little bit more about your eBook.

[0:13:08.2] AR: Yes, so that's dropping in a month. Again the title is *Discover Your Strong: The Entrepreneur's Guide to a Stronger Body, Mind and Business*. So it covers a lot of what we just talked about. So the process of becoming stronger from the outside in. So we have always heard the opposite, "stronger from the inside out". I think that if you have the external vehicle, you have this major extrinsic motivator so every week a short term goal you want to hit your lift.

Well you are going to schedule your life in such a way that you are more efficient at running your business. You feel better every day, you feel happier, you feel healthier. So you have that system in place and I do have all of the tools and resources available in the book for women to get to that point and then just the byproduct of that and how empowered you feel and how important that is for women.

[0:14:02.1] AVH: And why do you think that it's important for women to have a specific resource for them?

[0:14:08.3] AR: Right, so this has actually a topic of much discussion but I want to do this generally. Do I want to make this as broad as possible and not limit my audience? But the truth of it is that I'm writing the book for myself, right? This is a resource that I would have loved to have 10 years ago. So I am 35 now and I've worked my ass off to be where I've been. Had I had this resource and had I known that I had this outlet to feel empowered and that I would be

able to develop the structure and the systems that I needed in my life to be successful, that's whom I'm writing for.

[0:14:47.1] AVH: Yeah, that's awesome. Do you have any competitions or anything coming up, personally?

[0:14:51.5] AR: Yeah, I had actually put that on the side for this year but I am looking at some competitions this summer.

[0:14:57.8] AVH: And are they throughout, like do you compete in Canada? Do you travel? Where do you go?

[0:15:02.0] AR: Fun story on that. I started in Strongman maybe four, five years ago. I would travel to the US to compete and none of the local Canadian promoters were hosting anything for women. I got tired of travelling and pretty much, I am not taking full credit for this. I think a synergistically movement is happening on a broader scale. So I'm sure other women like me were encouraging promoters, Canadian promoters, to host event for women.

I was tired of travelling for one. You know, I was like just do an open category. Just do it for no weight classes, just make it open and the female attendance had surpassed that of the men that first year that they had done this. So I could come to the US and I could clean up ship but if I go compete, the Canadian girl just scare the crap out of it.

[0:15:48.8] AVH: Awesome, so cool.

[0:15:51.9] AR: Yeah so now they have a new association, they have weight classes, they also have light weight classes for men, which I thought was really important. So again, I am talking specifically to woman because that's been my journey. That's been my dialogue and my own conflict, but I know I'm very mindful that men have the same — the struggle is real on both sides.

[0:16:13.7] AVH: Right. That's awesome. I mean all you need to do is just ask people like, "Hey ladies are you interested in this?" and look what happens. The enthusiasm is there, you just need to open it up to people.

[0:16:22.7] AR: Yeah and this sport is increasingly popular, right? So we're seeing it in the CrossFit Games now and here.

[0:16:29.3] AVH: And here. One of the cool things about, I was doing a Facebook live of your demo. I wanted to kind of do it a little bit more but, you know, a girl's got to work. But it was really, really fun. People were coming by and watching because there was cheering and people were excited and you are watching people do it. Everyone's like excited to try things for the first time. It's not like a lot of demos where you are sitting there and you are learning a movement. You're learning something, okay. This was like fun. People were having a good time.

[0:16:53.3] AR: And people were putting out a 110% within that event. So like I said, I organized — I structure it in such a way that it would be very much like a Strongman competition or a training session and so yeah. So people gave it their all because they knew that it would be over in 30 seconds that they only had four implements to get through and I mean this conference is fantastic because the energy is just wild here. But being able to do that in front of an accidental audience and feel like you're in a legit strongman comp is a pretty big deal.

[0:17:24.5] AVH: And you feel so good when you try a movement or a lift or something that you've never done before and you do it, you feel awesome.

[0:17:30.4] AR: Yeah and the demographic of people that I get at these it seems to be pretty consistent. So I may or may not have like athletes, like CrossFit athletes that do want to spice up their routine or don't know how to use the gear at their gym, right? But I'll always have like a middle-aged woman who is just get very new to training who is looking for this vehicle to empower herself and this is very frightening, it's very new, but also very exciting and then I'll have the, so like a veteran or something. Again, maybe like 40 plus demographic, right? Like a dude who may have been an athlete at some point who will come in with injuries, wants to get back into it but doesn't want to do the same goon thing he's been doing at the gym that F-ed him up in the first place, right? Like, "This looks fun, let's do this," yeah.

[0:18:23.0] AVH: Yeah, so those of us again at home that aren't going to come in and play with the actual cool equipment yet, I know you mentioned to a couple served at home easy things you can do, like pick up your kid, pick up a water bottle, pick up something a little bit atypical and play with it. What are some other sort of quick at home easy ways to do some strongman movements?

[0:18:42.7] AR: Yeah, farmer's carry are quite — that's an easy one. So whatever odd shaped object you can get, maybe even do...

[0:18:51.5] AVH: And like one hand? Both hands? Different weights and whatever.

[0:18:53.2] AR: Different lengths, you have it yeah anything goes. Again I talked about the gallons of water. So even if you have a handle on that that would be easy but then if you don't you're wrapping your hand around the top so you are working on grip strength for that. If you have any stones in your yard, any kind of brick work. So like a wheel barrow is another great load and carry event. So you load up your wheel barrow, you ride it to the end of your yard, you dump it out, you do it again.

[0:19:19.3] AVH: Yeah of course the car thing. I live in New York I don't have a car but I really want to borrow somebody's car. When I come to auto I'm going to borrow somebody's car and just push and pull it.

[0:19:27.2] AR: Yeah and buddy stuff too. Like we had the sled pull today but yesterday we did a buddy pull. So we just tied a rope around a friend and we just dragged them across the floor.

[0:19:39.9] AVH: That's part of the fun of it too, I guess. It's just making things up. Like, "Okay buddy, let's fireman carry you over to the side of the room," or something.

[0:19:47.0] AR: Sky's the limit.

[0:19:47.8] AVH: Yeah that's very cool.

[0:19:48.2] AR: Yeah, if you are working anywhere near nature, if you take nature runs and you see some dead fall, pick it up, take it with you. Yeah.

[0:19:57.6] AVH: A little bit of creativity goes a long way. Just have fun with it.

[0:20:00.3] AR: Absolutely, yeah.

[0:20:01.9] AVH: All right, well I'm going to let you go. I know this is a very busy long conference but I really appreciate your time. Tell us where we can find you online or follow you and learn more about what you are doing.

[0:20:11.1] AR: Yeah, the best go-to would be either my website, Instagram or Facebook all of which are Strong Aimee Rose. So Strongaimeerose.com.

[0:20:21.7] AVH: Great. We'll make sure we put that in the show notes so everyone can follow you and check your eBook when it comes and when I am in Ottawa next I want to come by and throw some things up with you.

[0:20:30.2] AR: Yes, pick some things up and put them down again.

[0:20:32.2] AVH: Awesome, perfect. Thank you Aimee for your time I appreciate it.

[0:20:34.6] AR: Thank you.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

[0:20:36.2] AVH: All right, thanks again to Aimee for having this chat with me. You can learn more about her at Strongwomanaimee.com and that's Aimee and you could check her out at lovetotrain.ca. Now don't you just want to go outside and pull a car down your street? I can't be the only one. Anyway, all right later this week we have another short podcast from Paleo (f)x, this one is with Leo the Iron Lion Vassershteyn.

You know him as a long term contributor to Paleo Magazine, writing about functional and primal movement and he's the guy who's always swinging those clubs and maces around so you can't miss him. Anyway, Leo is always full of good info and good one liners so you don't want to miss that interview. Subscribe to Paleo Magazine Radio on iTunes and get all the exciting episodes that we have coming up, and if you leave a nice review and rate our podcast, you can be enter to win a free paleo cookbook. I'm just full of good news today aren't I?

All right, well that's it for today. So to all my strongwomen and strongmen listeners thank you for taking the time out of your day to learn with me and I'll see you soon.

[OUTRO]

[0:21:39.7] AVH: Paleo Magazine Radio is brought to you by the Paleo Media Group and is produced by We Edit Podcasts. Our show music features the song *Light It Up*, by Morgan Heritage and Jo Mersa Marley, and on behalf of everyone at Paleo Magazine, thank you for listening.

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