

**EPISODE 258**

[INTRODUCTION]

**[0:00:20.3] AVH:** Hey everybody, welcome back, it's your friend Ashleigh, host of Paleo Magazine Radio and I am speaking to a living legend in the ancestral health world today. The excitement of talking to this guy is up there for me with the first time I interviewed Mark Sisson and Robb Wolf and just feeling like I'm talking to a huge celebrity who also happens to be super smart and can teach me a lot.

I'm feeling very fortunate today and excited that I can share this with you. Unless you've been living under a rock for the past 15 years or so or even if you have been living under a rock actually, you should probably know the name Erwan LeCorre. He is the founder of a fitness and movement system called MovNat whose mission is to reintroduce movement to our modern lives. What he calls ancient movement skills.

That's walking, running, balancing, jumping, crawling, climbing, swimming, lifting, carrying, throwing, you get the point. He's been helping people from all walks of life all over the world, reclaim natural movement patterns and function and that helps to improve fitness, reduce pain and anxiety and dysfunction and even helps improve specific sports goals like he works with martial artists for example.

Erwan believes that it's everyone's universal and biological birthright to be strong, healthy, happy and free. I think that's something we can all get behind. He travels the world, he offers these MovNat workshops and sort of vacations, you can check out a ton of free information and resources that he has online if you go to [movnat.com](http://movnat.com). put in his name in YouTube to see some amazing videos of him just killing natural movement in a way that — he makes it look like it's the most natural thing in the world to climb and jump and run through the forest barefoot.

Which, actually, it is the most natural thing in the world. We just maybe don't feel that way because it's not part of our daily routine but it is the most natural thing in the world and he's bringing that back to us. Super cool, he's recently put out a book called *The Practice of Natural*

*Movement* and you can actually look out for a full book review coming up in an upcoming issue of Paleo Magazine.

This book is as far as I can tell, it's basically like the natural movement version of Arnold Schwarzenegger's *Encyclopedia of Bodybuilding*. In that, it is incredibly comprehensive, it's incredibly thorough, the book is big enough to double as a weapon but it's really readable because he just talks about all the major elements of natural movement.

The theory, the physiology, the practical applications. Whether you're someone who just wants to go out and just get a good squat or maybe you want to know about the anthropological, the ancestral aspects of movement or maybe you want to nerd out on the physiology or the science behind it. All of that is covered, all of that is in the book.

Including a ton of visual step by step guides for how to do basically every kind of movement possible by the human body. The book is really an amazing achievement, it's a huge resource for movement and fitness enthusiast and I was super excited to chat with Erwan about the book and about his study and his love of natural human movement. I hope you get a lot out of this interview, it's was really like a milestone in my career to be able to speak with him.

Yeah, without further ado, here's my chat with a lovely and charming Erwan LeCorre, after a quick word about today's show sponsor, which is Jones Dairy Farm.

[SPONSOR BREAK]

**[0:03:46.3] AVH:** These guys are a family owned business, they're based in Wisconsin, they've apparently been operating for 130 years as of this year. They seem to know what they're doing, they're best known for all natural sausage, dry aged center cut bacon, naturally smoked ham and Canadian bacon which according to us Canadians, we just call it bacon. Actually, I'm lying, we still call it Canadian bacon because I mean, it's basically ham. Anyway, I'm going off track here.

These guys are dedicated to high quality, healthy ingredients. So their sausages are made without binders, fillers, gluten, preservatives, MSG, nitrates, nitrites, they've continued their

tradition over the past 130 years of making their sausage in small batches, they use only fresh, never frozen, hormone free pork, chicken and turkey which is obtained from local producers around the Midwest. So that the meat is never more than 48 hours old before it's used.

You can find some of their stuff in the frozen and refrigerated aisles in your grocery store but you can also learn more about the company and what they offer and actually checkout their fully paleo certified products at [jonesdairyfarm.com/paleo](http://jonesdairyfarm.com/paleo). Check it out there, they've sent me some stuff I've been trying.

You know, I'm a breakfast person anyway so I personally would eat eggs and bacon and sausage for every meal for the rest of my life if I could. I really been enjoying their turkey sausage, their no sugar bacon. You can just tell when things are made with better quality ingredients, it's not loaded down with salt and sugar and fillers, it makes a perfect addition to any meal I think.

There's great paleo options there, it's great if you're keto too, or you know, plant based but you just need a little bacon in your life because no judgments there. You really can't go wrong, they're just a better quality, healthier version of the delicious breakfast meats that we all know and love. Check it out, [jonesdairyfarm.com/paleo](http://jonesdairyfarm.com/paleo).

Thanks guys for sponsoring the podcast and enjoy my interview with Erwan LeCorre.

[INTERVIEW]

**[0:05:45.8] AVH:** Erwan, thank you so much for being here, I'm honored to speak with you and I've been a fan of yours for a long time, ever since your YouTube video The Workout the World Forgot. You've just been so hugely influential in the paleo and primal and ancestral health world so you're kind of a big deal over here. I really appreciate you taking the time to talk with me.

**[0:06:07.1] ELC:** Well, it's very nice of you to say, I'm glad that you invited me, I'm thankful that I'm getting to be on your show.

**[0:06:12.5] AVH:** Your new book, the book that I just finished reading and I love it so much, *The Practice of Natural Movement*. This is something obviously that you've been doing for a really long time and you've been sharing and teaching people. What made you decide that now is the right time to come out with this book?

**[0:06:28.4] ELC:** I wish I had been able to publish this book earlier and I can't believe it took me about a decade to actually complete this work but maybe it has to do with different circumstances, also, you know, I became a father, I have now three children, you know, I grew a company from a single man to now being a team that operates internationally.

So I've been a very busy man and also, my book is not a primer, it's a textbook, it's a huge book, it's 480 pages, there's actually – I had to cut 200 pages –

**[0:07:07.1] AVH:** You cut 200 pages from that book?

**[0:07:09.0] ELC:** Yes I did.

**[0:07:10.1] AVH:** Wow.

**[0:07:10.9] ELC:** They will be soon available actually, my publisher is working on editing this material to make it look nice and it's going to become a free PDF for everybody to access that they have bought the book or not. Yeah, I don't know, I'm thorough person and I really meant with that book to give everybody everything I could, everything I could share.

On top of that, it's not only to – it's a lot of material which by the way is when I said textbook, that doesn't mean that it's for academics or nerds. It's really for everybody. It's clear and concise and very practical. I didn't want to hold back on my knowledge, this is the encyclopedia of natural movement but it's also the whole MovNat that pretty much.

**[0:08:06.3] AVH:** I'd love to hear more about how the process of writing the book as you said, this is something that you didn't just kind of throw together, it's extremely thorough, it's obvious that it's years and years of experience and knowledge that you have put into this book.

Was there anything that you learned or the course of writing and putting the book together, was there anything you learned about teaching natural movement because obviously it's so thorough that I would imagine putting this process putting the book together is quite different than maybe your courses or retreats or the way you teach in real life. Is there anything you learned about teaching in the process of putting the book together?

**[0:08:42.6] ELC:** When you're a teacher, you are always a student, you never stop learning. At the same time, I'm going to say it's not like I ever had any epiphany or breakthrough, the method is all fundamentals are – have always been there since I started this and since the MovNat certification was designed and put into the whole curriculum and that we use in our MovNat certification, it started in 2011, 2012 maybe.

Then, the following years, what I've been doing is gathering every little detail that I could and every time I would be teaching, I would be, that little detail. I'm a detailed person. What I wanted to say is there is no fluff in the book. Every piece of information, every little detail is again practical, it's really there to help you move better and put that into practice.

No breakthrough but a long process of gathering all these little details that then would be used in description of such and such technique or in the manifesto or insight that will be placed into one of the principles of my philosophy, things like that.

**[0:10:03.3] AVH:** Yeah, I can second that there is no fluff in that book, there's a lot of information, you can almost take it in chunks, I was reading it kind of in the afternoons when I was taking a break from work and I'd get up and kind of try some of the movements and I was really kind of playing with it and it was really fun. My question now is, what is in the 200 pages that you cut that you're going to put in this PDF for us because there's so much in the book.

I mean, what are these 200 pages that we're missing?

**[0:10:29.4] ELC:** They ask me to remove whatever I thought was nonessential and I told them no, I can't do that, everything that's in the manuscript is essential but at the same time, maybe less priority, less important so I had for instance, well, a number of techniques, a number of

movement variations for those of diverse positions, different movement that I wish had made it to the book.

But for the sake of shrinking a bit of the sheer volume of it, I had to resort to just say “Okay, well, that one has to go.” I was the one who made the suggestion of, “Hey, why don’t we create an extra PDF,” and this way it didn’t feel so bad for me to cut anything, I was okay.

In the end, people will access it. There was like a strength program which was an example of how you create – say for instance upper body strength, not by doing workouts like in a gym or with exercise machines but by using natural movements and showing progressions on how to achieve a pull up, which is a natural movement and which enables to do climbing transitions to what we call power ups or pop ups or other – their typical MovNat techniques.

This kind of thing, yeah, additional material that I thought okay, it’s important, it’s very valuable but it. It doesn’t have to go on the printed version.

**[0:12:06.9] AVH:** That’s got to be one of the hardest parts about putting a book together is the editing process and trying to, because especially when it’s your work and your life’s work it’s very hard to decide what isn’t essential but I guess that’s part of it.

**[0:12:20.2] ELC:** Yeah, it was hard but the fact that I knew that it would become part of an electronic version of it, because in the end it’s knowledge, in the end it’s material that participates to a person’s physical education. Because that’s what we do.

To myself okay, does it really matter that it’s in a printed version that, you know, it’s on paper, it’s more you know, it’s more tangible in that regard or that it is going to be able, people are going to be able to access it electronically on the screen. It’s okay, we live with screens, actually, I’m working on online courses now. So it’s going to be videos and online programs. It doesn’t matter in the end the tool you use, what matters is that you make it accessible to people so they can learn and then becomes part of their own life.

**[0:13:14.8] AVH:** I’d love for you to kind of explain some really high level general terms first for people who may not be very familiar with MovNat or the work that you do and I’d like to start

with a discussion about what natural movement is, what that term means and I guess, on the flip side of that, then what is unnatural movement, we can kind of talk about that a little bit.

**[0:13:37.7] ELC:** Natural movement is a general term that I started using the moment I started to do what I do. It was 12 years ago and I decided to call it MovNat which means movement in nature and moving naturally and then I would explain, “Hey, it’s about natural movement.”

People would open their eyes and they would be intrigued. Then, in most cases, they would jump to the conclusion or at least asking the question, “You mean yoga, is that Tai Chi?” Quickly realize that most people, actually everyone including so called fitness experts had no clue whatsoever, what’s the meaning of natural movement, what is a natural movement or what is the general idea of natural movement.

What happened is that I was just pushed to come up with a very clear, concise and detailed rationale for that concept because it was too vague for most people. Whereas today, 12 years later and because of many years of explaining of making that term popular, people understand that natural movement is the practice of evolutionary movement skills, such as walking and running and crawling, balancing, jumping and so forth, back in the day, that was not the case.

The 12 principles that are part of the manifesto in my book that is really bad explaining what natural movement is. To summarize that, natural movement is the general — the overall practice of our evolutionary instinctive, universal movement skills.

**[0:15:26.8] AVH:** It is kind of difficult to describe it because that’s why you wrote a 480 page book but with the principles because it’s kind of hard to say it in one or two sentences, right? There’s more to it.

**[0:15:37.7] ELC:** Right, there’s more to it and because, you know, anybody can come up with well, my natural movement is this, my natural movement is that, my natural movement is whatever I want it to be. Okay, that’s fine but you know, you may think, well, natural movement is what you do spontaneously but the problem is that we have become zoo humans, so most people are divorced from the nature within since an early age that they don’t even know what you say to hang and swing or jump and land anymore.

Or, we could say, “Hey, I’m doing some tai chi in there, I’m throwing some yoga poses in the mix,” and this and that. I explain in my book why none of this is actually natural.

**[0:16:24.3] AVH:** One of the key principles that you talk about is efficiency. I’d love for you to kind of articulate a little bit more about what that means because I think that a lot of us have a hard time knowing if we’re being efficient movement.

If you think about throwing the baseball or doing a deadlift, it can be relatively easy for us to know what is correct or incorrect in terms of how to do those movements but if we’re talking about more natural movement like climbing trees or running through on it on the beach or hanging from something.

It can be kind of – because that’s not unfortunately natural to us now as zoo humans, how do we know that we’re being efficient?

**[0:17:06.9] ELC:** Yeah, that’s a very good point, efficiency, that is really what it is about, in effect, the whole book is about efficiency in natural movement or at least that’s really the core idea of the book. The idea is that you know, anybody actually has basically abilities for natural movement. We’re all born with them and as a young kids, we develop them instinctually.

Now, the question is, are we efficient in those movements, can we do them with the best performance possible? You want to think of for instance, if you start practicing in martial art and it’s about being able to defend yourself. Nobody’s going to tell you that you should go start fights in the street or in bars so that you can learn to become maybe not to become a fighter but become able to defend yourself, that’s not how it works. You’re going to be sent to a dojo to or to an MMA academy, some place where they teach you how to defend yourself.

Those disciplines, they also don’t tell you, “Hey, first go for a whole year and get strong in the gym, do some workouts, lift some iron and become strong and then we’ll start to teach you.” They start teaching you techniques, that’s the foundation. What is the ability to defend yourself? You might want to strike or to avoid strikes, you know, avoid the punches, avoid kicks. Being

able to throw a kick, being able to wrestle and to grapple or to defend yourself from an attempt to be choked or something like that.

Those are very instinctive movements actually. You see kids, they do that, they grapple and they do these things but they don't do it efficiently and martial arts teach you to do those natural movements efficiently. Well, if you apply that reasoning to the whole scope of natural movement abilities, again, you have running, you have jumping, you have balancing, crawling, ground movement and hanging and climbing and so forth. Then, that's a lot of techniques that you need to learn to actually be efficient.

In short, natural movement is a universal birthright, it's primary, it's both an instinct and you know, some basic abilities but it is through mindful and technical practice that you become skilled and that skillfulness becomes second nature. That's when you become really capable, you're not just a jackass doing crazy, wild things in the woods while not really doing what they do.

You are actually mindful and skillful and very capable through efficiency.

**[0:20:06.7] AVH:** I like that you bring up the example of fighters and MMA fighters because you've worked with a lot of MMA fighters in the past, right? Can you talk about how the work that you do can kind of complement or help their training? How those two things kind of work together?

**[0:20:23.6] ELC:** I have trained a few and the thing is that, when you do martial arts, you're usually, they're interested in very practical skills, ones stands a person, man or woman, who does martial art, some are interested in the beauty of it, some are over the aesthetics and the tradition. But in most cases the core of such practice of such choice for a physical training is that you want to be self-confident with you want to equip yourself with real defensive skills.

It makes sense that you may not want to be limited in that sense if you think of self-confidence for the real world because that's what the ability to for self-defense is. It's physical skills for the real world. And then you may want to expand that capability to other areas of movement that also applies to the real world so can you jump an obstacle? What kind of obstacle?

Can you climb, can you balance, can you do all of that? It's a mindset of real world capability that a lot of martial artists they really get it quickly, they really understand that and on top of that, say, if you are competitor, If you're into competition, what you do basically, that's movement.

I wouldn't say that absolutely any movement is going to give you an edge. But there's a number of movements for instance, ground movements that you may not practice in your very specific martial art training that may add to your repertoire, to your movements skillfulness.

That could be hanging and climbing movements. That could be even some stepping and jumping and landing movements. Those, in addition to your regular fighting techniques, they can make your feet stronger, it can give you additional mobility, additional strength, additional reflexes that you would not typically develop through a regular conventional martial art practice.

You become more complete as a mover, and therefore you become that can give you an edge, because, even fighters are specialized athletes. That can give you an edge physiologically or in term of skills, motor skills.

**[0:22:50.9] AVH:** I would think even adaptability as well because one thing being a fighter is you have to be able to adapt to constantly changing situations and adapting to your opponent and when you're in nature and you're out in not controlled environments, you have to be adaptable too, right?

**[0:23:08.1] ELC:** Actually, in that regard, martial artists — well, because you move in nature, it's not like nature does not move around you or towards you, right? It's not like an opponent. The core of natural movement practice, MovNat practice, its' really adaptability. In the end, you want to fast adapt to changing context and context is made of either a situation or an environment or a combination of both that sometimes are also changing.

When you fight the context or the environment is you opponent. Your opponent is the whole context, the situation and the environment. Their size and their speed, their intentions, their moving intentions, their real intentions and their fake intentions, all of that is — you need to be able to read that very fast and to react to that very fast.

You do that in nature too, there are elements of adaptable movements that you can train in nature or train with natural movements that don't exist or not practiced in those martial arts that will add to your game.

**[0:24:15.9] AVH:** When you were doing MovNat certifications or when you're working with people in person, are there differences in how you approach teaching athletes versus I'm just going to say, average people who are not necessarily into sports or not sports specific and are just trying to be fitter and understand their bodies better?

Are there different approaches? Because as you said, maybe high level athletes have a certain sort of mental toughness and discipline but they may also have some sort of engrained movements that other people don't, that might make it trickier almost to learn some MovNat stuff?

**[0:24:51.0] ELC:** Yeah, that's where coaching expertise comes into play. You don't coach a complete beginner or a person who is completely out of shape the way you teach a more high level athlete s who is a very fast learner who can handle more intensity, physically speaking. Yeah, that can be very different, so every case is different, I've trained US Special Forces, I've trained elite MMA athletes and I've trained people who are just really not into any kind of physical activity. I've also trained people who are into physical activity but very specialized.

Everybody will have their weaknesses and their fortes. You got to read people's movement and then start from there and then you see what's there, you see what's missing, you see what they have to individually address. So you would be surprised to know that even people who consider themselves very fit and who are from modern standards very fit or from specialized standards, very capable, can become completely beginners, like really.

When presented with specific movements or to be performed in a very specific way, we're talking about — okay, well, I'll give you an example. For instance, the ability to transition from a sit position on the ground, you're sitting. To a squat position, without using your hands and while looking forward and you would be surprised to not only know that few people can do that and

people don't even know what techniques can be used, so they don't even know what their options are.

They find themselves, if you just ask them, "Okay, just do that, sit on the ground, sit on the floor, okay, now transition to a deep squat." Pretending that they can hold a deep squat. Now, you got to do that well looking forward, they can't even look down.

While holding your hands on behind your neck or on your chest or in front of you, things like that. Some special operators can't do that. We're talking about high level special operators, right? People who do that for a living, can't do that. They're not trained to do that so they are using other options but that's potentially detrimental to their operational effectiveness.

If they were to find themselves in a situation that demands that kind of transition to be done that way. Yeah, you know, it's not just, oh wow, it's about climbing a tree or it's about jumping between two rocks and landing with balance. You know, natural movement, it's physical capability for the real world.

It can be as simple as standing to sitting and sitting to standing without supporting your movement through your hands and arms. A lot of people including people who are listening to us right now are maybe as we speak, wondering well, can I actually do that? I'm not sure, they don't even know, they don't even know, that's not saying anything.

**[0:28:13.4] AVH:** Well, because they never have a reason to which is the kind of again, the sort of sad, maybe part about the zoo human lifestyle that we're all living but we don't ever have to.

**[0:28:25.0] ELC:** Exactly. That is the true meaning of natural movement., Again, it's not just to say it's evolutionary. Okay, it has to be evolutionary and then you're going to start to come up with some kind of theory and you're going to put your five fingers on and you're going to star to do handstand on, against a tree as if your ancestors ever did that, you're going to call that primal.

**[0:28:49.7] AVH:** But it looks cool.

**[0:28:52.6] ELC:** That's cool because it's part of stuff you can do for fun or even for strengthening and all, there's nothing wrong with that. All I'm saying is, but you don't know if you can do that transition where we were talking about.

That's just one example. You don't know if you can do it and probably, you cannot do it and if you can do it, you don't know what are the options you got to do it or how to learn, to train yourself and practice so that you become able to do it. In that case, you know, being primal is more a theory like a gimmicky idea rather than a fact.

Rather than a reality that you actually experience and I'd like to say, that an evolutionary approach to fitness, it's not a romantic replication of some of the physiological efforts like high intensity that I'm going to do on a rower and indoors, that's not what it is, it's really about – forget about the past times, just think of the legacy of your ancestors, did not expect you to just have a romantic memory of their lives in the wild for you try to replicate that through a handful of pseudo-primal drills. I know I'm very rattling chains right there. Kind of a little mean but I just want to invite people to be a little more objective.

Forget about the past, think of your modern situation and what are the movement tasks that are tangibly useful and practical that you could have to do, that you have to do, that it is in a day to day situation or that it is in a potentially challenging or even life threatening situation.

That's what you want to look at and this is what we teach, MovNat is as cool to equip, not just kids but grownups with the practical skills that they've never developed in the first place, not in school, not when they're kids or only in part, and not at the gym and not even in some kind of primal exercise program out there.

**[0:31:15.2] AVH:** Tough love, I appreciate it, I hope that all of our listeners after ordering this are going to attempt some of these things. I mean, I know when I was reading the book, I'm like "Okay, let's see if I can sit down on the ground and then get up to a standing position without using my hands," and if I can go from a standing position to sitting down without falling the last foot and a half on to my butt. These are a lot of things that were way harder than me going to the gym and trying to deadlift twice my bodyweight.

It's humbling but it's – I also look at it, it's a positive thing too because I'm learning something, I'm learning a skill, I'm getting better, I don't necessarily look at it completely like, "Geez, all these things that I can't do," it's exciting, it's literally opening a book to a new skills and fun things that I can learn and get better at so that is the way I am looking at it.

**[0:32:04.3] ELC:** Yeah, I totally agree. You want to be straight forward. You want to be grounded in the practical side of physicality not in some delayed cosmetic reward even though there is nothing wrong in wanting a better looking body. Actually it is totally legit. It is part of evolutionary psychology.

You want to be feeling good about yourself. You want to be attractive to yourself and others. That is also part of some form of an instinct but that means nothing if you are not actually capable. So number one, be capable or become capable. Number two, look good in the process of making yourself capable.

**[0:32:43.8] AVH:** Yeah, I like that. How important is and I guess maybe I shouldn't frame it this way but natural movement and moving in nature, these are both two key components to what you are doing. But how important is the "natural environment" when you're learning these skills? I ask this as someone who is currently in a very cold place and I don't really want to be doing summersaults and lunges and bear crawls outside in the cold icy frozen snow right now.

So if I can't have a lot of access to natural outdoor environments for a large part of my year, what are some concessions I can make or what are your thoughts on practicing natural movement in an environment maybe that isn't natural?

**[0:33:32.0] ELC:** Yeah and if I am not mistaken, bears are currently hibernating, so bear crawls are out of the –

**[0:33:37.8] AVH:** Okay so that's not seasonal. That is not a seasonal movement. Okay.

**[0:33:40.6] ELC:** You know, keep your movement seasonal or choose the right animal that is actually not hibernating. But yeah, so you have to make it a difference between natural

movement or what natural movement is made of a high, of a vast variety of natural movements and the environment where you do them.

So when you look at kids, you let them go in the woods, they are going to move naturally in the woods. No woods, just a playground, they are going to move naturally on the playground. They're indoors, they are going to move naturally indoors. They're going to vault over your couch they are going to crawl underneath that chair, they are going to climb on the table and jump off of it. They are not going to start doing bicep curls or muscle isolation drills because they are indoors and the environment is not natural therefore it cannot behave naturally.

And wild animals they would do the same. The hawk will fly over their city and perch himself on an electricity line or a wolf, if you plunk a wolf in your city they are not going to start to behave like a Chihuahua, right? So we are the same, first off do you really acknowledge of the naturalness of your physicality and of your natural movement potential and if you do, then you realize that it applies regardless of what you are. If you are outside in nature in the summer, awesome, beautiful.

If you want to do it in the cold outside that is possible too. It's more challenging. It is more slippery. There is more risk. Well you can also do the same indoors as well. So there are a number of pros and cons that is also part of – that is actually I have a whole chapter in my book where I explain the pros and cons of training in controlled environments which are indoors or traditional environments and outside in nature. It is not either or and you can blend both.

For instance there is a number of natural movements you can practice at home without any equipment just on the ground. Again those transitions, those get ups from sitting to standing, standing to sitting and milling in transitions and deep squats and crawling you can do all of that. You can do that in your background, we have a license gyms and they are equipped with a custom made props and equipments with transverse bars and where people can do vaulting and hanging and climbing and jumping and all of these movements.

And they don't have to drive one or two hours to a spot in nature. You also want to be practical. So practical that is not just in the movements you do. That is also in the way you approach your practice. If it is the winter, if you are far from the city, you may not have access to nature but

there is still plenty of natural movement that you can do indoors and prepare for when you do have access to nature when the weather is not too harsh.

**[0:36:54.3] AVH:** I like that you mention kids and the way they play and move regardless of where they are because I thought it was cool. You mention in the book children and their play and anybody who has ever seen a kid, a toddler squat down to pick something up and they have this effortless perfect movement that most adults at this point who spent too much time sitting are very envious of.

But another thing you talk about is how child's play, like they really push limits, they do things that we consider quite dangerous and they behave in ways that most adults like we won't push our limits when we are playing and jumping and running the way that kids will and maybe that is something of course listeners, I am not advocating for you to do something dangerous and hurt yourself but it is an interesting concept to look at and think of child's play as being something that is actually a lot more risky than the stuff that we are usually doing when we were in the gym or learning or trying to get stronger.

**[0:37:47.7] ELC:** Yeah and that is actually why in my book, I challenge the idea that kid's natural movement is only play. To me that is a great myth that, "Oh, it's play." It is not always play or it is not only play, it also depends on your definition of play. To me play is more mindset rather than something you do and it's the mindset that's attached to what you do. Some people are playful when they work and they are more creative and productive as a result.

Kids as you've mentioned that very good observation that they take risk and when you take risk, excuse me you can hurt yourself. You can be scared, you can be at least afraid and that's not really what you would call play, you know? That is not something where you're just going to be all smiley and relaxed or reckless and mindless or just laughing and having fun. I have seen my own kids just taking risk and measure risk right. Because they have that built in instinct for self-preservation.

But taking risks, trying to do things really hard, pushing themselves, doing the same jump 20 times in a row just to perfect it so it is not just exploration. You said, "Oh wow, you see the toddler doing that perfect movement." The thing is that before we can do that particular perfect

movement, that same toddler probably tried 300 times, imperfect movements exploring a variety of angles, a variety of positions and sequences to finally achieve that perfect pattern.

So exploration is not just exploration. Kids are not exploration or whatever, they're exploring the most effective, the most efficient patterns because their instinct is driving them to forming themselves into capable human beings, not in just playing for the sake of it. That is not we don't see and yeah, the level of physical intensity can really reach levels of excursion. So it can be that play we are talking about, it can be really tough. It can actually be that serious workouts.

It can be some risk taking. There is a lot of falls, there is a lot of failures, there's a lot of pain involved, bruises and cuts and even emotionally we can get to cry and this and that. So I am not sure that all of that is play honestly.

**[0:40:19.4] AVH:** That is so interesting. I never thought about it that way but when you look at – you watch nature shows and you watch bear cubs or wolf cubs and they're fighting with each other and they are saying, "Well these little babies are playing," but they are really learning.

They're teaching each other and learning how to defend themselves or how to move through the world and it is playful but there is an end game there. They're trying to learn at the same time. So I guess yeah, I never really thought about it that way.

**[0:40:44.8] ELC:** Yeah and it is the same for us. Adults, when they think of natural movement, they think of jumping and climbing and hanging and climbing and swinging doing all that balancing. They're like, "Oh that is play. I want to play." Well, you are thinking that way because probably since you were a kid you've been told to not do these things. Your environment, the culture around you has been regressive and limiting and shrunk your natural movement. Physical behavior or it's expression, the freedom of expression.

And so as grownups, you resent that a little and then you see those movements are somewhat not as valuable as real workouts with exercise machines in a gym and you think they're just play to have fun and that you also think that you are probably going to be good at it right away and you don't realize that it is much more, like you said, it can be so rapidly humbling, challenging, difficult because we are talking about real capability.

As much as you can and you should have lots of fun, finally allowing yourself to do these movements and have lots of fun in the process but it is also real practice and real practice means also commitment.

For instance if you want to become strong or stronger at some of those movements, it is not just playing. At some point, you've got to work for it if you want to become really skilled at the movement. Sometimes it is going to be playful and sometimes it's going to be like, "Darn, I really can't nail that movement." And you're going to have to be very mindful and do lots of repetition until finally, you get the technique right.

So again, play is a mindset more than something you do and natural movement is not necessarily play. It is not just play. There is play involved but there is also real work, real practice, real commitment, real discipline, involved into becoming skilled at those movements.

**[0:42:51.4] AVH:** For our listeners who have kids, who may be looking to encourage them to spend more time in nature and explore some natural movement because it is something that maybe we all kind of took for granted that kids just play and move naturally and we lose it as we get older. But it seems like kids are losing it too because we got this increasingly indoor, attached to our screens kind of environment and then combining that with, as you said earlier, maybe parents who are discouraging sometimes from doing things that may seem dangerous.

What are some ways that parents can encourage and maybe explore natural movement with their kids? Is there any different approach or is it the same for all ages?

**[0:43:34.3] ELC:** So you made again a very, very good point is that you right away into your – the way you presented this is that you say, how can parents move with their kids and often the question is how, if you're a parent, you have kids, how do you encourage them to move more, to move naturally more? And you said, how can you as a parent move more with your kids? Well that alone is like a tough solution already is that you don't expect your kids to do something that you don't do yourself. And that you never show as an example.

You turn yourself into a natural mover, you learn MovNat. There are different options for that. You learn the method, so you can train yourself to become not just doing those movements but doing them effectively but also efficiently and then it becomes a family thing, where you can do it in the backyard, at the local playground, of course in nature. You can do it before school, after school, you could do it indoors, you could do it at home.

You can maybe arrange literally some structures, wooden structures indoors, so that the whole family can have a playground indoors. When, again when it is too late to be outside, when it is too cold, too rainy to be outside. So instead of having a playroom that is basically empty but filled with plastic games or plastic toys, you could have an actual playground made of wooden structures in a room inside your house or in the backyard.

So there is two considerations here, is the movements that you want to do to want to commit to do, to practice, make sure you do these getups and those crawls and those balancing and then you have the environment, the structures. You are not getting to wait that magically you live in a city and magically there is going to be a river and a fallen tree and you have to traverse walking in balance across the fallen tree, right? That is not going to happen.

So you may recreate such challenges like for instance using two by fours and you balance some of the two by fours, we have been using that strategy for 10 years. Let more people start to understand and replicate that idea of provide a richer environment, a more complex environment.

Because that's the thing is that with environment, even if it is just some pieces of board on the floor and you pretend they are rocks and you jump from one to the other and you step off of them, it is hot lava or you just take a dive into a raging waters and you're finished, the end of the adventure or maybe the beginning of the adventure but that is another story.

But the idea is that you somewhat seem like situations but you also in part replicate environmental demands that you will find in nature in the real world but with simple means. Again such as boards or bars and then you create that environment that is scalable, that is safe but that is also there because you could hang and climb if you don't have something to hang and climb from.

You can't balance and jump really if you don't have something to balance and jump from or onto. You can certainly do jumps without any specific environment but you don't have adaptability. You don't have a fun, the realisticness that stems from say jumping from one board to the next it becomes real whereas if you don't have that then it is just a jump but you don't have the mindfulness that is implied into looking at your target, paying attention to being accurate to exactly where you're going land your feet and then land that jump in a way that is stable. Pretending that if you were to be off-balanced you will fall off a cliff.

Those are very simple strategies. I explain all of that in my book by the way that should make your practice very effective, very pleasurable and get amazing results. So parents and kids can do that together because that and I will finish with this but that real world physical capability that is not just for adults. That is not just for professionals, that is not just for kids. It is really for everyone. It's just like reading and being able to read and write.

It is a no brainer. It is part of your education. You can't imagine a person not learning that in their lives. So the question is why would the ability to operate your own body in those tangible real world useful ways be an option to anyone?

**[0:48:21.5] AVH:** I don't want to keep you too much longer because I understand that it is impossible for us to get through all of the things that are in this book in a podcast. It would be have to be two or three days long.

But I really do want to touch on a huge part of your book and that being the resiliency and mindfulness and mental side of natural movement and how important that part is. It is not just about can you move your body in natural ways but there is so much more too to being able to control your brain and your ability to tell yourself that you are capable and can do things.

You get into neuroplasticity and all of this stuff, can we talk a little bit about how to I guess train or encourage or use the mindfulness part of natural movement as well as just the physical part of it?

**[0:49:09.2] ELC:** It is built in the practice. Because to learn a technique like a new pattern – so for instance everybody can jump to some extent in a certain way but depending on say an obstacle, a particular environment, you may have to jump inland in a very specific way. To acquire that technique that body control, it is not a physical thing. It's not just a physical thing, you got to be mindful.

So you become mindful, very mindful by practicing natural movement, which again adapts to those variables that are external to you. You see, if you hold a position or you do a movement, we've had that interaction with an environment. So you are in a flat floor and you could close your eyes and it doesn't matter. You are not getting bumped into anything. You are not getting bruise your knees or your feet or sprain your ankle or anything like that.

So you can close your eyes and you can say, "I am mindful." But the truth is you're just closing your eyes and you may pay attention to your internal sensations. But trust me, when you have to land or when you have to deal, to interact with those specific external variables like that specific to rain, that specific branch, that puts specific surface that supports you when you balance, the level of mindfulness that is required is actually greater, much greater.

Because you have to deal with an environment which existence you can now deny since you are moving around it. You are moving, you are interacting with it. And so you cannot close your eyes, you've got to be in the here and now. You can now think about the future, you can now think about the past and you can even really think about what you are doing because thinking is not going to help you.

However you have to be mindful. You have to be very, very focused on what you do. So the benefits on cognition are built in. They are built in in the fact that your movements are practical and that they are adaptable to the context or the environment that you train again that it is artificial or natural, it doesn't really matter too much.

**[0:51:22.9] AVH:** You talk about mental toughness and resiliency being a key to a more healthy and sort of well moving body and this is just me kind of speaking in general terms but a lot of us live very easy lives and we are very fortunate that we don't maybe have our mental toughness or resiliency tested very frequently and that's something that is similar people who maybe don't

like the idea of testing their physical capabilities because it's painful. How do we encourage or get ourselves to try things and be in an environments where our resiliency is tested when we live in such an easy, comfortable, air-conditioned world?

**[0:52:01.5] ELC:** That is not something that should happen overnight. You are not getting to pull yourself to the top of the building and try to jump between a large gap where you know that if you miss you are just going to fall and die. That obviously would be ridiculous but there are progressions to that. There is progressions to being more skillful but there is also progressions to become tougher physically and mentally.

**[0:52:28.9] AVH:** Sorry to interrupt you, in the book you talk about the path to unconscious competence, is that related?

**[0:52:34.1] ELC:** That is exactly not the same. The path to unconscious competence is that simple idea that at first you may not even be conscious that you are not so good at a movement. Then you become conscious of your inefficiency, then you learn how to become efficient but you have to really pay attention to it and then in the end, you become efficient even when you don't think about it but just by reflex because your skill has become second nature.

But you can do that — say a swimmer ultimately does that. The swimmer or that is just one example or dancer, somebody whose practice so much that they don't really have to think and they just apply the move, apply the technique and they're good at it. But that does not imply risk taking or resiliency in the face of intimidating environments or situations. So that is something that you learn to do by increasing what we call the volume intensity and complexity.

So for instance, when you learn to do more repetitions pretending that you do that efficiently but more repetitions with more intensity, that is one aspect, clearly you are going to start to feel the burn. You are going to start to feel the effect of repetitions are a certain speed with a certain way or a certain depth for distance and you are going to have to start to fight. You are going to start to be tough if you want to keep the pace.

So there are physiological adaptations involved but to obtain higher levels of physical adaptations, you need to be disciplined and you need to fight. So that is mental toughness there

and again, this is something you can build progressively. When the other aspect is dealing with actual dangers and that is also not something that you want to do with dangers that are actually potentially lethal or that could really hurt you very bad. And if you are going to want to do that that is not something you want to do every day.

You know the same way we make the practice scalable progressive so you may start balancing on the two by four for instance at home, indoors. But in the end, you will have to balance across that full entry, crossing a river. Not that you are forced to do it, not that you may ever want to do it and that's okay but if you really want to become braver and tougher and just bring your MovNat practice to a greater level, eventually you will have to confront yourself with some of your fears and some of your mental limitations.

Again in a way that you know is safe enough, of course.

**[0:55:22.8] AVH:** Yeah, like I said earlier, that is the part that excites me the most about it because everybody loves the journey. It is the progression, it's the being able to learn something new and get better and learn about yourself every day. That is why this natural movement concept is so great because it is never done. You are never like, "Okay well I've got MovNat. I am done. I got it all," you know?

There is always something new to learn and try and explore and experiment. I think the mindfulness part is so key in the modern world where we are so easily distracted and pulled in a million different directions. I think that having a practice that puts you really in the moment and has you just absolutely in your body I think is a really valuable thing to do so thank you.

**[0:56:11.2] ELC:** Thank you.

**[0:56:11.9] AVH:** I appreciate that. So I will let you go, I'm sure you probably didn't get to drink any of your tea this entire time. I made you talk so much, in the past hour. But I would love for you just as we are finishing off here, for our listeners who maybe had no idea what MovNat was at the beginning of this conversation and are now very interested and are very excited to try and learn more, what is the first thing besides buying your new book, what is the first thing they should do?

**[0:56:37.6] ELC:** Buying the new book.

**[0:56:41.2] AVH:** It's all in there.

**[0:56:42.5] ELC:** So I would do this, I would say this, try that no hand get up. Try to do it both ways and see and try to assess with that simple test, your levels of ease, of comfort, of balance, of fluidity, of mobility, all of those considerations, all that feedback you could get, could you do it in the first place.

If you can, how many ways do you know or have you discovered or rediscovered on how to do it. Yeah, you can also go to [movnat.com](http://movnat.com) and we have a number of – we have material there. We have material that you can check with some drills, just try.

Just explore, you can also run the woods and see what you can do there. What do you feel comfortable doing or imagine how much capability do you want in your life, could you from a hanging position, could you climb on top of the horizontal surface from hanging? Do you think that you could jump off a height, not very high and then land in a way that is stable a few feet away?

My point is, how capable in the real world with your body, physically speaking, how much of that do you want and also, how much self-confidence do you want because it stems from that capability? So it is a little like, again, coming back to the camper region with martial arts and people learn martial arts because they want to be self-confident and they want to know that they won't get bullied and they will have physical response that is as effective as efficient as they can and they are going to learn techniques because they want to become capable in that regard.

So now, if you were to extend that reasoning, that rational to any kind of physical demand that could be placed upon you in your life, could you move heavy stuff? Could you run and sprint and could you run with efficiency? All of these questions, so I like to place that first and not just, "Oh, can you do that particular movement?" Because it is also a lifetime pursuit.

Because to me that capability is basically a biological duty. So it is not just a program that you take two months before going on a summer vacation. It is really a school method, a life time pursuit for not only becoming capable but staying capable, as long as possible. And as a result, benefiting from a psychological standpoint of self-confidence and self-esteem from also looking better with your body, getting stronger, having more mobility, more levels of energy in your day to day life.

More wellbeing, better recovery from a potential injuries, from potential physical issues that can be breaking from the boredom of specialized or overly specialized training or sports that can be for law enforcement or fight the fire. Again just learning some movement skills that could be – that are highly applicable to your professional activity that could be if you are a hunter and you want to move better with nature.

That could be being a gardener, that could be – there is so many applications, natural movement is the forerunner of any other physical activity, sports or discipline. There would be no yoga or tai chi without natural movement. There would be no American football, baseball, basketball, tennis or any sport without natural movement.

**[1:00:30.9] AVH:** Well I want all the self-confidence so I am glad that this book exists and Erwan, thank you so much for taking the time to talk to me today. I think it was so much fun. I think it is such a valuable conversation. I think our listeners are going to love it so thank you for all that you do and let's hope everybody gets the book. I am going to go practice my get ups and I am excited to see what you do next.

**[1:00:52.1] ELC:** Thank you Ashleigh. I really appreciate being on your show. I hope it was something at least intriguing to your audience but I believe that whoever is into paleo diet or paleo lifestyle will definitely enjoy to know that there is an actually rational, practical, effective method for a paleo approach to fitness and that MovNat, that is the concept of natural movement and the book explains everything.

So I really recommend it. It is not just the explanation of the philosophy. It is also the how to and most important is the how to. So you want to learn techniques, you want to learn how to train in a way that is really relevant to an evolutionary approach to physicality, buy that book.

**[1:01:38.6] AVH:** Absolutely and I guarantee that every listener is now sitting on the floor or already has. So I hope we are starting the movement already with this one but thank you again for taking the time.

[END OF INTERVIEW]

**[1:01:55.0] AVH:** All right that's it for today. Signing off, thank you for being here. I hope you enjoyed it. How amazing is Erwan LeCorre? How fantastic is that accent? I mean let us have a moment to be grateful for how awesome technology is that it allows us to listen to and learn from experts and people who have just dedicated their lives to being elite at something and we get all of those information for free. All we have to do is subscribe to Paleo Magazine Radio and we get all of these world class information our fingertips. Pretty incredible, right?

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So join me next week. That's it. Have a great day. Thanks for listening.

[OUTRO]

**[1:03:25.8] AV:** The intro music for Paleo Magazine Radio is a song called Stronger performed by Alter Ego and I hope you love it.

[END]