



NOTES

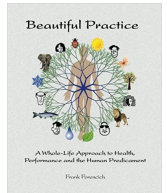
# Beautiful Practice

A WHOLE-LIFE APPROACH TO HEALTH, PERFORMANCE AND THE HUMAN PREDICAMENT

FRANK FORENCICH

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252 PAGES



## KEY POINTS

What is a 'Beautiful Practice'?

It's Life Changing

Start With The Body!

No body, No life!

Neuro-Optimism

You CAN Change Your Behaviours!

Train For Function,

Not Looks

What Do You Want?

Train Specifically

Do It Yourself and

Do Your Reps

*"Education is always the answer, but what we need more than anything else is a unifying, whole-life experience, a focal point for meaning in our lives. We need engagement and discipline, a time and a place to draw our energies together into a powerful and coherent whole. We need a renewed culture of learning, one in which the process and experience of education is valued for its own sake. Most importantly, we need to put our lives up against the world and find out what we're really capable of. And we need to do it often, with regularity, with discipline, with commitment and with resolve. Mere knowledge is not enough. There must also be a doing, a consistent, engaging, risky and powerful doing. In other words, we need a practice."*

Frank Forencich from Beautiful Practice

This book is an inspiring read. If you are struggling with any part of your life and need direction / motivation then I highly recommend it. It will light a firecracker in your pants. I'm pleased to say that Frank's words have motivated me to engage more with my movement and eating practices especially.

In the book Frank explains what a 'Beautiful Practice' is, then leads us through 25 lessons including 'Do Your Reps', 'Return To Your Breath', 'Take Ownership' and 'Focus Your Energy'. As a movement nerd I'm going to focus this note on what Frank recommends we do with our bodies in terms of movement and physical activity so that we can reach new levels of health and awareness.

Before we kick off ask yourself this: What's one aspect of your health that needs more practice? Do you need to move more? Sleep more? Connect with others on a deeper level? What is it? May I suggest that you let yourself be guided by Frank's suggestions and make whatever you need to practice your new 'Beautiful Practice'?

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## What is a 'Beautiful Practice'?

*"Above all, a beautiful practice is authentic. It is sincere, engaging and risk-taking. Teachers and students have a shared sense that the art is something worth doing and worth doing well. This is no mere pastime or hobby. We are engaged in practice, not simply to secure a credential or a position, but to transform our lives and the lives of others."*

A 'Beautiful Practice' is a focused, dedicated path to improving yourself. Before starting a beautiful practice it is really important to know 'what you want.' What do you want? What do you want your life to look like in a year or five or ten? How do you want to grow? What practices will help you get there?

As well as authentic Frank suggests that a 'Beautiful Practice' be 'alive', 'mindful', 'physical', 'social', 'integrative' and 'playful'. How can you bring these attributes to the practices you already have and to the new practices that you know you need to start?

Now might be a good time to get out some paper and write down a new practice that you would like to start? What is it? A walk with friends at lunchtime or a five minute morning stretching routine or...? What could you do to make this new practice more alive, mindful, playful and integrated?

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## Start With The Body

*"We start with physicality. We begin by moving our bodies deeply and often, pushing boundaries of what we think is possibly. In this practice, we experience fatigue, muscle soreness and an incredible rush of supercompensation as our bodies generate new tissue and pathways for energy and function."*

Do you want to feel alive in your body? Then use it. Do you ever move your body deeply? How often do you push your boundaries? Do you have a regular movement practice? Do you take every opportunity that presents itself to move your body? We all know that movement is imperative to our health so how can you get more movement into your life? Ready to change your life? Start by changing your body with a Beautiful Movement Practice. What is your movement practice going to include?

*"No matter your profession or your place in life, your body is your primary source for everything you might want to do in life."*

*"Your body is your primary source for everything you might want to do in life"*

A sick body leads to a sick life or is it the other way around? As in a sick (unhealthy) life leads to a sick body? A healthy body leads to a healthy life. Or is it a healthy life leads to a healthy body. Whatever it is your body is your primary source for everything you might want to do with your life. Is your body allowing you to do the things you love? Is there something you can do for your body to help it? Is your life allowing your body to stay healthy? Is there something you can change in your life to help your body.

This idea reminds me of Katy Bowman, she says, "If your body is not working for your life then it is your life that needs to change for your body." What part of your life needs to change to help heal your body? Are you taking actions to solve your body problems? To heal your body you must change your behaviours. One of your body's most important required behaviours is movement.

Let's start our 'Beautiful Practice' by getting our body moving more. What are you going to do? How and where are you going to do it? Who are you going to do it with? Don't think you can adopt new behaviours? The science of neuroplasticity shows us that it is 100% possible to change our behaviours. What new movement behaviours are you going to install?

## **Neuro-Optimism**

*"This new view, now known as "neuro-optimism," has taken the scientific and popular imagination by storm and this time, the implicit message is deeply empowering. We now know that we can take control of our learning and development. We can learn new arts, skills and disciplines throughout life. We can transform our brains, our bodies and our spirits. Through training, we can develop almost any quality we desire"*

Through training we can develop any skill or quality we desire. With focused, integrative, mindful training we can develop any skill or quality we desire. That's really exciting. Any skill you want to learn you can through thoughtful practice. Any quality you want to embody, you can, through skilful practice. What are you waiting for? What do you want to develop within yourself?

*"Now for the first time in human history, we have a solid understanding of how the nervous system works, how people learn and how to train ourselves for health, happiness and engagement with the beautiful adventure. We are entering a new golden age of training and practice, an era that promises to rewrite everything we thought we knew about human performance and potential"*

How's your performance and potential. Got anything you need to start beautifully practicing?

Ellen J Langer, the Harvard Psychologist, states, “Your potential is unknowable”. Neuroscience is now proving this. Neuroplasticity or the ability to re wire your brain with new thoughts and behaviours gives you the ability to constantly improve and grow. Awesome.

## **Train For Function, Not Looks**

*“Functional training is a concept that’s emerged from the athletic training and physical therapy community over the last several decades. In contrast to common appearance-based disciplines such as bodybuilding, the focus is on our ability to execute practical movement. Superficial appearance, muscle tone and body-fat percentages are largely irrelevant for the functional coach: it’s our ability to move powerfully, gracefully and effectively that counts.”*

If you want to be skilful and have the ability to ‘execute practical movement’ then your best bet is to practice skilled movement patterns. This is the exact opposite of isolation training. Isolation training is very popular in the world of bodybuilding. The idea is to train one muscle at a time in order to increase the size. Isolation is the opposite of integration and does not lead to you learn the skills involved in complex movement patterns. Isolation training might get you big muscles but they will have no idea how to perform complex movements. If you are interested in discovering the practice of natural human movement try MovNat ([www.movnat.com](http://www.movnat.com)) or get a skilled movement coach.

## **What Do You Want? Move Specifically.**

*“In short, the body sculpts itself to meet the demands that are imposed upon it. We become what we do; we get precisely what we train for. If you train for strength, you’ll get strength. If you train for agility, you’ll get agility. If you train for compassion and kindness, you’ll get compassion and kindness. That’s it; everything you need to know about training in a nutshell.”*

Let’s say you want to become a surfer. How should you train? In the water, surfing! General mobility, agility and strength movements will help you improve but you won’t get better at surfing by practicing agility. Do exactly what you want to get better at. Practice with a body free from muscle imbalances and weakness and over time you’ll learn what you need to focus on. The process of training will make your training more efficient so start today☺

## Do It Yourself And Do Your Reps

*“This is something that is simply unavailable with to us methods. Medical procedures that are done to us may very well be effective, but they do not empower us; they merely fix us. In contrast, things done by us have the potential to be profoundly empowering. When you participate fully and engage completely with life, you take action and accept risk. When you create change in your life and in your world, you will feel a sense of satisfaction and control. This is inherently health –promoting”*

Would you like to be magically fixed or would you like to heal yourself. Hopefully you want to take control of your life and start taking the action you need to get results. Have you ever been to the physio with say a sore knee? The physio probably helped you and gave you some exercises to re balance your body and eliminate the pain. DID you do the exercises? Or did you hope that going back to the physio a few more times would heal you. YOU MUST DO YOUR PART. The physio can give you the exact set of steps you need to take to get better. BUT IF YOU DO NOT TAKE THOSE STEPS YOU WILL NOT GET BETTER.

If you want something in your body to change you must do the work, I can't do it for you. The physio can't do it for you and your mum can't do it for you. YOU MUST DO IT.

Of course it's wise to get advice from experts and people who have achieved what you want to achieve but you are the only one who can make it happen. Engaging in the behaviour once will not help you reach your goal either. In order to excel you must 'Do Your Reps'.

*“The discovery of long-term potentiation and myelination confirms what coaches, teachers and trainers have know for thousands of years. That is, learning is all about reps. Reps are the raw material of human learning and skill development. Cells that repeatedly fire together form a stronger connection and in turn, the circuits in question become faster. The more we repeat an idea, an action or a behaviour, the greater the probability that it will stick.”*

Do your reps! Excellence is all about consistency on the fundamentals. Consistency is reps. Do your reps day in and day out and you are bound to get better. Your chances of success will increase with every rep. I'm having fun developing systems that help make doing my reps easier. I'm excited to see what I can achieve as I get better at doing my reps. I'm excited for you too. How can you get in a few more reps today?

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That's a very quick look at some of my favourite ideas from Frank Forencich's awesome book Beautiful Practice. If you enjoyed this note I recommend getting the book.

### **About the Author of 'Beautiful Practice'**

#### **Frank Forencich**

Frank Forencich is an internationally recognized leader in health and performance education. He earned his B.A. at Stanford University in human biology and neuroscience and has over 30 years teaching experience in martial art and health education. He is the author of many books and was named by Experience Life magazine as one of the "Five Visionaries leading the charge to better health, and a healthier world"

### **About the Author of this Move Note**

#### **Hazel Boot**

Hazel has a degree in Exercise and Sports Science. She is also an Anatomy Trains Structural Integrator and a Restorative Exercise Specialist. She works with clients to improve movement and reduce pain. She loves reading and geeking out on movement books. She writes notes on the books she loves to help others learn faster.

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I hope you enjoyed the content of this note but please remember that it is not medical advice and should not be used as such.