

## Why the Franklin Method may be for you:

We all want to feel healthy and well functioning. Yet the fact that most natural physical activity has been removed from our everyday life and replaced by a mainly virtual reality, means that a large percentage of us are in such a bad shape that it is a threat to our health. So we rightly and hopefully seek to train and exercise, which traditionally has included aspects such as strength, healthy muscle tone and good endurance. Now what has not been part of the paradigm is that there is an underlying reality to our training and that is how we use our body/mind in everyday life like our posture, our walking, our everyday movements, our force absorption, our breathing, and even our mental and emotional aspects. How could that be?

Practice makes perfect we say, well obviously anyone with a brain would say that depends very much on what you do. So what are you doing?. Not only in your training/exercise, because training your strength, flexibility or your endurance will of course all be influenced by that underlying usage. Could strengthening, stretching or putting in a great engine influence your body to work/function really well?, its possible but is it a guarantee? Obviously not or anyone who did a certain training/exercise would end up super well functioning and we would soon all get the point, flock to do that practice and that would be it. But thats not the case: any kind of traditional training or training equipment will have their build in possibilities and limitations. Plus we all come with our own possibilities and limitations depending on a wide array of factors like DNA, general body usage, culture, social environment, attitude etc. Combine that, do the math and thats your training effect;-)

The bottom line is that we all want to be healthy and in order to achieve that many of us do exercise like running, go to the gym, do yoga, pilates, spinning, aerobics, swimming, martial arts or dance etc. So the question is: how is that working for you? is it improving your function?, are you noticing improved posture, improved breathing, easier gait and every day movement even improved thinking and attitude?

For example right now running or jogging as it has been popularly known, is very popular: do you think that running will improve your overall function, your posture, your walking, your breathing , your everyday movements? Or if the practice you do has too much emphasis on flexion, what does that do to the posture?(notice how a very popular form of exercise leave most of their practitioners with slight flexed posture and rounded shoulders) Or if you are training your biceps to look manly for a date on a Friday night: what will that do to the overall muscle coordination of your body.? Or if you are stretching your body a lot: what does that actually do to your tissues?, is it good to stretch our joint capsules and ligaments? Does it improve on our function?

It is not that any of these practices in them selves are necessarily bad, but they do raise certain questions, which if we are well intentioned(which we believe most of us are) we should be able to answer. For example: is what we think we are doing and what we are actually doing the same thing? Is what we think we are getting, the same as what we are actually getting? And could we maybe do something that would absolve and integrate these concerns?

## **Teaching you to you**

So what we are suggesting in the Franklin Method is; why don't we look at the original instrument: the human body with its own possibilities and limitations. Which would authorize the owner, you, to not only possibly use it really well because we would know what that means, but also give you autonomy to make better choices. For example an educated insight into how the different forms of training would affect your body. Or an understanding of how our body usage has affected our psychology.

What we are proposing is that you can get so much more and we can do so much better. We can help other people help themselves at a total different scope than what we are doing today. We are pointing to a different paradigm of wellbeing, where we create a fundament of using our body well so that we are fundamentally healthy. The normal high from exercise is short lived and rarely carried over into improved patterns of everyday living. Why not make that part of our training and then we can add strength, flexibility or endurance and bring that integrated health to our chosen forms of movement.

## **Emergent properties**

In the Franklin method you learn how your body is designed to function and you get to experience what it means to use your body well. Whenever you want to improve on something and you go to a class or training, the teacher will always point to the fundamentals. And what we do most of the time is our fundamentals; standing, breathing, walking, every day movement, thinking. Which in turn when used as designed will turn on the emergent properties of the dynamic system that is you in the form of more well being, enhanced metabolic and physiological health, more creativity and mental emotional clarity, calm intensity and simply more joy of being alive. Which is of course a bit of a mouthful and cast a shadow into a host of professional disciplines. To which we would like to point out:

We have endless experts on endless subjects, which is of course wonderful, super important and necessary but the downside is that we have more and more people, who know more and more about less and less. And do they communicate and cross link among the different disciplines or is the amount of incoming data simply too taxing.

On a practical level for us normal mortals: we don't live our lives in parts; its one interconnected interactive and wholesome experience and we need practical tools and insights to deal with this totality, so we can become somewhat the authorities on our own experience. At least to a degree, as it is not realistic to achieve a high level of health in an interactive system without involving the main systems operator; YOU!

And the thing is: those fundamentals don't change that much, we are designed to move, breathe and function in a certain way decided by the challenges of a given environment where our ancestors made due for hundred of thousands of years. We can each learn the fundamentals of how our design works to better steer us through life's currents and be fit in the process, all the while we have experts picking up new and important pieces of information that can help us understand and fine-tune our reality better.

## **Why should I care?**

Now at this point you may be thinking "well it sounds interesting all right, but I will take my chances and trust I will be okay with what I'm doing already and that will be it". Why bother with learning something new, (even though it is the body I will be using the rest of my time here on earth) So why bother?

Well there are 3 clear reasons why this may be an essential and very useful tool for someone to learn:

- 1) If you are a teacher of movement you may notice that some of your students bring certain patterns to their training and that if you could teach them something they could do themselves to start changing that pattern they would get more out of the type of training they do with you. I know some of you might say: "well we already do that" to which we would say well yes but in a round-about-way: you do exercises often done in a different relation to gravity than how we normally use our body, exercises that are different to the basic functions they are supposed to improve. We go directly to the core of the matter and identify and practice how those functions work and work well.
- 2) You may be having a situation where the body is acting up and you are experiencing symptoms and pain. Yes you could get that fixed but you may also be well served in understanding why you created that situation in the first place: It is estimated that about 60-80% of the cases when we experience pain in the body and go see a medical professional is related to the musculo-skeletal-(fascial;-) system. And most from long term chronic misuse, not a steel drum dropped on my toe kind of scenario. If you can as a health provider, which you btw are as a teacher of movement, provide a path to health that does not include them taking the same path that lead them to be injured in the first place it may be a reasonable alternative to offer rather than the fixing and return to the cycle of unconscious behavior that lead them to have the problem in the first place.
- 3) There are as well people out there that really want to excel in a certain activity; in arts, sports or other activities; they may want to know something about how to use their body better to do that really well and in the process minimize or avoid certain pitfalls that could derail all their efforts.

### **New Paradigm Exercise for the 21st Century**

So to reiterate and sum up: we love all types of movement in the Franklin Method because your fascia, muscles, bones and brain strives on variation, but we may be well served in also asking ourselves: is it improving our function: our posture our breathing, increasing our energy levels and decreasing every days aches and pains, enhancing our thinking and attitude?

We need to create the dance/yoga/pilates/exercise of the 21st century and not only keep repeating the different attempts of the past, we need a new paradigm that embraces our newfound understanding of biotensegrity, biomotion and the body/mind interphase.

What does it look like? Well big surprise its not an exercise!: its taking the things all of us do most of the time and becoming really good at that. Learning to be brilliant at our fundamentals. And like the song goes: "if we can make it there we can make it anywhere"

### **The Pedagogy of Embodiment**

Now how do you help another person or yourself becoming good at that: the information itself is not enough, the really cool understanding and details of biomotion/mechanics wont necessarily change anything. (Try go to the anatomist ball and you will know what I mean:-) and all the information on synaptic representation and research on the brain available wont change your neuroplasticity.(no one shows up for the neurologists ball because they are all up over their heads in research;-)

What for sure will affect how you use your body/mind is a process that brings the whole thing together as an experience: A felt experience in your own body. So that the information becomes something you are experiencing and we call that “embodiment of function”, not only the felt experience of being a body but the felt conscious experience of “ah thats how I am designed to function”; “this is how my bones muscles fascia and nervous system interact” to produce for example walking or breathing as it was ideally meant to be working. We call that process of helping yourself or someone else to have a felt conscious experience of their own function: “the pedagogy of embodiment”.

To facilitate this educational process, which may look easy when you experience it in a workshop, you need a sound understanding of the basics of what we call “the Bone Rhythms”; how your bones move 3 dimensionally inside your body to produce and absorb force, which is the scaffolding of sorts for all of our functions. You need a clear grasp of the parameters of working with the body-mind interphase which we call Dynamic Imagery and finally you need to know about how you can help others have that experience by applying the Pedagogy of Embodiment.

If the above sounds compelling to you, please come join us for a workshop or one of our trainings.

[www.franklinmethod.com](http://www.franklinmethod.com)

Embodily yours

Morten Dithmer

Vice director & Master Teacher Trainer of the Franklin Method

(For a new audience, to elicit their interest some of the below highlighted lines may be effective to serve as a hook)

**If you already are exercising, why would you want to change it?**

**If you are not exercising would you like to know how to do the best and most comprehensively?**

**Ask yourself: Why do you exercise?**

**DO you want to get more out of your training? Do you want to train better?**

**Would you be willing to consider that what you think you are doing, what you are being told you are doing and what you are actually doing, is maybe not the same thing?**

**Could we be willing to, instead of endless recycling the different attempts of exercising from our past and commercially elevating them to some ultimate superior status, try something that integrates and synthesizes the new movement science with what we already know. insights from the fascial revolution of biomotion, the neuroscience of the body/mind interphase and the versatility and variation that our new insight demands.**

**And could we elevate fitness to a whole other realm of wellness with positive effects on all aspects of our life.**

**What if you could get what you are already getting, plus some other side benefits like**

- **improved posture which would make you more attractive and beautiful,**
- **better biomechanical efficiency, which would make you last longer, age better and give you more energy in the process.**
- **What if you together with being fit could also have not just less aches and pains but experience more overall comfort and wellbeing in your everyday life. Not just the quick high from exercise but a constant ember of wellbeing that permeates your being alive.**

**Synopsis:** We all want to be healthy but the traditional training is limited in its effectiveness and scope. The Franklin Method offers you a new paradigm of fitness where we create and underlying wellness we can then bring to our fitness training. This has the potential to elicit a much broader spectrum of what health actually means. To facilitate this change we offer revolutionary new concepts like Bone-rhythms, Dynamic Imagery and the Pedagogy of Embodiment. Finally we point out how this information/method is vital for movement teachers, therapists and movement professionals in Arts and Sports.