



# MUSCLE EXPERT PODCAST



EPISODE 57

LOUIS ZITO

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Welcome to the Muscle Expert podcast with Ben Pakulski, one of the world's top professional bodybuilders – an expert on human performance and mindset mastery. Ben dives deep to deliver the strategy of top experts to upgrade your body, mind, muscle, strength, performance, biochemistry, and how to become the upgraded, modern man.

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**BEN**

What's up ladies and gentlemen, Ben Pakulski here at the MI40 headquarters in Tampa. I've got my great friend Jacques Taylor, we've just recorded a podcast with Coach Adam Miller. And now you've got a special guest on, Mr. Louis Zito, who I've known for quite a long time – I don't even know how long, you know better than me, but probably five years.

Luis has gone through literally, I think, one of the greatest transformations I've ever seen or anyone has ever seen. If you want to see what he looks like, we'll be posting on the Muscle Expert social if that's okay with you Louis, and the MI40 Nation. I just want to bring you on and congratulate you and talk about this process, because it's literally mind-blowing. I want to talk about the process, but I'm most interested in talking about the mindset. And the reason I bring this up is because I'm going from the mindset of being a 310 pound bodybuilder for the last 20 years, trying to shift out of that and become a normal human being, or at least a 'normal' human being who doesn't have to eat six times a day and my life doesn't revolved around consumption and growth.

Let's start. I don't know even walk to walk through the process yet, we can do that in a minute. Let's talk about your struggles man, like, there is no doubt. First of all, how long has it been since you started this journey to transform your body? And tell us about your history too, because I know at one point you had a very high percentage of body fat.

**LOUIS**

Yeah. So it must be about 6 years now, and I was my heaviest. I was 270 pounds, and I'm about 5'8 to give you some reference.

**BEN**

And you weren't working out, right? That was like no muscle at that point?

**LOUIS**

No, nothing. That was just high school, no sports, I was pretty lazy. And I didn't even realize how big I was, and it was just, I remember it was my doctor. He was just talking to me one day, and he was like, "You keep going this way, you will get diabetes and just all the health things." I think that just kind of clicked with me, and I was like: man, I do need to change something. Just from that, I didn't really know where to start, but just started trying to eat better and look at nutrition and start going to the gym. That's just kind of how it started for me. Once I really heard like the damage I was doing to myself, it kind of just clicked.

**BEN**

How old were you at that time?

**LOUIS**

18

**BEN**

Amazing. So your first few steps, I think the hardest thing for most people is taking those first few steps and then maintaining them. Talk about them that. So Jacques as you know, is a neuro-phys expert, and we just finished a podcast diving deep on understanding the psychological states that people go through in a transformation when trying to achieve anything, whether it be a body composition change or a strength change or trying to build muscle – all the psychological states you go through. It's such a fascinating and interesting thing, I'd love for you to talk about any of the struggles you remember, and if you still struggle with it all at all.

**LOUIS**

Yeah, I'd say honestly the biggest straw was kind of just not so much like 'oh I missed this kind of foods', it was more the lifestyle changes. You know, all my friends we always used to go out and eat and stuff like that, so it's just strange when all of a sudden these things stop, and you're like, "No, we're not going to do this, instead I'm going to go to the gym," or, "Let's not go to this buggy place, let's go to this place," you know.

It wasn't so much a struggle. I missed pizza, which I did, but it became more like the social aspect I would say was the big struggle at first. Just having or get used to seeing you change.

**BEN**

So when you started at 18 years old, you had 18 years of programming, basically saying: hey man [I'm going to be cruel to you man], you ate like a fat kid, you probably had the lifestyle of a fat kid, and you had to shift your paradigm completely to change your psychology to be that of what is now a lean and literally shredded – this is one of the most impressive thing – there is no backwards action from you at all. It was like you did one show and a few years later you did another show, and you're even leaner; there is no regression whatsoever man, that's what's fascinating.

So it's really a complete psychological shift from 270 pounds that probably was close to 40% body fat, to now it was probably what is close to 4 or 5% body fat. Walk me down the psychological shift man, who is Louis now compared to what Louis was then?



**LOUIS**

It's funny. It's actually kind of crazy, like, to me it's almost a different person. I can't imagine being like that. I think now, I think where my head is at, the thing that keeps me so committed to it as well is that I can help others with it – kind of help them change their bodies as well, just being a personal trainer and coaching others.

It became more almost like a research project for me, so instead of being like, 'oh, I've got to go,' it's more like, 'if I change this thing, let's see how even my chest reacts,' or 'if I put these fruits in my diet, let's see what happens.' And then it became pretty exciting for me, because it became research rather than just something I didn't want to do.

**BEN**

Was it like that from the beginning? What was your attitude towards the gym or towards even exercise in the beginning? I'm very curious, because typically most people who have a high amount of body fat typically have a negative association to training. Is that something that you found in the beginning was hard for you to overcome?

**LOUIS**

Yeah, at first it was. I think the fear of just not knowing what to do as well, I mean, I think it's easy to go in there and just start running on the treadmill (which I did, because you see all these machines and you're on your way to start, so you're like, oh I know how a treadmill works – I'll go do that). Then you see your body change, not really the results you want but at first honestly it just kind of sucked. You just always like: I don't want to do this, I don't really know what I'm doing. But once you start to see those changes in your body, it keeps you more committed.

**BEN**

You become empowered, right?

**LOUIS**

Yeah

**BEN**

Like, if I do something I actually see a difference. Yeah, that's awesome man. Very, very fascinating. Walking us down your journey as far as, I don't even want to talk about any MI40 involvement in the journey, I want to talk about your self-discovery of the exercise process. So like you said, you started running on the treadmill and had no idea what's to do, like everybody else, right? You were looking around at all these mindless misguided fitness enthusiasts. Walk me down the journey, because they're people out there who are really going to benefit from this. There's people out there living your old life, like no empowerment, you're completely discouraged, you don't know what to do. Teach them, man.

**LOUIS**

Yeah. The way I started, you know, I would recommend people do get help, from a trainer or someone that they think might be able to help them. Obviously, honestly the first trainer I had was not the best, but still it still taught me some exercises; things I could do on my own. And just do your own research; look at things like online there's so much on there, there's a lot of crap out there but you can find these things just to start learning and practice these things by yourself. Put the time in them and learn them. It is hard at first, because you find these workouts, I know with like the Muscle Magazines. I'd start trying arm workouts for 12 weeks and it didn't go right. It shows.

And just stuff, honesty it takes time and you're not going to get it the first time but just not being afraid to go. A lot of people are scared that they'll look stupid in the gym. But you know what, just look stupid, just do it.

**BEN**

I know man, but that's the thing: how do you overcome that, right? Yeah, because people are afraid and most people are so controlled by their ego, they're not willing to succumb to that. How did you allow yourself to just go, "F it, I'm going to do it!" Like, was it just the fact you were young and naïve, or was it the degree of commitment that you had to get in such great shape?

**LOUIS**

Yeah, I think it was just the fact that in my head I was like: I'm done being fat, I'm at a place where I'd rather not be fat and be embarrassed in the gym, I would just go do that.

**BEN**

So here's the thing: you went from like really fat to really shredded. Most people go from really fat to not really so fat, but they're still kind of fat. You kind of transcended a number of intermittent steps there, and that's why I think this is the most fascinating thing. Because, most important over if you're 40% body fat you think to get it to 20-25, and you'll live this life of mediocrity and kind of be healthy, you're not the fat guy anymore, but certainly not the fit guy like you've gone to now. You have taken yourself to where you're an inspiration to anyone in the fitness industry with your current level of fitness.

That's what I really want to pull out of you, Louis. Like, walk me down the mental journey that it took from having the paradigm of a fat guy, to now having the paradigm of you're a fitness inspiration.

**LOUIS**

Honestly, I think it was the fact that I wanted to show that fat guy that you could become a bodybuilder, that just you don't have to be like: oh I'm just not fat anymore. Because, I mean, when you're 270 pounds, you're not thinking: oh, maybe I'll be a bodybuilder. But I think I wanted to show the old version of me, that you know what, you could be and you can do well at something like this and actually enjoy the process and help others too. I think it was more just I wanted to prove to myself I could.

**BEN**

Amazing. So what do you do now, what's next on your list of how you're going to progress this journey?

**LOUIS**

So I've got a show tomorrow, yeah.

**BEN**

Nice

**LOUIS**

One day out, so I'm leaving in a couple of hours for that. And then I've got, you know, just keep learning, keep educating. I just finished my RCS certification this year, so I've got NAT signed up for the beginning of next year. And I'll be coming down to Tampa definitely.

**BEN**

So how can this guy help answer some of your questions about your next journey in training? Is there anything you want to do to upgrade your ability to build muscle or your ability to get stronger? Any questions you have about the nervous system or just how to develop your program?

**LOUIS**

Yeah. Well, what would you think the next place to start, where would you think I should take it? How do I keep advanced?

**BEN**

He doesn't know where you are, right? If you want to make a specific question about what's holding you back, that's going to be his first question. That's a long conversation. Yeah, is there anything that you're trying to improve or a body part you're trying to improve? Or if there's a plateau you've reached, anything like that?

**LOUIS**

Yeah, especially shoulders, I do have a troubled time feeling those. I know just sometimes they don't fire quite right, just getting that connection. Even things like throughout RCS, things like that, I still don't really connect with sudden muscle groups as well as I think I could.

**BEN**

Ask him questions Jacques, I know you're going with that. So we just finished a podcast about this, and ask questions, you got it.

**JACQUES**

Well, a couple of things. So when you are training, say your shoulders, what are you thinking about? What's your self-talk, what's that little voice in your head saying to you?

**LOUIS**

Squeeze it.

**JACQUES**

Alright. And when you don't feel that squeeze it, then what comes up?

**LOUIS**

I slow it down usually.



**JACQUES**

Okay, and you still don't feel it?

**LOUIS**

No.

**JACQUES**

What happens?

**LOUIS**

I just keep going kind of

**BEN**

What's your strongest body part Louis?

**LOUIS**

Probably my back.

**BEN**

So your ability to feel your back is great?

**LOUIS**

Yeah.

**BEN**

How would you compare your mindset going to back training, compared to shoulder training?

**LOUIS**

Yeah, I'm pretty amped up for back.

**BEN**

And how would you be for shoulders?

**LOUIS**

Yeah, I'm probably not thinking about it as much. Oh, here we go.

**BEN**

Now, this is what we're thinking about: so Jacques is an expert when it comes to the nervous system and the brain and how the brain learns, and how you can develop these body parts. This is what we discussed in the podcast (you'll love the podcast), when you try to learn a new skill, your state of mind becomes extremely important – a lot more important than you realize. And I'll let Jacques kind of walk down path.

**JACQUES**

Yeah, absolutely. So as you're exercising, your muscles are producing these hormones: one called brain-derived neurotrophic factor, which can help you learn, which actually helps with brain plasticity. One thing though that undermines it in its ability to help your brain, is stress. So when your attitude toward that workout is, "This isn't working, this is going to suck, I never feel it," then that kind of undermines your body's ability to use this really useful hormone.

**LOUIS**

Right

**JACQUES**

So what I'd recommend is: do you have some time when you can take no pressure, just go in the gym, use some of those RTS principles, like the idea of leaning forward a little bit and doing that shrug, and then doing frontal plane abduction for your shoulders. You can play around with it so you can actually explore it and feel it and find when it's going to work, and allow yourself to be curious about it as possible to just being ah, ah.

**LOUIS**

Yeah.

**JACQUES**

Or really have the curiosity, and then once you get it you've got to celebrate it, right? Just like you celebrate that feeling in your back, does that make sense?

**LOUIS**

Yeah it does, damn right!

**JACQUES**

Yeah, you feel like you've got some good RTS tools that you can use to say: okay, I'm going to play with not only dumbbells, but I can get a cable, I can have it pulling from that way – you see what I mean?

**LOUIS**

Yeah. You find coding distractions out, even like music and things like that.

**JACQUES**

I would say so. I think that, and we were just talking about this too, sometimes it's nice to have your earphones on and put you in your own little world. But at the end of the day, humans are social beings. It's kind of nice to be in an environment with other people doing what they love to do; lifting some weight. And not that they're there to socialize, but just to take it in, just to experience that community – that might be helpful too. Not that it would be distracting to have people around you, but there are people around you, right?

**LOUIS**

Right. I like that, it's cool

**BEN**

Yeah man. We really dug deeper on the podcast, and that'll probably be out in a couple of weeks, so check it out! And dude, I don't want to keep you anymore, I know you're very busy getting ready for your show. But thanks a lot, send us questions and we'll definitely share them for you.

**LOUIS**

Thanks a lot, thanks for having me on. I'll see you guys soon.

**BEN**

Dude keep inspiring people, you're doing awesome!

**LOUIS**

Thank you.

**JACQUES**

Take care.

**BEN**

Hey, I hope you enjoyed that podcast, thank you very much for listening. Head over to iTunes right now and leave me a review. Let me know if you loved it, let me know if you absolutely hated it. Either way, I need to know so I can improve my job, and bring you guys at the best information with respect to muscle building, health optimization, and building a better person – building a better man.

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Another shout-out to GASP and Better Bodies, for always take great care of myself and my trainers and my staff. If you guys want to get a discount from GASP and Better Bodies, head over to [www.BenPakulski.com/podcasts](http://www.BenPakulski.com/podcasts), and check out the show notes from this show and all the other shows. And you can find transcripts there as well.

So have a wonderful day, upgrade your life, stay focused, and live a life of greatness!