

The Foundation of Movement Philosophy

Ido Portal identifies himself as an international guru for movement and dealing with the body. His philosophy fundamentally rejects the idea of separating the self from the body, a concept he notes has persisted since Descartes.

Critique of Body-Self Separation:

- Portal argues that the body is not merely a tool or a sketch, but an **essential and cardinal part** that cannot be separated from the self. He emphasizes the linguistic trap of referring to the body as "mine" (as in, "my body") because "The body is me, it is not mine". Language itself, he suggests, has created this separation.
- The fundamental mistake people make is having a **narrow view** and treating their body like a **slave**, demanding changes (often through restrictive training or chemicals) without providing the necessary groundwork.
- When people engage in activities, they are often not truly **present** in the experience. This lack of intentional presence is a crucial failing in modern physical activity.

Defining Movement and Practice: Portal consciously chose the terms **movement** and **practice** to broaden the scope beyond traditional training definitions.

1. **Movement:** Movement is a much larger concept than mere physical training. It includes all aspects of physical training, sports, dance, the somatic world, and fighting. It also encompasses movement of thoughts and feelings. Movement is not physical itself; rather, it leaves behind physical movements and a trajectory.

2. **Practice:** Practice is described as the **most powerful word available to a human being**. It is "the word of the Absolute" and the device for everything, noting that evolution is an aspect of practice.

- Practice is a **point of view**, involving **deep responsibility** for one's self, leading to discovery and development.
- Portal defines practice simply as **"working on myself"**.
- He suggests that all other preoccupations are secondary, and the purpose of understanding and learning must lead to a behavioral application in practice.

The Critique of Fitness and Pragmatism

Portal is highly critical of the modern fitness industry and the demand for easy, pragmatic solutions.

• **Critique of Fitness and Health:** The word "fitness" itself is problematic. Portal warns that **fitness and health are not the same thing**. While basic fitness is necessary for health, a high level of fitness often separates from health and can lead to the **destruction of the body** and joints (e.g., powerlifting, extreme yoga, high VO2 max). He notes that Darwin did not view "evolution" (related to the concept of survival of the fittest) as improvement.

• **The Problem with Gyms and Multitasking:** Going to gyms (the "hamster wheel") is not a place that encourages "real, sincere, and deep practice". The gym atmosphere, often filled with loud music and repetitive action, does not require interference or intentional presence.

◦ Portal states that listening to a podcast while exercising is a **destructive action**—a "dirty action" of multitasking—which he calls a "huge placenta".

◦ He analogizes using a gym to giving one's "car keys to someone else", creating a dependency that prevents true physical experience and agency.

• **The Rejection of "Cherry Picking":** Portal is suspicious of the demand for "actionable" or "pragmatic" tips that cater to "people's short heartedness". He suggests that consuming content (like podcasts) often encourages "cherry picking" and assembling an approach to life based on one's own weaknesses, likes, and dislikes, rather than sincere practice. He is not impressed by short-term

successes or claims that an idea "changed my life" because people often fail the "wet exam" (the real test of behavior under pressure).

- **Critique of Posture:** Portal views "posture" as a "lie" or a fixed position. He adopts the views of figures like Moshe Feldenkreis and Friedrich Alexander, arguing that posture is a **living, dynamic entity** that involves organization. A well-organized body can sit in any position without pain. The skeleton is not a column but operates closer to a Tensegrity model, where it floats and creates spaces within the tissues.

Key Movement Practices and Tools

Portal advocates starting practice with the body, as it "often does not lie". He intentionally provided three primary tools over the years to "entice and manipulate the audience," which became global phenomena.

Tool	Description & Application	Effects and Rationale
1. The Squat (Full Push-Up)	A basic human rest position where one sits with buttocks on heels and chest between knees (varying by proportions).	Should be practiced for a significant portion of the day, recommended at least 30 minutes daily. This practice has been credited with eliminating lower back and digestive problems and saving people from surgery. It is necessary because modern culture often replaces this moderator position with sitting, standing, and lying down.
2. Hanging (Taliya)	Accumulating time hanging from a bar or rings (feet may gently touch the floor).	Recommended 10 minutes a day for 30 days. It allows gravity to do its work . It produces extreme changes in connective tissue, tendons, joint health, and the unity of the body that strength training or yoga/flexibility cannot.
3. Waves in the Spine	Segmental movement/lobe that transfers information and movement through the spine from the coccyx to the apex.	This practice helps flow life lymph fluid, synovial fluid, and blood, and aids in the transfer of information within the body. It helps organize the structure of the body, healing movement by passing energy through it. This movement pattern is naturally present in ancient activities like running, grinding, or throwing a stone.

Cultivating Deeper Practice

Portal advises that these tools are merely a start, a small opening to a much larger world. The true path requires commitment to complexity and observation:

- **Complexity and Problem Solving:** The body requires complexity. Instead of linear exercises, activities like **climbing** or **learning new sports** (e.g., basketball, ping pong, combat) are recommended because they require **problem-solving**, coordination, and scratch the brain and nervous system.
- **Intentionality:** Practice must be **intentional** ("intenal"). This means being focused on the action (e.g., stopping distractions like music while training). Intentionality is the key metric, even for actions often deemed negative (like having sex or masturbating); if intentional, there is no problem, but if it is done in "delusional distraction," it becomes problematic.
- **Continuous Questioning:** The best advice Portal received and follows is to **live inside the question and not the answer**. Since all models and answers are considered incorrect or temporary, the practice is to live within the question, constantly seeking, observing, and testing weaknesses. This philosophical approach drives the entire process of discovery and practice