

## Training Smarter, Not Harder

*Just because someone can do something, doesn't necessarily mean they should.*

This thought is very practical when it comes to physical conditioning and training, which should be intelligently approached. Many people with good intentions train way too hard or spend too much time training. Inappropriate exercise, or overtraining, often results in a failure to achieve goals and/or results in injury.

On several occasions I've had the opportunity to meet people that were injured as a result of physical conditioning. When I posed the question, "what were you doing and why were you doing it?" the responses were very revealing as to the general lack of understanding of what constitutes appropriate exercise and the rationale for the methods being used that resulted in their injuries.

It has been my experience that many highly motivated and energetic people simply work too hard in their personal quest for fitness, not knowing or ignoring their current limitations. A good rule to follow is to not do anything more than what is absolutely necessary to achieve the maximum desired result, otherwise what's the point? Doing anything more than what is necessary boils down to working hard to hurt yourself... it becomes a self-defeating effort.

People need to realize that exercise provides a stimulus for the body that will cause certain adaptive changes to occur if sufficient recovery from the effort is permitted. Overtraining simply is excessive stimulus with insufficient recovery. I recognize that some people simply love to exercise, or perhaps are even addicted to the way they feel during and/or after an intense, prolonged, or exhaustive effort, but is it really necessary or in their best interest? This can be answered by objectively assessing the person, their goals, the methods being used, etc.

A few simple, but yet essential questions that should be asked before introducing exercises or training methods are the following:

1. Why this exercise or training method?
2. Is this the safest, most effective, and most efficient exercise or training method available to achieve a particular goal?

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3. What are the risks and what are the benefits of this exercise or training method?

Once these questions have been asked and honestly answered, then the best choices can be made.

Please train intelligently, and if you don't know or are unsure of how to do that, then please seek out a qualified trainer that does and benefit from their knowledge.

Train smarter, not harder!