

THE ELEMENTS OF FITNESS

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KILL YOUR WEAKNESSES

I'll start this article the same way I should start every one I write: *If you're happy where you are, read no further.* If, however, you're not totally satisfied with your body, listen up. Your habits and the weaknesses they've created have helped you get the body you now have. The quickest road to getting your body where you want it is to eliminate, once and for all, your biggest weaknesses.

If you look at what you do in training, you'll see patterns. Although these patterns or habits are occasionally useful, most of the time they are responsible for holding you back, as well. You find a new train-

ing plan, play with it a few weeks, and slowly modify it back into what you were doing before.

How do you deal with limiters? The same way. You do a little hamstring stretching at the end of each session for say, two days, then you skip one, then eventually it becomes clear that you can't possibly



fit in all of your bench press variations if you waste all this time stretching.

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THE STAT:

156

Minimum number of hours we'd like to see you exercise in 2013.

QUICK NOTES

Our next Kettlebell Fundamentals class is January 5th (Saturday) from 9-11am. We'll cover all the essential kettlebell lifts, as well as how to bring kettlebell training into your own training program. This class is free, open to the public, and awesome.

We're adding another EARLY am class this January. For those of you who like working out before 6am, we're offering a 5:30 am Metabolic Blast class starting on Monday, January 7th.

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The Elemental Winter Boul-

dering Competition is on January 19th from 4:30-8:30 pm. The climbing gym will be closed on the 17th and 18th to prepare for the event.

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Did you know that 69% of the population still think low-fat diets are effective for fat loss?

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THE REALLY SIMPLE DIET

Every year, there's a hot, new diet that gets people going and inevitably leaves them a little disappointed in the end. I always feel bad for people who proudly declare they're "going Paleo" to all of their Facebook friends, especially when going Paleo turns out to be really hard work.

I've talked before about keeping the rules simple and making gradual changes and how those two components are critical ingredients in almost ALL effective diet plans. The problem? Simple and easy are two different things. Oh, and the other thing...gradual isn't fast enough for most of us.

You've tried the "change everything" diet and you're fatter than you were at the end of it. Maybe, just maybe, you should try something else this time. The problem with my diet recommendations is that they aren't trendy, they're not sexy, and you don't get to eat chocolate, not even the dark kind.

If you really want to lose weight (a performance diet is different), here is a results-based approach to fat loss.

Weeks 1&2: Eliminate all carbohydrates from your diet that have fewer than 3 grams of fiber per serving. This

eliminates most junk food and many fruits. Look at the labels, do the research. No exceptions.

Week 3: Eat at least 20 grams of protein at each meal. Maintain fiber rule from weeks 1 and 2.

Week 4: Push for 4+ servings of vegetables per day. Maintain above rules.

Week 5&6: Eliminate all fruits and breads from your diet, with the exception of berries.

Not that complicated, but the thing works. Fun? No. Thinner? You bet.

THE PROBLEM WITH MY DIET RECOMMENDATIONS IS THAT THEY AREN'T TRENDY, THEY'RE NOT SEXY, AND YOU DON'T GET TO EAT CHOCOLATE, NOT EVEN THE DARK KIND.

JANUARY CLASS SCHEDULE - PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE FOR CLASS DESCRIPTIONS

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
EARLY!	Metabolic Blast 5:30-6		Elemental Endurance 5:15-6		
6:30 AM	Hybrid Training 6:30-7:20				
7:00 AM				Early Bird Yoga 7:00-7:50	
8:30 AM	CORE 8:30-9:20				CORE 8:30-9:20
NOON	Mobility + Restoration 12-12:50				Metabolic Blast 12-12:30
1:00 PM		Hybrid Training 1-1:50		Burly Girls 1-1:50	
5:30 PM	Hybrid Training 5:30-6:20	Mobility + Restoration 5:30-6:20		Metabolic 5:30-6:20	
6:00 PM			Metabolic 6-6:50		
6:30 PM	Elemental Strength 6:30-7:20 / Ski Fit 6:30-7:20	Kettlebell Conditioning 6:30-7:20		Elemental Strength 6:30-7:20 / Ski Fit 6:30-7:20	



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PLEASE VISIT OUR WEBSITE:
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WE CHANGE LIVES.

“When I listened to my mistakes, I grew. - Bruce Lee

This Month’s Workout

Test yourself. There is a fundamental component to training that many of us miss out on, and it’s testing for change or progress. At the beginning of each year, I like to test myself to see what’s changed. When I was younger, it was to see how much better I’d become, these days it’s to assure I haven’t slipped too much. The first week of every year is testing week, and I do the following tests. I don’t think all of them are valid for me anymore, but I still do them to collect the data. I’ll spread these out over several workouts. Build your own, but don’t let yourself go without testing!

1. Weigh and do girth measurements. Measure everything you can imagine—you’re only doing this once per year.
2. Vertical Jump Test. This is a measure of lower-body power.
3. Max Deadlift, Max Bench Press, Max Squat. This is a measure of total body strength.
4. One mile run test. I do this on a treadmill. A measure of short-term aerobic endurance.
5. RKC Kettlebell snatch test. Test of anaerobic / muscular endurance. See last month’s newsletter.
6. Max air squats in 120 seconds. A terrible and accurate way of gauging lower-body endurance.
7. Max push-ups in 3 minutes. Same as above. Rest as needed.
8. The first climbing day of each January, I have a group of “landmark” climbs I like to do to make sure I’ve still got it.

The numbers won’t mean much now, but as you collect years, it’s great to see if you’re getting better, or way worse, as time crawls on.

KILL YOUR WEAKNESSES (CONTINUED FROM P.1)

Weaknesses are inherently problematic—part of the reason we have them is because we don’t like doing those things. I’d much rather talk about rock climbing than my feelings, so I’ve become very good at talking about rock climbing and even better at rationalizing why talking about feelings is stupid.

Weaknesses demand action. How much is your bench max going to drop if you commit to flexibility training for 6 out of 7 workouts? Maybe 5-10 pounds. How long is it going to take the new, flexible you to pick up

those pounds next month? No time at all.

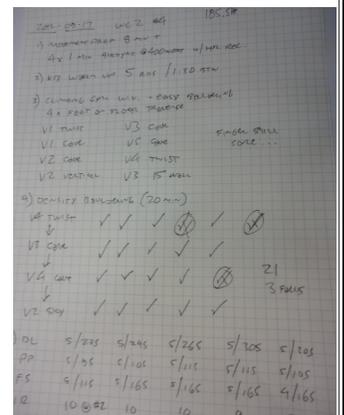
Your weakness-killing action plan should go like this: Figure out how much total training time you have in a typical week. Take that amount of time, and commit 75% of it to training your one weakness. Make it specific: “flexibility” is not enough—you’ve got to train for a very specific kind of flexibility, and one you can measure.

The other 25 % of your training time will be dedicated to maintaining all those things you usually do,

but not trying to move forward in any one of them.

You have 4 hours to train each week? Good. 3 of those hours are going to be spent trying to get your lifelong hamstring inflexibility to go away.

Take a month and work the weakness, then go back to your “normal” training. The following month, reassess where you are weakest, and attack that for another 4 weeks. Stay after the weaknesses in this way, and soon they’ll be very hard to find. Ignore them, and they’ll put the brakes on everything eventually.



Keep a log as you work on your weaknesses to help keep you on track.