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FUN, PASSIONATE, DRIVEN

QUESTIONS FOR THOUGHT

For those who strictly play high-intensity sports and don't feel the need to do otherwise, do you recommend additional strength or weight-training, and why?

If your goal in playing hockey or squash once twice or three times a week is to have fun and hang with your buddies that is great but most of the time the games are not that intense really and often end up at eh bar for some wings and a few beer to replaced the calories you think you lost but you'll no doubt end up eating more than you just burned. Sometime people can actually gain weight when they start to exercise because they overestimate the caloric expenditure in their workouts and start to eat more thinking they've earned it. If your goal is to actually stay fit with your sports and you do push yourself hard that is fantastic but I would still recommend some other form of resistance exercise for either increased performance or injury prevention. If you don't really care about getting better then we work the muscles that are not being worked in your particular sport to maintain balance and focus on stretching out the areas that get overworked. If performance is your goal then we would continue to work on balancing the body and stretching but can be more aggressive with our exercise selection and start to incorporate some lifts that strengthen the main movers of a particular sports specific movement and add resistance to those movement as well as explosiveness that can be carried to the rink or court.

What do you recommend to those with old school eating habits, tastes, and mannerisms (eating white rice, white flour, as a general staple)?

There is such a push nowadays for everything to be raw, fresh and organic that we categorize foods such as white rice and flour as old school and make them appear as detrimental to our health and fitness as a chocolate bar and Coke for lunch. We should be looking at all the options and make the best choice in front of us at all times, but to insinuate that eating white rice will kill you is wrong and it stresses people out.

People eat white rice everyday and live just fine as well as competitive physique athletes while getting down to low single digit fat levels. There are better choices but if your client hates brown rice and just won't eat it you've got to let them know that white rice is a better choice than 3 slices of bread with butter or pizza.

White flour to oat flour, white pasta to brown pasta, skim milk to 2% these are all little changes that can amount to big body composition shifts over time. Making all the right choices won't just happen over night but as long as you keep it top of mind when the options present themselves at the grocery store, restaurants or a friend's house you can make a better choice.

The most important thing people should know about working out?

When you start working out it could be for many reasons but usually it comes down to looking better. People want to lose that extra bit of fat, tone the arms flatten the stomach, grow a bigger chest and so on. Depending where you are in your life that looking better usually boils down to looking better for that person you want to attract whether it is to get that new girlfriend or boyfriend or husband or wife.

There are those that want the health benefits too like increased cardio, flexibility and energy but I believe the most important thing to understand when working out is that all of the things I mentioned so far are not what any of us really want. What you really want is what having those things will bring you in terms of feelings.

How looking better will feel and what that will bring you. Increased cardio and flexibility is great but why? When you realize it is to play longer with your grand kids all day long injury free so that when you are gone they will have many fond memories with you. Feeling energetic and powerful as you walk through your daily life is a confidence that can't be faked and will bring you who and what you want. People want to do business with confident, powerful people. People want to have relationships with powerful, confident people.

When you can connect curling a Dumbbell or doing a sit up to these long term feelings in the moment of the set not only will you be able to give forth the intensity required to transform the body but you'll be subconsciously moving towards that vision everyday through repetition. Sounds pretty deep but that's what I believe because I've seen it happen in my life and in the lives of so many of my clients.

Do you believe in bootcamp training?

I like Bootcamp training as it offers a different dynamic that some, not all, people like. I run a large group workout I call Troop every sat at 9am and Mon at 7am. It's a fun and intense workout using untraditional equipment and gives people a chance to meet others going through the same victories struggles. Most clients will come to see me once or twice a week and then throw in a large group workout once a week as well. It is a good format for fat loss and toning but you need to have your form down before jumping right in because you can easily get hurt.

Getting hurt doesn't have to mean right in the moment either. You can feel fine and not be able to move tomorrow because you tweaked your back or knee with improper form. It's simply impossible to keep a close eye on 16 people at a time so you need to be fairly independent.

Growing muscle as fast as possible is going to take some heavier lifts with great form and intensity requiring a certain amount of rest between sets. Growing muscle is not really geared towards a Troop workout either as most of the exercises are high tempo, low weight but does make a nice addition once a week for the ones looking to gain as we tend to do a lot of core as well.

There are certain memories, occasions, or success stories that tend to mold us and ignite the passion for our career what is one that you hold dear?

Trying to decide on one specific moment that molded me into this career is really hard. I could sit here all day thinking of the various people I have helped, the good times that come with being fit and the success stories of my clients in fitness and life but I need to pick one. One pivotal moment that I am sure helped to get myself going in the industry specifically was making my first sale. I was working full time for Bell managing a warehouse at the time and making pretty good money. The job was boring and I hated but was just doing it while I applied to different fire departments. The opportunity came up to work for Bally's and I started there working nights and days at Bell. I figured as soon as I could make enough to get by working at Bally's I would quit Bell. Making my very first sale to the first person I saw gave me the confidence I needed to quit within 10 days and sell almost everyone I met. Not because I smooth talked them but because I showed them value and passionately conveyed it. Had I missed my first 1, 2 or 10 sales I might still be at Bell today... probably not.

This showcase can present you with opportunity--if you were to get 50 new cts, what would you do?

Fifty new clients would be fine as I have my own studio and a team of trainers to facilitate my program designs. I also run Extreme Adventure weekends twice a year and would get most people on board to train for that and celebrate their accomplishments with me. The next one is

in March and we are going to Banff. In a nutshell we'll be cross country skiing, down hill skiing, great food, dancing and a whole lot of fun.

Do you believe in supplements, physical enhancers, and do you believe in giving advice where these are concerned?

I do believe in supplements and have been using them for years. Supplements are only to be used as an additional aid when all the right elements of training and nutrition are in place. The word supplement means "extra" and thus only provide a little "extra" help. You don't need supplements but if everything else is firing then they can help and they do even provide a placebo effect. This means that even if they were not really helping you people tend to eat better and train harder while supplementing and in turn this is what gets you better results.

You can definitely take too many supplements and there are supplements that don't work. In fact, I would say that 95% of them don't live up to what they promise. There are a few staples that work and are safe provided they are taken properly. Multi vitamins, fish oil, creatine, glutamine, protein powders are a few of the staples but even with these, some brands are better than others.

So I recommend some but don't push any. If your trainer is pushing a ton of supplements be wary as they are most likely involved in a multi level marketing company selling overpriced supplements.

What do you feel about training two people at a time?

Two people at a time can work provided you have the same goals and abilities. This can be a fun, economical way for 2 people to get a good workout in but if your partner wants to gain size and you want to tone up then the partner thing doesn't work out too well.

Do you believe in weight training for children, if so how do you proceed and if not, what do you recommend?

I don't believe in traditional weight training for kids but I do think they should exercise. Kids can jump and roll and lift and pull just like adults, even better. You just have to keep in mind that it needs to be light not to hurt their little joints and their form is usually way off too. Teach them the forms keep the reps to 30+, focus on their core and bodyweight movements and above all keep it fun. If it is not fun they won't do it and then your efforts are worth nothing.

How do you stay above and beyond the rest?

Being a trainer for so long now I acquired a good group of friends that are professional trainers as well. We constantly share ideas for business as well as training. We recommend books to read, conventions and seminars to attend and above all implement what we learn on ourselves and then others. I also read a lot of research journals and watch the trends making sure to stay ahead but also to pass on the ones that I don't feel have merit.

What is the greatest change you have made in your given routines in the past 2 years?

Long ago I changed my mentality with weight lifting. I always thought, how I could lift more weight, more times." This is the thought of most guys when they start out. Since reaching my goal size I have used a different mentality and that is "How can I make a lighter weight feel heavier and more effective?" I do this by using text book form with advanced techniques and a slow eccentric tempo.

I have also rebalanced my training to incorporate more mobility/flexibility type exercises, increased my cardio with 3 5km runs per week, use high rep sets with kettlebells and use training timers to implement Tabata principles and other short rest modalities. I am not quite as strong as I once was but overall am in better shape in regards to muscular endurance, cardiovascular conditioning, strong core muscles and good, not great, flexibility. I can still Bench 225 for 15 so as long as I can keep that I am happyJ

What specific area of training would you consider yourself an expert and list why that is?

My specific area of expertise would be body transformations most specifically focusing on the core. The fact is having a strong or sexy core is the number one request heard by trainers. Whether it is a young teenage girl or a 70 year old man everyone wants a strong core for mere aesthetics or function.

It started 10 years ago when I and a few of the other managers at Bally's were put in charge of developing the new trainers. Every 8 weeks we would put about 40 new trainers through a week long course designed to teach them how to be better trainers. Inevitably, every time we'd meet up with these new recruits I'd end up learning a lot too. It was probably around the time I learned over a 100 different ways to train the core that I started meeting with my trainers once a week for a workout. Partly to teach them but mostly to get my ass kicked. We'd start with me training them through a non-stop 40 minute core workout and in return they'd have to do their worst back to me. As you know, you'll never put yourself through the same hell in an ab workout as you will when someone is yelling at you.

Because everyone is different the exercises that really work for some may hurt or be less effective for others. Some clients can do 87 different exercises some can only do a handful to start with. Learning to be creative with exercises, sequencing and modalities (tempo,

resistance, and sport specific, explosiveness...) has given me the ability to train anyone for a full hour on just core work alone. A lot of the exercises will incorporate many other muscles so by the end you feel as though you have done a full body workout and you have. Of course we all know that you can't get a flat stomach by doing core alone. It requires a lot of nutritional discipline, overall resistance training and some cardio work as well will not hurt but we can work to strengthen and grow those ab muscles.

If we can grow the abs to make them pop then your abs become visible at a higher body fat percent. My first show my abs popped at about 8% body fat, meaning that you could see them flexing. Today my core region looks as good at 12% as it did at 8% because they are developed and push out more. This is not to say that my gut is bigger but the muscles themselves have deeper insertion points (cuts). It is an investment and takes time and for those that realistically want a 6 pack need to know this. If you can't foresee a change in diet and that will facilitate 8% body fat then we work on getting the abs strong and visible at a higher body fat percent.

WORDS TO LIVE BY...

"Obsessed is a word the lazy use to describe the dedicated"