

FAT LOSS HAPPENS ON MONDAY

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JOSH HILLIS WITH DAN JOHN

**FOREWORD BY
VALERIE WATERS**

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Josh Hillis
with Dan John

Foreword by Valerie Waters

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FOREWORD

IT'S ABOUT BECOMING THE KIND OF PERSON YOU SAY YOU WANT TO BE

Imagine two scenarios.

First, imagine you didn't plan and prepare—

You come home at six o'clock at night. The kids are crying, the dog needs to be fed; you're tired and cranky because you didn't plan your snack, so you ate some candy and drank a diet soda from the vending machine at four o'clock in the afternoon.

Now your blood sugar is crashing. You open the refrigerator, but you didn't go to the market on Sunday and pre-prepare anything—so what do you?

You're trying to decide on the fly—you've got to get dinner on the table for the family; you've got to get the dog fed. You're calling for food delivery. In the meantime, you're stuffing a tortilla in your mouth—not because you love tortillas, but because your blood sugar is crashing and you're desperate to get it back up.

Second, imagine you did prepare—

Imagine you open the fridge. You're hungry and you know it's going to take you 30 minutes to prepare dinner, but there's something you can nibble on that's not going to derail your plan.

You slice up a cucumber and have a little guacamole as you're preparing to put the chicken in the oven. And you can put the chicken in the oven because the chicken is there to be put in the oven.

You shopped the day before. You already marinated the chicken and all you have to do is take it out of the

refrigerator and let it rest on the counter for a minute while you chop up the veggies, which have already been washed.

You turn on the oven, and you're eating your cucumber with guacamole while you're happily just catching up with your husband or while the dog sits next to you as you listen to music or chill in silence. Then you pop the chicken in the oven. Maybe you steam some broccoli or cauliflower and maybe make some rice if it's on the plan that day, and then in 30 minutes it all comes together and you feel great.

STRATEGY TRUMPS WILLPOWER

You feel great, and it's because strategy trumps willpower. You know it's not about white knuckling, "Don't eat the tortilla! Don't eat the tortilla! Don't eat the tortilla!"

People are always unsuccessful when they wing it. So instead, you set yourself up to not be so ravenous that you stuff the tortilla in your mouth while you're standing in front of the refrigerator. You prepare so you have other options available.

It's not about deprivation. Mostly you wouldn't really have felt more excited to have the pizza delivery. Not only would the pizza delivery have derailed your fat-loss plan; it wouldn't even have made you happy.

The pizza might have gotten there fast, but it's not something you would have enjoyed more than your simply prepared chicken. And now you feel good about yourself because you've done something you're committed to—staying on your plan. You feel proud of yourself...you

were able to get dinner in the oven and have it come out and taste good.

And it doesn't need to be fancy cheffy food. It just needs to be a home-cooked meal. There's something so pleasurable about being able to feed yourself and your loved ones that's so much greater than eating the most delicious fast food. There's something more—you're happier with this food.

And it all comes down to planning and preparation and habits. You don't get that happiness if you didn't go to the market when you planned.

Everyone is busy. Whether you work full time or have kids or both, we're all overcommitted and we're all looking for ways to build a better quality of life through simplifying and taking better care of ourselves. And it really starts at the most basic essence—feeding oneself.

We need to feed ourselves in a way that's nourishing on every level.

- Nourishing in that we get the nutrients we need
- Nourishing in that we like it
- And nourishing in that it feeds our goals and who it is we said we want to be

Clients sometimes say, "I can't be perfect all of the time." But it's not about being perfect, and it's not about a fear-based lifestyle. You can have lots of foods to choose from. It really comes down to having quality food on hand, and then choosing not to eat crap.

RULES AND HABITS ARE FREEDOM

I think of a diet as a series of rules. Josh calls them habits, but it's the same thing. If you have a series of rules or habits in place, the diet never ends. A vegetarian will never have to decide whether to order hamburger or steak. It doesn't come up; a vegetarian won't even look at that part of the menu.

When I go to a restaurant, I don't even look at the pasta and the macaroni and cheeses and the pizzas. It's not like it's me fighting myself and working so hard to not eat it; it's just that I have a rule that says I do better when I don't eat white-flour products.

When we have rules or habits in place, it takes away a struggle. The rules are the freedom.

And essentially, your diet, your plan means having some basic rules or habits in place. The rules are not to make you feel deprived in some way. It's exactly the opposite—these are your ticket to freedom. Once those habits are in place, everything else disappears. You don't ever have to struggle about food again.

We all have our own rules—I don't tell a lie; I don't steal. This is how society operates—rules make everything work. It's not bad to have those rules. We don't think, "Oh my God, I hate that we have to stop at stop signs. I just want to roll through the stop signs." I'm happy we have a rule to stop at stop signs so I know what everyone else is doing. It's the rules that make driving on our busy roads even possible.

We use rules like food prep on Sunday, wash and clean the vegetables as soon as you get home, always have water with you, make the diet the priority. Working out is very important also, but fat loss is determined by what you eat, which is really what *Fat Loss Happens on Monday* is all about.

This lifestyle gets easier as you abide by your rules or habits. And these habits make it easier to become the person you say you want to become. Every habit you have either moves you closer to or farther from becoming that person.

JOSH AND FAT LOSS HAPPENS ON MONDAY

Josh and I met in person for the first time at a gathering of fitness authors in Florida. That night at dinner was like we had known each other forever—Josh just plopped down and we started talking. Josh's enthusiasm and passion for fitness was so clear and we connected immediately.

Josh really gets that everyone has the same struggles, because food and diet and exercise and bodies and self-esteem—it's all messy stuff. And that's where Josh and I really connect, that we want to help people. We want to give people freedom from some of these struggles.

It's the clarity of Josh's writing and Josh's deep desire to help people that made me want to be involved in this project. How much Josh cares comes through in all of his writing.

Josh is awesome, and his writing is really good. The reason his ideas make a difference for people is because his plan is clear, and it's not fancy wizardry. Josh meets people where they are, and leads them by the hand—"Let's put one foot in front of the other and walk forward, and it's okay to freak out, and we're going to keep going."

Fat Loss Happens on Monday is a book that's going to lovingly hold your feet to the fire. You're asking for results, and you're going to get a realistic and manageable plan, wrapped up in eleven food habits to help you toward your goal. You'll also get great workouts, but the magic of *Fat Loss Happens on Monday* is putting the nutrition habits first. Monday is just a metaphor for first—before you get into your workouts, you'll have already done your food planning, shopping, and preparation.

The path is very clear. And it lets you know you can do it, and here's how. It's caring and it's hopeful. I really believe if people follow the *Fat Loss Happens on Monday* program and implement the habits, they'll get results and they can be their own superstar.

Valerie Waters

Creator of the ValSlide & Red Carpet Ready

INTRODUCTION

One of the turning points of my life and my career as a coach was flying to Granville, Ohio, to join the John Powell Discus Camp at Denison University. I was at a standstill as a thrower and I decided, wisely, that I needed to return to the beginner's mind. The road to true mastery involves those moments where you empty the cup so there's a chance to refill it. I was 35, and I had a bed check every night by a counselor and a bang at the door when it was time to get up in the morning.

It was camp and I camped.

This still stands as one of the best decisions of my life. I was beaten down, melted, and reforged. Moreover, in the years since, my annual visit to Ohio has become a staple of my life, my family's lives, and a reunion of friends, family and people who should be family.

Not every camp or day at camp has been idyllic. In fact, one story stands out that so shaped the rest of my career and my vision of my impact on these few years on earth that I revisit it every time I think I'm finished with my life's work.

We share our camp cafeteria with a cheerleader group. Honestly, the bulk of them are perfectly fine, but that simple truth doesn't make a very good story. This story is no reflection of the excellent staff who have been nothing but kind and gracious to me and my friends and family.

I think I covered my bases here so far. Now...the rest of the story, as Paul Harvey used to say.

Basically, these are several hundred young girls in matching uniforms, matching hair and face glitter. The young ladies in our camp are throwers, certainly beautiful young women, but built on the large and powerful side. In the lunch line, one of the cheerleaders walked up to one of our girls and asked the high school female thrower—
“Are you guys like a fat camp?”

When I heard about this interaction, I was reminded why most people hate high school. The young woman who was asked if she belonged to a fat camp was an all-state volleyball player and received her education for free because of her athletic talents. Yet, she has self-esteem issues. She is tall, strong and muscular, but she doesn't fit into the mold of the 'miss teeny bikini' model of the glamour magazines.

Did she go to her prom? I don't know, but I would be proud to call her my daughter.

With perfect timing, a huge zit would have emerged on the cheerleader's nose. But that's not what happened. Rather, our young cheerleader with her perfect smile marched off to her perfect life.

I was reminded of my father's favorite curse, besides *Pardon my French, but are you a stoop?*—short for stupid. He would say to someone who was greedy, “I hope you get everything you want.”

In my experience, getting everything you want is a quick ticket to unhappiness.

I also didn't know until years later that both of my daughters were standing next to these high school girls. Kelly and Lindsay spent time with me at Discus Camp in Ohio in a Daddy Day Care situation for up to three weeks a year. Lindsay commented on what turned out to be the final bit of irony—the cheerleader's plate was filled with all yellow food: mac and cheese, chicken or chicken-ish nuggets and French fries.

The throwers all had a protein serving with vegetables and a salad.

There's a genetic roulette. Some people are born fast and some are born tall. If you're over seven feet tall and grew up in the United States, you probably played basketball even if you wanted to be a basket maker. I can't teach you to make the Olympic final in the 100 meters, and I can't figure out how to get you over seven feet tall.

I also can't make you the cover girl of a fitness or fashion magazine. We can do wonders today with makeup and Photoshop, but we can only go so far. A five-foot-tall cheerleader with a wasp waist is going to look different than a six-foot volleyball girl.

That is all true and that is all good. And it only takes one statement to knock the pillars out from under this truth: *Are you guys like a fat camp?*

Raising daughters, working with female high school athletes and helping with a large number of women in various training situations has made me realize we need a better vision than we're usually offered when working with women.

That's why I like Josh's work so much. It's reasonable. And it's always gracious.

Gracious is probably not the word you expected. It means a lot of things, but what I see in Josh's work is this: kindness. It's reasonable, yes, but it's also kind. The workouts are doable. The goals are reasonable. The path is clear.

And all of this is done with kindness.

Maybe our cheerleader friend asked this in a spirit of kindness and caring and simply didn't understand decorum as well as she needed to. Perhaps, on the other extreme, she was a cruel, evil, awful person.

Frank Layden, the former Utah Jazz basketball coach, always used this wonderful line: "So, I asked my player if he was stupid or apathetic. He said, 'Coach, I don't know and I don't care.'"

I'm leaving the door open for multiple interpretations of the young lady's intent.

There are other stories, of course, and the readers can probably add dozens, if not hundreds, of other stories, too.

One woman told me she was 'so fat, her husband wouldn't touch her.'

A college girl at Utah State liked to stand near heavier girls in the locker room and lament about being so fat, even though she was quite lean. She told her friends, "I like to see how uncomfortable they get."

It's all true. There's nothing—and I can't repeat this enough—nothing concomitantly more public and more private than our relationships with our bodies. Our desire to lean out here and pump up there drives some of us to the edge of life, while others try anything reasonable or unreasonable. For some, money, energy and pain seem to have no boundaries.

We can do better.

We must do better.

Let's get started with a reasonable approach to fat loss. Let's start with a reasonable way of eating and training. Let's leave a legacy of dignity of the human person and respect for ourselves and others.

We can do this.

CHAPTER 1

FAT LOSS IS EASIER AND SIMPLER THAN YOU'VE BEEN TOLD

The way you've been doing your fat-loss workouts and diet has been making it harder and more complicated to lose weight.

But it's not your fault.

Virtually everything you see and hear is setting you up to have a harder time losing fat.

The way we talk about fat loss makes it harder, the kinds of workouts we do are designed to make it harder, and the kinds of diets we're taught to think are cool and trendy are all really hard.

It keeps going this way: We do everything the hard way. And we just keep getting older, and we get more responsibilities. Things keep piling up, and losing stubborn fat and getting the body we want starts to almost seem impossible.

But it's *totally* possible. It's exactly the opposite of what you've been told.

The rules have changed. The big revolution in fat loss from 10 years ago saying we needed big movements, circuits, and interval training created its own set of problems.

Workout intensity is a power tool that's been unbelievably overused. We're going to show you exactly when, and exactly how often it should be used for optimum fat loss.

When you use a smart fat-loss system, you get to have the easiest and fastest fat loss possible. Smart, simple, repeatable fat loss requires a different program, and a different mindset—both of which you're going to discover in this book.

A PLAN FOR MAKING FAT LOSS EASY

Going hard all the time is a recipe for failure, for quitting, getting hurt, and losing motivation, or it can be just as simple as fat loss steadily getting harder.

We know we need to cycle all of this.

The trick is, what do you do during the easy workout phases to get results?

Too many easy workouts mean backsliding on your results, getting fatter, and having a harder time.

Fat Loss Happens on Monday is made up of medium and easy workouts that make fat loss doable in real life.

It sounds radical, but it's actually pretty simple if you know what to do.

At its most basic—

1. **We need to make really small changes in food so they stick long term.**
2. **We need a smart plan for getting stronger.**

Making small changes in food that stick long term comes before the workouts. The biggest reason you don't need to do killer workouts is that for fat-loss results, the workouts are secondary to the food intake.

But number two—most people aren't doing a workout that will provide results over the long term.

Most people are doing a workout that *feels* like it gets results. Really, when you leave the gym drenched in sweat and everything is exhausted and you're sore the next day... doesn't it just feel like that should get results?

Workouts that throttle you are sexy. The best-selling workout in the United States today is a DVD set that's five really hard, 60- to 90-minute workouts each week. It looks cool; it sounds cool. It makes people feel tough.

It's the same thing with in-person workout trends. It's all 'hardcore,' 'elite,' 'bootcamp.' Mostly it's running people around until they're totally throttled. It makes people feel like they're doing a hard workout. Like I said, it's sexy. People buy sexy.

But you know what's sexier than that? *Actually getting results.*

There's a great quote by Tony Blauer: "A really bad idea, embraced by millions of people, is still a really bad idea."

In other words, just because it's cool and trendy right now, doesn't mean it's a good idea.

The truth is going to shock you. The program we're using is radically different, and much easier than what you've been 'sold' it takes to get fat-loss results.

This program doesn't exist because I set out to make an easy workout program. This program exists because I set out to create a program that actually works in the real world.

The best-selling DVD set I was telling you about breaks down like this—

Every four weeks—

20 Hard Workouts

I'm not going to lie to you. If you can fit it into your schedule and do it, it works. It just won't work for very long. At best, you'll crash and burn in about two months.

***Fat Loss Happens on Monday* works like this—**

Every four weeks—

Two Hard Workouts

Six Medium Workouts

Four Easy Workouts

We're talking 60% fewer total workouts. And 90% fewer hard workouts. That's a lot less hard work.

And you can get even better fat-loss results. All it takes is for you to make your food preparation the most important 'workout' of the week. Then your actual in-the-gym workouts just need to get you a little stronger over time, and they need to change at pre-planned, regular intervals.

CHAPTER 2

PARK-BENCH WORKOUTS

My former boss Archbishop George Niederauer has a wonderful way with words. He is the most well-read person I know, and he has this interesting way of simplifying the most complex things into bite-size pieces for the rest of us. He often speaks about two kinds of prayers, the kind where you ask for something and the kind where you just talk with God. A few years ago, he wrote an article about this concept and gave us a simple image to understand it.

In the Tale of Two Benches, Archbishop Niederauer describes sitting on a bus bench. When one waits for a bus, one is filled with expectations. The G bus should be here at 8:11. If I look up at 8:11 and don't see it, I begin to panic. At 8:13, my day is ruined. We want to get off this bench and get going somewhere else! The bus should be here now. Wait...now!

The park bench, however, is a time to sit and listen and watch. We wait for nothing. The local squirrels that showed up yesterday may or may not be here today. And that is okay. We don't call the city squirrel police if they don't show up when we want them to.

Both of the benches in our example might look exactly the same. You might find the same wood, the same metal, and the same back rests in both of our benches, yet our

expectations will be radically different. Niederauer uses this image of the bus bench to describe those times we ask—demand—things from God, and the park bench describes those times we're communing with those things in the universe greater than us.

The approach most athletes take to competition is the bus-bench image.

“On Saturday, the 26th, I will defeat all who show up, break all my personal records, find perfection in all I do, and meet the person of my dreams.”

This, my friends, is the G bus of sports preparation and of life. It's a tough model to follow. As I look over my 45 years in organized competition, I can only think of a few times when the G bus showed up on schedule.

For most athletes most of the time, and for most of us for most of our lives, the park-bench model is much more appropriate. When you compete, or simply train, take time to enjoy the view, breathe the air, and don't worry about the squirrels! Whatever comes along during your competition or training should be viewed through the lens of wonder and thanks.

My great joy in competing in Highland Games has a lot to do with the friendships made, the variety of events, and the party atmosphere. Highland Games athletes just

don't make fools of themselves complaining about a bad performance. The events make a fool of you!

To get a park-bench mentality, you have to realize that at best, very few competitions are going to be perfect. In addition, when the stars arrange for you to have those perfect competitions, you had better not try to mess things up with a lot of extra energy—you just have to let it go.

The park bench also helps with the 20% of competitions where things go all wrong. If you can keep your wits and feed a squirrel or two, you may just salvage this competition.

By the way, nothing frightens your competition more than a serene smile on your face; they'll think you're up to something!

I fully believe that life is a competition. There's just enough Darwin in me, as well as a master's degree in history, to believe that life is tenuous at best, and your survival, without any hint of irony, reflects on your fitness. Without worrying about hyperbole, I feel this is the 'why' of lifetime fitness. Your survival might depend on your fitness, so why are you slamming your head against a wall to get it?

Train hard, but enjoy the competition. Compete hard, but enjoy your training.

One final key point must be kept in mind at all times: NEVER judge a workout or a competition as good or bad solely on that single day.

I often tell new throwers, "Sorry, you just are not good enough to be disappointed."

Judging one's worth as an athlete over the results of single day is just idiocy...and will lead to long-term failure. Epictetus, the Roman Stoic philosopher, tells us, "We must ever bear in mind that apart from the will there is nothing good or bad, and that we must not try to anticipate or to direct events, but merely to accept them with intelligence."

If that is too complex, I have a favorite story.

A farmer had a horse and a son. One day, the horse died. All the neighbors said, "Oh, how bad."

The farmer said, "We'll see."

The next day, the neighbors got together and bought the farmer a new horse. They all said, "That's a good thing."

The farmer said, "We'll see."

The following day, the horse threw the son while trying to break the horse. The son broke his arm. The neighbors all said, "Oh, how bad."

The farmer said, "We'll see."

The next day, the army came to the town and drafted all the young men, save the son with a broken arm. They all died in the first battle. The neighbors said to the farmer, "Oh, how good it was for your son to have a broken arm."

The farmer said, "We'll see."

What does this all mean? First, let things happen and don't judge them as good or bad. Enjoy the opportunity to train and eat well.

Second, find yourself a community of people who support your goal—and be sure you support your goals, too. Do my ideas work in sports and life? We'll see.

So, what would be an example of a bus-bench workout? To be honest, it's the kind of thing most people want. Call it a program, a cookie-cutter approach, or a training manual, but it's that long page after page after page of 'do this' and 'do that' that most people want.

I have done bus-bench programs that have names like—

- Bigger Arms in Two Weeks
- Two Weeks to a Tighter Tummy
- Six-Week Soviet Squat Program

And the list goes on and on. Generally, bus-bench programs have a built-in time, like two to 12 weeks, and if you follow the directions, you should be changed in that time. If not, the program FAILED. Complain away.

I recommend that everyone should have about two bus-bench programs a year. Clarence Bass, a bodybuilder noted for his lean physique and who is known as Mr. Ripped, continues to schedule an annual photo shoot to insist that he has a focus each year to, well, get on the bus. After age 70, it's still working well for him. Many people use January as a time to refocus, and also the weeks leading up to bikini season. I applaud the effort.

The issue I have with most people is that they turn all 52 weeks of the year into the bus-bench mentality. People on internet forums discuss this all the time, how whatever is the latest and greatest is the right answer. Open one of your deep dark cabinets and look at the miracle pills, goos, and patches that have been touted as the answer to all your problems.

I have survived high carb, low carb, high fat, low fat, high protein, and low protein diets, only to learn that most diets are simply the bus-bench mentality at play. And please listen—this is important: Two weeks on the Atkins Induction diet honestly works miracles for some people.

As I often state, it worked so well, I stopped doing it.

Here's the thing to remember. If you faithfully tried 500 calories a day and an injection of beef plasma every day for a few weeks and you failed to achieve your goals, BLAME the program! If it was a success, refocus for a while, readjust your priorities, but don't celebrate with two-dozen doughnuts. One dozen is plenty.

I can't emphasize this enough: The bus-bench approach to training and diet is RIGHT. It's absolutely right about twice a year. Like the old joke about a broken clock being exactly right twice a day, a focused, disciplined attack on a goal is a great thing to do. Just not all the time!

Every aspect of life and fitness is best served by a healthy mix of bus-bench and park-bench mentality. I'm convinced that the bulk of one's time should be spent doing park-bench work.

In this book, Josh outlines a clear park-bench mentality to training most of the time. For many of us, this is difficult, as we tend to want to engage our bodies and train like an army preparing for battle.

There's a time for those hard workouts. There's a time for those strict diets or ways of eating. It's just not all the time.

CHAPTER 3

EPISTEMOLOGY: TO THE EVIDENCE, NO MATTER WHERE IT LEADS

How do we find the truth? How do we know what we know? These are questions that don't often pop up in books written by strength coaches, but if we're going to cast off the ropes of mistruths and misunderstandings about health and fitness, we have to answer some tough questions.

Listen, you bought the book; I'm not selling you anything else. I don't have a supplement or an 'act now' or anyone standing behind the curtain. How do we know... what we know?

Epistemology is a great word to use at a party. You simply need to stand there with drink in hand, monocle around the eye, and ask, "You make a fine point, my young friend; what is the epistemology of your evidence?"

This will drive away beautiful women and make all the men roll their eyes. This, in fact, is how I kept myself single for so long. However, there's a great value to the word, and it applies to every field. It's the study of how you know what you know.

I spent my undergraduate years trying to balance my academic life with my athletic career. Fortunately, I had a fine group of mentors who understood the needs of the

intercollegiate athlete. Athletics never excused me from class work, but it sure made me stand out when I took philosophy classes. I may have been one of the few philosophy students in history to wear a letter jacket.

But I had excellent professors, and among them was an Indian scholar named Dr. Kulkarni.

Dr. Kulkarni had a way of explaining a 4,000-year-old story that kept us both transfixed and wondering how we would handle it on a test. After a few weeks, the names of all the characters would mysteriously slide into a Sanskrit jumble...the basic storylines seemed to meet at some points, then leap into completely unexpected directions. Studying for this class on Far Eastern philosophy after reviewing the breadth of the Hindu canons seemed daunting to the whole class.

A group of us formed a study group and met in one of the school's library rooms one Tuesday evening. We began when one student burst out with a monologue discussing a central concept Dr. Kulkarni discussed nearly every lecture. The student was fascinated by it and wanted our insights. The concept of Dr. Kulkarni's 'droot' really made

him interested in continuing with the follow-up course the next term.

“Droot?”

The other students exchanged glances. This was unsettling—we had never heard Dr. Kulkarni discuss the ‘droot.’

“Sure, yes,” he told us, “he talks about it every day... the ‘droot.’

“Droot? Droot?”

“Oh, the truth!”

Dr. Kulkarni’s accent often made a word or two hard to fathom.

“He is talking about the truth!”

At that moment, the student completely changed his demeanor and explained that he knew the truth from his faith, and that his faith’s prophet had explained everything and that was final for him.

In one moment, he went from excited scholar to stiff fundamentalist. For him, the case was closed; the book was finished. He was fascinated by the search for ‘droot,’ but he had no interest in looking for Dr. Kulkarni’s truth.

“A man gives a diram to each of four persons. The Persian said he would spend his on an angur, while the Arab said he would spend his on an inab. A Turk said he would spend his on an uzum, and a Greek said he would spend his diram on an istabil.

These people began to fight with one another.

The angur, the inab, the uzum, and the istabil are all grapes.”

~JALAL-UDDIM RUNI, MASNAVI

How do we know the ‘droot’ of fitness, health, strength, and conditioning?

I often get challenged about how I know that this or that works. Frankly, most of us in the strength and conditioning field have fallen into saying something akin to

‘I don’t know.’ When people use phrases like the Black Box, to explain the process of how one grows after lifting or loses fat after training, I remind them of what J.R.R. Tolkien, the author of *The Hobbit*, said about the use of the term Celtic.

“Celtic of any sort is...a magic bag, into which anything may be put, and out of which almost anything may come... Anything is possible in the Celtic Twilight.”

How do I know how my training systems work? I love falling back on this idea of the Magic Bag of Tolkien. We put anything in and almost anything comes out. I have you sprint and lift and soon you look better. Cheers to you and me.

It’s funny to think about this so many years later, but my economics professor once stood at the podium and waved his hands to explain Adam Smith’s notion of the invisible hand that drives capitalism. Every field seems to have this moment of hand-waving.

Recently, Chip Conrad of BodyTribe told me how the *South Park* television show used this same hand-waving to explain why the Underpants Gnomes (yes, I just wrote Underpants Gnomes) stole underpants to make a profit.

1. Steal underpants
2. ?
3. Make a profit

How we know programs work or don’t work is going to look a lot like the second point in the grand scheme of the Underpants Gnomes. At times, and honestly that should read most of the time, we simply have no idea how it happens. We just know it happens.

Frankly, I think it’s good enough to know that lifting makes people stronger and we can move on, but it’s fascinating to discuss.

Robb Wolf, author of *The Paleo Solution*, offers a concept that really handles the miracle of how doing this with diet and that with exercise works so well: cascades.

Like a snowball gaining size as it rolls down a hill, certain food choices or mistakes can have a cascading effect on the entire system.

As I learned years ago, there are chemicals that in small doses can do wonders for you. In larger doses, they kill you. Choose wisely.

I know from personal experience that a maximum deadlift can take weeks to recover from the hit of the few seconds of pulling the weight off the ground. High-repetition back squats seem to swell up my whole body and the weight stays on for years. Overtraining breaks me. I know all of this, yet I can't always explain how I know it.

From my years of teaching moral theology, I use a simple system for discussing how we choose values. Values, in my classroom, are simply things we value. I realize this seems redundant, but if you think about it and have the opportunity to discuss it with someone else, it makes more sense.

I recently had a conversation with two young men who were convinced they needed to date women with six-pack abs. It was at that moment I realized we valued different things in life. I'm not judging, just observing.

So, how do we discern our values? Generally, I think there are six ways: authority, deductive logic, sense experience, emotion, intuition, and real science.

Without even thinking about it, most of us effortlessly flow from each of these ways to another. When I came out with my book *Never Let Go*, it occurred to me that I could easily re-sort the collection into the various subheadings of *Authority, Deductive Logic, Sense Experience, Emotion, Intuition, and Real Science*. A training lifetime rubs against each of these methods.

Let's look at them.

Authority is probably my personal favorite for my training. When Dick Notmeyer told me to snatch and clean & jerk three days a week, and to front squat and go overhead two days a week, that plan is exactly what I did. "Dick said

so" took away all the thought process. Authority, obviously, is a top-down approach to things.

I truly enjoy this. Some of the best successes of my life are when I trust someone else to plan things for me and I just dive in. Examples of this in my career include—

- Throwing under the guidance of Ralph Maughan at Utah State;
- Playing football at any level;
- Doing Alwyn Cosgrove's *Warp Speed Fat Loss* program.

These were all successful for me. I have my own authority programs, like the *Big 21*, where I hand out a spreadsheet with every lift for every day of the program, *Mass Made Simple*, a six-week bulking program with every lift for every day of the program, and a few others. When my athletes follow these, good things happen because, well, I said so!

The authoritative model can often be the most reasonable. Having your own personal mentor is nice (Yoda, Gandalf, Dumbledore, Merlyn, or Ralph Maughan), as you can just trust the process. When you're told, "Take a day off, you look tired," you might take a day because you're tired. If someone has walked this path before, there's a chance he already knows where the pitfalls, traps, and boogiemens are hiding.

The authoritative model reflects the notion of regression better than most of the other models, too. The best and brightest coaches, from John Wooden to 'name the best coach you know,' will all insist on the fundamentals long after you're convinced you know the fundamentals.

I'm telling you to try planks and get back to the basic movements because I have regenerated my career several times doing planks and the basics. Yes, it's hard to hear that the basics are the key because we all love the new and groovy and exciting and secret, but success is rarely found in the exotic.

Basic and boring wins.

Deductive logic can be maddening to define, but in the most general sense, it's the process of reasoning from general statements. Oddly, it works well most of the time. It can be as simple as what I did to become a discus thrower. When I was about nine, I went to the USA-USSR track meet in Berkeley. When I saw the throwers, I noted that—

All the throwers are big and muscular.

All the throwers are very fast.

All the throwers do these interesting movements called techniques.

To be one of them, it seemed, I should get bigger and faster and learn how to throw correctly!

Josh does a nice job of deductive logic with his fat-loss website, where he often outlines a celebrity's training and diet program. He then points out the consistent use of using food logs and basic training moves.

In college, we had the whole family of syllogisms to use and play with in class (Aristotle is a man. All men are mortal. Aristotle is mortal.) but generally people understand this method without all the fuss.

If we have the basic facts, this is an easy method. The problem in the field of strength and conditioning is that we don't always have all the facts. Muscle magazines often push supplements and training programs showing bodybuilders or fitness models who might never have done the workout or taken the product, but will have taken a lot of products only available from people with sunglasses in back rooms. Fourteen-year-old Billy in Nebraska will literally put his health at risk trying to do the arm day of his hero, Mr. Greater Galaxy.

Recently, I gave a talk to the strength coaches of the professional basketball teams of North America. It turns out one can get paid to play basketball. Who knew? I wonder if they're interested in a middle-aged, six-foot power forward.

The problem with basketball (among other things, trust me) is that for years—almost half a century—the sport ignored strength training. I had a friend who told me he worried that lifting would mess up his shot. He was a back-up center at our high school and, thank God, he didn't let training get in the way of his two-point-a-game average.

Yes, sarcasm is just part of what you get from me.

By ignoring lifting, basketball coaches found themselves in a situation where they now are flooded with commercial and personal enterprises of 'do this' and 'do that,' from machines to large bouncing balls to plastic wraps. They have no shared history about what works and what's pure idiocy.

By ignoring strength training for so long, they struggle with reasonableness. The athletes float off to all kinds of trainers, positive and negative, without any ability to say, "The best have been doing X and I too need to do X."

This is the reason deductive logic is so important in this field. It allows us to experiment, but not go too far off the mark.

Without any foundation, it's very difficult to regress. In other words, without the basics and fundamentals of a traditional strength-training platform, it's difficult to go back when injuries, stagnation, or mere off-season issues arise. As a player ages, it's nice to be able to outline a series of regressive movements that will keep him in the game.

But without the tradition, one can't regress.

Basketball will be an interesting study in deprivation. Without the benefit of a tradition in strength training, the very definition of deprivation, we can now observe the sport and coaches attempting to catch up.

Sense experience, too, can be dangerous. This is anything we learn from our senses: taste, smell, touch, see, and hear. Montaigne, the great French author of the sixteen century, gives us some ideas in his great work *Essays*, which simply means attempts in English. After grading thousands of essays in my teaching career, trust me, *attempts* is a far better idea than anything else one can use.

Honestly, a sentence starts with a capital letter and I stand by that no matter what my students write.

Montaigne's motto was *What do I know?* He felt humans would fail in the quest to find certainty and that we have to experience things. With a smile on my face, I remember his firsthand account of being beaten up in a street fight, as he decided to find out, firsthand, what it would feel like to be hit. It hurts.

I can be honest that my journey in strength and conditioning has been no less than Montaigne's leap into a street fight. I can discuss the pros and cons of many programs as I leaped into them, bloodied my face, and came out the wiser. People have asked me many times if my two-year attempts at Nautilus and CrossFit were bad. No. In fact, both experiences opened up some great questions in my head—and some answers—about the role of strength and conditioning.

We can improve on minimal work, but only for so long. We can also learn a lot about human movement by learning and doing a lot of different things, but it's going to move us away from our goals unless our goal is simply to move a lot.

I think one of the things that makes me a reasonable coach are these attempts. I know what it's like to wake up at night with sore joints and a level of body stiffness that demands some intervention from the medicine cabinet. Sometimes the route to reasonableness demands a lot of detours and email messages.

Once again, to quote Ralph Maughan, it's fairly easy to follow this dictum, 'Be reasonable; do it my way,' but sometimes we just have to taste the blood in our mouths. Then I can turn to you and say, "Don't get punched in the mouth."

Sense experience might be a door into understanding regression and, perhaps, deprivation. Getting into a pick-up basketball game with the best in the field will highlight every weakness you have as a player. The universe will scream to you, "Practice the fundamentals!"

You will also become very aware that your genetic gifts may have been deprived in your ability to dominate a game of pure vertical.

Emotion might not work in this discussion as well as the other concepts, but in discussions of what we value, this shows up a lot. It can be explained as the heart flutter we get when we think we're right about something. Most of us have experienced that odd urge toward another person that simply can't be put into words. Joseph Campbell described this as the 'urge of the organs toward each other.' Sure, it can be love, lust, and amore, but it's also the way many people make decisions about God and country and family. Don't confuse me with the facts.

Whenever I feel like I'm caught up in something, I stop for a moment and review what's going on. This is how fads in strength and conditioning come into play. When we see others marching along this new path, perhaps we have this fear of being left behind so we join in. I honestly believe emotions play a huge role in dietary errors, missteps, and lapses. I have been candid before about tears running down my cheeks while deep in a very strict diet, as my response to food could only be described as emotional.

In schools today, we reward kids with candy for turning in their homework. Chocolate is given to show love several times a year, and cake is what we eat when we celebrate a birthday. By tying food to events, we get an emotional hit. It's sometimes good—Thanksgiving and turkey is a great example—and sometimes it's bad.

If we see food as a reward, food is going to be an issue. If we begin to value cakes, sweets, and treats as part of the qualities we have as a person, it's going to be hard to unpack that later with a good training program.

When one finds that moment of 'yes, this is it,' it often comes after some frustration at trying things logically and linearly. The problem, if one wishes to call it a problem, with the emotional approach to learning is unpacking it for the next generation. Standing in front of a group

of young warriors and telling them the approach you're demanding is the best approach because it makes your heart go pitter-pat might be the ticket to a new job.

Regression is difficult with emotions, as anyone who has ever had an enflamed heart that cooled will tell you. Of course, the heart grows fonder when deprived, so the strength coach can only offer so much in the matters of love.

Intuition is simply acquiring knowledge without reason. When Luke is lining up to blast the Death Star, the voice of Obi-wan tells him, "Use the Force, Luke." Like emotion, we can't always justify decisions based on intuition.

In the teaching of kettlebells, we often discuss the *Aha!* moment when a drill lights up a person's face with complete understanding. *That's it!* seems to go beyond any ability to use words to explain the insight. Science is filled with the stories of these *Eureka!* moments where everything suddenly comes together.

Dick Fosbury attacked the high jump bar backward and revolutionized the sport. L. Jay Silvester went to his backyard and let his leg hang out a bit in the discus, threw 20 feet farther, and changed discus throwing forever. Bill Koch, the world champion cross-country skier, saw a skater pass him by on a lake and thought he would try that on cross-country skis. The impact forced the sport into two different divisions to deal with this new method.

Reverse-engineering insights like these is nearly impossible. Sherlock Holmes gives us this great skill in *The Adventure of the Cardboard Box*, where Holmes reads Watson's thoughts by watching his eyes. But for us mere mortals, we sometimes just have to enjoy this illuminating insight and be happy that words don't always tell the whole story. I think in the long run, this method is closely allied with authority. Unpacking that *aha* might take awhile, but it's what makes great coaches better than the rest of us.

When we get to *real science*, things get interesting. Greg Gensel, who has been head track and field coach at Utah

State University since 1988, told me, "No program has ever been proved to be more effective than DeLorme's."

I argued that we all know we need to increase load and decrease reps to continue to grow beyond the DeLorme Protocol.

"Right," Greg added, "but no one has proved that this has worked better."

He then explained the issues and problems with setting up a scientific study with enough test subjects, enough follow-up, and enough proof to support what DeLorme and Watkins were able to do with polio victims and WWII soldiers.

Certainly, what we do in the weightroom is right...right?

We see the same issue on the diet and nutrition side of things. We can't even get a roomful of experts to agree on what's a good breakfast, or even if we should eat breakfast. Why? There's research that tells us coffee is good, coffee is bad, breakfast is good, or breakfast is bad. Be sure to eat fruit, but not fructose—the sugar in fruit.

Huh?

Exactly.

We know that lifting weights does wonderful and marvelous things for us, but the devil, according to the real science, is in the details.

In my previous works, I've tried to note that the key to true strength training is twofold.

First, ensure the athlete doesn't have any gaps in any movement—don't miss any basic fundamental movements—and then second, be at some standard at each and every movement. If you're strong in every movement, your issues are not in the weightroom. We might need to assess a lot of things to figure out your problem, but the weightroom can be scratched off that list.

"The truth is like a lion. You don't have to defend it. Let it loose. It will defend itself."

Saint Augustine was talking about something besides fat loss for women, but the point stands well in our discussion.

Figuring out these ways of knowing involves one additional step, and here I have punished my students with one of my famous formulas. Remember, you can't divide by zero, but you can multiply by zero and that's easy: You always end up with zero.

Facts times interpretation equals truth.

If your facts are true and your interpretation is true, I think you have a truth.

If your facts are false, but your interpretation is true, I think you don't have a truth.

If your facts are true, but your interpretation is false, I think you don't have a truth.

If both your facts and interpretation are false, I think you don't have a truth.

Position one is where I try to get to on most things. Say I read something from the 1920s, and it's a concept that stands the test of time. I apply it to my athletes and, like magic, it works today.

Positions two and three are where we find much of the advertising in the fitness world. I remember a guy selling me a bottle of chromium picolinate, telling me that a college study found it (and it's always this phrase) 'better than steroids.' I knew the study. These guys also trained four days a week with a combination of Olympic lifting and powerlifting and gained lean body mass. Most people gain LBM lifting weights...especially, as the study forgot to mention, off-season football players coming in after three months off. People who take time off and then train, increase lean body mass.

I don't care how many drops of magic formula you add, it won't be as important as all the rest. Make sure the facts and the interpretation are true.

Position four is the bottom-feeding mess of some of the fitness industry. I've been sucked into this in my past with any number of things and I can admit being a fool. I'm trying to get over it. Does anyone need my bottles of Horny Goat Weed?

It comes down to this: I am not dumb. Nor do I think the legions of coaches, trainers, researchers, and scientists are dumb either. There are some basic issues: Cutting into a corpse is an interesting way to learn about anatomy. Cutting into a living being is frowned upon by polite society. The living, breathing, growing organism called 'you' is pretty complex.

And, it's amazing, too.

Nassim Taleb gives us this genius of an insight.

"If humans fight the last war, nature fights the next one. Your body is more imaginative about the future than you are. Consider how people train in weightlifting: the body overshoots in response to exposures and overprepares (up to the point of biological limit, of course). This is how bodies get stronger."

~NASSIM NICHOLAS TALEB,
ANTIFRAGILE: THINGS THAT GAIN FROM DISORDER

I don't worry so much about the how it happens. I'm sure Robb Wolf's insights on cascading will be a great model for many things, especially something like hormones in the body. But I literally have no need to know how all of this (hands are flapping) happens. Our bodies have more imagination than my hands flapping.

I'm convinced we get stronger in two steps, but I am more than willing to be wrong.

Step one is why you hired me: Strength is a skill. It can be learned. There are tricks to lifting more weight and they are as simple as learning tension and relaxation, learning to wedge under a load, learning to grease the groove and learning that real strength is something that's a practice,

not a single workout. In other words, step one is learning to be strong. It takes a while to learn all the great movements, yet an advanced lifter can become ‘instantly’ stronger by learning this cue or that tension.

Instantly is a funny idea. As Charles Staley told me years ago, saying ‘instantly add an inch to your arm in two weeks’ sells much better than the same phrase without ‘instantly.’ For those of us who have experienced that *aha* moment where we failed doing something several times, then were told a new cue and suddenly succeeded, instantly is as close to the magic bag as anything we will experience in life.

Step two is where the real fun begins. Following Robb’s insight, step two might simply be called the hormonal cascade. Now, feel free to drop the hormone part as I am sure it’s much more subtle and complex at the same time.

I’ve seen this several times in my life.

The best example is when I met Dick Notmeyer. I had been training with weights for a long time and I was very strong. As a high school senior, I was stronger than most men I’ve known in my lifetime. I weighed 162 pounds and I was a bench-pressing machine.

Then I met Dick. Four months later, I weighed 202 pounds. That’s 40 pounds in four months, 10 pounds a month, two-and-half pounds a week.

How did that happen?

The math won’t work, by the way. There’s no way I could have consumed enough calories with the calories in/calories out model when I was training so hard, and still exploding in size.

That’s the cascade. In *Mass Made Simple*, I offer a six-week training program with only 14 workouts. Guys who do the program always report back that they made the best progress of their lives.

I also get questions like this: If it’s so good, why don’t you keep doing it?

And I laugh. Obviously, this person has never done the workouts that have pure strength moves, complexes, and

staggeringly high rep squats. You can only do it for six weeks. But if you take it seriously, the body will reward you with a cascade.

When you decide to get stronger to support any other fitness goal, don’t worry about the how. Correct strength training will get you on the right path. Master the movements and keep your reps, sets, and loads reasonable and repeatable.

Then, enjoy that wonderful gift when your body responds by cascading the hormones and all the whatevers that will make you bigger, leaner, stronger, faster, and abler.

Don’t focus on the how. Focus on the do.

This leads us to one of the most important and overarching principles of life.

It’s fine when we don’t know how it works...if it works.

ONE
CHANGE

CHAPTER 4

THE HARD TALK

It's time for us to have the hard talk. Now, I get a little nervous every time I have this talk, because I know it's the most important talk we can have about your body composition. I also get a little nervous because I know that when things aren't going well in terms of your fitness goals, this isn't the talk you want to have. There are some parts of it you're not going to like, but here it is: *It's all about the food.*

If you don't like the way your body looks, the problem is always food. Sometimes it's the *quantity* of food. Sometimes it's the *quality* of food.

But it's always the food.

It's never your genetics. It's never how old you are. It's never that you're a man or a woman. It's never that you aren't doing the newest and craziest workout. It's the food. It's the quantity of food, or it's the quality of food.

Once we get real about this, we can get with the facts: The only game we're playing is the game of trying to figure out how to change the quantity or the quality of food you're eating.

That's the key to make this work in real life.

HOW FOOD REALLY WORKS IN FAT LOSS

When it comes to making food work for fat loss, there are only three variables: quantity, quality, and ratios.

That means quantity of food, quality of food, and the ratio of macronutrients, like proteins, carbohydrates, fat, and alcohol.

When we're dealing with quantity, we'll find a lot of diets based on that. These are any type of diets that use points, blocks, or counting calories. This all boils down to different ways of measuring quantity.

Another way people measure quantity is portion size, like the original *Body for Life* diet where a portion of carbohydrates or a portion of protein is the size of the palm of a hand. This is just another way of measuring quantity.

Right now, it's cool to say quantity doesn't matter or counting calories doesn't work. While this is a slick marketing technique, it's just not the truth.

I'll give you a quick story. I used to do Brazilian jiu jitsu. I often ran into people who were professional fighters. Things really hit home for me when I was hanging out with Marcus, a guy who fought at different weight classes. Marcus was a built dude. He was about 8% bodyfat, which is lean. He was about 8% when he fought at one weight class, and he could fight at a weight class 15 pounds heavier and still be about 8% bodyfat. He was lean in three different weight classes.

I asked him about his diet and how he changed weight classes. The quality of his diet was always the same. He always

ate about the same foods. The only difference between one weight class and another was the quantity of food he ate.

Don't believe anyone who tells you quantity doesn't matter. Of course, quantity matters. In fact, I would argue that the only thing that determines your scale weight is the quantity of food you eat.

If you've got a highlighter, highlight this: *Quantity equals scale weight.*

Any way you measure quantity, whether it's calories, points or palm-of-the-hand portion size, that's what's going to determine your scale weight. For our purposes, we're going to use calories. Look, I know calories aren't a perfect measurement, but they're the best measurement we have, and the most effective way to track quantity for fat loss.

A note about quantity: They've done numerous studies proving that the people who have the hardest time losing weight are the same people who have the hardest time judging and journaling accurate quantity. Said another way, if the scale isn't moving, you should literally weigh and measure your food to recalibrate yourself to how much you're eating.

The next issue is quality.

Now, quality works on multiple levels. When people are eating fast food, they don't need to worry about whether their eggs are free-range. They need to worry about eating less fast food.

There are a lot of different diets that look at quality. Usually, they recommend a certain level of quality and that's the level of quality you're told to eat.

You need to move through *levels* of quality. If you're eating Ding Dongs and Ho Hos every day, that's the thing to handle. You don't need to worry about not eating a turkey sandwich because it isn't what a caveman would eat; you just need to stop eating Ding Dongs.

As your levels of quality improve, the quantity is going to become less important. This is the concept behind a lot of diets with the idea that you don't need to worry about

quantity. It's one of those things where as the quality improves, you're going to get leaner.

I'm going to simplify things a lot. The reality is, quality equals bodyfat percentage.

Whatever the scale weight, your ratio of muscle to fat—how lean you look, how tight you look, how toned you look—is your bodyfat percentage.

Regardless of what the scale says—

Higher bodyfat percentage means more jiggling.

Lower bodyfat percentage means more lean and tight.

Quality is something I coach incrementally. There are different levels to work through, and you don't have the same concerns at one level that you have at the next.

Impacting the quality of food you're eating is so powerful, people have created diets to focus entirely on that. The quality of food you're eating directly impacts your leanness and your tightness or your ratio of muscle to fat. It's one of those things where whatever your scale weight, your ratio of muscle to fat at that scale weight is going to be impacted by the quality.

It really is this simple: *Food quality equals bodyfat percentage.*

As you look at quantity and quality, these both matter a lot. They just affect different things. If your real issue is scale weight, you have to take a look at the quantity.

If your real issue is you're not as lean and tight and toned as you want, you have to take a look at quality. If your issue is both, you have to take a look at both quantity and quality.

FAT LOSS HAPPENS ON MONDAY RESULTS KEY

YOUR SCALE WEIGHT

QUANTITY OF FOOD YOU EAT (CALORIES)

YOUR BODY FAT PERCENTAGE

QUALITY OF FOOD AND HOW STRONG YOU ARE

FEELING FULL

The last of the three variables we look at in terms of food is ratios. This is another area where you'll see diets entirely based on ratios of protein, carbohydrates, and fat.

For example, *The Zone Diet* equally balances protein, carbohydrates, and fat. Atkins and ketogenic dieters eat no carbohydrates—just protein and fat. And in the 1980s, it was all about low fat.

These are all ratio diets. Usually, when they work it's actually because altering the ratios or providing some kind of rules generally lowers the quantity of calories.

In terms of ratios of proteins, carbohydrate, and fats I don't give people a specific rule. In fact, when I worked at a large gym, we used to survey people to give them a macronutrient ratio 'type.' We found both 'carb type' and 'fat type' people. Basically, what that came down to was some people feel full with more fat. Believe it or not, some people actually do feel full with more carbohydrates. Some people feel the most full with a balance. There really are 'carb type,' 'fat type' and 'mixed type' people.

Just ask yourself—

Do you stay full and satisfied after a meal that's mostly carbs?

Do you stay full and satisfied after a meal that's mostly fat?

Do you stay full and satisfied after a meal that's mostly balanced?

In terms of protein, almost everyone feels more full with more protein in the diet.

Right now, with protein and fat being all the rage, you might assume that *everyone* feels more full and gets better results with more fat.

I have actually had clients who were 'carb types' and felt more full with a higher carbohydrate diet. We would rock it. I helped guys get down to 10% bodyfat and women

down to 18% and 19% bodyfat on fairly high carbohydrate diets, as long as they were eating good-quality carbohydrates. This means they were getting all of their carbohydrates from fruits, vegetables, brown rice, and quinoa. It's totally workable.

I don't type people by survey anymore. Now we just take a look at the food journal. We take a look at when they were hungry and after which meals. It's usually pretty simple. We see things like, *Here I had more carbohydrates and I felt more full*, or *Here I had more carbohydrates and I was starving an hour later*.

Things are usually pretty obvious if you look at your food journal, assuming you keep good notes.

There's also a fourth variable, which is timing. A lot of people get into food timing as something they think they should focus on. But timing really isn't an issue. It's one of those things where people talk about what you need to eat or not eat at night or how you need to split food up into six small meals.

This is not something that's been an issue for my clients, and it's not something we're going to work on. It's one of those things where if we get the quantity and the quality correct, you're set. Most of the timing protocols are unnecessarily complicated.

One of my least favorite concepts is six small meals a day. For most people, this just means every single meal they eat is unsatisfying, whereas if you split that into two meals and two snacks, you'd actually get two meals that feel like meals.

I could dig more into this, but all I want to leave you with is that timing is the least important variable in the equation. You want to focus on quantity, quality and the ratios that help you feel the most full, and that's it.

This is the way to think about it—

- *Quantity equals your scale weight.*
- *Quality equals your leanness and tightness.*
- *Ratios equal feeling full.*

CONTEXT AND MINDSET

What we should talk about next is context; it's a mindset thing. Context is not going to change anything we talked about before. It doesn't change what you do. However, by adding new context to it, it changes the *way you do it*. It might change the intensity you have or the level of commitment you apply.

Here's how this works. My specialty is helping people lose stubborn fat. The biggest mistake you can make in losing stubborn fat is to buy into the idea that fat can be stubborn. In fact, there's no such thing as stubborn fat.

Fat is actually the opposite of stubborn. If you think about it from a physiological perspective, fat needs to be maintained. If you don't constantly feed fat, you'll lose it. Fat is like a stray dog. If you keep feeding it, it will stick around forever. If you stop feeding it, it immediately goes away.

One of the things you have to latch onto is that anything making fat appear to be stubborn is a mistake in terms of quantity, quality, or ratio.

Actually, it's just quantity or quality.

There is no stubborn fat.

There's usually an issue with preparation or with the way you're tracking such that you're making an error in quality or quantity. That's why you still have the fat. Once you rectify the issue of getting quality and quantity correct, fat can no longer be maintained and you'll lose it.

This is really the basis for the way I coach everyone. It's in view of that context that I make every recommendation. It may seem like a simple or a small thing. But once you get it, everything becomes very clear.

It really boils down to the fact that the quality of food equals how lean and tight you are, and quantity of food equals scale weight. Anything that's stubborn inside either of these is either too much quantity or too little quality.

If you stop maintaining the excess quantity and stop maintaining the lack of quality, you'll lose fat.

Here's another way to look at it.

If you have more fat than you want, you need to look at what you're doing to maintain the fat and stop doing that. That's really all there is to it. It's exactly that simple and easy.

Actually, 'easy' is probably not the right word, but it is that simple and it is that clear. If you really use this as the context for all of these tools and all of the strategies you've heard so far, you'll have a new access to fat loss that you didn't have before.

CHAPTER 5

REASONABLENESS

Let's just get this out first: I believe that a reasonable way of eating and a reasonable training model trump insanity all the time. What's insanity? This idea that you can eat 500 calories for a few weeks, inject yourself with some monkey plasma, and effortlessly lose fat. Insanity is training yourself to exhaustion for 90 days, taking your picture, and then flopping back to the couch for a few years.

	REASONABLE WORKOUTS	TOUGH TRAINING
REASONABLE EATING	<i>MOST OF THE TIME</i> REASONABLE WORKOUTS AND REASONABLE EATING	<i>PEAKING OR PREP</i> TOUGH TRAINING AND REASONABLE EATING
STRICT DIETING	<i>POST-PARTY TIME</i> STRICT DIETING AND REASONABLE WORKOUTS	<i>EVERY FOUR YEARS... MAYBE?</i> STRICT DIET AND TOUGH TRAINING

In my last few workshops, I've gone to the whiteboard and illegibly scribbled in my scrawl that earned Ds in handwriting at St. Veronica's School, asking these questions.

What's a tough workout?

Dozens of hands go up, dozens of answers.

I truly enjoy this part as we swim from totally random training programs to sports (run a marathon!) to a multitude of DVD programs and the like. There are programs that can kill and programs that have from 16–50% injury rates inside of six weeks. Remember, this is a room of fitness pros and we still think we need to kill a person to make progress.

What's a reasonable workout?

*A few hands go up, a few shy answers like
Even Easier Strength.*

I discuss hand-waving again and again in my writings. It's this side-to-side hand-shaking wiggle we do with both hands, followed by our mouths saying, "You know," and our shoulders shrugging.

With 'reasonable,' sadly, we seem to not know. I argue that reasonable workouts cover all the basic human movements in a repeatable repetition scheme and an appropriate load, while providing plenty of time and energy for corrective work in any and all areas.

Reasonable seems repeatable.

What's a tough diet or tough way of eating?

Most hands go up with everything from pure fasting or protein-drink-only diets to sheer lunacy.

I had a girlfriend who had a three-day diet. Day one she ate seven eggs—that was it for the whole day. Day two, she had seven oranges and day three was seven bananas. She would lose seven pounds doing this. That, my friends, is a tough diet. I would probably find a three-day fast easier, as my blood sugar would go crazy on the fruit days and turn me ravenous.

Oh, on day five? She put on nine pounds.

What's a reasonable diet or reasonable way of eating?

Crickets.

Nothing.

Blank, uncomfortable stares. As a classroom teacher for 34 years, my one fear has always been passing gas during a lecture. As the seminar group stares back at me, I have one of two thoughts: Either I farted or we have a problem.

I checked. It wasn't me.

Seriously, some of the biggest names in the fitness industry won't raise their hands and tell me what is a reasonable way of eating in this age of one million diets.

Years ago at the Olympic Training Center, we were told to focus on three things.

Protein

Vegetables

Clear Water

Is there anything stunning there? Later, Robb Wolf summarized the most complex eating program in the

world (dozens of books by the same author promising all kinds of things, and the problem is always that you don't do it right) with these three memorable lines—

More Protein

More Fiber

More Fish Oil

Please note: I have stolen both of these concepts and I now claim them as my own. Remember, the first time I say something, I'm quoting someone. The second time I say something, I say, "My good friend, fill in the name, always says..."

The third time I say something, I say, "As I always say..."

This is what I remember from my ethics class on the topic of intellectual property.

As I argued in *Mass Made Simple*, I think we know how to eat.

"Honestly, seriously, you don't know what to do about food? Here is an idea: Eat like an adult. Stop eating fast food, stop eating kid's cereal, knock it off with all the sweets and comfort foods whenever your favorite show is not on when you want it on, ease up on the snacking and—don't act like you don't know this—eat more vegetables and fruits.

"Really, how difficult is this? Stop with the whining.

Stop with the excuses. Act like an adult and stop eating like a television commercial. Grow up.

Now, let's get back to the point: Eat like an adult!"

My point here is important: To begin the process of training and eating reasonably, I have to raise my voice, shake my fist, and wake up the world. Reasonableness has been so lost in the field of fitness, strength and conditioning that striving to get someone to train more reasonably has become unusual, odd, strange, and contrarian.

In junior college, I studied paralegal research at Skyline College. My days were filled with the great canon of Western Civilization and long classes on business and criminal law. The two fields intertwined nearly every day. After we discussed the ideals of classic Greeks, I would grab my bag, walk down the hall, and hear about the basic legal standard.

To understand the law, you must first and foremost understand reasonable and reasonableness. I have always thought this definition of the reasonable person by Percy Henry Winfield to be, well, *reasonable*.

“He has not the courage of Achilles, the wisdom of Ulysses or the strength of Hercules, nor has he the prophetic vision of a clairvoyant. He will not anticipate folly in all its forms but he never puts out of consideration that the teachings of experience shows such negligence and so will guard against negligence of others when experience shows such negligence to be common.

He is a reasonable man but not a perfect citizen, nor a ‘paragon of circumspection.’”

That sounds like a lot of people I know.

Reasonableness is not only a pillar in the study of law, but it used to be considered one of the rocks of a person of integrity. Integrity, according to my mom, was being one person all the time no matter what the circumstances. I have been at dinner with Cardinals of the Catholic Church, stars from Broadway, professional athletes, Olympians, and fitness models, yet I strive to follow this simple advice from my mother. Ideally, at my funeral you will all be talking about the same guy in my urn or casket.

Integrity comes from the same root as integer. Like a whole number, integrity asks you to be a whole person. I have found, and this is nothing unusual as billions have done it before me, that being reasonable in your thoughts,

actions, beliefs and approach to life allows you to handle the contradictions, disparities and unpleasanties of living in community.

My college coach, Ralph Maughan, had a sign on his desk: *Be reasonable. Do it my way.*

Coach Maughan, who was drafted by the Detroit Lions, made an Olympic team as a hammer thrower, won the nationals in the javelin, and earned three medals at the Battle of the Bulge, maybe had more reasons to be reasonable, frankly.

Coach Maughan, part of the Greatest Generation, had seen and done things that were glorious and tragic, and he understood life well. His way was usually a pretty good idea.

Earl Nightingale tells us in *Lead the Field*, the audiotape series that changed my life, “*And, to me, reasonableness is another word for integrity: integrity to truth, to the evidence, no matter where it leads...Are you ready to discover ‘through experiment and reflection what course of life will fulfill those powers most completely?’ That’s being true to yourself; that’s integrity; that’s reasonableness.*”

To the evidence, no matter where it leads is the drumbeat of my search for better ways to seek and attain our goals in fitness, health, and sports.

An important caveat: *You probably are not getting ready for the NFL Combine.*

My goal in the eighth grade was to play professional football. The Orange Library had two books that changed my life that year, *The Sword in the Stone* by T. H. White and *7 Days to Sunday* by Eliot Asinof. On Wednesday of the seven days, Asinof talked about an undersized linebacker named Kenny Avery, and his story changed my life. If he could do it, I could do it. Pushups, running, tumbling, the hurdles, the shot put, and the discus became my route to the NFL.

I didn't make it. But I became pretty good at the discus throw.

To prep for football, everything is helpful. I use the concept of Quadrant Two to explain collision sports and collision occupations training systems. The number of qualities needed to play football or to work in special operations is staggering. Moreover, the level you need to be at the minimum in all these qualities is truly stunning. The average high school football player is probably faster, stronger, and better conditioned than anyone you know.

To train QII people, your quiver of training ideas has to be jammed full. Sleds, car pushing, Olympic lifting, wrestling, sprinting, hurdling, stadium steps, and everything else you can think of will help someone prepare for the collision sports.

I use the *Mass Made Simple* program up to twice a year for football players, six weeks of a lot of high-rep squatting, complexes, and upper-body work. Frankly, it can be awful. A high school football player needs to do it perhaps twice a year.

You probably don't. This is the caveat, the warning—the sign that says *No Swimming...Sharks* concerning a reasonable approach to training.

The most popular way to sell programs is to use professional football or special operations (think Navy SEALs) or a rugby player in full pursuit as the image to train most of us. But most of us are not playing pro football. Count the number of professional football players in your immediate circle of friends and family. Few of us will make it to one, and those who do will find this might not be true in 3.2 years.

Most of us need to train very simply, very reasonably. Now having said this, I also work with a lot of football players and people whose jobs involve a lot of collisions. I train them differently for a while, until they get where they need to be. Then, usually around age 27, I train them just like I train anyone else.

The warning is this: Enjoy playing football and watching collision sports. Then, remind yourself of who you are day to day, and train appropriately. That's the truth, and believe me, the truth is a hard thing to find in the fitness industry juggernaut.