

# My Thoughts on After a Workout, Effort, and Growth



## Aftermath

What should you expect to notice after a workout? It depends upon what kind of shape you're in and how much you do in your workout.

For quite a few years, actually ever since the 1990s, I've been doing two sets of each exercise. I had intentions of moving up to 3 sets, but I never really did. But I have now.

My rehab is past, and I've been training three times a week. At first it was two sets of everything and then gradually I moved up to three. Increasing the weight and decreasing reps where necessary on each set has been the goal and it's resulted in new muscular growth.

It wasn't without soreness, and I expected it as the weights got heavier. I didn't want to get injured, so I progressed very gradually. It turned out that training three times a week worked out best. Usually it was back/biceps/forearms on Monday, legs on Wednesday, and chest/shoulders/triceps on Friday. This gave me enough rest between upper body workout, and it was needed because the pulling day on Monday and pushing day on Friday both work deltoids to a great degree. Rear delts were trained on back day because they get worked a lot on the low cable row exercise which is done right before my rear delt exercise. Front and side delts are trained on pushing muscles day.

I use a technique whenever I feel sore or stiff or my joints hurt more than usual. Simply reduce the weight and do the exercise in stricter form with slower reps. When the weights get too heavy it seems that the joints start taking up the stress. Injuries don't heal when you are trying to train around them using heavy weights. When weights get heavier form gets looser and the effect of the exercise is spread over a larger surface area of the body. Getting good muscle shape and development depends on how well a muscle group is isolated when doing a set. And this is accomplished by stricter form.

Going a little lighter when necessary is a good way to reduce muscular soreness. So, when I go lighter, I rest less between sets. It works out well when training with a partner, just rest when the partner is doing his set.

Normal soreness from a workout should come on the next day, or it may take longer as it often does when getting back in shape. If it takes long to heal through the soreness cycle, it's DOMS (delayed onset muscular soreness). So cut back a little until your body gets used to how you're training it, and it heals more quickly. It means you are getting in shape.

Whenever I'm too sore or need to heal a minor injury, I take a three-day layoff and do ultrasound, heat, and or ice therapy. It keeps me going.

## Sheer Effort

Psychologist William James got it right in 1907 when he published 'The Energies of Men'. Here are his words.

Everyone is familiar with the phenomenon of feeling more or less alive on different days. Everyone knows on any given day that there are energies slumbering in him which the incitements of that day do not call forth, but which he might display if these were greater. Most of us feel as if we lived habitually with a sort of cloud weighing on us, below our highest notch of clearness in discernment, sureness in reasoning, or firmness in deciding. Compared to what we ought to be, we are only half awake. Our fires are dampened, our drafts are checked. We are making use of only a small part of our possible mental and physical resources.

Part of the imperfect vitality under which we labor can be explained by scientific psychology. It is the result of the inhibition exerted by one part of our ideas on other parts. In all of us are functions not tied up by the exercise of other functions. Yet many of us are well aware how much freer in many directions and abler our lives would be were such important forms of energizing not sealed up. There are in everyone potential forms of activity that actually are shunted out from use.

The existence of reservoirs of energy that habitually are not tapped is most familiar to us in the phenomena of second wind. Ordinarily we stop when we meet the first effective layer of fatigue. We have then walked, played, or worked enough, and desist. That amount of fatigue is an efficacious obstruction, on this side of which our usual life is cast. But if an unusual necessity forces us to press onward, a surprising thing occurs. The fatigue gets worse up to a certain critical point, when gradually or suddenly it passes away and we are fresher than before. We have evidently tapped a level of new energy, masked until then by the fatigue-obstacle usually obeyed. There may be layer after layer of this experience. A third and fourth wind may supervene. Mental activity shows the phenomenon as well as physical, and in exceptional cases we find, beyond the very extremity of fatigue distress, amount of ease and power that we never dreamed ourselves to own, sources of strength habitually not taxed at all, because habitually we never push through the obstruction, never pass those early critical points.

We are to some extent victims of habit neurosis due to our wider potential range and the habitually narrow actual use. We live subject to inhibition to degrees of fatigue which we have come only from habit to obey. When we do obey, what makes us do so? Either some unusual stimulus fill us with emotional excitement, or some unusual idea of necessity induces us to make an extra effort of will. Excitements, ideas, and efforts are what carry us over the dam.

## How to Grow

The key to muscle growth is to work the big muscle groups. The three power lifts do this: squat, bench press, and deadlift. So, if you want to grow bigger do these exercises in your routine.

Squatting is the key to growing and gaining solid muscular bodyweight. The question is where you want to gain the weight. The good thing about squatting is that it not only builds the largest muscles in the body (hips and thighs), but it also stimulates upper body growth especially chest, back and shoulders. Arnold got a pump in his biceps when he squatted from holding the bar. You need to squat if you want to grow.

The problem is squatting takes its toll on your knees and lower back as you continue going heavy. It builds a strong muscular lower back as well as bigger glutes and a bigger waist. When you squat down

with a weight on your shoulders it forces your waist outward and even moreso if you bend forward as you squat. Heavy squatting also builds obliques so if you want a smaller waist be careful. The bar on your shoulders forces you to bend forward and engage the butt and lower back as you descend into the deep squat. Tall people who usually have long legs have a difficult time staying erect in the squat as the weight gets heavier. Check out the squatting photo below of me, it's a perfect barbell squatting position. I was a good squatter because my thigh length was optimum for it.

Squatting builds bigger sweeping thighs, it did for me, it built them too big. So, from 1976 onward I didn't do heavy squats and then in 1983 I discovered the Leg Blaster and eliminated barbell squats completely.

A better way to squat is with the Leg Blaster. It's the best way to squat because: there is no downward spinal compression as when squatting with the bar on your shoulders; the center of gravity of the weight is at hip level not at the top of your upper body; it reduces compression of low back and knees; possible to do all forms of squatting, calf raises and lunges for a complete leg workout; takes up little room and is portable and accommodate regular or Olympic plates

Right now, my thigh routine is 3 sets of 8 to 12 reps on leg extension, leg press, leg curl and Leg Blaster squats. My thighs are getting stronger and growing and as a consequence my upper body is too.

It's important to take photos to see how everything is growing, so you don't get out of proportion. As mentioned, my squatting prowess caused my thighs to grow bigger and as a result, I was able to not do squats and leg press so heavy. Thighs aren't hard to shrink if you stop training them with heavy weights. I chose the isolation effects of the leg blaster and kept a good proportionate size and etched in the details.

Bench press is a popular exercise for chest/shoulders/triceps but watch it, keep doing heavy benches and your pecs may get too big for your upper body and make your delts, lats, and arms look smaller. Close grip benches for triceps are great but the wider grip power stuff is something I stopped doing to keep my pecs in check. I like doing the close bench press with very slow negatives and this enhances growth, "if you want your muscles to grow you gotta do your negatives real slow.

Deadlifts work big upper body muscle groups too depending on how you do them. The powerlifting way with one hand reversed is dangerous as the supinated hand puts excessive stress on the inner biceps and could cause a tear. For shapely results from the deadlift try doing it on a Smith Machine with a wide overhand grip pulling the bar from the knees up, doing very slow negatives. On a Smith machine there is no danger of one side of the barbell hitting bottom first which can throw the lower back out. I use weightlifting straps when I do this exercise.

My most productive training for competition was probably 1979 Mr. Olympia. You can read exactly what I did the last month (September) before competition in my *Workouts from Personal Training Diaries* book. It was heavy upper body training as my thighs were big enough (I focused on thigh shape and definition). Training 3 days in a row and resting the fourth day, I worked back/biceps/forearms day one, legs day two, and chest, shoulders, triceps day three. Would have squatted if I needed to but my last month's preparation was about developing everything in proportion with extreme definition. I concentrated on upper body growth by doing heavy bench press, inclines, and overhead pressing on the pushing muscles workout days, and deadlift from knees up, pulldowns and rowing on pulling muscles day. Everything grew and I got in the best shape of my life.