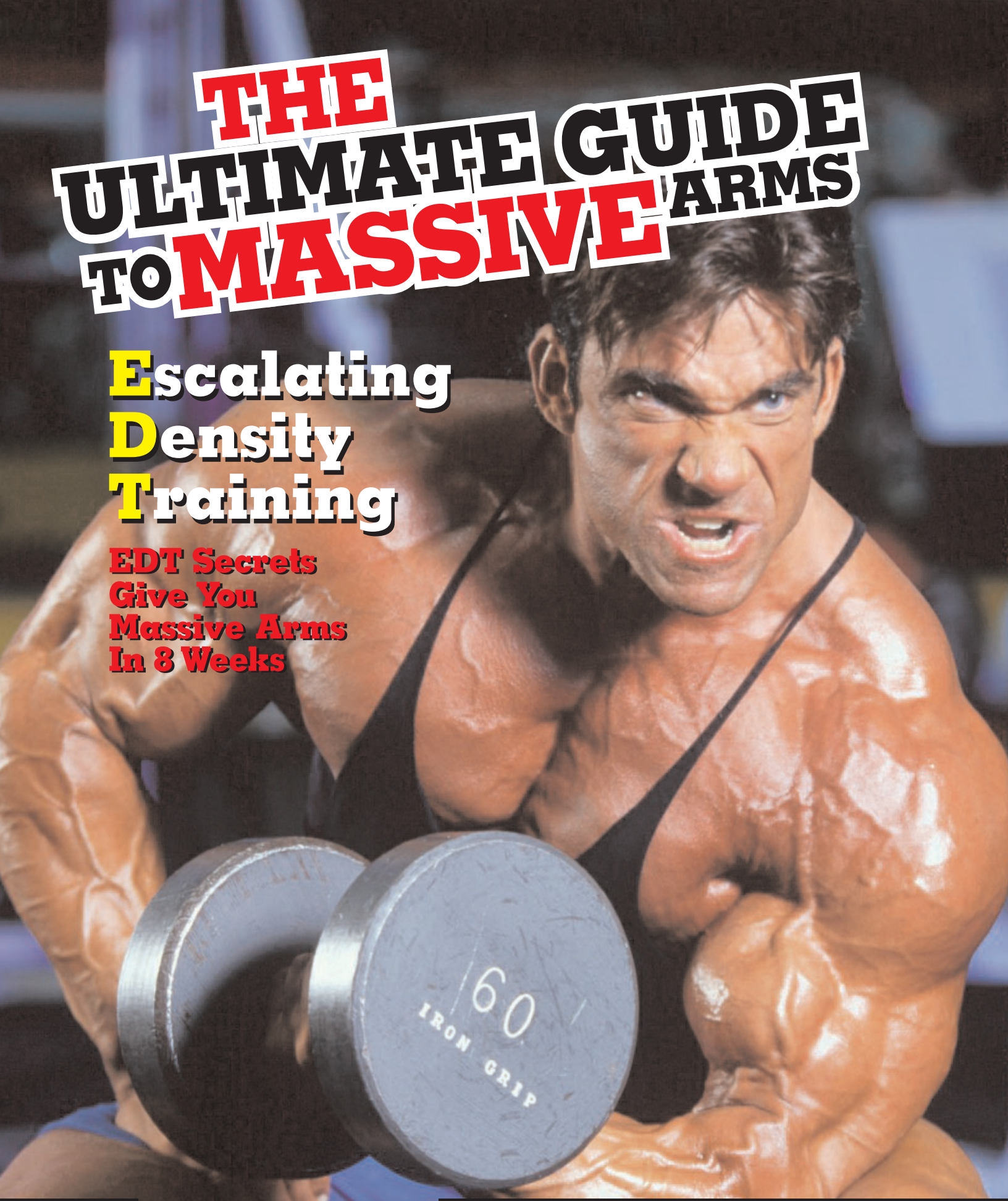
THE ULTIMATE GUIDE TO MASSIVE ARMS

Escalating Density Training

EDT Secrets Give You Massive Arms In 8 Weeks



Charles Staley, MSS. B.SC.

www.edtsecrets.com

Vol. 1: Arms

The Ultimate Guide to Massive Arms: Escalating Density Training

Volume I: Arms

By Charles Staley

DISCLAIMER

Please note that the author and publisher of this book are NOT RESPONSIBLE in any manner whatsoever for any injury that may result from practicing the techniques and/or following the instructions given within. Since the physical activities described herein may be too strenuous in nature for some readers to engage in safely, it is essential that a physician be consulted prior to training.

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To Rebecca & Ashleigh

The Two Girls That Changed My Life

In Wonderful And Unexpected Ways...

"Just wanted to let you know that while I haven't done an EDT arms specialization, I did modify workout #1 into an upper and lower body split routine. The results I got in 3 weeks—actually, probably less than that—were stunning!!! My arms grew about 3/8" without any direct work in that time! I'm a little reluctant about specializing on them at this point, because I might have to invest in a new wardrobe! Thank you for making training fun again! And simple!

ÑChris Merrow, Portland, OR

"Hi Charles,

Me and two training partners recently did a four week mesocycle of EDT, as a test to see how it affected us we didn't alter any diet or cardio regimes that were in place. Following the four weeks we had all gained the following:

Myself : 6/8 inch each arm (eating for mass)

Training Partner 1: 1 inch each arm (eating for mass, obviously more effectively than me!)

Training Partner 2 : 2/8 inch each arm (while severely DIETING!)

None of us where using any supplements apart from protein shakes/MRPS. I have to say I am incredibly impressed, and it has made me believe that this is the ONLY way to train arms. Thanks for your program..."

ÑAnthony Ball, Merseyside, UK

"I just completed my 6 week mesocycle of the EDT Arm Specialization plan. I realize that the article recommended only 4 weeks, but after 4 weeks my arms were still growing like crazy so I kept going! At the end of 4 weeks, my upper arm measurements had increased from 16 inches to about 16 1/2 inches. After 6 weeks they are now close to 17 inches! Although my arm meas-

urements aren't huge compared with most bodybuilders, the 3/4 inch or so that I gained has a huge visual difference. My arms now look much bigger than before—my gym buddies have seen my results and they have already started on their EDT mesocycle! Just a note of advice to anyone who does this training, make sure you get enough Vitamin C like Charles recommends. Also the post workout ice massage works like a charm for decreasing some of the DOMS you will get in your arms from EDT!"

ÑDavid Liu, Auckland, New Zealand

"Once again your methods blow me away in their simplicity yet their incredible effectiveness. The best part is every workout is a competition to perform better than the last workout and that is tremendous for motivation. My trainers are psyched with their results and our clients see progress every time they complete a workout. Although I mainly train to increase combat performance, EDT is a great cycle to use for body composition. Thanks again, Coach!"

ÑTim Larkin, Master Close Combat Trainer
and Creator of Target Focused Training.

"Charles,

After two EDT cycles, I am a believer. The first ended abruptly on the third session due to injury, but it was not related to EDT.

The impression that was made during the three sessions was, "Hey what the heck, even if I don't really gain ANYTHING, it is still a very fun way to train. Fun in an odd way.

I didn't really start EDT up after injury healed, wanted to crawl back in. The "burn" hunger returned and what a return on my investment.

Five weeks in, second go 'round, and although I haven't done any arm specialization as it was presented, only tweaked it mildly, and I am up from 16 1/4", with a little bit of slack, (ego thing) to

16 7/8ths, true measure. I am shooting for 17" and am certain it is on the horizon. That's not the most impressive part. My Chest/back measure went up from 47.5 to a very full 49 7/8ths. Waist is down from 36 1/2 (tight, ego again) to a comfy 36. The measurement I wish I took was across the shoulders. If my jackets are indication, the gain is equally impressive.

I have trained all my life, from age 14 (now age 36). This is the most sensible training I have ever come across. Had I stumbled across this early in my "career" I am certain that I would have avoided some injuries and regained an immeasurable amount of time.

Did I use everything EXACTLY as prescribed? No. I had to make some changes to fit my schedule. What I like the most is that EDT is able to be changed, should it be necessary, to accommodate schedule, injuries, etc. Simplicity is king.

Thank you for sharing your wisdom."

ÑJay Wegner, North Richland Hills, TX.

"I performed the EDT arms program during the four weeks between my summer and fall lacrosse seasons. Previously, I'd done bi's and tri's on different days—bi's 5 sets of 10 barbell curls, and tri's a mix of dips, overhead presses, close grip benches and pushdowns. I did the plan as outlined, except my exercise selection was slightly different and I had no post-workout cryotherapy, as I often work out over lunch and I can't really sit at my desk doing cryotherapy every afternoon. I gained about 1/2 inch on each arm—well worth it for a guy whose arms have been the same size for almost a year. I upped the weight once, after I beat all my rep goals by 20% in week 3. I really liked the time limits, they made intense workouts doable over a lunch hour. I'd like to do another week to beat my new heavier weight rep totals, but with lacrosse starting, there ain't no way. I really liked EDT and will do it again for arms and other body parts in my next hypertrophy phase. Thanks for EDT."

ÑMatt Ingwalson, Denver, Colorado

"Charles has redefined simplicity with his Escalating Density Training system. Do more in less time and you will grow. I wish I had known about EDT while on the National Team (Luge). It would have saved me a ton of wasted time and training."

ÑJonathan Edwards, Olympian.

"I am a 39 year old husband and father of three. I have been playing sports and weight training since I was about thirteen. Anyway, I have used many training methods and supplements. I have to say that EDT has given me real noticeable gains in a shorter amount of time than any other program I have used. It is a logical and easy to follow method.

First of all, my arms, (my weakest body parts) responded quite well. Several people, including my wife, remarked about how much more muscular I was getting. When someone you only see a few times a year says that, it may not mean much, but when the people you see every day notice, I think that is significant.

The other advantage of EDT, for me, is that it causes me to feel motivated before, during and after my workouts. There is no more satisfying competition than when you compete with yourself. Attempting to improve during each and every workout is something that I always said I would do, but never really stuck with for an extended period. I was more focused and I looked forward to each workout. EDT doesn't allow you to get into a "rut."

I am currently training low volume, to aid in recovery, but as soon as I finish that program, I will be going right back to EDT!"

ÑAlfred L. Guy, Baltimore, Maryland

"I have been following the EDT program since you wrote it.I have modified, added, and gone thru both version 1 and 2. I must say I have had the best gains in my life, not too mention the fat burning cardio aspect to it. Thank you, thank you, thank you!"

ÑRod Termaat, Lincoln, NE

"Just wanted to let you know that I gained 8 lbs in last months EDT cycle went from 190 to 198. Actually got up to 200 but steadied out at 198. Went from 13% bodyfat to 12% as well. I actually gained those 8-10 lbs in the first two weeks."

ÑGreg Gonzales

"Just wanted to let you know your two articles on EDT have kicked my ass. I have lost a few pounds fat/water without dieting!" Thanks.

ÑMike Holladay

"I recently began using the Escalating Density Training routine by Charles Staley. All I can say is, OUCH!…Staley's routine has produced more muscular soreness than I have ever experienced. It's not just the first few workouts that produced soreness, but every workout for the last two weeks, plus the pump I get is absolutely incredible. Not to mention the fact that I don't feel guilty about my lack of cardio with this routine; in fact I began wearing a heart rate monitor because I thought I was going to have a heart attack. My pulse rate is maxed out during the entire workout. I can't say enough about the workout, especially the workout planning. All I have to do is pick four exercises and go balls to the wall, a total no-brainer.

I love the pain and intensity of this particular workout; all the cattle (people who allow themselves to be led rather than forging their own way) in the gym look at me like I'm a psycho. They haven't a clue what working out is all about."

—Brian C. Kowalewski

"The sheer effectiveness and brutality of the EDT program does not come across in the written word. This is a TOTAL gym experience"

ÑAlwyn Cosgrove, CSCS, Director, Cosgrove F.A.S.T Systems, Newhall, California.

I'm standing there in a puddle of sweat, muscles aching, mind humming, grooving on a well-deserved beta-endorphin rush. Yeah, I'm thinking, this is what it's all about. Call it being in the zone, experiencing flow, or enhancing your ch'i. Doesn't matter. Whatever term you apply to the feeling, you know it when you experience it. To those of us who train with weights, it's the ultimate high.

That's about as much time as I have for reflection however, because the impetus behind this hyper-conscious state of mind, Charles Staley's revolutionary new training program, demands that I stop messing around and get another set…and another, and another, and perhaps just one more. This is, I think, the longest, most challenging thirty minutes of my life, and I'm loving every second of it. This is EDT.

I first heard about EDT, or Escalating Density Training, over a year ago when it was only a rough idea bouncing around the brain of Coach Staley. The idea was certainly intriguing, one of those ideas that makes so much sense, you think to yourself, "Hey, why hasn't anyone thought of this before?" (That, by the way, is usually a sign the idea is a big one, something that could very well change everything.)

I told Charles if he could ever capture that idea and get it down on paper, I'd love for him to submit it to the magazine I help edit. He did, and then something quite remarkable happened: everyone at the magazine, from the copy editor to the executive head honcho, started using the program!

Folks, that just doesn't happen very often in the muscle magazine business.

We see new programs daily, heck, we're practically desensitized to them. It really takes something groundbreaking to peak our interests and get our adrenaline pumping. After a week of EDT, we all agreed that Charles was really on to something.

In this book, you'll learn how to construct your own rut-breaking, paradigm-shifting, ball-busting EDT program, but the book goes way beyond sets, reps, and rest periods. Like any good teacher, Charles knows that education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire. In this book he'll provide all the kindling you'll need to build a raging blaze, from goal setting to accelerated recovery methods. Your level of training knowledge will grow right along with your biceps.

Get ready to think differently.

Get ready for the rush.

Get ready to grow.

EDT has arrived!

—Chris Shugart
Testosterone.net

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Big Arms= Big Impact

Like it or not, there's no escaping the fact that a set of large, muscular arms demand respect. They make you stand out in a crowd. Most of the time, your abs, legs, etc., are covered up, but if your arms are lacking, it's there for all to see.

In my experience however, many sincere and hard working people (gym rats and athletes alike) face endless frustration when it comes to adding even fractional amounts of girth to their biceps and triceps. The options are endless: three sets of ten…five sets of five….ascending sets…descending sets…pyramids…drop sets…super slow….explosive training…the more you read, the more confused you become! Even my Olympic and professional athletes find themselves so exasperated that often they'll often just say "Charles, just tell me what to do—that's all I want!"

Well, look, it's not your fault—I can relate with those who find themselves terminally confused as they attempt to wade their way through the miasma of (usually) conflicting theories and methods about working out. In fact, it was my own frustration with this confusion that eventually led to my own proprietary training system known as Escalating Density Training™ (EDT), which we'll be discussing in great detail in pages to follow.

Eventually, what I came to appreciate is that what makes a program work (or not work) has less to do with the particulars and more to do with the governing principles. In other words, when you know the "why to do's," the "what to do's" usually take care of themselves.

Common Herd or EDT?

I've been in gyms all across North America for over 20 years, and I've watched countless numbers of hard-working, well-meaning people working out in vein, having absolutely no clue that they'll never get anywhere with the antiquated, piss-poor methods they're using.

So I'm going to let you in on a little secret: The way of the herd is not and cannot be the path to extraordinary accomplishment. Think about it—of all the people who you see regularly at your gym or health club, how many of them have made any sort of recognizable progress in say, the last 3 months? OK, how about 6 months? I'll even give you a full year…how many have made visible progress?

My guess? Less than 1 percent. And that means, quite simply, that the sum total of all the methods that the 99 percent are using, quite honestly, do not work.

An old definition of insanity is doing the same thing and expecting a different result. What I'm asking you do do is something dif-

ferent, and I'm PROMISING that if you do it, you WILL get a different result (specifically, shirt-sleeve splitting guns that will inspire awe in some, disgust in others, but regardless of the reaction, people will RESPECT, and typically, admire, the inescapable evidence that you are no stranger to the gym).

I want to state right here and now that I am completely confident that EDT will work for you. But I must warn you that extreme results require extreme measures. And while it is true that EDT workouts are very brief as compared to other methods, there is a price to pay if you expect extra-ordinary results. The reason that very few people ever experience these results is that they are unwilling to pay that price—in other words, at the end of the day, having mind-boggling arms is not worth the lifestyle choices and behaviors that are necessary to achieve them. So, in closing, I want to emphasize that EDT is not simply a set/rep format, but in reality, a lifestyle. It requires attention to attitude, mindset, recovery, nutrition, and time-management. Is your goal worthy of this type of commitment? If so, you're the person I'm trying to reach with this book.

Right now, you're holding an enormous shortcut in your hands—over 20 years of total (and probably irrational!) dedication to training boiled down to it's most practical essence. Don't be fooled by the seemingly simplistic concepts you'll find in the book. It's been said that we all need a lesson in the obvious, and this book will be a major step in that educational process for any and all who read it. Although EDT has been called a novel approach to training, we must be careful not to confuse novelty with effectiveness. If 3 sets of 10 was the best way to train, that's what I'd be writing about.

I suspect you're already working hard— now I'll show you how to work SMART. EDT is the culmination of my over 20 years in the field working with everyone from 9 to 5 types to some of the most talented athletes who have ever walked the planet. And while many other training methods can and do work, EDT is the most effective and efficient way to train. But then, you'll find that out as soon as you complete the first workout!

I wish you unprecedented, shocking levels of success in your training, and in life, and I'm truly grateful and having the opportunity to contribute to that success through this book.

Charles Staley
Las Vegas, Nevada
September 23, 2002

PART ONE

Getting Into The Game (The Preliminaries)

ÒDid you ever consider how ridiculous it would be to try to cram on a farmÑ to forget to plant in the spring, play all summer and then cram in the fall to bring in the harvest? The farm is a natural system. The price must be paid the and the process followed. You always reap what you sow; there is no shortcut.Ó Ñ Steven Covey

1

Understanding The Principles That Create A Successful Training Program. Without These Any Plan Will Fail

Some readers will have a tendency to gloss over when discussing this subject because they perceive it to be impractical or somehow unrelated to their bottom-line objective. I disagree for two reasons:

1. Understanding the principles (or the "why to do's) make you more independent and better able to make good "on the fly" decisions when problems or unexpected situations arise. For example, let's assume you're in the middle of a workout and it becomes apparent that you're never going to manage 5x5 with your chosen weightload of 145 pounds. What should you do—complete the remaining sets with less weight? Continue using 145 and just get as many reps as possible on the remaining sets? Or perhaps you should just stop as soon as you fail to hit 5 reps? When you understand the principles—which are in essence the beneath the surface "software" behind your workouts, you'll automatically know how to make the best corrections when problems arise (and they will, trust me!)

2. When you understand the underlying principles of EDT, you'll have even greater confidence in the system—you'll have a better appreciation of why it works and why I've designed it the way I did. And, it goes without saying, when you have more confidence in the program, you'll commit to it on a higher level that you would if this were simply a "how to" type of book.

Before we examine these principles in detail however, let me state that ANY program which abides by these principles will lead

to success. The big advantage of EDT however, is that is makes it almost impossible for your workouts to violate any of them, ever. Every workout will be specific, progressive, and your training cycles will have the appropriate amount of variability for optimal progress. Further, EDT automatically adjusts to each individual's specific anatomy, fiber-type ratio, personality type, and other factors, from workout to workout.

So without further adieu, let's look at the five immutable laws that govern your efforts in the gym. Master all five, and you'll succeed beyond your wildest imagination. Fail to appreciate them, and you'll join the common herd of wanna-be's that never make a speck of progress no matter what they do. The choice is yours!

The Principle of Progressive Overload

IN GEEK-SPEAK:

In order to provoke an adaptational response, the organism must be subjected to stressors of ever-increasing magnitude.

IN GYM-SPEAK:

"No Pain, No Gain."

COME AGAIN?

Golfing phenom Tiger Woods, like all beginning golfers, started with the simplest of skills. He learned how to hold the club, how to address the ball, and so on. But if Woods had not continued to challenge himself with increasingly more difficult skills, he would never have attained even a small percentage of his ultimate potential.

The same applies to exercise training. To the body, physical training (which is in fact a form of "motor learning") is a form of stress. In fact, Soviet sports scientists refer to training as an "irritant," since it disrupts the body's preference to stay the same. This is called "homeostasis."

OK, BUT HOW DO I USE THIS STUFF IN MY WORKOUT?

In a nutshell, you MUST ensure that each session is slightly more challenging (and I've used the term "slightly" on purpose—progressing at a rapid rate always leads to failure because it cannot be sustained over the long run) than the one that preceded it. There are at least three ways to accomplish this:

1. Increase intensity: Intensity is defined as the absolute difficulty, or the quality of your training.

2. Increase volume. This refers to the total amount, or the quantity of your training.

3. Increase density. Escalating density is both the name and hallmark of the EDT system.

There is one catch to this principle: If the stress applied is too sudden or severe, the body will be unable to successfully adapt, and injury, illness, and overtraining will result. Think of it this way: If you're very pale and on the first hot day of summer you decide to lay out in the sun for four hours, you'll probably acquire a severe sunburn—the sudden and severe stress of the intense sunlight exceeded your body's ability to protect itself against it.

On the other hand, if you lay out for 30 minutes the first day, and then 60 minutes two days later, and then 90 minutes two days after that, your body will have time to create melatonin cells in your skin as a protective measure against future exposures to the sun. Training works exactly the same way.

Perhaps the best way to ensure that your exercise program abides by the principle of progressive overload is to keep a detailed training log. In this way, you can determine last week's training load, and then plan this week's training such that it exceeds what you accomplished last week. There are a few very simple yet powerful ways you can do this:

> Perform work of a higher intensity (or quality). In the gym, the generally means using a heavier weight, although it can also be accomplished by moving a given weight faster.

Do more work (e.g., more total sets and/or reps) in the same period of time, or…

Do the same amount of work in less time

Whichever method you choose, when you progressively challenge yourself you'll grow. Life requires challenge in order to thrive, and your muscles are no exception to this universal principle.

The Principle of Reversibility

IN GEEK-SPEAK:

When the environmental challenge is discontinued, the organism responds by discontinuing it's adaptational response.

IN GYM-SPEAK:

"Use it or lose it."

COME AGAIN?

After a lengthy period of inactivity, your body will return to its previously untrained state. Although unsubstantiated by research, athletes over the years have recognized a certain "muscle memory" that makes it possible to make a "comeback" after a long period of inactivity, in a shorter period of time than it took to get to get to that level initially. However, conscientious trainees are better served by ongoing training than by gambling on "muscle memory."

The principle of reversibility suggests that you should stay in training year round, although the intensity and character of training will vary throughout the year. The sudden discontinuance of training (for example, after a professional athlete retires) is in itself stressful physically, as well as emotionally and psychologically. For this reason, many former Eastern-bloc sports programs utilize a planned and gradual reduction of training over several years upon an athlete's retirement from elite level competition.

OK, BUT HOW DO I USE THIS STUFF IN MY WORKOUT?

Consistency is the hallmark of all successful training programs.

Perhaps the best way to ensure it is to create a lifestyle that supports your training efforts. This includes scheduling your workouts as if they were meetings or appointments. When something is important, you must put it on your schedule first, and then work other tasks in afterward, rather than vice versa. So, instead of planning to do a workout "tomorrow," actually set up an appointment with yourself tomorrow from 1:00 to 2:00. Even better, find a motivated training partner who will keep you accountable to that appointment! In a later chapter, I'll thoroughly discuss a number of time-management strategies that will help you to stay consistent in your training schedule.

The Principle of Variability

IN GEEK-SPEAK:

Over time, monotonous stimuli tend to result in ever-smaller disruptions to homeostasis as the organism learns to cope with already-familiar stressors.

IN GYM-SPEAK:

"Dude, you've hit a plateau— change up your routine to shock your body into new growth."

COME AGAIN?

One of the more paradoxical facts about training is that specificity must be balanced against variability within the context of a sound training program. In other words, specificity is necessary, but too much of it is just as much of a problem as not having enough! Here's why:

> The effectiveness of any program is a function of the degree to which it challenges your body. The problem is that familiar programs are less challenging, because the body habituates (habituation is the gradual reduction of a response when an initially new stimulus is repeated over and over). Every time an athlete repeats a training program, it becomes less effective.

All programs have both negative and positive features, no matter how well designed or specific. Too much time on one program, and athletes demonstrate a tendency to habituate to the positive aspects and accumulate the negative ones. For example, the athlete who performs barbell bench presses every week may develop an imbalance between the front and rear deltoid muscles, despite the fact that he or she is not getting stronger on the exercise.

Unchanging training routines lead to overuse injuries. According to Dr. Sal Arria, Sports Medicine Director for the International Sports Sciences Association, "Adopting long-term training habits of any kind is very often a precursor to degenerative changes in the joints. Advanced athletes are particularly vulnerable, since their training tends to become more and more specific over time."

OK, BUT HOW DO I USE THIS STUFF IN MY WORKOUT?

For the reasons just stated, it's crucial to constantly change all aspects of training—everything from the frequency of sessions to their content. In most conventional forms of training, you're required to consider various options in terms of how to accomplish this. When you perform Escalating Density Training however, these decisions take care of themselves. For example, each workout, you'll perform more total repetitions in the same time frame. This means that each workout features greater volume and density. Further, as soon as you manage to improve your initial performance by 20 percent or more, you'll increase your weightloads by 5 during the next workout— an increase in intensity. Finally, when you are no longer able to improve upon your last performance, you'll change your exercise menu and start the process all over again (more about EDT's progression strategies later).

The Principle of Specificity

IN GEEK-SPEAK:

The body's adaptation to training is very specific to the type of training stimulus. Thus, the athlete must first decide which type of adaptation is desired (strength, speed, power, agility, or whatever)

and then select the appropriate type of training that is known to produce the desired response, or training effect. This is sometimes referred to as the "S.A.I.D. principle," or Specific Adaptation to Imposed Demand.

IN GYM-SPEAK:

"If you want a bigger bench press, do more bench presses!"

COME AGAIN?

All of the principles I'm discussing here are universal and apply to all facets of life. In the case of specificity, let's use the analogy of going to school: studying geography tends to improve your skills in geography, but not your skills in other subjects such as math or English literature. If you go to the gym three times a week and do nothing but barbell curls, you'll tend to develop bigger biceps, but not bigger calves (this example excludes certain individuals who experience hypertrophy of the low back musculature as a result of doing barbell curls!)

OK, BUT HOW DO I USE THIS STUFF IN MY WORKOUT?

OK, whenever you talk about specificity, you have to ask "Specific to what?"

In the gym, your exercise selection must be specific to the muscles you want to develop, and the loading parameters you choose must be specific to the motor qualities you wish to develop.

The first part of this explanation should be intuitively obvious. However, if you're not sure which exercises target a particular muscle, there are a few easy ways to find out:

During the exercise which muscles are experiencing fatigue?

The next day, which muscles are sore?

On many exercises, including leg extensions, leg curls, back extensions, tricep kickbacks, lateral raises, flyes, etc., you can determine which muscles are targeted by simply observing

which muscles or muscle fibers are facing the ceiling. For example, if you perform a front dumbbell raise, the deltoid fibers that face upward are the ones, which will receive the brunt of the training load.

Incidentally, if you're using an exercise that supposedly targets a specific muscle (say, the quadriceps) and you feel the most fatigue/soreness in other muscle groups (such as your low back), OR if you tend to feel pain in your joints rather than fatigue in your muscles, it'd be wise to have an experienced exercise professional evaluate your technique for you.

Now let's look at the second part of the explanation: Òthe loading parameters you choose must be specific to the motor qualities you wish to developÓ. Here is a short list of a few of the most relevant motor qualities you should be familiar with:

Absolute Strength: This is the amount of musculoskeletal force that can be generated for one all-out effort, regardless of time or bodyweight. While only powerlifters need to maximize and demonstrate this type of strength, anyone interested in a leaner, stronger body should work on developing absolute strength, as it forms to create a foundation for hypertrophy (see below)

Speed Strength: This term simply means strength divided by time, or put another way, strength per unit of time. SS is defined as work divided by time, where work is defined as force x distance. Therefore, SS is defined as force x distance, divided by time. Many fitness enthusiasts ignore this motor quality, assuming it only applies to elite athletes. But it's important should not be underestimated, for at least two reasons:

Speed strength training targets the so-called fast-twitch muscle fibers— the ones that have the most capacity to enlarge and raise the metabolic rate

Of all the motor qualities, speed strength is one of the fastest to deteriorate as we age. So if you want to maintain your ability to train hard and enjoy an active lifestyle as you approach your later years, you need to work on your ability to move weights fast.

Hypertrophy:This refers to muscle enlargement—Now remember how I said earlier that absolute strength forms the foundation for hypertrophy? Here's why: you have to stimulate fast twitch fibers before they can grow.

Note: Unlike conventional training systems, which use different workouts and/or loading parameters to promote the development of these various qualities, EDT promotes the development of these qualities using the same parameters. In other words, in a single 15 or 20-minute PR Zone, you'll be developing maximal strength, speed strength, muscular hypertrophy, short-term anaerobic endurance, and lactic acid tolerance.

The Principle of Individual Response

IN GEEK-SPEAK:

Each biologic organism is unique with respect to genetic potentiality, morphology, environmental stressors, fiber-type ratios, endocrinology, and a host of other factors, which precludes the possibility of an across-the-board, homogenous response to particular stimuli.

IN GYM-SPEAK:

"Everyone's different— you have to find what works for you."

COME AGAIN?

While the previous principles are often regarded as the cornerstones of a scientifically planned training system, another very important factor—individual differences between athletes—must also be considered. While similarities frequently outweigh differences, an individual's physiological, as well as psychological and emotional characteristics, must be considered in the course of constructing the ideal training plan.

OK, BUT HOW DO I USE THIS STUFF IN MY WORKOUT?

If you apply the same training plan to one hundred athletes, be assured there would be a corresponding number of different adaptational reactions (i.e., character of, and rate of progress) to that

plan. Males and females differ in their recovery times between workouts, taller people have longer reaction times than shorter people, large-footed people have better balance than those with short feet, and so on. Sickness, injuries, lifestyle, and coaching background, as well as innate genetic differences further add to the differences among athletes.

Individuality is a dynamic concept. As you progress, your training must change to reflect your higher level of fitness. For example, it might take you 16 weeks to reach a certain level of strength the first year of training. The next year, even if you have not performed strength training for several months, it might take only eight to 10 weeks to meet or even exceed the strength levels of the previous year.

Escalating Density Training recognizes and anticipates your unique individuality without the need for your conscious participation in the process. For example, some people have a very competitive, aggressive personality, while others are more laid back and tentative in the gym. With EDT workouts, it doesn't really matter—each workout, you'll perform more total reps than you did in the previous session. Aggressive people will exceed their last performance by a large margin, and less aggressive people will improve by a smaller margin. However, in the long haul, both are training in a manner that corresponds to the five immutable principles we're discussing in this chapter. Therefore, both will make optimal progress, albeit at different paces.

In another example, an athlete who is fast-twitch dominant (meaning that he has a relatively large proportion of fast twitch muscle fiber in his muscles) will instinctively choose lower-repetition sets in each PR Zone, as compared to someone who is slow-twitch dominant. Again, EDT accommodates to each person's individual differences without the need for different strategies for different types of people.

From Principles to Practices

Now that we've explored the underlying laws of successful training, I'd like to shift your attention to some important behavioral components of the training process. These factors typically receive scant attention in most books and articles on the subject, but my experience has convinced me that they form the foundation of success.

2

Goal-Directed Behavior

The concept of goal setting is viewed as somewhat cliché, but it's hard to argue against once you consider it carefully. Paradoxically, virtually everyone agrees that goals are important, yet less than 5% of the population has one...

Once I was asked if I'd ever like to be able to squat 1000 pounds. I replied that, no, not really, because obviously, if I had really wanted a 1000 pound squat, I would have taken the steps necessary to get it, which I obviously haven't. Now of course, it might be the case that even if I applied maximum effort and resources to the goal of squatting 1000 pounds, it might not be in the cards for me anyway. But my point is that self-actualized people make things happen, rather than hoping they will happen. (Incidentally, I'm also philosophically against gambling, because it promotes the idea of hoping for success, rather than planning and working toward it. When you live on hope, the universe is in control. However, when you base your life on strategic planning, YOU are in control.

I once heard powerlifting coach Dave Tate explain the process of goal orientation this way: if you're trying to find a location in Columbus, Ohio using a map of Cincinnati, no matter how well intended, no matter how hard you try, you'll never find your destination in Columbus. Life is a lot like that— if you don't have a clear destination and an accurate map, you'll never find success. You may remember that in the introduction, I cautioned against mistaking novelty with effectiveness. This is just such a case: goal setting certainly isn't anything new, but please be assured, it is profoundly effective. In fact, if you wish (or better yet, plan) to be successful, there really isn't any other altern

Where Are You Going?

We all have desires, things we hope to achieve in life. The question is, what exactly do you want? And how badly do you want it? How serious are you really? Have you really considered what you'll have to give up to get what you want?

Anatomy of a Goal

A goal is a written expression of intent to accomplish a specific, personally meaningful objective within a predetermined time frame.

Based on this definition, I'd guess that fewer than 5 percent of all people have even a single goal at any one point in time. Sad, isn't it? If you're in the 95 percent club, this chapter will show you how to cross over. As a starting point, let's examine the above definition point by point:

A goal must be stated in writing: If it isn't written, it isn't a goal. Period. It may be a wish, or a vague desire, or a fantasy, but it isn't a goal, and you're not likely to achieve it.

A goal must be specific and measurable: Your desire to become "as big as a house" isn't a goal. It isn't specific enough. We need to talk pounds at a certain body fat percentage, not real estate.

In order to be specific, your goal must be quantifiable. This is a very significant for bodybuilders, whose sport is by definition qualitative and subjective.

Where Are You Going?

A goal must be personally meaningful: Your goal must be worthy of your unconditional resolve and personal sacrifice (defined as giving up something in order to gain something greater as a result) for the allotted time-frame, or you won't bother to pursue it. It must have real value and undeniable potential to improve your life. The desire to get down to 7 percent body fat by May 1st so that you'll look great at the beach this summer is specific, challenging, and has a completion date, but other than soothing your ego, what meaning does it really have?

Now of course, if this goal (getting down to 7 percent body fat by May 1st) is part of your long-range objective to become a champion bodybuilder or fitness competitor, we now have a more meaningful context for your objective, since your competitive aspirations will have rewards above and beyond ego-gratification, such as career possibilities, character development, and so on. Once you can see the complete range of benefits that accomplishing the goal has for you, you'll be ready to commit enormous personal resources to achieve it. Now think back to your original motivation—looking great at the beach. Is this goal really worth the considerable time and effort that it'll take to achieve? If so, proceed. If not, explore other goals that will significantly impact your life when you accomplish them.

Additionally, goals must be framed in such a way that they push your emotional "hot buttons." For example, it may be that you have a goal to parallel squat 400 pounds by your 30th birthday eleven months away. Your current PR is 355. This is a specific, challenging, and presumably meaningful goal for you. However, step back for a second and consider which sounds more attractive: 400 pounds (a nice even number), or, 405 pounds, which is (4) 45-pound plates on each side of the bar. Or, if you happen to weigh 205 pounds, perhaps the concept of lifting 410—double your bodyweight—has the most appeal.

There is no right or wrong answer here— the point of the exercise is to see how slightly different ways of framing an objective can effect your emotional reserves. Which option seems most appealing to you?

> A goal must be challenging: If your goal isn't challenging, you're not likely to mobilize significant resources to attain it. For example, using the previous example of the 400-pound squat, some would argue for a more "realistic" goal of 365 pounds. However, while certainly realistic, a 15-pound improvement in 11 months is hardly the stuff of dreams, is it? In fact, its such a small increment that you might be likely to forget about it before the day is over! Better to aim for the stars and fall on the mountain peaks, as they say.

How Long Will It Take?

A goal must have a specific date of completion: Time frames are what create pressure to get the job done. Your time frame must be aggressive, but realistic. If you're not sure if your goal can be accomplished within a certain time frame, you'll have to either base your time-frame on personal past experience, or you may have to do a bit of intelligence work in order to find out.

Your goal must be stated in the positive: Remember the old story where the football coach says to his star receiver "Whatever you do, don't drop the ball!"? Guess what he ended up doing? You can't plan to not accomplish something.

A Few Essential Items to Pack for the Trip

The following collection of strategies and skills are like a psychological "toolbox" which will properly arm you while in pursuit of your objectives. These tools are found in the blueprints of all champions, not only in sport, but in life as well.

Visualization and Imagery: If you can't genuinely picture yourself achieving your goal, it's very unlikely, probably impossible that you will achieve it. The old, overused, cliché axiom "conceive, believe, achieve" is packed with truth. Let me relate a story from my martial arts background. When I taught martial arts professionally, I always had very successful kid's classes. Occasionally, during a quiet moment either before or after class, or simply when the moment seemed right, I would take a kid from a beginner's class, and I'd remove my black belt and tie it around his waist. Words simply cannot express the wonder and complete change of "state" that would instantly overcome that child—you could literally see the gears turning as that child imagined what it would be like the day he achieved the rank in the future.

You know the old expression "I'll believe it when I see it"? Long before I ever squatted 400 pounds, I saw it clearly in my mind. I actually practiced by loading the bar on the power rack and just pondering the day when that bar would be mine. I'd even perform "walk outs" with the weight in preparation for the big day. I also frequently used Olympic bumper plates, which are much thicker than iron plates for their weight—using bumpers, a

bar loaded to 176 pounds occupies about the same space as 405 pounds of iron plates. This way, I was really able to see myself squatting 405. Funny thing was, the day I actually lifted 405, it wasn't particularly a big deal for me—I'd felt as though I'd already done it, and this was simply the physical expression of a capability I already knew I had. The moral of this story is, I could give you 50 ways of becoming more successful, but if I could remove your self-doubt, those 50 things would improve all on their own!

Affirmations: An affirmation is a statement of belief. It can be regularly recited, or written and posted at a place that you're likely to see it often during the course of a normal day. The concept of affirmations is to overload your psyche with positive belief statements until there is no longer any room for preexisting negative self-perceptions—much like taking a jar filled with water (which represents old, limiting beliefs), and filling it with pebbles (representing the positive affirmations) until all the water has been forced out of the container.

Although the concept of affirmations is often the butt of late night TV humor (e.g., Saturday Night Live's Stuart Smalley), in truth, they are very powerful tools for the acquisition of goals. The mind is immensely powerful—if you can control it, that is. Ever notice how women will tell you that they gained too much muscle after 2-3 weight training sessions? Or have you ever heard lifters (usually guys) extol the virtues of XYZ supplement, even though science has proven it completely useless? This is the power of belief, my friends. If you can harness that power to a well-designed plan, the battle is already half-won.

Sample affirmations:

"Because I expect to succeed, I find it easy to take daily action on achieving my goal."

"I am responsible for my own future. I expect to succeed. I control my own destiny."

"I dream big dreams, believe in them, set goals to achieve them, and take action to make them become reality."

Create your own affirmations to support your goal, as well as the habits and attitudes necessary for achieving your goal. Write them on note cards and choose a consistent time to read them at least once a day.

As I sit here writing this, I can see an affirmation that has been important to me over the years—in fact, it's so meaningful to me that I've had it framed: "The biggest difference between champions and other people is that champions stay focused on completing activities which are the highest and best use of their time."

Modeling: A very useful concept, popularized by Anthony Robbins (if your only exposure to Robbins are his info-mercials, don't rush to judgment— his concepts and teachings have very real merit), implements what I call the "don't reinvent the wheel" principle: find other people, similar to yourself, who have accomplished similar goals. Then, find out what they did to accomplish the task(s), and repeat those steps. Since all humans share essentially the same biology and physiology, you should get the same result, or at least very similar results.

For example, if your hectic, 6-day a week work schedule is a severe obstacle to accomplishing your goal, find a talented lifter who has succeeded with a similar schedule. Find out how he managed to do this, and then implement the same strategy. Chances are very strong that it'll work for you as well.

Cognitive dissonance: The mind can't maintain two contradictory beliefs simultaneously. When you're trying to extinguish a negative or limiting thought process, or emotion, cognitive dissonance can be your best friend. Let me provide an example from my competitive fighting career: When you step into the ring with a skilled opponent your own size or bigger (and especially if you don't have Don King on your side!) it's natural to be afraid. After all, you can get hurt doing this stuff! While fear is not entirely a bad thing (it's a self-protective mechanism), it does tend to make you doubt your abilities, and your skills erode accordingly. Over my own fighting career, I learned little trick that helped me enormously: I learned to act. I would put on an air of total disregard, joking with my opponent, yawning, goofing off, and so on. It's called "acting as if..." What I learned is that you can't be scared and act like you're bored simultaneous-

ly—something has to give. Incidentally, this can also be called the "fake it 'till you make it" principle.

How does one apply this principle toward the acquisition of challenging goals? Going back to my personal experience with the 405-pound squat, I remember that I thought, acted, and presented myself as a 400-pound squatter long before I could actually do it. I would look for any and every opportunity to demonstrate this, for example, squatting 315 completely cold (i.e., no warm-up) when someone asked me to demonstrate something about the lift. Although inwardly, it was quite a challenge for me to squat this weight cold, outwardly I'd act completely nonchalant about it, talking through the lift and acting as if I could squat that weight all day long. The idea behind all of this is that I was gradually convincing my unconscious self that I was a 400-pound squatter. With a bit of creativity and imagination, you'll come up with various ways to employ the "fake it 'till 'ya make it" principle in your own training. And if it's not obvious by now, yes, it IS dangerous to squat big weights without a warm-up.

Avoiding Collisions Along the Way

Although it will seem tempting, don't automatically express your goal to everyone you come in contact with. You need to consider the likely responses you'll get, and how you'll react to those responses. For example, if you thrive on proving people wrong, then it might be a good idea to express your ambitious goal to your friends and peers who are most likely to doubt your abilities. On the other hand, if you're somewhat dependent on more positive forms of feedback, avoid such people in favor of those who will be supportive of your project.

Let's face it—if you are in the process of pursuing challenging goals, the "common herd" will view you as a freak. If this sort of antagonism really drives you, express your goals to everyone you know, and get ready to surf the wave of negativity all the way to your completion dates! On the other hand, if you think you'll be a bit intimidated and depressed by having everyone you know doubt your abilities, it's better to keep your plans to yourself.

Fear of Failure

Probably the number one reason that few people establish goals for themselves is the fear that failing to succeed will bring unbearable negative consequences. These people postulate (usually in an unconscious way) that if they never set a goal, they can never fail. These people also fail to realize that the flip side of this pattern is that they will also not succeed!

If fear of failure seems to be a reality for you, consider that even if you fail to realize your goal, it's still likely that you have improved to a measurable degree along the way. For example, maybe you set a goal to enter and place in a local bodybuilding show. It turned out that you came in dead last and felt terribly embarrassed. But consider what really matters—did you significantly improve you physique in the process of pursuing the goal? If so, you efforts were totally worthwhile. In general, "process oriented" people tend to be more effective than "results oriented" creatures. Develop the habit!

Are We Still on the Right Road? Monitoring Status and Adjusting for Errors

Once you've created your plan, you need to have a reliable way of assessing whether or not it's working. This involves testing quantifiable outcomes on predetermined dates, and then implementing changes if these tests fail to reveal appreciable progress. When implementing these changes, it is critical to change only one element at a time, while holding all other variables constant. A pseudo-placebo effect often ensues when an athlete starts taking an expensive new supplement, and, in an effort to maximize his gains, also starts to eat better and train harder as well. Then, when results do indeed surface, the supplement gets the credit when in fact, it may have had insignificant impact on the results.

Record keeping is a critical factor in the success of athletes. I keep precise records on all my athletes, as well as for myself. Accurate records not only tell you what's working, but also what has, and has not worked in the past. To me, failure to keep records is like failing to record transactions in your checkbook. Sounds crazy, right?

Never Been Here Before! PR's: Your Own World Records

In the realm of sport, nothing compares to those rare moments when existing World records are broken. Only the rarest of human beings can do it, and even then, only rarely. Personally, I never considered it relevant as to whether or not I could ever break a World record (fortunately, it turns out!). What really matters is this: can you exceed your lifetime best performance? If you can, you're making progress, and getting ever closer to your ultimate destination, whatever that happens to be.

Perhaps the most exciting aspect of EDT from a motivational standpoint is that each and every workout, you'll be breaking your previous PR's for the exercises you're using. Each and every workout, you have specific goal to achieve. When you have a clear purpose, it's much easier to devote yourself to the task.

You've Arrived at Your Destination—Now What?

Maybe the scariest aspect of goal orientation is the moment when you achieve your goal. What's the next step?

My suggestion is that you document your success— use your training log or tracking software if you use such tools. This act enables you to review your goal from inception to completion. It also fosters belief in your own abilities, especially as you accomplish more goals. Why do you think it's so universal that kindergarten kids receive "stars" or similar tokens as testament to their accomplishments? Why do you think Weight Watchers awards 10, 20, 30-pound (and so on) ribbons to members when they lose the corresponding amount of weight? The answer is simple— to provide a visual reminder of the accomplishment. You should do the same, as silly as it may sound.

If you goal was designed to be a quantitative measure of a qualitative objective, did the fact that you accomplished the goal fulfill the objective? For example, if your objective was to increase the size of your quads and hamstrings (qualitative), and you established a goal to increase your back squat by 50 pounds in six months (a quantitative goal), did the gain in your squat performance correlate with significant leg mass? If not, was accomplishing the goal worthwhile anyway, for other reasons? If the answer to either or both of the above is "yes," you now have solid information to base further goal setting on.

Goal orientation is truly an autotellic activity— in other words, it has intrinsic value above and beyond the expected outcome. History shows that individuals facing specific challenges, which must be solved within a specific time frame, are able to mobilize seemingly impossible resources to achieve their objective. Conversely, individuals who rarely face such challenges never reach even a small percentage of their true potential.

Just like muscle, goal-orientation responds to training— the more you do it, the stronger it gets. The more difficult the challenge, the more you'll learn how to "raise the bar" and set new standards for yourself. If you still find yourself thinking, "Jeesh— this seems really involved and complicated!" consider the following question: Will you be more successful as a goal-oriented athlete, or an athlete with no goals? I'll let you be the judge.

Coming Up Next...

In Chapter Three, I'll explain the critical distinction between activities and behaviors, and why success in the former requires refinement of the latter. It's called Behavior-Based Training, and it has to potential to completely revolutionize your training results.

3

Why Your Training Is Not Just A "To Do" List But Rather, A Change In Your "Behaviors."

Before a new building can be erected on a site where an older building exists, the older building must be demolished first.

In much the same way, I'm going to start this chapter by demolishing a dearly-held myth that many trainees have regarding their avocation of choice:

"I'll finally reach my goals when I find the perfect training (or nutritional) program." WRONG

Look, it's not your fault—I've been there too. I've had the experience of discovering some unique program in the latest muscle magazine that some super stud athlete supposedly used to transform himself from nothing to something. Even today, when I run across a unique training concept or program, I still salivate at the discovery—anticipating the workouts, the novelty of a new program. Problem is, you have to clarify your objective: is your passion in life intellectual masturbation, or breaking through long-standing plateaus to new PR's? If you answered the latter, read on.

Performance (or progress) Improves Only When Weak Links Are Identified And Fortified.

It's pretty much this simple: if you want your chain to lift heavier weights, you've got to inspect that chain link by link, and identify the weakest segment in that chain. Then you've got to find a way to make that segment as strong, if not stronger than the others. Then you've got to find the second weakest link and repeat the process, which, incidentally, never ends. NOTE: Aside from

avoiding habituation (the body's ever-decreasing reaction to repetitive, unchanging stimuli), the most important reason for altering training programs is to account for the continuous introduction of "new" primary weak links).

Hunting For Kingpins

In the logging industry, professional loggers have a very effective way to figure out how to clear huge log-jams as they attempt to send large numbers of trees down the river. What they do is to go downstream and find the "kingpin:" this is the single log which, if re-positioned ever so slightly, will restore the flow of logs down the river.

In much the same way, you'll need to find your own personal kingpins if you ever expect to accelerate your own rate of progress.

Some theorists suggest that one should ignore weaknesses and instead, focus on strengths. However, from my experience, a strength overused becomes a weakness. In assessing your own situation, determine whether or not the weak link is CORRECTABLE. If not, don't worry about it. If so, make it the number one priority until it is no longer your weakest correctable link.

The Q2 Prioritization Rule:

This is a strategy that I developed from my work with Olympic and professional athletes, as well as members of my private coaching group. In essence, the rule states that one should prioritize training elements (which could refer to habits, behaviors, muscle groups, motor qualities, etc) which are:

- Needed
- Under-developed
- Highly trainable
- Foundational to other elements
- Given available resources

As a brief explanation, let's look at the motor quality of maximal strength. For many athletes, it is needed AND underdeveloped. It is also quite easily improvable compared to some other

motor qualities (such as speed, which has significant genetic constraints). Maximal strength creates a base for the development of speed-strength, hypertrophy, strength-endurance, and can also help athletes avoid injuries. Finally, maximal strength can be developed using very rudimentary equipment such as barbells and dumbbells. So, it's clear that for many trainees, maximal strength should be prioritized according to the Q2 Prioritization Rule.

Most People's Weak Links Relate To BEHAVIORS, Not Activities

Most people, when examining their own training experiences, will notice that they have made acceptable levels of progress using all manner of training systems and approaches. Most will attribute this phenomenon to the fact that ANY new program will provoke an adaptive response (at least temporarily), simply due to its novelty. However, I do not believe the novelty of a new training stimulus is sufficient to explain this observation. Instead, I propose that whether or not someone is successful during any given training program has less to do with the program per se, and more to do with the PERSON (and specifically, his or her behavior) as the program is carried out. Now, of course, I'm not saying that intelligently designed training programs aren't important—after all, I've created a career out of designing programs and teaching program design. I'm simply saying that for many people, developing better behaviors will have a greater payoff than looking for better programs (activities).

The Seven Behaviors of Highly Successful Athletes

There are many behaviors that lend themselves to successful training outcomes. For the purposes of this column however, I'll focus on seven behaviors which I believe are tantamount for unprecedented levels of success:

1) Delayed GratificationIt has been said that the pain of self-discipline weighs ounces while the pain of neglect weighs tons. Maturity is defined by the willingness to sacrifice now in order to experience a greater outcome in the future. This applies especially to nutrition and supplementation, since the positive outcomes of a sound nutritional program take weeks, if not months, to experience.

2) Consistency: Training is a form of motor learning, and learning requires repetition. Training consistency can be dramatically enhanced through a variety of techniques, but one of the most powerful methods is also the simplest: scheduling.

There is a VAST difference between thinking, "Tomorrow I'm going to work out." and "My workout is between 7-8am tomorrow morning." In the first case, you might have a vague time frame in mind, say 8:00am. However, by 7:30, you're behind schedule, so you reason to yourself that you'll train after work. Then, by the time you leave work, you realize that you didn't bring your gym clothes with you, so you think, "I'll just train after dinner." And of course, after dinner, you're tired and distracted by the television, and guess what? You missed your workout! Now, you might rationalize that you'll just do the workout tomorrow instead. This leads you to the incorrect assumption that you simply rescheduled your workout rather than skipping it, which is exactly what you did.

On the other hand, knowing that you have a workout (or a meal) scheduled at an exact time, you'll be much more likely to prepare for and keep your appointment. If you DO fail to keep to the schedule, you'll be much more likely to feel a sense of consequence for your decision.

3) Goal-Directedness: The failure to develop goal-directed behavior accounts for more failure than all other causes combined. Most people understand that goals much be specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-referenced (S.M.A.R.T.), however, many people fail to carefully weigh the benefits of achieving the goal versus what must be sacrificed. If, upon careful inspection, you are deeply convinced that the benefits justify the sacrifices, you'll create the psychic and emotional fuel necessary to sustain your motivation when the going gets rough (as it inevitably does!).

4) The Autotellic Mindset: Autotellic people do things primarily for their own intrinsic value, whereas exotellic people do things primarily for the secondary, external reward. In my experience, autotellic athletes are far better able to sustain their motivation. The take home lesson is this: people who

just LOVE to train go much further than those who just want to look better.

5) Open-Mindedness. Closed-mindedness is, in my opinion, a genetically-ingrained survival trait. Thousands of years ago, a Neanderthal man looked under a rock and found some grubs to eat. The technique obviously had value, and it made more sense to look under more rocks than it did to look up in the trees. But for this Neanderthal to go beyond mere survival, he should in fact look up in the trees, for if he did, he might find better food choices. In many ways, athletes are the same way. At some point in their athletic careers, they are convinced to train in a certain way, and because this way lead to a certain degree of success, they now pronounce this "way" as the "only way." So remain receptive to new ideas, because usually, the thing you're looking for is where you aren't looking!

6) Fatigue Management. We LOVE to feel "fragged" after a workout, so much so that subconsciously, we tend to actually modify the workout to produce more post-workout fatigue, rather than to permit a better training performance. When you're trying to do gradually more and more work from session to session, fatigue-management skills are essential.

7) Lifestyle. Many athletes spend untold hours examining and re-examining their training, nutrition, and supplement schedule, while at the same time completely ignoring the fact that their life is antagonistic to their training efforts, rather than supportive of them. Late night partying, exhausting job schedules (I know what you're thinking here, but jobs CAN be changed if you have a good-enough reason), and general inefficiency can wreak havoc on the best-laid plans.

Putting The Concepts Into Action

Where to go now you're wondering?

Here's my suggestion to anyone who's serious about optimizing their training-related behaviors is to do a simple self-evaluation inventory. After giving it some careful thought, make a list of your 3 most destructive behaviors. Rank them from best to worst. Next,

consider the root causes and possible remedies for these behaviors. Can you develop substitutes or alternatives?

Coming Up Next:

That's your homework for this chapter. Next we'll examine some of the most common day-to-day mistakes that almost everyone makes, and also how to avoid them through intelligent decision-making.

4

The Classic Things You Will Do To "Shoot Yourself In The Foot"

Former World karate champion and popular action star Chuck Norris was once asked if he ever made mistakes, upon which he replied "no." Seeing the surprised and somewhat incredulous reaction of the interviewer, Norris continued by explaining that sure, he makes mistakes all the time, but only once. Norris' feeling was that if you learn from your mistakes in order to avoid making the same ones again in the future, they really didn't count as mistakes.

We all like to take a certain amount of pride in doings things right. However, let me assure you, even the smartest, most dedicated trainees make lots of mistakes on an ongoing basis. That's why even the best athletes have coaches. In fact, the better you are, the more important it is to have a skillful coach— someone who's been down the road you're traveling and who can point out the various obstacles along the way. If you can intuit the logic in my argument, I'd like you to allow me to be your coach for a moment as we explore the various errors that people make in their quest for physical perfection, and how to either avoid them in the first place, or to learn to substitute more productive habits and behaviors in the future. What follows are the ten most common and also most significant mistakes that well-meaning gym rats make day in and day out. Odds are, you're guilty of at least three of them, no matter how disciplined and careful you are. So please read on, because the information in this chapter may save you enormous amounts of time and energy as your pursue your training goals.

CLASSIC MISTAKE NUMBER ONE: NO GOAL

All good plans start with a clear, concise picture of the desired objective. In stark contrast to this, I can't tell you how many times I've been setting up on a particular station in the gym when I overhear a conversation like this on the machine next to me:

"So, what ya wanna work today?"

"Dunno, maybe chest?"

"Ummm…I guess so…tryin to remember when I did chest last…how about arms?"

"OK, cool, what exercise ya wanna do first?"

And on it goes as I shake my head in a combination of amusement and pity.

When's the last time you jumped in the car and drove without knowing where you were going? Never? OK, then when's the last time you did a workout without having a crystal-clear objective? Always? I thought so.

EDT offers a better alternative: Each workout, you'll pull out your training log and find your most recent workout of the same type. For each PR Zone, you'll note the weightload you used and the total repetitions you achieved.

You now have a specific objective for your next workout: perform more total reps with the same weight in the same period of time. It's not easy, but it is simple and brief (hey, two out of three ain't bad huh?)

Additional suggestions:

> Please review Chapter Two (Goal-Directed Behavior) and determine at least 3 significant ways to apply the principles to your next training cycle
>
> Make sure your training journal is durable and functional, regardless of whether or not you use a spiral-bound notebook, tracking software, or some other form of record-keeping.

Challenge yourself by aiming for big numbers each workout—the only difference between successful people and everyone else is the size of their goals…make sure your goals are worthy of your complete dedication.

CLASSIC MISTAKE NUMBER TWO: SACRIFICING QUALITY TO QUANTITY

This is both the most common and most costly mistake that most gym rats make.

More isn't better— BETTER is better! Here's a common example of the quantity-mindset at work:

The typical trainee who can do 4-6 chin-ups and who wants to do 10. Typically, he'll simply try to add another rep every time he does chin-ups (increasing quantity). Better way: to decrease quantity by dropping down to sets of 1-2 reps. You'll be less fatigued, and therefore more able to recruit your fast-twitch muscle fibers, which have the best potential for size & strength gains.

Bottom line: Make sure you do something well, before you do it more.

Tips:

If you're not happy with your technique on a particular workout, shoot for a minimal increase in total reps the next time out, and focus your energies on improving your technique instead.

Always strive to move weights as fast as possible on the concentric or positive phase of each lift, particularly at the beginning of the stroke. More speed means more tension, which means better results.

More intense efforts require even more attention to active recovery (see Chapter Ten for more information on this subject).

CLASSIC MISTAKE NUMBER THREE: FATIGUE SEEKING

The way to assess the effectiveness of a workout (or training system) is by the degree to which it improves the qualities and/or abilities you're trying to develop, not by how much pain it produces.

If your primary goal is to be sore, why not consider taking a job as Lennox Lewis' sparring partner? Muscle grows when you gradually force it to perform more and more work in a given time frame from workout to workout. This requires managing fatigue, not seeking it.

Escalating Density Training features built-in mechanisms to ensure optimal fatigue management, including both innovative loading parameters to active recovery measures such as post-workout cryotherapy. EDT also recognizes that each individual has unique recovery capacities and allows for individualization within the overall EDT training structure.

Suggestions:

Focus on achievement, not the after-effects of your efforts.

If you're sore, it is in fact a sign that your muscles are in a repair state— do not train on sore muscles. Instead, wait until you have one full day or no soreness before training the same muscles again.

When in doubt, aggressive personality types should err on the side of doing less, whereas more tentative individuals should err on the side of doing more.

CLASSIC MISTAKE NUMBER FOUR: TRAINING IN PAIN

In my opinion, the timeworn expression "no pain, no gain" is at the root of a lot of bad training decisions. Pain is your body's signal to you that something is wrong. Pay attention! Adjust your workout accordingly, and, most importantly, if you have pain that lasts more than a few days, seek medical attention! It's amazing to see how many people, upon experiencing an injury, simply think "Well, I guess I can't bench anymore, but maybe I can do incline presses." Before long, you'll find that you've "painted yourself into a corner" like a lot of the older guys you see who can now do only 2-3 exercises without pain! Please take not of the following suggestions:

Pain that diminishes or disappears after the warm-up should still be taken seriously. The reason is that your body releases histamines during your early sets, which are a natural painkiller. You may be doing yourself harm without knowing it.

If you experience sudden, sharp pain in a joint during a workout, stop immediately and apply ice to the area. If you do not experience considerable improvement within a few days, seek medical attention.

A feeling of tingling, numbness, or "pins and needles" in one or more extremities should not be ignored—seek medical attention promptly.

CLASSIC MISTAKE NUMBER FIVE: EXCESSIVE FOCUS ON LOAD

I'll never forget the day when, minding my own business at a place called Iron Gym in Goleta, California, a young guy, weighing maybe 165 pounds, asked me if I could spot him on incline dumbbell presses. Although my general premise is that if you need a spotter, you're moving the weights too slowly and should lighten up, I agreed to lend my services anyway. As I follow the guy over to his station, I notice a pair of 110-pound dumbbells laying on the floor next the bench. "Hmmm" I thought. "Wonder what this guy is up to?" I soon found out. To make a long story short, he asked me to hand him the dumbbells one at a time, and after that, I got the unexpected workout of my life as I helped him through 4 forced reps, where I estimate that I lifted about 75 percent of the weight on the first rep, and about 95 percent by the fourth rep! Not all was lost however—that was one of the best trap workouts of my life.

Look, my point in all this is, the amount of weight you can lift does matter, but it isn't the only consideration by any means. A lot of guys for example, will do almost anything to lift more weight, including using powerlifting support gear, significantly reducing the range of motion, and/or using a training partner to help them complete the lift. In each of these examples, you really didn't lift more weight at all—you just appeared to have lifted more!

When you train EDT style, your target weights are clearly defined: choose a weightload that equals or approximates your 10RM for each exercise— in other words, a weight you can lift for 10 reps but not 11. Then, at the beginning of each PR Zone, you'll lift that weight for sets of 5, and over the course of the PR Zone, you'll gradually shift to 4 reps, then 3, 2, and finally, singles, as your fatigue levels elevate. You may rightly question the logic of performing only 5 or less reps with a 10RM weight, so let me explain the reasoning behind this: the training effect you'll gain from lifting any given weight is a factor of not only the load, but also the speed with which the load is lifted. Think of it this way: if I place a 10-pound weight on your foot, no problem. But, if I drop that weight on your foot, big problem! In both cases, the weight is the same, but the speed is different. When you lift a weight as fast as possible on the concentric (or "positive") phase of the lift, you put more tension on the muscles than if you lift it slowly. This allows you to get more done with less weight. It makes your efforts far more efficient, which is the whole point of EDT.

Tips to Consider:

Your chosen weightloads should enable "brisk" sets of 5 at the beginning of each PR Zone.

The difficulty of loads selected in antagonistic exercises pairings should be as similar as possible.

The selected weightloads should allow between (approximately) 60 and 75 repetitions for each exercise within a 15-minute PR Zone.

CLASSIC MISTAKE NUMBER SIX: TOO MUCH FOCUS ON STRENGTHS

Just because you've heard it a gazillion times doesn't make it any less true: a chain is only as strong as its weakest link.

And from my experience, a strength overused becomes a weakness.

Consider the following tips:

Determine if your weak link is correctable or not (short arms, for example, may be undesirable for a deadlift, but

nothing can be done about it). Focus on correctable weaknesses.

Make a list of all the major muscle groups, and then rank them from 1-10 in terms of your own development. Next, take the two lowest-scoring muscle groups and allot one training day a week where you work only on these muscles.

List your five least productive habits. Consider how you might substitute more productive habits in their place.

CLASSIC MISTAKE NUMBER SEVEN: INSUFFICIENT DIVERSITY

I'm never asked, "What's the best food," but I'm always asked, "What's the best (exercise, workout, time of day to train, etc)." There's no such thing as one best food because no single food has all the nutrients you need. Similarly, no single exercise or program can be all things to all bodies. The best program is the one you're not doing, and here's why:

The effectiveness of any program depends on the degree to which it challenges your body. The problem is that familiar stressors are less challenging, because the body habituates (habituation is the gradual reduction of a response when an initially new stimulus is repeated over and over) to them. Every time you repeat a training program, it becomes less effective.

All programs and methods have both negative and positive aspects, no matter how well designed or specific. Too much time on one program, and you'll demonstrate a tendency to habituate to the positive aspects and accumulate the negative ones. For example, if you perform barbell bench presses every week, you may develop an imbalance between the front and rear deltoid muscles, despite the fact that you are not getting stronger on the exercise.

Unchanging training routines lead to overuse injuries. Athletes are particularly vulnerable, since their training tends to become more and more specific over time.

People tend to be creatures of habit, but even good habits have a

downside as we've just seen. Be sure to provide for enough variety so that your workouts remain challenging and therefore, productive.

CLASSIC MISTAKE NUMBER EIGHT: LACK OF CONTINUITY

While variation is important, so is continuity. Getting stronger is largely a matter of "motor learning." And this requires repetition, just like any other kind of learning.

If you change exercises every single workout for example, you never get enough practice on any single exercise to get better at it. Similarly, if you mis-interpret the classic texts on periodization, you might make the mistake of training for muscle hypertrophy for 6 weeks, and then maximal strength for 6 weeks, reasoning that maximal strength training is potentiated by a prior phase devoted to hypertrophy development. The only problem is, by the time you're 4 weeks into the strength phase, you're 4 weeks away from the last hypertrophy workout, which means the quality you worked so hard to develop for 6 weeks is now rapidly fading away as you focus on another objective.

Consider these tips:

One way to strike a good balance between diversity and continuity is to change half of your exercises every 4 weeks.

Generally, exercises which utilize (relatively) large loads and multiple joints (such as squats and deadlifts, for example), are more difficult than "isolation" exercises, and therefore, should be practiced on a more continuous basis in order to maintain your expertise.

CLASSIC MISTAKE NUMBER NINE: POOR BIOMECHANICS

You can learn a lot from observing others…sometimes by looking at what they're doing right, but just as often, by noticing what they do wrong. And if you use the latter category of learning experience, you'll find most gyms and health clubs to be a wealth of educational opportunity!

Allow me to relate one such example from my own experiences in order to make a point about proper lifting technique: This one goes way back, probably about 1984, in a small gym called (I

believe) Northern Dutchess Health & Fitness in Red Hook, New York. Two young guys were (for some reason) spotting each other on standing barbell curls. They were both using loads that were far beyond what they were capable of lifting, and every single rep required intense partner-assistance and the most horrendous physical contortions you can imagine in order to complete each rep. Over a series of weeks, I witnessed these two guys perform that same workout over and over, and I began to joke to myself that they must have been Russian sport scientists who had devised a stealthy way of protecting their secret techniques— each rep required equal contribution from each partner, making it impossible to determine who was the lifter and who was the spotter!

OK, all humor aside, here are some insights and suggestions on good lifting technique:

Generally speaking, if you're lifting a weight correctly, you'll feel tension through the target muscle but no pain or discomfort in the associated joint.

Your movement should be precise and consistent from rep to rep, almost like you are a machine. If you find yourself "shaking and quaking" under the weight, it's probably too heavy relative to your current abilities.

If it looks wrong, it probably is. For example, if the bar isn't parallel to the floor when you squat, deadlift, or bench press, it means you're applying more force with one limb than the other.

Lift light weights as if they were heavy, and heavy weights as if they were light. For example, if you can't lift a 300-pound bar over your head to put it on your shoulders in preparation to squat, don't do it with an empty bar either. Every rep you do should be viewed as an opportunity to perfect your technique.

Regular small doses of steady-state exercise can actually improve recovery, but too much can sap your strength and lead to muscle wasting.

If you compare the physiques of short sprinters against long distance athletes, you'll see that the sprinters are just as lean (if not leaner) than their aerobic counterparts, even though they do little to no aerobic exercise. Extensive and frequent forays into the aerobic zone can cause your body to lose muscle (since muscle weighs more than fat, it is the body's preferred tissue to cannibalize in the interest in lightening the load). If you've been trying (unsuccessfully) to lose 10 to 20 pounds of unwanted fat, think of resistance training as the core of your program, and aerobic exercise as the supplementary activity— not the other way around.

CLASSIC MISTAKE NUMBER TEN: TOO MUCH AEROBIC EXERCISE

Tips:

If you feel deprived if you can't ride your bike or go out for a run once in a while, consider doing anaerobic intervals instead of aerobic workouts performed at the so-called "target heart rate"—research shows that interval training burns far more calories than aerobic exercise. In fact, if you want to jump on your bike or rowing ergometer (for example), I'd suggest you exercise either below the target heart rate (which will facilitate faster recoveries) or above it (which will facilitate greater bodyfat oxidation).

Don't jog or run when your legs are fatigued from resistance exercise.

Vary the content of aerobic exercise rather than doing the same activity every time. Your cardiovascular system doesn't know which muscles are creating the demand.

OK, we've covered most of the preliminaries…so now, let's take a detailed look at what makes EDT truly unique in Chapter Five. Make sure you digest this information thoroughly before proceeding to the actual EDT programs in Part Two of the book…

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The Heart And Soul Of EDT. Why This Program Works And Why You Should Follow It

WHAT MAKES EDT UNIQUE?

At this point, you're probably wondering what all the clamor is about and exactly what makes EDT so different from every other way of working out. Fair question! Here are

- Unlike all other programs, EDT has "native intelligence." Much like a smart bomb that knows exactly how to get to its target, EDT adjusts to you (rather than the other way around) workout by workout. This means that every workout you do becomes more effective than the one that preceded it. You'll be absolutely assured of always performing the optimal numbers of exercises, sets, reps, and workouts.

- Other programs tell you how many exercises to do, how many sets & reps, and how long to rest between sets. Then you complete that program, regardless of how long it takes. With EDT, you're given set time-frames (called "PR Zones™") and THEN you'll do as many total repetitions as you can in that time frame.

- Other programs focus mainly on manipulating volume (usually by increasing it). EDT acknowledges the importance of both volume and intensity, but focuses primarily on a little-appreciated, yet critically important facet of the training load called "density." Essentially, density is the work/rest ratio of your training. Your arms will get bigger when you force them to do gradually more and more work in the same period of time. Many programs allow this to happen, but EDT FORCES it to happen!

- No other program matches EDT's motivational appeal! Every time you initiate a workout, you know exactly:

  What must be accomplished, and…

  When you'll be finished

Every workout, you'll set a new personal record. And numbers don't lie—when they go through the roof, so will your arm size!

- Most other programs are vague (to say the least) about how to progress your weightloads from workout to workout. This always struck me as being a REAL problem, since progressive overload is the very hallmark of effective resistance training programs. EDT workouts employ what is known as the "Critical Density Index™ (CDI). Very simply, as soon as you can improve your performance by 20% or better on any given workout, you increase the weightload the very next workout by 5% and start the process of setting NEW PR's every workout with this new weight.

- Most other programs instruct you to go to failure (or at least very close to failure) every workout, or at least most all the time. BAD IDEA. Let me provide an analogy to show you how absurd this concept is. Let's say you're a doctor, an office worker, a carpenter, whatever. Do you organize the day's events & activities in such a way that you'll be as tired as possible at the end of the day, OR, do you organize the day's events & activities in such a way that you'll get as much done as you can?!?!?! Obviously, the latter. But when it comes to exercise, almost all of us do the former! Very often, the right way is 180 degrees opposite of what seems instinctively correct, and EDT is just another example of this universal truth: With EDT workouts, the vast majority of sets come NOWHERE NEAR failure! In fact, you'll start with a weight you can lift 10 times, and perform sets of 5 reps with that weight. As you approach the end of each PR Zone™, you will approach, and in some cases, reach failure. But this is a rarity rather than the rule.

PART TWO

The Evolution Of Your Success (The Programs)

ÒThe best program is the one youÕre not doing.Ó
Ñ The Author

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Laying The Foundation

Chapters Six, Seven, and Eight contain the three successive EDT arm workout cycles, starting with the entry-level cycle presented here in Chapter Six.

By "entry-level," I don't mean "beginner" or "easy"—far from it. This introductory cycle will leave your bi's and tri's screaming for mercy, believe me. In this case, I've chosen the phrase entry-level to indicate that it is the suggested starting point for those trainees who are unfamiliar or new to the EDT system. This cycle serves to introduce the concepts and somewhat unusual loading parameters used in EDT with a minimum of confusion. Once you've mastered the system, you'll move on to the second and third cycles as you travel the path to unprecedented levels of muscular growth.

The EDT arm specialization mesocycles presented in Part Two of the book consist of two workouts a week, separated by 2-3 days of rest between workouts. It's important to note that there are no "set" loading parameters in the conventional sense (see "EDT Training Procedure" below for more details). Your sole objective is to force-feed gradually more and more work on your bi's and tri's for 8 successive workouts. Couple this with optimal pre- and post-workout nutrition and post-workout cryotherapy, and the result is an average gain of 1/8 per inch per workout. It's that simple (on paper anyway—the trick is to survive it!).

So here's your first EDT arm cycle—Enjoy!

DAY ONE

Pre-workout:

- 500mg Vitamin C (3-4 hours prior to workout)
- 5,000 to 6,000 of L-Tyrosine (my favorite L-Tyrosine product is Power Drive from Biotest (see resources section for more information Mix the L-Tyrosine in club soda instead of water for better absorption.

First PR Zone (15 Minutes):

A-1: Standing Dumbbell Reverse Curl
A-2: Lying Dumbbell Triceps Extension
B: Consume a "fast" protein/carb shake containing about 15 grams of whey protein and about 25 grams of fast-absorbing carbohydrate (for a 200 pound individual—adjust upward or downward according to your own bodyweight). My preferred product for post-workout nutrition is Surge by Biotest (see Resources section for more information)

Second PR Zone (10 Minutes):

A-1: Low Cable Hammer Curl.
A-2: Straight-Bar Triceps Pushdown
B: Consume a "fast" protein/carb shake containing about 15 grams of whey protein and about 25 grams of fast-absorbing carbohydrate.
C: Post-Workout Cryotherapy: I first learned to appreciate the value of post-workout cryotherapy from Jay Schroeder, conditioning coach for Adam Archuletta, who went on to break the NFL combines bench press record last year. Adam benched 225 pounds for 31 reps at a bodyweight of 212. I subsequently used this method on a number of athletes with great success, including Gea Johnson, who broke the track record in Park City, Utah, during the 2002 Olympic trials for bobsleigh. I use a cryocup (from Cryo Therapy, 1-800-ICE-5722) on each arm—just continue the massage until the cup has entirely melted. Focus on soft tissue, staying away from bones and joints. Concentrate on long, deep strokes, going parallel to the muscle fibers of the biceps, triceps, and forearms. IMPORTANT NOTE: You may recall that in the introduction of this book I spoke about the importance of being willing to pay the price for

extraordinary results. Now it's time to walk the walk. Yes, this will be messy, inconvenient, it looks completely nutty, and, as you'll soon find out, it feels completely miserable—all I can say is just suck it up and do it. Again, do NOT skip this step.

DAY TWO

Pre-workout:

- 500mg Vitamin C (3-4 hours prior to workout)
- 5,000 to 6,000 of L-Tyrosine

First PR Zone (15 Minutes):

A-1: Incline Bench Overhead Pressdowns
A-2: Lazy Man's Dumbbell Curl
B: Consume a "fast" protein/carb shake containing about 15 grams of whey protein and about 25 grams of fast-absorbing carbohydrate

Second PR Zone (10 Minutes):

A-1: Concentration Curl (Right Side)
A-2: Concentration Curl (Left Side)
B: Consume a "fast" protein/carb shake containing about 15 grams of whey protein and about 25 grams of fast-absorbing carbohydrate.
C: Post-Workout Cryotherapy

EDT Training Procedure

General Notes:

The arm training cycles in Part Two of this book are specialization programs. This means that training for other muscle groups should be placed on a maintenance cycle as you focus your resources on arm training. Although there are a number of ways to carry out maintenance training, my suggestion is to maintain the intensity of the training load (i.e., the amount of weight you use) while at the same time reduc-

ing the volume (total amount of pounds lifted, as calculated by multiplying the weight by the total reps performed with that weight) by approximately 50 percent. Using this suggestion, if your "typical" training procedure for a particular exercise is 4 sets of 8 repetitions, then use 4 sets of 4 repetitions using the same weights.

The workouts should be performed on non-consecutive days (e.g., Mondays and Thursdays, or Wednesdays and Saturdays).

Escalating Density Training is based on the concept of doing more and more work from workout to workout. Therefore, it's critical that your exercise biomechanics (i.e., technique) is consistent on every workout. If you perform strict curls on one workout and loose form the next, you aren't really doing more work (for the arms at least!)

I recommend 10-15 minutes of light to moderate cardio, followed by 10-15 minutes of light stretching on "off" days for the purpose of promoting active recovery and reducing soreness.

Each workout in this cycle consists of (2) PR Zones of either 10 or 15-minutes duration separated by a short (5-minute) rest periods. In each PR Zone, you'll generally perform two exercises, for a total of 3-4 exercises per workout.

In each PR Zone, you'll typically perform two antagonistic exercises in alternating fashion, back and forth, using the same weight for all sets, until the PR Zone has elapsed.

After warming up the first exercise(s), select a load that approximates a 10RM for each exercise. Ideally, the weight used for each exercise should be equally difficult.

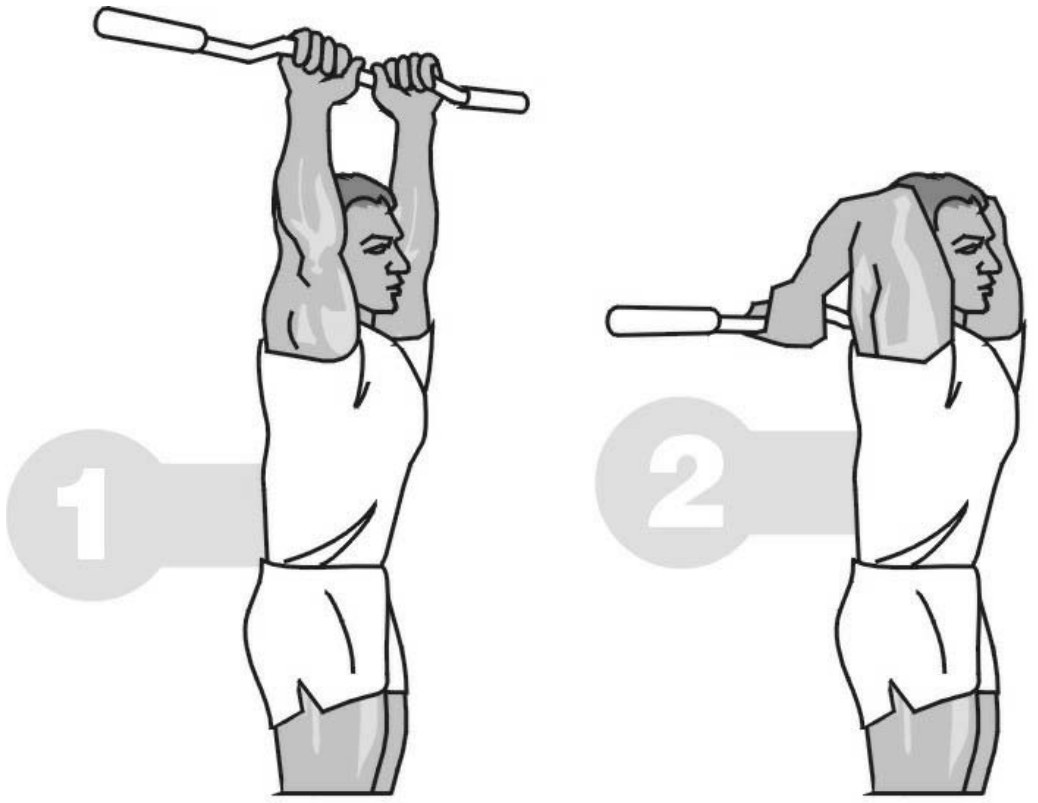
Sets/Reps/Rest Intervals: This is where EDT is truly unique. Most people will find it most productive to do higher repetition (but not maximal effort) sets and shorter rests at the beginning, and then gradually progress to fewer reps per set and longer rest intervals as fatigue accumulates. As an

example, you might begin by performing sets of 5 with very short (10-15 second) rests. As you begin to fatigue, you'll increase your rest intervals as you drop down to sets of 4, then 2, and as the time limit approaches, you might crank out a few singles in an effort of accomplish as many repetitions as possible in the time allotted.

NOTE: Do not perform early sets to failure, or even near failure. My recommended starting point is to do 1/2 of what is possible (e.g., 5 reps with a 10RM weight) at the beginning of the time frame. As the time limit approaches however, you'll find yourself working at or near failure as you attempt to break your rep record.

Progression: Each time you repeat the workout; your objective is to simply perform more total repetitions in the same time frame. As soon as you can increase the total number of reps by 20 percent or more, start the next workout with 5 percent more weight and start over. Similarly, if you manage to improve upon your last performance (for the same workout) by 40 percent, then you'll increase your weights by 10 percent on the next workout.

EXERCISE DESCRIPTIONS FOR THIS TRAINING CYCLE:

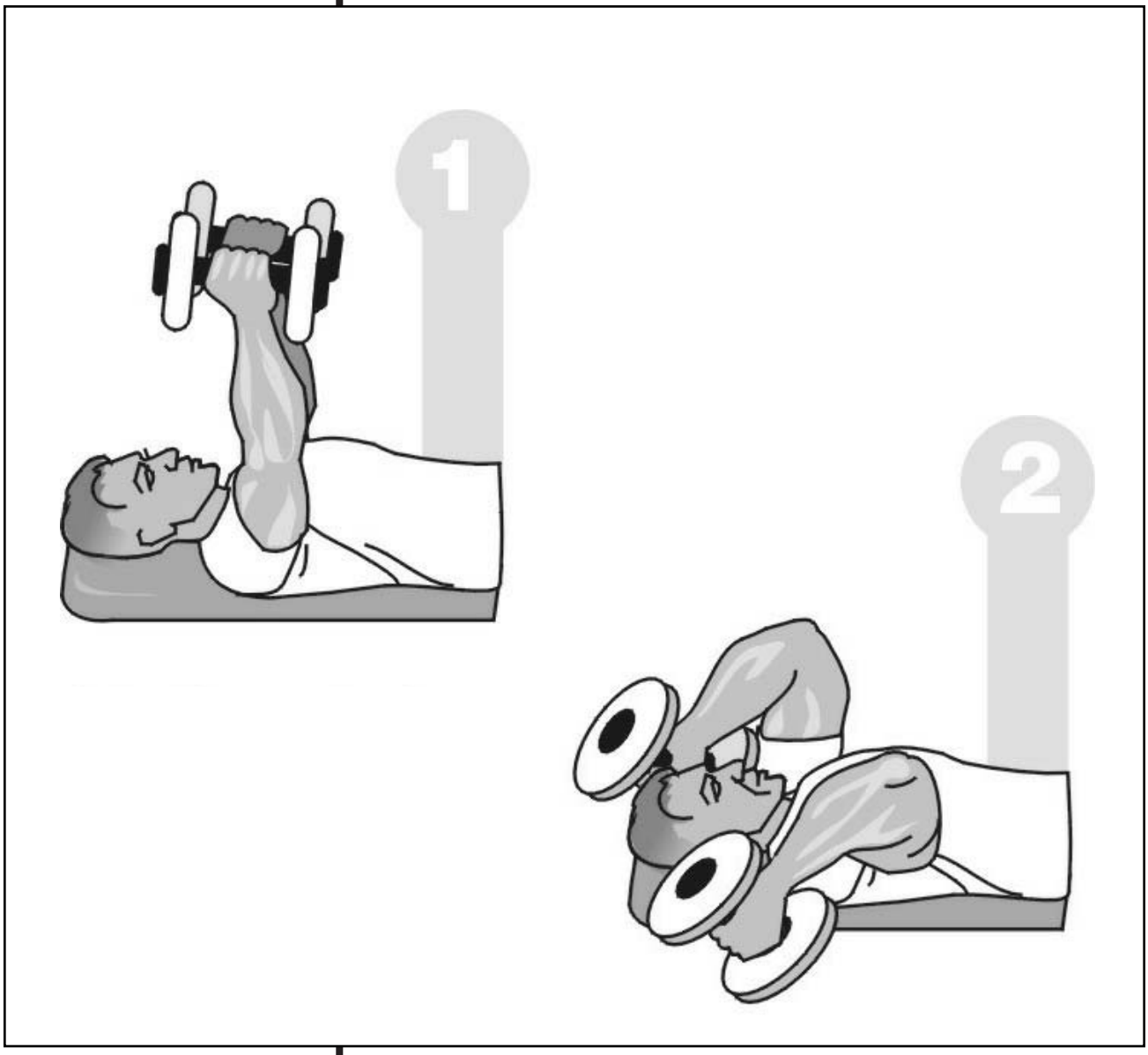


Overhead EZ-Bar Triceps Extensions

Standing Dumbbell Reverse Curl

After gripping the dumbbells firmly with a pronated (palms down) grip, the lifter stands erect, with each elbow pressed firmly to the side of his or her body. Without moving at the shoulders, and with each elbow locked firmly in place, the lifter flexes the arms at the elbow, raising the dumbbells in upward arc until both arms are completely flexed. The dumbbells are then lowered through the same path, and this movement is repeated for the desired number of repetitions.

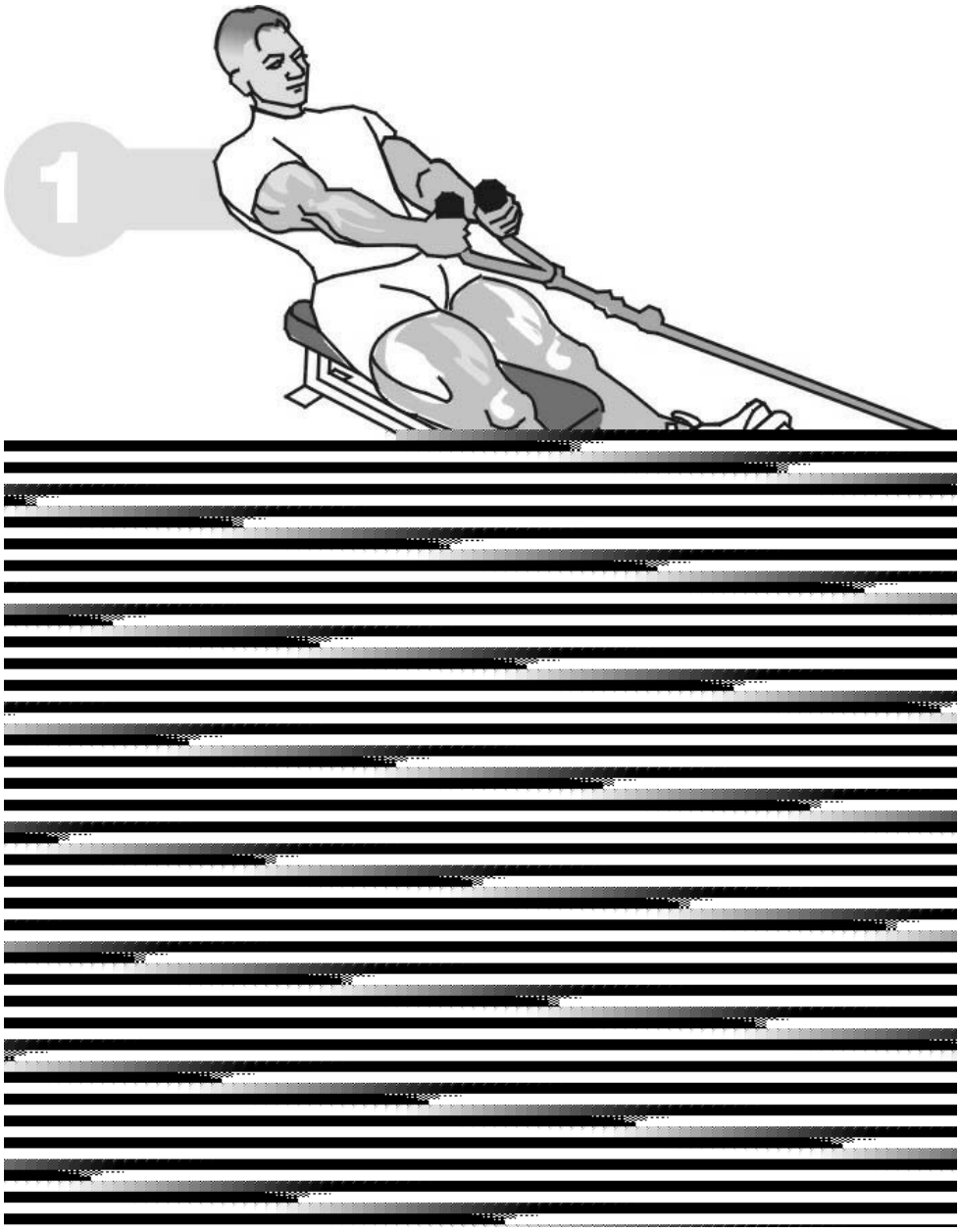
EXERCISE DESCRIPTIONS FOR THIS TRAINING CYCLE:



Lying Dumbbell Tricep Extension

Position yourself face up on a bench or Swiss ball. Using dumbbells (shown) or a straight bar, extend your arms until they are perpendicular to your torso. From this position, relax your triceps to allow your elbows to flex until the dumbbells touch your shoulders (when using a bar, full flexion is realized when your biceps make contact with your forearms). Reverse this action to return to the starting position, keeping your elbows stabilized (motionless) throughout the exercise.

EXERCISE DESCRIPTIONS FOR THIS TRAINING CYCLE:



Low Cable Hammer Curl

Attach a triceps rope to the low cable. Sit on a bench positioned perpendicular to the cable's line of pull. Sit on the bench, bracing the feet against the lower supports of the cable unit. Lean back to a 45-degree angle, anchoring the elbows to one's sides (similar to performing a triceps pushdown), and perform a hammer curl.