

## The Gym is Your Lab and Your Body is the Experiment

**\*In the eyes of me, a Personal Trainer\***

The modern day gym should be considered a human performance laboratory where you go to exceed in strength, speed or metabolic demands that you may need in life. Additionally, it is a place where you hunt out bad movement patterns, posture and mechanical tendency. Therefore, as a Personal Trainer, I believe it is vital we pay attention, especially to our clients, instead of being a god damn drill sergeant.

For me, the gym is a controlled environment in which you can safely and systematically layer skill progressions while simultaneously addressing mechanical and range of motion issues. You regularly see people that can correctly perform an overhead squat with a dowel. This exercise has high hip and ankle demands and you must keep the torso upright and shoulders stable with arms locked out. However, if you get that same person to run few hundred meters, then do the same overhead squat with a something a little heavier for a few more repetitions, all while competing against someone else. You end up with a complete different person/exercise.

All we did was add a little **volume, intensity, stress** and **metabolic demand** to the overhead squat. This then made the invisible, visible. The point is that the person who aces the quick test, sometimes falls apart under real-life working conditions. In the gym you have to adjust load, volume and intensity to match the persons ability and capabilities. This not only exposes holes in their movement profile, but also makes them stronger, faster and generally more functional.

Every person I train is different. If the Personal Trainer follows 'the one size fits all approach', then I am sorry, but they are stealing your money and have an easy job. I know and learnt that people can hide mobility restrictions and poor technique for short periods. However, when they start to begin to fatigue can lose effective positioning. Don't get me wrong, I do not class myself as a world class PT. Although, after reading all my client testimonials, I know that I do a great job at observing their movement pattern, identifying weaknesses and fixing problems.

This is what you need to think about within the gym, even if you don't have a Personal Trainer.

**'Observe** and **highlight** every aspect of your **movement quality** and **fix** the **suboptimal** pieces, all while **operating** within a **safe** and **controlled** environment.

That is why I consider Strength and Conditioning (my degree) the heart and soul of athletic development and human performance model. Sorry to all the Cross Fitters out there. A program for me is an organised, well structured plan that challenges movement capabilities with the stress leaving minimal body and dysfunctional patterns. Why does anyone want to struggle stepping or sitting down in pain. I could hand my PT uniform to anyone and they could destroy the hardest military person in the planet. It takes skill and knowledge to make sure people have long term development.

Lastly, I know most of us have no gym in sight at this moment of time. If you have a gym at home, holla at me when this is over. The good news is that while at home you can still program workouts. Slow the movements down, take a little less rest, have enough rest, squat with a band etc. Just make sure it is safe, controlled and challenging enough.

Takeaway points -

- Learning how to move correctly is like learning how to read and write at school. You get a formal education and become fluent. Bad news you got to invest in some time and go back to basics. The good news is that it's never too late.
- Get programming in some way.
- Keep moving In these dark times
- Think about hiring me after this is over ;)