

## ***Strive to Achieve Your Physical Potential***

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Whether you are elite athlete on the field or court or a champion in the field of life, you should always have the burning desire to achieve your physical potential. By ensuring that your body is fine tuned and firing on all cylinders will allow you to perform at your highest level possible. To achieve your physical potential you must have a clear understanding of the essential components which influence your body. These essential components are your personal habits in your mind set, physical training, nutrition and recovery. By continuously evaluating and setting new goals in each of these areas, you will ensure that you are on the optimal path to achieving your physical potential.

### **What is your physical potential?**

For everyone the answer will be different. It doesn't matter if you are a professional athlete or a business professional; we all have tremendous physical potential to achieve great things. When physically prepared, the human body has virtually endless capabilities to what can be physically achieved. Individuals that are committed to physical achievement have completed a spectrum of feats, such as running up to speeds of 25 mph, jumping over 40", lifting over a thousand pounds, running over 100 miles straight, holding breath for over 10 minutes, and swimming endless lengths at a time, to name a few. Be open minded to the possibilities of your body and physical potential. You don't have to set or break a world record in order to achieve your physical potential. Just continually strive to be the best physically you can be every day of your life.

### **Mind Set**

One of the most important factors in the quest of achieving your physical potential is a proper mind set. I begin with this component, because I believe 99% of physical achievement occurs from the abilities of the mind. Unfortunately, we live in a society where being lazy and unhealthy is acceptable. On the television, the ever increasing drug commercials try to convince us to just pop a pill instead of taking care of our bodies. We are constantly being bombarded by negativity from the news media and pessimistic people that almost seem to like being miserable! Always be very cautious of what you allow into your mind. Limit your exposure to negative stimulus such as

negative people, negative news coverage, or any other source of negativity that will inherently bring you down. By limiting your exposure to negativity, you will prevent your mind from being filled with useless clutter allowing you to focus more on the positive aspects of your physical achievement.

Over the years, I have been heavily influenced by my father, and other great motivational and goal setting gurus such as Zig Ziglar, Napoleon Hill, Norman Vincent Peale, and Brian Tracy to name a few. From all of these great men I have learned valuable strategies and methods that are directly applicable to achieving your physical potential. The reoccurring theme presented by all of these gentlemen, is what ever the mind can conceive and believe it can achieve. This powerful statement can be applied to help you strive to achieve your physical potential.

According to Dr. Hill the starting point for all achievement is the *Definiteness of Purpose* which is developing a burning desire to achieve your goal. With a solid game plan and the burning desire, there is literally nothing that can get in your way of achieving your physical goals. Your goal should be to reach the top 3-5% of the population in physical fitness, which I call the upper echelon of society and physical achievers. I characterize this top 3-5% as the elite minority, who choose to treat their body as a temple and understand the importance of proper mind set, physical training, nutrition and recovery. This top 3-5% does not make excuses; they take action every single day to ensure that they are always moving towards achieving their ultimate physical potential.

### **Where are you now?**

The first step in the quest to reaching your ultimate physical potential is to understand where you are presently. Without this knowledge in hand, you will not have a clear vision and understanding of the direction you need to take. By taking a critical look at yourself and your habits, you will be able to determine the areas of your lifestyle that require an improvement. Carefully evaluate each area which impacts your physical potential and determine where change is needed.

## **Six Ways to Turn Desire Into Physical Achievement**

From the writings of Dr. Hill, his philosophies can be applied to convert the burning desire you possess into its physical equivalent by using what I call the ***Six Ways To Turn Desire Into Physical Achievement*** with six definite practical steps to determine your physical goals:

1. Determine in your mind what areas you want to improve. Perhaps you need to reduce your bodyfat 5%, or increase your strength, flexibility or speed. Be as detailed as possible about the specific areas you need to improve upon.
2. Determine exactly what you intend to give in return for the physical achievement and attainment of the goal in regards to efforts in physical training, nutrition or recovery methods.
3. Establish a definite date when you intend to obtain the physical achievement goals, no matter if it is in 4, 8, 12 weeks or 1 year.
4. Create a definite plan for carrying out your desire, and begin at once, whether you are ready or not, to put this plan in to action.
5. From the previous steps, now write down your specific goals, the goal date and what you intend to give to achieve these goals, and include the plan you will use.
6. Read your written statement aloud, twice daily, once in the morning and once before going to bed. As you read the statements- visualize yourself like you have already achieved your physical goals...leaner, stronger, faster, or etc.

Once you have completed these six steps you will have established a clear path towards your goal. Next, from where you are presently, to the point of your goal, work backwards and set incremental goals between these points and establish a time line to achieve each goal. For example, if your goal is to reduce your bodyfat 12% in 12 weeks, when working backwards your increment goals would look like this:

**Week 12 Goal:** Decrease Bodyfat 12% Total

**Week 8 Goal:** Decrease Bodyfat 8% Total

**Week 4 Goal:** Decrease Bodyfat 4% Total

**Week 1-** Starting Point

By setting these incremental or smaller goals will ensure that you are on the right track towards success. By achieving all of your individual incremental goals you will easily be able to reach the end goal, in this situation is decreasing your bodyfat 12% in 12 weeks. Once you have clearly defined your goals and are in pursuit of them, do not let yourself get off of the path. With a solid game plan and the burning desire, there is literally nothing that can get in your way of achieving your goals. Take clear and decisive action everyday! Once you get rolling, momentum will build and will propel you forward towards your goals.

Over the years I have had the opportunity to work with some of the best athletes in their respective sports, the first step I take with all of them is establishing an *optimal path* to achieving their physical goals. I describe staying on the optimal path as persistently staying focused on the goal and adhering to the mandatory physical training, nutrition and recovery program to achieve their goals and to become the best they can become. The fastest way between two points is a straight line- when you stay on the *optimal path* there will be less resistance and difficulty in obtaining your goals. When consulting with season two UFC reality show Pro MMA fighter Mike Whitehead, he was initially at weight of 270 lbs. and his goal weight for his next fight was 205 lbs. With less than 12 weeks to accomplish his goal and fight on national television- we had to layout a precise plan to get him ready quick! I structured the necessary training, nutrition and recovery program for him-but then it was up to Mike and his burning desire to achieve his goal of being 205 lbs. Mike's burning desire combined with his persistence paid off greatly when he weighed in at his fight weighing under 205 lbs!

### **Daily Affirmations**

Daily affirmations can be helpful to keep your mind free from negativity, and focused on positive, goal-oriented thoughts. Affirmations are a form of autosuggestion in which a statement of a desirable intention of your mind is deliberately meditated on and/or repeated. By utilizing this technique, you will create a mental program for your mind to be directed towards your goals of achieving your physical potential. Affirmations are always phrased in the first person and usually in a present tense, "I am", rather than a the future tense , "I will", in order to increase the realization of the statement. For example, you could repeat your affirmations while exercising.

Such as "I am getting stronger", or "I am getting leaner", or "I am getting faster". These affirmations will help to keep you motivated. Soon they will be part of your thought process and will help fuel you forward to achieving your goals.

### **Visualization**

Visualization can help you develop a clear mental picture of where you want to be or what you want to achieve. This technique can be used with affirmations to make a powerful combination, fueling your physical achievement. I have personally utilized this technique for many years throughout my own training and with my athletes to break into higher levels. This can be directly applied to anything that you may believe to be physically challenging or difficult. For example, over the years, when trying to set new records or personal best in a particular lift, I would complete the repetition successfully in my mind before I ever touched the weight. By practicing visualization techniques you can instantly improve your bodies abilities! Use this on a regular basis to overcome self-doubt or fear when striving to reach any physical goal.

### **Eliminate Negative Thoughts**

Fear, self-doubt and negativity are the enemy of progress and physical achievement. A great way to reduce all of these is to constantly be focused on your goals and be thinking about taking action. By staying focused on action, you will have less time to ponder and think negatively. If a negative thought enters your mind, quickly replace it with a positive thought...tell yourself, "I can, I can, I can!"

### **Associate with Like Minded People**

The individuals you associate with will have a dramatic influence on you. As the old saying goes, choose your friends wisely. By choosing to associate and spend time with others that have similar interests and goals as you, will help you reach higher levels of personal physical achievement. You have the right to be selective to whom you associate with. You should discontinue relationships that present negativity, and may hinder you from achieving your goals. Stay clear of people that are negative and pessimistic, they can quickly derail you off the path to your physical potential. Surround yourself with positive, optimistic individuals that choose to live a healthy and balanced life style.

## **Failure is Not an Option**

After you have set your physical achievement goals, and you determine what must be done to achieve the goals, never consider failure! From the beginning you should tell yourself that failure is not even an option, and you are bound to succeed. By eliminating failure as an option, you will quickly reduce your self doubt and fear which will fuel you forward to achieving your goals.

## **Physical Training**

Like every creature on the face of the earth, we have been built to survive and perform physical tasks. There was a time when we used our bodies on a daily basis to complete physically rigorous tasks such hunting, gathering, farming, and building. These physically demanding tasks required each individual to be physically fit for the sake of survival. In the modern society we live in, which is full on luxuries and conveniences, the amount of physical work we must complete on a daily basis has been eliminated. For this reason, we must be incorporate daily exercise or physical training to ensure the optimal function of our body. The human body is an adaptive being that has the ability to rapidly adapt to the physical stimulus or demands that are applied. Proper physical training provides a positive stimulus that allows each of your body's physical abilities to improve. According to the goals that you have established, your physical training or exercise should be reflective of your goals and place you in the right direction to achieving your goals. Do not get caught up in adhering strictly to only one training method or training philosophy. Be open minded to all ways of physically training. Over my career, I have thoroughly researched and applied just about every physical training method that exists. These methods and philosophies have included: bodyweight training, free weight training, band training, machine training, vibration training, strongmen training, powerlifting, Olympic lifting, bodybuilding, sandbag training, kettlebell training, gymnastics, martial arts, boxing, endurance training, sand-pit training, sprint training and the list goes on and on. What I have learned that works best it to keep an open mind and be willing to apply any and all forms of training to reach your physical potential.

## **Address Your Weaknesses to Build Upon Your Strengths**

The human body is a kinetic chain that is only as strong as the weakest link. One of the fastest ways to improve your physical performance is to identify and target your

areas of weakness. For some of you it may be your core muscles, but for some of you, it may be an inability to squat properly or a lack of mobility.

### **Master Your Own Bodyweight**

To reach your physical potential you should be a master of your own bodyweight. This means you should have a solid foundation of strength and be able to complete any and all bodyweight movements. This includes movements such as squats, various lunges, various steps, bridges, bends, push-ups, pull-up, various planks, various chops and rotations, bear crawls, walkouts, burpees and etc. Even though I can bench press over 400 lbs and squat over 600 lbs, these movements still present quite a challenge for me! Your goal should be able to complete any movement in any plane of motion without any restriction from lack of strength or flexibility.

### **Do What You Don't Like the Most**

A very simple philosophy I have utilized over the years, is to do what you do not like to do the most. To constantly progress physically, you should get out of your comfort zone. By incorporating training methods that you find difficult, will most likely yield the greatest progress.

### **Be Cautious of What You Hear and Read**

There are many myths and misconceptions when it comes to physical training. Always question any information you may read or hear on the television in regards to exercise and physical training. Make sure any information you listen to comes from a professional in the field, with a degree and reputable certifications to validate the information. This will reduce the likelihood that the information you are getting is false and misleading.

### **Monkey See, Monkey Do**

Just because you see someone doing a certain exercise, program or method at the gym, does not necessarily mean it will work for you. Due to the diversity and complexity of each person's body, everyone will have different needs and goals. This means you should be training to meet your goals, not the person's that you are watching.

### **A Partner Can Push You to New Limits**

Find someone that has similar physical abilities and goals as you to workout with. Training with a partner can motivate you to reach new levels of physical achievement and will help hold you accountable to your goals. Be sure to constantly challenge and encourage each other to push forward to achieve your goals.

### **Strive for Continuous Progress**

Continuously strive to make improvements in every area of your physical abilities, whether it is strength, power, speed, agility, balance, flexibility, or endurance. From the goals you have set, make sure that you are making measurable progress in each area of your training and exercise. If a certain exercise or method is not working for you, discontinue it and try a different approach. Always strive to set new PR's or Personal Records in your training. This will ensure that you are constantly challenging yourself and getting outside of your comfort zone, forcing your body to adapt and become better.

### **Nutrition**

As the old saying goes, "you are what you eat", could not be closer to the truth. The nutrients you consume on a daily basis have a significant impact on the overall function and physical performance of your body. To reach your physical potential is important that you understand the basics about nutrition and how each nutrient influences the function of your body. Many individuals view eating as a program or something you focus on temporarily to achieve a goal. If you look at nutrition like the majority of people in our society look at it, you will fall short of reaching your physical potential. Every physiological process in the human body requires energy to function. The energy is produced from calories, or units of energy, which the body extracts from carbohydrates, protein and fats. These nutrients work in synergy to fuel your body's vital health and levels of physical performance. Every second there is thousand of chemical reactions occurring within the body that require the correct ratio and amount of these nutrients and vitamins, minerals and water. If there is an imbalance or deficiency in any of these areas, your body will be unable to perform at optimal levels. I always say, if we had a control panel on the outside of our body and we could open it, and see all that is going on inside of our body, we would have a greater appreciation for the complexity of the human body and its reliance on the

vital nutrients from the food we eat. According to your goals, your dietary habits should be structured to contribute to your forward progress of achieving your goals.

### **If it Walks, Swims, or Grows Out of The Ground, Its Okay**

Consume foods that are as close to the natural state as possible. Your dietary habits should consist of lean meats, fruits, vegetables, grains and good sources of fat such as healthy nuts and oils. This means to reduce the amount of processed foods, or man made foods that you consume. Stay away from foods with high fructose corn syrup, preservatives and unidentifiable chemical compounds. When possible, incorporate fruit and vegetables that have been organically grown. This will allow you to consume less amounts of pesticides and genetically altered, gas ripened foods, which could adversely effect your body.

### **Eat for Fuel, Not for Fun**

You should look at food as the fuel required for your body's optimal performance. Much like a high performance race car, your body runs the best with the right fuel or nutrients. Most people make emotional decisions when it comes to nutrient or food selection. You should always select foods that are best to fuel your body.

### **Hydrate, Hydrate, Hydrate**

Proper hydration is important for every physiological process that occurs within your body. If you are thirsty, you are already dehydrated. The best way to ensure that you are properly hydrated is to make it a habit of keeping a container of water with you at all times and drink constantly.

### **Limit Your Alcohol and Caffeine Consumption**

Alcoholic and caffeinated beverages should be consumed in moderation. Alcohol is foreign substance to the human body, and in excess can place a stress on your liver and other organs. Caffeine can adversely effect your energy and metabolism when consumed in excess. Try to consume both of these in moderation.

### **Nutrient Timing and Nutrient Selection**

It doesn't matter if you are trying to gain lean muscle, lose bodyfat or to maintain your current weight, the timing and selection of your nutrients is important. Depending on your goals you should eat 5-6 meals per day, spacing them out to

every 2.5-3 hours. Each meal should consist of a combination of protein, carbohydrates and fat. This will ensure that your energy levels are steady throughout the day and will allow your metabolism to function at optimal levels.

### **Preparation and Organization**

Preparation and organization are two of the top keys to success in healthy eating. Plan your meals ahead of time to make sure you will have access to the foods you need to eat. Like most people, do not wait to the very last second to figure out what you are going to eat for your next meal. If you are not prepared, you will be unable to maintain your required schedule for eating. This will quickly derail your body from reaching its physical potential. Plan ahead and always have the food you need to eat accessible to you.

### **Recovery**

Recovery or the physiological regeneration and repair of your body from physical training or stress is a requisite to reaching your physical potential. By taking proactive measures to enhance your recovery, you will keep your body feeling fresh and will reduce the chances of becoming injured. There is a long list of ways to accelerate your recovery such as sleep, relaxation, meditation, stretching, chiropractic, contrast baths, massage, performance therapy tools, acupuncture, visual imagery, vibration therapy, EMS, and light therapy to name a few. Be sure to take time to incorporate some of these recovery methods into your training schedule.

### **Proper Sleep**

While you sleep your body releases hormones which promote the physiological repair and regeneration of the cells in your body. You should sleep 8-10 hours per night to ensure that you are adequately recharged. If your schedule permits, implement short naps to boost your recovery even faster. If you go through a period of days with less than 8 hours of sleep, make up those hours by sleeping more on the other nights. Your body keeps track of these hours, and it will reflect in your energy levels and physical performance.

### **Relaxation**

Schedule times to completely relax and let your body unwind. This will enhance your recovery by reducing stress levels allowing your body to heal and repair.

### **Listen to Your Body**

You should learn how to interpret the signals that come from your body to enhance the recovery process. By being in tune with your body you can quickly address areas of your body that may need special attention.

### **Self Massage**

To accelerate the healing of your muscles from physical training, use a performance therapy device such as the Muscletrac. Using the Muscletrac after or between your workouts will reduce muscle soreness and tightness.

### **Flexibility**

The most effective method to improve flexibility and muscle elasticity is to incorporate active or movement based stretching into your physical training program. Take time after your workouts to incorporate stretching to enhance your recovery.

## **Bringing it All Together**

To achieve your physical potential, stay committed to living a healthy and well balanced lifestyle. Constantly set goals for new physical achievements and be conscience of your mind set, physical training, nutrition and recovery. Be a student for life and strive to never stop learning about new ways to achieve your physical potential. Remember that what ever the mind can conceive and believe it can achieve. Set your sights high and work hard to achieve your ultimate physical potential!

### **About the Author**

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