

# Achieve Your Training Equilibrium

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Finding the perfect amount of anything is a difficult task. The right amount of calories to eat, the right amount of sleep to get are both examples of this. To find an equilibrium is hard, but to do it while exercising is even harder. In the fitness world the perfect amount of input to training is the equilibrium that everyone desires to achieve. As the exerciser you have to worry about underlying barriers like over and under training. If you can find the safe-zone between these two barriers, you will have found your training equilibrium. The whole concept of training is to see results efficiently, which is best accomplished by finding that ideal amount of time and intensity to input without being counterproductive. Below you will find several ways to set and achieve your training equilibrium.

## ***Quit While You Are Ahead***

It is entirely important to know how much time to spend training. If you have not met your equilibrium and you find yourself over-exerted at the gym then you are most likely over-training. You do not necessarily have to clock-in and out of your training sessions to avoid over-training, but make sure you pay attention to how your body is reacting to your duration spent at the gym. If it feels weak and depleted this is a good sign that you should get home to refuel and rest. Even more beneficial is if you can stop training while you are ahead. Just like gambling, if you can cash-out of the gym before you have done damage to your body you will reap the rewards.

## ***Put Your Blinders On***

As much as some want it to be and others make it, the gym is not a coffee shop. There is nothing wrong with casual, quick conversation; the gym is intended to be a place of focused physical production not constant social fraternizing. If you find yourself getting caught up in a verbal mambo while training you may also find yourself being a victim of under-training. Keeping your body moving or exercising is a good way to avoid excessive chitchat or at least tell the others you are serious about your training. And if all else fails get an MP3 player, stick your ear buds in and pretend you are in your own world with no distractions. Put your blinders on!

## ***Monitor Your Intensity***

I define the training equilibrium as your optimal input spent training without being counterproductive. I mentioned before how too much time spent in the gym can be

detrimental to your results, but continuous over-exertion (too high of an intensity) can also put you at the mercy of over-training. Get a heart rate monitor; it is a very simple yet scientific tool to monitor your exercise intensity through your heart rate. It will also allow you to determine how your body physically reacts to certain training intensities (heart rates). Some people have a stigma that heart rate monitors are purely for endurance athletes; however, they can be just as beneficial to the more anaerobically inclined. Although desired exercise intensity is entirely personal and somewhat subjective, I would say start out around 65% of your max heart rate and progress from there. Once you have developed an exercise plan and conditioned yourself then you can tailor it. There is nothing wrong with eventually hitting 85% of your max HR. From there you can use more specific formulas to gauge your workout intensity. If you are just starting out use the formula below.

$.65 \times \text{Max HR} = \text{Desired Workout Intensity}$

$\text{Max HR} = (220 - \text{Your Age})$

### ***A Different Type of Craving***

Like I mentioned before seeing how your body reacts to both time and intensity spent in the gym are important to steering clear of over-training. It can also be useful in avoiding under-training. If you find your muscles getting cold and your heart rate dropping, then you need a jump-start! Given that you have consumed a proper pre-workout meal the last thing your body wants to do is digest food, especially if it is focused on output. If you start feeling hunger pangs while exercising, unless you are not getting proper nutrition, your body has probably been stagnant too long and has chosen to shift its focus. Instead of focusing on the exercising you are supposed to be doing to wanting food it now wants food. Don't let your body tell you how much you are slacking, stay focused and productive in your training. If you get proper nutrition and stay busy in the gym, your body will crave weights not calories.

### ***Get Rest***

Training directly involves putting your body under significant stress, however the body is resilient enough to handle that stress as long as you give it enough time to recuperate. Giving your body, specifically your muscles a rest is just as important as the training itself. Many successful athletes will tell you that one of the hardest parts to being successful is being secure enough with your training progress to take time off and rest. Your muscles need the rest time to heal and rebuild. Without needed rest your body will sooner or later breakdown- a consequence related to over-training. In this regard, you do not necessarily have to train too much for over-training to occur. It can happen simply from lack of rest.

### ***Stay motivated***

A lack of motivation can be a primary cause of under-training or a stagnant lifestyle. Motivation is incredibly personal and can come from just about anything. New music, workout videos, friends, role models and your health are all great sources of motivation. While, much of motivation is internalized, do not be afraid to be vocal about your search for or discovery of motivation. Making it known to others that you are looking for motivation will mostly likely help you find it and sometimes even from an unlikely source. Once you have found your sought after motivation share it with others; they might be internalizing their need just like you use to do.

Now that you have several options to find your training equilibrium, you should get out there and put them to use. This is not an exhausted list of ways to find that perfect amount of input to your fitness, but once you get started you will find your own way and may even discover a few techniques yourself. Use these techniques to get you started and make sure to enjoy the journey to your training equilibrium!