



No.17 Newsletter

October 2014

NO.17 PERSONAL TRAINING, MERRION SQUARE, DUBLIN 2

IN THIS ISSUE

How hard do I need to train?

Training is so subjective. It can be very hard to distinguish what a trainee means when they report that they “train really hard”. Some people mean that they train frequently, going to the gym on a daily basis, and some people mean that the intensity of their workouts is high, albeit infrequent. The problem is that everyone has different standards where training is concerned and sometimes more is not always best.

People also have different goals. Whether you’re training to run a marathon, enter a bodybuilding competition or simply to be healthy and drop a few pounds, you’re all going to have different work-out requirements. This tells us that everyone’s workout needs are individual. So don’t get too caught up in what exercise regime your neighbour has: focus on what YOU need to do to get the best results possible and in turn deliver you at the feet of your training goal.

The reason this issue is pertinent to Personal Training at No.17, is that often we meet clients that have never trained before a day in their lives and obviously need to increase their activity level substantially. However the converse is also true: we meet people who are chronically OVER-trained. These are people

who have been flogging themselves day in and day out, trying to shift those extra pounds, and are met simply by a brick wall. They are stressed out and with chronically elevated levels of cortisol (stress hormone), their body begins to spiral into an endless pit of adrenal fatigue, and it can often be difficult to convince these people that in fact “less is more”. By training smartly you can minimise the amount of time spent in your sweat gear, but still maximize the results you create from time wisely spent.

At No.17 Personal Training we don’t simply aim to flog our clients. We look at individuals as just that: individuals. We listen to their story, consider their past and present, and plan their future in a systematic and calculated way in order to provide them with the best chance possible at success. Training with a trainer shouldn’t simply involve someone standing over you shouting while you struggle through your workout. It should involve a comprehensive approach comprising nutritional coaching, training plans and periodization, and a holistic component which recognises that the client may have a stressful life outside of the gym. To read more about how we listen to our clients, see this month’s “Athlete of the Month section”!

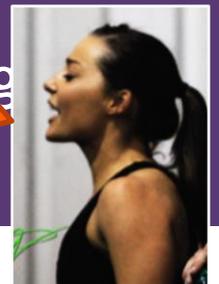


Is stress a real issue for you?

Stress is a silent killer. From increased blood pressure to mental health, it’s in your best interests to reduce the stress in your life whatever way possible. On page 2 we explain why high stress can correlate to high bodyfat.

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Oi! My granny can lift more weight than that!



Sophie Suggests....

Sophie Kavanagh practices what she preaches and in this month’s edition she is divulging some crucial tips for success...

I can't lose weight and it's stressing me out!!!!



So the zebra might have given it away. This article is going to focus on stress and on what it may be doing to you on the inside.

Many clients at No.17 Personal Training and stressed out beyond belief: they are hard-working, driven individuals who have very little time to themselves. For many of them, they reached a stage where they had been so busy trying to please everyone else around them that they finally stopped to look at themselves and realised that they have been neglecting the most important person: themselves. So they came to No.17, which don't forget, added another 90 minutes per week into their already-busy schedule in order to re-shape the body they've let go over the past while.

Often people who are the most stressed don't even know it, or, if they do, they thrive on it. Some people cannot function without it, and that's okay, once you make room for some down time once and a while. And here's why.

First, from a point of view of weight loss, stress is an instant barrier. Every time we're stressed, whether it's because you're late for an appointment, making an important presentation at work, being stuck in heavy traffic: your body responds in the exact same way. It releases adrenaline, a potent stress response hormone, which releases energy your body has stored from a prior feed, in order to allow you to "fight or fly". The point is that the body essentially doesn't know one stress from another, and so prepares to fight or run as though it was under severe threat, and not merely a missed bus. At the same time as all of this, another stress hormone called cortisol is released and this one instructs the body to replenish that energy even though realistically you didn't fight nor fly and you're just waiting for the traffic lights to go green again. As long as that stressful event continues your body keeps pumping out cortisol, which in essence, turns your body into a fat-storing machine for the time being. So this increases hunger levels, and we crave foods high in simple carbohydrates such as sweets, breads and chips because the brain knows that once the pleasure receptors in the brain are satisfied, the tension will be

released.

At a hormonal level then again, if you are in the gym and you are trying to shift weight, you'll be lifting weights to build muscle. Because as we know, the more muscle we have, the less bodyfat we store. However, the problem with a stressed individual in the gym is three-fold. In the first instance, whether you are male or female, you use testosterone to build muscle. And in a chronically stressed individual, the cortisol you secrete slows down the release of testosterone, the production of which will indirectly lead to weight loss. Secondly, cortisol promotes fat-retention, and in particular the fat that is inside the body known as visceral fat. Not only is this fat particularly dangerous to your health, contributing to high cholesterol, diabetes development and heart disease, don't make the mistake that just because it's on the "inside" that it can't add to your jeans size. And the third reason that stress complicates the weight loss journey for these people is that even exercise is a stressor!!

Why, you're asking, am I divulging that exercise is a stressor in a newsletter aimed for clients in a renowned training facility? Well, it's the truth. Exercise does put a stress on the body and does lead to cortisol production-when it is used in the wrong way. And once you're aware of this fact, you can manipulate the workouts to suit the needs of the stressed individual. And that's exactly what we do on Merrion Square, and indeed is one of the reasons why the duration of our sessions are for the most part, 30 minutes long only. There's a well-known saying in the fitness industry which is that "*your workout is only as good as your recovery*", which means that you can by all means train HARD, but then you need to couple it with some down time as well where the body is not swimming in a sea of cortisol. During this period, the muscle fibres replenish and repair, they grow bigger and stronger but looking at the overall picture, the body needs to relax a bit as well. If it doesn't learn how to switch off and the stress continues albeit from a different source such as work deadlines or family stressors, you simply cannot build muscle and lose fat.

Whether you know it or not, your trainer is constantly modulating your workouts to fit your needs in this regard. But on a personal level, there are things you can do as well. It is recommended to fit 20 minute breaks into your day that are solely devoted to you. This means going to a coffee shop WITHOUT your mobile phone or your iPad, and just reading your book. Reading the paper, especially before bed is not recommended as particularly in Ireland at the moment, reading the newspaper may increase stress levels more than any traffic jam.

You might be wondering about the zebra. Well Robert Sapolsky described this entire topic excellently in his book entitled "Why zebras don't get ulcers". He explains that, for the most part, the stressors in our lives are psychological fears and anxieties, rather than being actual life and death worries. But the problem, as mentioned above, is that our stress response is triggered regardless of how "serious" the worry is. The zebra does not have this affliction. It simply worries about those things that pose a real and serious threat to him life, and as a result the zebra does not develop ulcers, nor depression, colitis, heart disease, etc. So while their stressors are short lived (see a bigger animal => run away), ours become chronic and we let them dwell on our psyches into the night.

I know we can't get rid of these worries in our lives, and paying a mortgage, controlling a business, managing a family are all valid reasons to be stressed. But what you can do is focus on minimizing stress in your life when the thing you are dwelling on is something that you cannot control. You can strive to have some more "me time" in your day, even it is only for 15 minutes of peace. You can add something positive into your life like solo walks, or a yoga class. You can go for a massage. Ultimately, your body will thank you and reward you.

Recipe of the Month

Slow Cook Chorizo Chilli

Ingredients:

- 1 pound of grass fed beef
- 2 fresh chorizo sausages, casings removed (about 1/2 pound)
- 1 onion, diced
- 1 teaspoon of minced garlic
- 1 15 oz can of tomato sauce
- 1 15 oz can of diced tomatoes
- 2 chipotle peppers, chopped
- 2 Tablespoons of chili powder
- 1 Tablespoon of cumin
- salt and pepper to taste
- 1 avocado
- Sour cream



Method:

- 1) Brown off all the meat in a skillet
- 2) Drain and toss in the crock pot
- 3) In the same skillet add onions and garlic and
- 4) Cook just long enough to get some color on those onions
- 5) Throw the remaining ingredients into the crock pot and stir together
- 6) Cook on low for 6-8 hours or on high for 4-6 hours
- 7) Top with diced avocado and sour cream to serve

Stretch to Win

Piriformis Syndrome

Piriformis syndrome is a disorder that occurs when the sciatic nerve is compressed or otherwise irritated by the piriformis muscle. This causes pain, tingling and/or numbness in the buttocks on the affected side, and these symptoms can travel down the leg along the path of the sciatic nerve, sometimes all the way into the foot.

This is frequently seen in those who exercise a lot, especially affecting runners. More commonly seen in women, piriformis syndrome can be exacerbated by sitting at a desk all day, and it, along with tightness in the hip flexor muscle group, can contribute to lower back pain.

This kind of sciatic nerve pain can be brought on or exacerbated by many activities such as running or squatting, and can likewise be caused by inactivity such as sitting on the same side of the couch every night of the week. Whether you are affected by in or not

doesn't preclude you from stretching in order to prevent it from ever plaguing you. In fact, the stretches suggested below will help you to perform a range of exercises including squats as they will improve hip and gluteal mobility.

The first is called swan pose and can be seen in the following image.



If you find the above pose too easy, you can increase the stretch by lowering the torso towards the floor.



These poses can be held for 20-30 seconds each side, breathing slowly and deeply the whole time. If you are currently being affected by sciatic nerve pain, for example on the right side, it is recommended to stretch twice on the right side for every one time you spend on the left. However if you are simply stretching to improve flexibility and prevent this syndrome from occurring, you ought to stretch each side evenly.

If neither of these stretches proves challenging enough you may up your game by using a bench to elevate the front leg as demonstrated here.



ATHLETE OF THE MONTH

Ciara Malone

Ciara Malone is a busy primary school teacher who began training in No.17 Personal Training just under two years ago. An avid exerciser before that time, she had tried every single diet and exercise routine out there and just couldn't crack the secret to her body. And that's when she met John and Sophie...

Ciara, tell me about the reason you went and sought help from the guys at No.17?

Well I had been training for a few years and I just felt that I had reached a total dead end. It felt like I was constantly training but never getting the results I wanted. I had literally tried every diet- good and bad- in the book, and I had been to every single type of gym going, and yet I still felt like I was at a total standstill. So then, through word of mouth, I heard how good John was at No.17 and I decided to give it one last shot...and two years later I'm still here!

That all must have been very frustrating; what was different about No.17?

Oh my God, everything! For the first time I felt like someone was actually LISTENING to me. I met John and he sat back and let me talk. Then one of his first questions was "are you stressed?". I said no I'm grand. When I told him I was a teacher, he told me I had stress written all over my face and that he wasn't surprised. Looking back I was totally worn down! But this was honestly the first personal trainer I'd been to who addressed my specific issues- it felt so personalised and individual. And then over the course of my training I realised that he is just so perceptive! He knows what is going on in peoples' heads, and he can literally notice the difference of a single kilogram in your bodyweight.

And you train with Sophie now is that right?

Yeah so from the very beginning then, I was paired up with Sophie. She introduced me to Olympic lifting and Crossfit. She is very encouraging. She has gotten me to do things I never thought I'd be able to achieve and she is constantly pushing me and encouraging me to sign up for team events and competitions. Her belief in me that I could potentially go on to compete is just mind-blowing. It really

motivates me to work harder in the gym and makes me feel like I'm training for something tangible.

And you said you were worn out when you started- can you elaborate?

Well I was massively over-training for a start! For example I was getting up at 5am to get out and do sprints, then going to the gym later again that day. There was one point right before I met John that I had trained 14 days in a row, sometimes twice a day. I had the attitude that "more was better" and that if I wasn't dropping bodyfat then I obviously wasn't pushing myself hard enough. In hindsight, it's so easy to see that I was running my body into the ground. I'd say my cortisol levels were through the roof. When I started at No.17 they had to convince me to calm down on the training and do it in a more structured and time-effective manner. At the beginning it was all about bringing down the stress levels. In the first week I did a cleanse with them and I lost about 4kg! I had been taking a lot of whey protein which is essentially a dairy product, and although that can be fine for some people, it seemed I was intolerant to it the whole time! Then on the training parameter, they made me totally take a step back. I started by training 3 times a week in 30 minute sessions. That's the great thing about training with Sophie as well, actually all of them, they're great at putting in the intensity when you need it but not all the time.

"For the first time I felt like someone was actually LISTENING to me"

So it's safe to say you're enjoying training at No.17?

I would say it's the highlight of my day- I actually look forward to it all day at work! I was a party girl when I was in my 20s- the polar opposite of where I am now.

What would you say to someone who is in the position you were in 2 years ago?

Well years ago, a trainer I met, said something that really struck me. He didn't have the answer to what was going on with my body, but nonetheless, he said "don't stop until you find what works". And that's always stayed in my head. So I'd implore someone in a similar boat to keep going until you find someone who knows what they're doing. Keep on fighting. Because we're all different. When I think of all the money and time and effort I've spent on other gyms and on fad diets... Even for people who haven't exercised before but want to get in shape- go to someone who knows what they're about, spend the money because you won't regret it. It's heart-breaking to see people trying but not quite getting there because they're not getting the right advice. FINALLY, I've chosen the right gym for me.

Anything else you want to add?

Just that when I first met John, I had lost all motivation, was beginning to lose faith in the fitness industry, my self-esteem was on the ground and I doubted myself hugely. I thought I had no more fight left. The reason I signed up and was able to give myself one more push was because both Sophie and John made me feel like they genuinely cared about me, they gave me my hope back and I found some more fight!! And I haven't looked back since. *Thanks for sharing your story with us Ciara, and congratulations on being chosen as No.17's October Athlete of the Month.*



Exercise of the Month

The Deadlift

This is simply one of the best exercises going. Read on to learn why.

Deadlifts have been hailed by many as being the most fundamental lifting exercise in the world of resistance training. Some use it to work their back muscles, and some see it as a hamstring movement, but in fact the deadlift works out your entire posterior chain from the vertex of your skull, all the way to you Achilles' tendons.

The reason it is considered so important to work on the posterior chain is that it is constantly being opposed by the activities of daily life. When you sit at a desk all day, drive in your car, sit on the couch, the muscles at the front of the body adopt a shortened and flexed position, causing us all to develop chronically poor posture. Performing exercises which enhance the muscles at the posterior of our bodies helps to combat this epidemic.

Another reason we should all deadlift is that it is a seriously good bang-for-your-buck exercise. That is to say that if you only have limited time in the gym of a given session, you could choose to waste your time on ab crunches and not really achieve anything at all, or you could do some deadlifting and work out a huge percentage of the muscles in your body whilst getting a neurologically challenging work-out and work on your six-pack at the same. The more muscles you can actively engage during an exercise, the

greater the hormonal response and the more lean tissue created. The more lean tissue, the higher the fat loss.

We mentioned that the deadlift trains the abdominal muscles. It in fact trains the entire "core" from your rectus abdominus, to your obliques to the paraspinal muscles lining your spine in the lower back particularly. The activation of these muscles and their strengthening in a controlled manner allows to prevent injury experienced by less active, sedentary people when they pick up a relatively

light box in the work place or lift a child at home. Not only will your back be better able to deal with these common situations once you've been deadlifting, but also the technique you acquire doing these lifts in the gym prepare you for all aforementioned eventualities.

Deadlifts are the perfect choice of exercise if you're looking to improve your power, as well as improving the transfer of force from the lower to the upper body. This becomes particularly relevant in athletes competing in sports where they need power as well as speed. A 2011 publication by the Journal of Strength and Conditioning Research showed that deadlifts lifted from the ground with the fastest possible concentric speed can help to build speed by improving your ability to accelerate through the entire motion of the lift. This helps particularly with Olympic lifting where power and speed are obviously essential. There is no use in building strength without also teaching the body to apply that strength powerfully in the land of Olympic lifts.



Tips if you're new to deadlifting:

- 1) Learn in the gym with supervision of a good coach to ensure proper form is maintained.
- 2) Start low and go slow – pick a manageable weight and increase gradually. There is no rush to greatness.
- 3) When setting up for the lift, step your toes under the bar, approximately hip width apart. Once there, neither your feet nor the bar moves until you pull it from the floor.
- 4) Hold on with a mixed-clean grip, or whatever your trainer has showed you.
- 5) Drop your hips and lift your chest until your arms have no bend at the elbow.
- 6) Engage your pelvic floor muscles and take a deep breath in (personal choice whether to breathe in here or not).
- 7) PUSH THE FLOOR AWAY FROM YOU WITH YOUR FEET (ie. stand up with the bar, maintaining a neural spine with natural lumbar curve).

Key tip to remember is that the arms are simply hooks. Your body does the lifting, and your arms are merely the apparatus connecting you to the bar. Push the floor away from you, and the rest will fall into place. Happy deadlifting.

"There is no point in being alive if you cannot do the deadlift"

- Jón Páll Sigmarsson

Strongman, powerlifter and bodybuilder from Iceland who was the first man to win World's Strongest Man contest 4 times.

To the right is a picture of John this week doing a version of the Deadlift known as the Trap-Bar Deadlift.

In one foul swoop he ripped 280kg off the bar which was full to capacity. As there was no more room on the bar for weights, beside both hands were 5kg plates, simply resting on the bar. No room for clips, no room for excuses.

Next time he may have to get Sophie to jump on his back in order to increase the weight!



SOPHIE SUGGESTS

Stress management is of utmost importance to everyone, and one way to “manage stress” effectively, is sleep. Stress is linked to heart disease, diabetes, muscle wastage and fat gain to name only a few, so it follows that recovery is essential. Sleep is your body’s way of regenerating, and ultimately is your most valuable tool for recovery.

Sophie’s top 3 tips for a successful night’s sleep:

1. Your bedroom needs to be pitch dark, allowing your body to naturally increase melatonin production.
2. If possible, leave your mobile phone out of sight or on a “do not disturb” setting. Unbroken sleep caused by late night calls or updates can wreak havoc on your sleep cycles, thus decreasing your body’s ability to repair and recover.
3. Cluttered room, cluttered mind! Fresh sheets and a de-cluttered room are proven to aid a great night’s sleep!



OPEX TRAINING

Kevin Sophie and Mark have just completed their OPEX ‘Programme Design’, and ‘Life coaching and Assessment’ modules. I firmly believe in holding the highest standard of coaching, and the OPEX courses are just that. Programme design in particular is crucial to good personal training, as it makes sure that clients’ goals are reached in a systematic and structured way. It is essential to periodise one’s training, in order to prevent or overcome plateaus, to become stronger, leaner, fitter individuals in the quickest time frame possible. If you fail to undulate the training programme, not only will the client get bored, but so too will their body. If the client keeps hammering away at a programme to which their body has adapted, they are, in a nutshell wasting their time.

No.17 has the best qualified group of coaches in the country, and we’re constantly developing our skills set. We are now able to offer a lot more online programming for athletes/ clients who can’t get to our facility to train. This remote training allows people to have a coach to whom they are accountable, even where it is not always feasible to train in the same centre as their trainer.



WHAT'S HAPPENING IN NO.17



New to No.17

Watch this space! Over the next few weeks, we'll be introducing a new product in the gym. These natural juices and juice cleanses are made daily in Rathcoole, using mostly local ingredients. They believe in providing their consumers with healthy and nutritious products and all of their drinks are pure, unprocessed and carefully sourced. Check out their website for more info at www.sproutfoodco.com.



The Beard Has Left the Building!!!

Yay or nay to the beard? Peer pressure is a powerful thing. It seems that Kevin can influence with the best of them, and alas the beard took the hit. And there are unanswered questions... Will the beard make a come-back? Is the drain that the beard went down, now clogged? Was there a personality change in the trainer once the beard disappeared?

For anyone who has felt any grief or sadness due to abrupt loss of the beard, please contact reception on 01 602 0660 to speak to our support group.

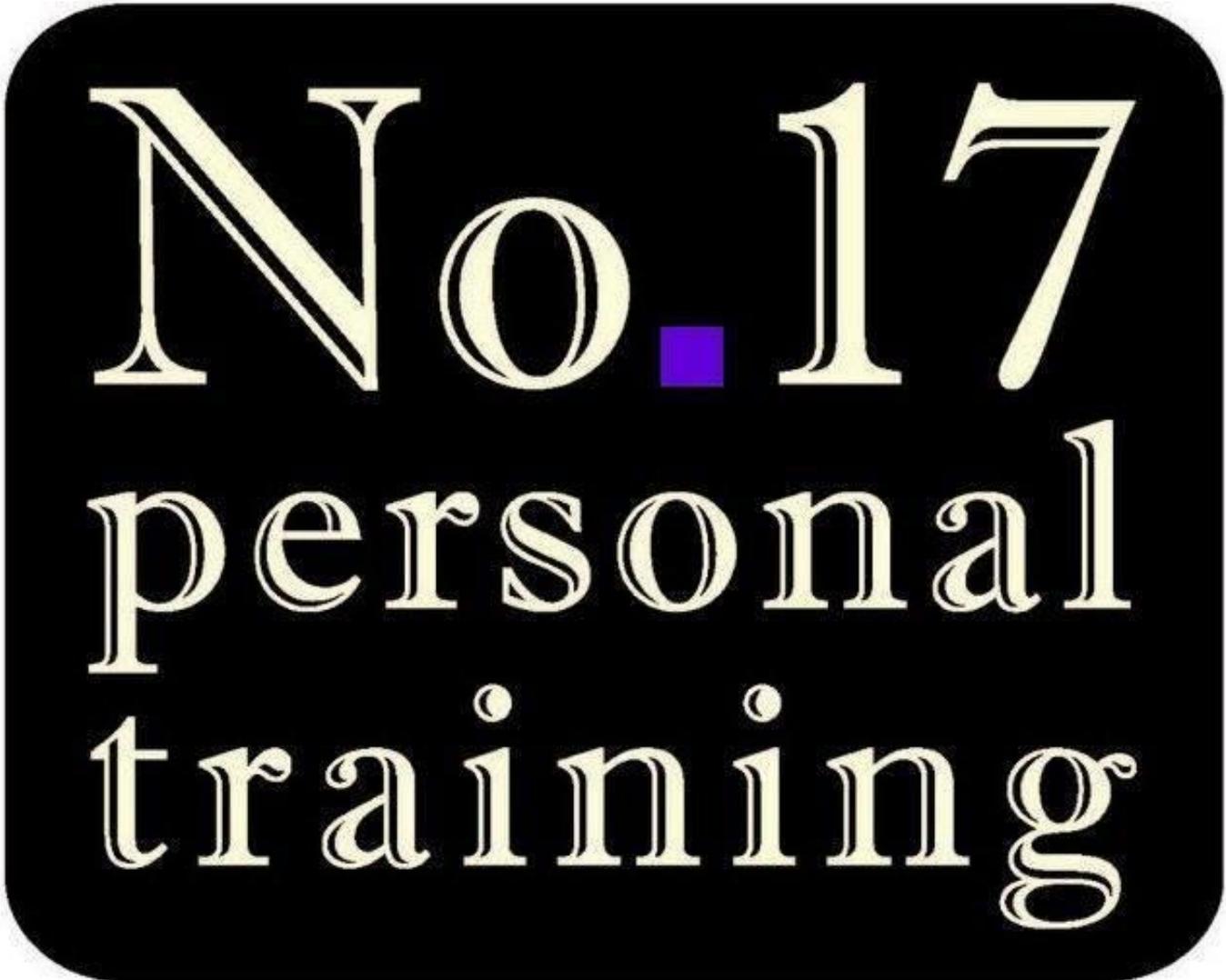


New to No.17

Rugby player for Leinster under 18s, 19s and 20s, and for Ireland's under 20s, Robin O'Sullivan is a qualified personal trainer who is passionate about the fitness industry.

He will be starting to work with No.17 Personal Training over the coming months and we are excited to welcome him to the team.

He feels that his passion for exercise, knowledge of sports requirements and his training background can bring a lot to No.17. Welcome aboard Robin.



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