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BRIDGING THE GAP BY VIRTUAL TRAINING by Ryan Haug

I think we can all agree that the past few months have been less than ideal. Schedules that most of us thrive on have been thrown out of whack. We've all been charged with the responsibility to be providers, care takers and in some instances, teachers. Lost in all of this is our priority to maintain and improve our own well-being and mental health.

You can't dispute the science behind exercise and the positive effects on physical and mental health. The benefits of physical activity extend well beyond weight loss and beach bods. Physical activity is the key contributor in immune system function and mental health stability. In this time of uncertainty, stability is what will drive us through the finish line.

In the first week of March, the staff at The Club had an emergency meeting in which we were notified that we would be shutting down for the near future with no exact time table for reopening. I remember walking away from that meeting with one overwhelming thought.....shear freakin PANIC!

I love my job. I love the amazing people I work with (there's not a better group of trainers anywhere and I've been doing this for a couple of decades). I love my clients and their inspiring drive to be better every day. I didn't have the feeling this was a situation that was just going to fix itself quickly. Like many things going on in the world today, it was time to evolve. I had to leave behind my short sighted ideas which kept me comfortable for many years.

Consistency was going to be the key, but how was this to work without a consistent facility? I immediately contacted all of my clients still in the area that had some equipment at home to schedule in home workouts (pre "stay at home" order). I found out very quickly that there just wasn't enough time in the day to see all of my clients. Above all else, my job is to keep my clients accountable and consistent. Home workouts do both of those things, but I just couldn't reach all of my clients. So while few were succeeding, I was failing a high percentage of clients... enter online training.

Online training via Zoom gave me the ability to see a much greater number of clients per day and succeeded in both accountability and consistency. What about clients with no equipment? In some instances this was the case. If this was going to be successful, I had to get better at my job real fast or at the very least start sifting back through two decades of body weight exercises that were safe and applicable to each individual client. I told each client to just try it once and if it wasn't for them we would find another way (although I had no clue what that would be). With over twenty clients, I would have been happy to keep just half of them going, knowing that the online workouts wouldn't be for everyone. Surprise!... it's for everyone. The reaction to online training was shocking. Not only did 95% of my clients want to continue doing the online workouts (the stay at home order may have helped), but many of them actually increased the frequency. The brilliant thing about the sessions was that it was a completely different style and tempo we were used to working out at The Club. When a trainer at The Club goes on vacation we always recommend the client train with someone while we're gone for just this reason. After the first week in May I was actually doing more sessions per week than I was before the "stay at home order" was in place. My clients went from an average of 1.7 workouts per week to 2.5. This may not seem like a huge number, but when you consider that every workout you burn between 600-800 calories, that equates to an extra 2400 to 3200 acute calories per month. That's not even to mention the positive chronic affect the increased frequency has on your metabolism. I have clients that live in California and Oregon part time, the ability to do online workouts bridges the gap between good and great.

As we moved into phase 2, not all are completely ready to return. Given the circumstances, I can't say that I don't understand. Those whom have chosen to return have done so to a facility that takes every precaution to ensure a safe environment. Moving forward, whether you are on vacation, out of town, or just want to be home, online training will continue to be a tool that we can all use to bridge the gap and promote a greater frequency, accountability, and consistency for all clients across The Club family.

During this uncertain time, sadly not every exercise facility will stand when this is all over. Our goal has always been and will always continue to be you as a part of The Club family. We will do everything we can to provide every tool and resource to ensure your program at The Club will be successful and safe.

DO THERMAGENICS WORK? By Hap Brecht

We live in a culture of quick fixes and supplements advertised to do the work for us. Thermogenics are those weight loss pills guaranteed to give you the body that you're looking for. The problem with this is that there are no shortcuts to health and fitness.

Thermogenic commercials will hype up their "proprietary blend" of magical ingredients that will strip off fat and then advise that you talk to your doctor. A competent M.D. that cares about your health won't support taking these supplements. Reality shows that these blends are mixtures of stimulants, ingredients that raise your heart rate, boosting metabolism and decrease appetite. These heart rate inducers range from 2, 4 – dinitrophenyl, which is very stressful and dangerous for your heart, to capsaicin, the molecule in chili peppers that make them spicy. This range of both number and quantity of stimulants is not regulated or proven to actually be effective for burning fat.

Studies have shown that, yes, stimulants help metabolism. Those studies also show that we don't need the astronomical amount of stimulants that thermogenics provide. Consumption of an extreme amount of stimulants may affect your sleep negatively, which is part of the design. Thermogenics make it tougher to fall asleep, which means that you're awake walking around and burning more calories than while your body should be sleeping and recovering in a healthy manor.

The optimal amount of caffeine that will boost your metabolism and be relatively safe is 3 – 5 mg/kg bodyweight. For most people, that equates to ~2 cups of coffee for the whole day. Using caffeine in this manor has been shown to increase metabolism by 4% and increase fat burning potential by 16% in a 24 hour period. Hydroxycut, the most popular thermogenic supplement, has 400 mg of caffeine per serving. Some of the side effects are; shortness of breath, nervousness and irregular heartbeat. In this case, less is more. With the high levels of stimulants in thermogenics and the way in which they are advertised, they can actually hinder weight loss. The commercials would have you think that the supplement will do all the work for you; sadly it won't. Another major flaw is that for many people, working out while using stimulants elevates their heartrate to an uncomfortable and dangerous level, which makes you less likely to exercise while trying to lose weight.

Fitness is a lifestyle that requires consistency and focus on your goals. Achieving your goals does not come from a pill or powder; it comes from exercise and nutrition. Your morning coffee is great, but thermogenics should be avoided.

PATIENCE IN YOUR WEIGHT LOSS by Jesse Boelk

Many of us have gained a couple extra pounds during our time in quarantine. While you may be in a hurry to get it back off, this may not be the best approach. After time away from a regular workout program, you will have lost some muscle, strength and potentially created some malalignment issues.

The last thing you want to do is rush back into a program that may potentially cause an injury or over-train and cause you to be so sore that you can't walk. Start by identifying any imbalances, use your foam roll or Theragun, then recondition your body progressively and build back your strength and muscle you may have lost. While many of us focus on our workouts to burn fat, remember that your metabolism is the key to losing fat and that relies on your muscle mass as a furnace to burn fat outside of the gym.

Next, start to refocus on not only your scale weight, but also your body composition to ensure that you are headed in the right direction. Weigh yourself at the same time of day and make sure you are adequately hydrated. When you do your body composition, hydration can drastically affect the accuracy of your results. Try not to get frustrated, good fat loss is a slow process, but it will ensure that you maintain your goals as you reach them. Try to identify large goals for fat and lean mass and then create small stepping stones and positive reinforcements for yourself when you reach each one.

Turn your setbacks into modes of creating structure and a positive lifestyle approach to your goals. For example, if you go out to dinner and eat too much, don't feel guilty as this can create a negative cycle. Instead use this set back as an opportunity to create a plan for a healthy breakfast, then get outside and do a little extra outdoor hike or kayaking to burn off your extra calories. This will help create healthy habits and prevent you from falling into a negative cycle, as guilt often leads to comfort eating, leaving you lethargic and not wanting to exercise.

Practice patience with your program, stay consistent, and think outside of the box. Your training frequency and intensity are the two most important factors in your program right now. You may want to increase your training frequency, or change up the intensity and type of workouts you are using to get to your goals. For example, if you were training two days a week, you may consider training 3 days a week and adding a mobility workout to address any imbalances or problem areas. Good luck and welcome back!



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Getting sick is not any fun! There's no way to sugarcoat it. When you get a common cold, let alone the flu, it can seem like you would do anything to get past the feeling of nausea, sore throat, stuffy nose, and exhaustion. While there is really no way to fully guarantee not getting sick or contracting a virus, there are many steps that you can take as preventative measures before you don't feel good. Obviously the elephant in the room currently is the coronavirus, which is an extreme case and has the potential to be a real problem if you get it. My personal medical opinion is to pop two Corona's with lime before bed and you will be fine, however it's probably a good idea to take some other steps to insure that if you do come in contact with a nasty bug, you put yourself in a place of power to allow your immune system to overcome and crush the illness! Here are a few suggestions:

- Get a flu shot! This is a no brainer. It won't guarantee you won't get the flu, but it will absolutely lesson the affects and make for a shorter bout with the virus. Flu shots have proven, especially with children and people with chronic illness, to prevent hospitalization and allow for a much less difficult overall recovery.
- Staying hydrated is extremely important to combat sickness. Between vomiting, fever, sped up breathing, and sweating we lose a lot of water when we feel miserable. Drinking a lot of water is important anyways but double your intake while you are sick. Drinking fluids with extra electrolytes help even more. Stay away from sugary drinks; they will just make you feel even worse.
- Getting enough rest is crucial to overcoming a flu bug. Your body is working overtime as you lay there in agony. The energy you expend with a fever when you feel flush and hot, that's a sign your body is hard at work, engaged in a battle against the flu demons. Fevers tend to rise at night when you're sleeping, not coincidentally when your body is in full repair mode.
- In general, a person with symptoms in their head and nose, such as those of a head cold, may benefit from working out. A person with symptoms in their chest or stomach or someone with a fever should avoid exercising; Typically with a virus it's better to get rest and allow your body to use the energy to fight off the bug, common colds are more likely to be "sweat out."
- Usually when you don't feel good, the appetite won't be there, however proper nutrition as a preventative measure as well as when you get sick, can be a huge weapon in quick recovery. As your body is working in overdrive, it will need to be replenished in order to fight the good fight. The more you can help it out with nutrient rich foods, the better off you will be.