



# 4 CRITICAL STEPS TO HIGHER SPORTS PERFORMANCE AND LESS EXHAUSTION

ANY WORKOUT CAN MAKE YOU SWEAT,  
BUT NOT EVERY WORKOUT CAN MAKE YOU BETTER!





*“No pain, no gain”, “No days off”, “Go hard or go home”...*

Sounds familiar?

Quotes like these, usually accompanied by the picture of a lion or a guy jacked up on steroids, are a huge contributor to one of the biggest misconceptions in today's sport and fitness world; that level of exhaustion is a good measure for the quality of your training session.

Let me tell you right now; it's not.

# **W**hy level of exhaustion is a horrible indicator of the quality (not to mention the effect) of your workout

It kills me to see how many athletes and trainees seem to think the only goal for their training session is to go as hard as humanly possible, for as long as they can muster up the willpower and force themselves to keep going for.

Because if by the end of the workout you're not lying on the floor gasping for air and at the brink of vomiting, you clearly didn't push hard enough, and you might as well just have stayed home, right?

Wrong.

Here's why:

## **1** It can put a serious dent in your motivation

If you are constantly feeling sick and sore after every workout, chances are you will start dreading your workouts, instead of looking forward to them. It can be both discouraging and draining to live by the rule that you have to go until someone literally has to wipe you off the floor, for it to be considered a good session.

**2**

## It will increase your injury risk

Keep pushing beyond the point of fatigue and, at some point, your survival instinct will take over and you will be more focused on just getting through your last reps or seconds on the clock, rather than what those last reps actually look like and do for (to) you. And as mental focus, form and technique goes out the window, it flies an increased risk of pain and injuries.

**3**

## It will decrease your performance

Getting your ass kicked every workout might seem effective, but remember that training is just half of the equation and progress comes with rest.

Training is a stress factor for the body, and it is only after the training is over that the body starts the process of rebuilding for you to get faster, stronger, and more resilient.

However, this will only happen if it is allowed the appropriate recovery time and environment to do so. And the higher the intensity and greater the stress per training session, the longer the recovery time needed.

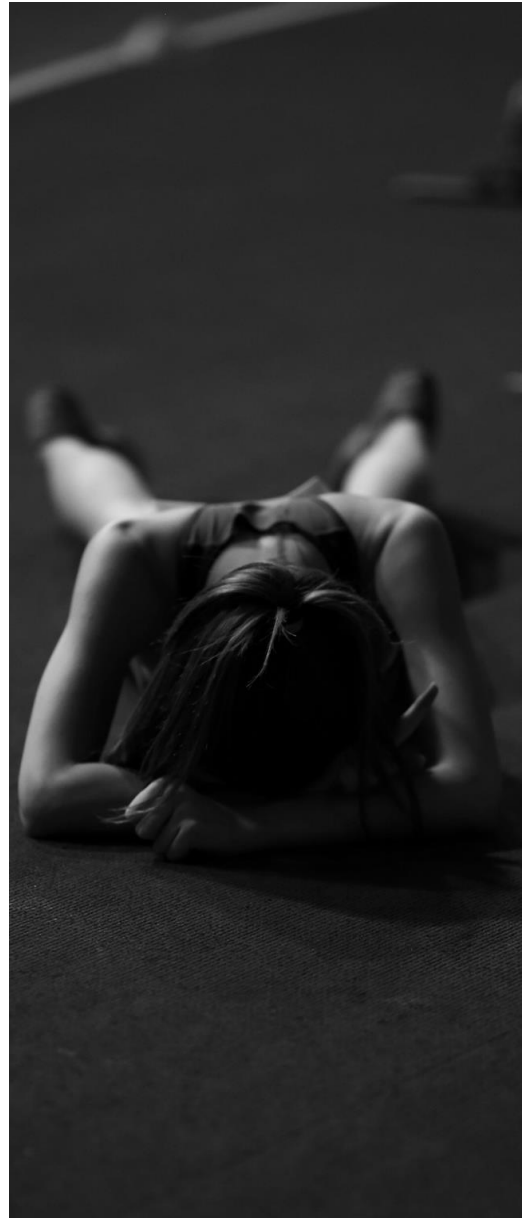
This is why constantly training at maximum capacity and going to full exhaustion is likely to leave you in a state of overtrained and under-recovered. Which in turn will lead to stagnation or a decrease in performance, rather than you leveling up.

Oh, and you know that lion from the “train insane or remain the same” picture?

It sleeps up to 20 hours a day to recover from its max effort to hunt down and kill its prey.

Did you sleep for 20 hours the last time you went all-out in the gym?

Didn't think so...



## 4

### Different sports require different training

If the aim of your training is to perform better in your sport, you need to, first of all, understand the physical demands of that sport.

What are the key physical components and what are the dominant energy systems being utilised?

A high jumper, a 100m swimmer, a 2000m rower, and an ironman distance triathlete will all have very different requirements, and their training therefore should naturally look very different.

But what about sports like volleyball, CrossFit, soccer or tennis - that have a mix of multiple energy systems and physical components?

That just means more variables to take into consideration, and all the more reason to have a pre-made plan and strategy in place.

Now does all this mean that you should never push yourself to your limit? Not at all.

The only way to change your body and what it can do is to challenge it.

So step out of your comfort zone, push yourself, dig deep, see what you are truly capable of - I'm all for it! But do so in an intentional and strategic way. Not by running yourself into a wall days on end.

You don't have to finish every workout tired. I'd even argue that, a majority of them, you should finish feeling better than when you started.

Exhaustion is not the answer to achieving results.

Getting tired does not mean you're getting better - and most certainly doesn't mean you're being effective at achieving your desired result.



# 4 Steps to Higher Performance and Less Exhaustion

## 1 Failing to plan, is planning to fail

Lifting weights for the sake of lifting weights will never get you peak performance.

You need to have some structure and a plan in place. Therefore the first thing you want to do is actually to take a step back and get a sense of the bigger picture - both in terms of where you are currently at, as well as where it is you want to go.

As mentioned above, every sport has its own physiological profile and its own distinctive combination of required abilities, and as an athlete, your training program should be designed in order to meet the specific demands of your sport.

Some questions you want to ask yourself is; “what are the most and least dominant energy systems and physical components of my sport?”, “which of them are my personal strengths and weaknesses?” and “what are the areas of improvement that would help me take my game to the next level?”.

Only once you answer these questions can you create a personalized, sport specific performance plan - one that will actually get you the results you work for, not just make you feel like you're doing all the work.

## 2 Periodization

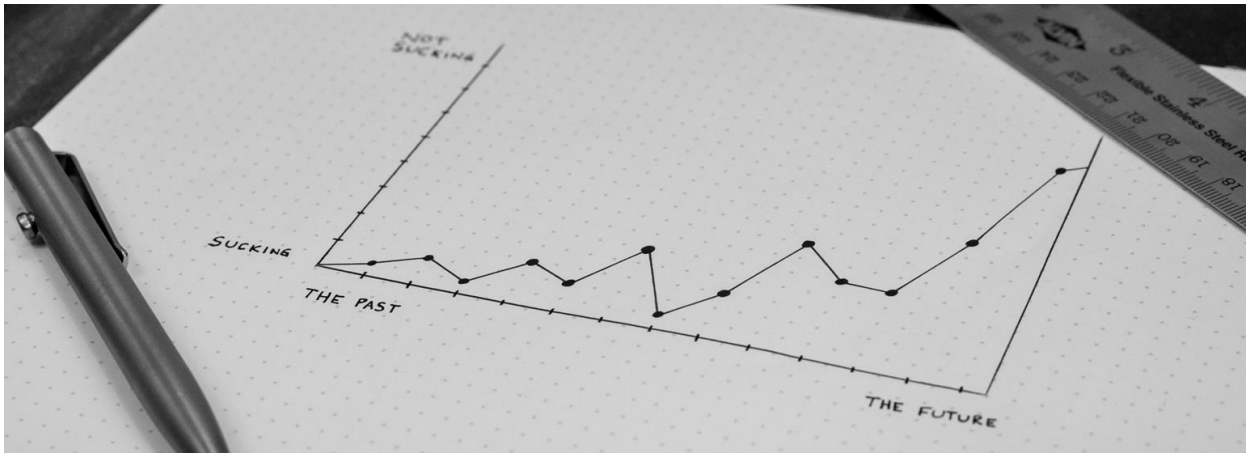
While you might not be in the position of trying to compete in the Olympics, that doesn't mean you can't benefit from setting some intention and planning behind your training.

And a great way of promoting a lasting and effective training regime is implementing some form of periodization.



It is not coincidental that periodization is a concept that is widely implemented in the world of sport. The multi-component demands of most sports requires that several qualities have to be developed throughout the year, but often some must be prioritized earlier or later in the year depending on the status of the athlete's fitness and their competition schedule.

By controlling and alternating the variation of exercises, intensities, and training focus at strategic times in the year, athletes can produce their best performances when it matters most. This is what periodization does.



### 3 If you're not assessing your guessing

Exhaustion and fatigue is a fickle and unreliable component to measure, so if you're just going off that then how can you know if you're truly improving?

Instead have a system to log and track your numbers for each training session. You also want to have regular testing protocols, relevant to your sport and to your goals, in place.

This way you can accurately track and measure your performance and your progress, or lack thereof.

A vital part of optimizing performance is constantly reassessing and adjusting.

Sometimes adjusting means pushing forward. Other times it means taking a step back or making a pivot.

Always strive to train smarter, not just harder.

## 4

### Stop exercising, start training

You need to know the difference between a “workout” and a “training session.”

A workout is an isolated bout of exercise, not directed toward a long-term performance goal.

A training session, on the other hand, is so much more.

Every aspect of a training session, from exercise selection to volume and loading, is carefully planned and designed specifically for you and your sport.

It is focused both on the long-term goal of peaking your body for optimal performance during the competitive season, and on the short-term goals at different stages of a periodized training calendar.

The training session does not stand alone as a one-off workout, but instead has a designated and deliberate purpose within the training week, month, season, and year.

So if you're serious about improving your performance, it's time to stop exercising, and start training.

At the end of the day any workout can make you sweat. Any workout can make you sore. And any workout can make you tired. But not every workout can make you better.

Sweaty, sore and tired are not requisites of a good workout. They can absolutely be a side effect of one, but they say very little about the quality and effect of your training.

It doesn't take a great coach or program to make you sweaty, sore, and tired.

That's easy.

But it does take a great coach or program to produce real, visible results.

So stop chasing a feeling, and start chasing results. Harder isn't always better.

**Better is better.**

# Ready for the Next Step?

If you are ready to leave exhausting and demotivating workouts behind and instead start training like the athlete that you truly are, then get in touch at **[anja@trainbulletproof.com](mailto:anja@trainbulletproof.com)**, and let's have a conversation about how we can take your game to the next level!



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