

Understanding overtraining

"Whoever knows when he can or cannot fight will be victorious. "

-Sun tzu

Written by Sun Tzu, The Art of War holds its share of truth and its principles have stood the test of time. It is for this reason that there have been various versions for entrepreneurs, therapists and life coaches, all inspired by these lessons that dictate the art of war.

The subject of overtraining regularly comes up on the table without even discussing it because the majority of fighters do not expect it but have several symptoms such as general fatigue, weird injuries, sleep disturbances, digestive problems, etc. It is practically a taboo.

No one wants to appear weak or tired because, as the famous saying goes: 'When you rest, your opponent trains twice as hard.'

This saying might be motivating, but unfortunately is the cause of many stupid injuries and hasty career endings.

In my practice, overtraining is very often the result of bad planification.

"Being prepared in advance for any eventuality is the greatest virtue."

-Sun Tzu

In combat, we study our opponents before entering the mat for the decisive fight. In hockey, we know the offensive and defensive tactics of the other team. We gather as much information as we can. We often have weeks or months in advance to prepare for that a given tournament or game, the ultimate fight.

In training, we determine specific goals. We split those goals into macro, meso and micro cycles. Each cycle has a specific purpose. Whether you are a coach or someone who uses the latter's services, you should always have a plan B.

Injuries, setbacks or life in general can always throw a curved ball at us, so you need to be prepared for any eventuality. The best coaches will always have another option when progress slows down or when you experience difficulties.

Each training is of paramount importance. You also have to understand the seriousness of recovery, why take a break from practice and training. These phases can be included after important competitions or following certain planning phases which have a higher

intensity. These phases require a great recruitment of the central nervous system. When this system is over stimulated in the long term, cortisol management becomes problematic. At this point, a cascade of hormonal problems will cause several symptoms related to adrenal fatigue. If these symptoms are not taken care of, performing and recovering will become more and more complex.

This is where the effectiveness of the principle of annual periodization lies. Our bodies (and our obsessive addictions) don't always recognize the early symptoms of overtraining.

"Being prepared in advance for any eventuality is the greatest virtue."

-Sun Tzu

In combat, we study our opponents before entering the tatami mats, for the decisive fight. We know the date of our fight a few months in advance and have just one idea in mind during the preparation: The ultimate fight.

In training, we determine specific goals, for ourselves and for our clients. This way we avoid wasted time and unnecessary mistakes. Whether you are a coach or someone who uses the latter's services, you must always have a plan B. Injuries, setbacks or, quite simply, life always throws curved balls at us, so you must be prepared to all eventualities. The best coaches will always have another option when progress is nonexistent or when you experience difficulties. I would highly suggest you get one of Ryan's webinar on rotational training programs to get some quick and uber efficient ideas on how to quickly change up some of your training strategies.

Beyond planning, here are some principles to maximize your recovery.

1. Sleep

Late workouts are usually the culprit of certain sleep disorders. Adrenaline levels are high even after arriving home and relaxing is next to impossible for some. The problem is, the mind doesn't stop. You didn't break your personal best, you didn't submit that lower belt, or you just couldn't score that goal. The good sessions and especially the bad ones, revisiting what went wrong. Those with big egos will surf the web on their phones or iPads looking for videos on YouTube so that this doesn't happen again.

THE # 1 tip for maximizing the quality of sleep is to put the technology away and relax. If the mind cannot rest, the body will follow. Let go of these trainings, these are only lessons. Leave the ego at the door. On top of that, the blue light from the screens you are looking at has the ability to disrupt your cycle of rest and regeneration, that is, restful sleep. Sleep better, ride better.

For more tips on maximizing sleep, look for Adrienne's Fully detailed articles on that very subject.

2. Nutrition

One of the major challenges for all the competitors and amateurs. Eating more is often difficult since no one wants to train hard on a full stomach. Especially those who train multiple times a day are faced with this great dilemma.

The intense nature of competitive training requires more calories for recovery, so how do we deal with this problem? You can't just eat when you feel like it, make a plan or schedule. You know for a fact when you'll be practicing and working out, so allow at least 90 minutes to 2 hours to digest (some may get by with just an hour). If you're struggling to get enough calories throughout the day, add post-workout shakes. These are easy calories immediately after training, which will be absorbed very quickly to speed up recovery. You know your schedule, so adapt. Serious athletes plan ahead.

Failure to plan is planning to fail.

Know when to release the throttle and throughout the year schedule periods of rest, regeneration and refocusing. Don't wait until failure to revise the plan, keep improving by applying this principle. This will prevent many overuse injuries and add many years to your practice.

Coach Eric