

Train with Intensity

By Turk Fickling

People ask me all the time what is intensity? How do you apply it to your training? Do I really need to train with high intensity to grow? Let me take a few moments to share with you my perspective on this topic! You can define intensity in 3 ways well actually 4 ways. You can increase reps, increase weight, decrease the time in between sets, or a combination of all 3, which would give you the 4th element.

It is difficult to have high levels of intensity, if your training model is centered on volume training. I say that because most people operate in this realm of intensity already. Let me give you an example, lets name our example Joe, Joe is a serious lifter and wants to put on size. Joe has been training in a pyramid volume format for the past 6 months to a year. However, he has noticed he has hit a plateau. Joe cannot understand why, when he trains, he does 4 sets 12, 10, 8, 6 and increasing the weight after each set. Based on what I said in the beginning of this article Joe is doing 1 of the 4 ways to have intensity in a workout, so why has Joe plateaued?

Muscle confusion is a real concept that should not be ignored! Now lets look at what Joe is doing a bit closer. True enough he is increasing weight each set, but he also decreased the reps so he added one intensity principal and took one away net return 0! This is why most people who do volume training will almost always hit a plateau.

Earlier I gave you the textbook definition of intensity; now let me give you mine. By using multiple training principals I can in effect stay in a constant state of muscle

confusion, which will help me avoid plateaus thus making my training far more effective!

Always go to Failure!

Let me give you an example of this training. We are training back in this example

- a. Rear delt fly's constant tension on working muscle to failure
- b. Right into stiff-arm pull-downs pauses at the top of the movement to failure

“Muscle confusion is a real concept that should not be ignored!”

- c. Lat pull-down reverse grip slow reps with force negs to failure

Let's look at this set a bit closer; this 1st set is a giant set, with constant tension on working muscle, pauses, and force negs. In this first set I am doing 4 training principals: giant set, constant tension on working muscle, pauses and force negs. Now here is an important take away, since I am going to failure on every movement there is no need to increase reps, increase weight, or decrease the time in between sets. The very nature of how I am doing this set already includes the principals discussed earlier. Technically, this backset has 4+4=8 training principals in only 1 set.

For those of you who have done volume training and increase weight each set you can imagine what an 8 training principal set would do to you. That is why I do not do allot of sets per body part. For small body parts chest, shoulders, bicep, triceps, and calves I will do 2-4 sets total. For back and legs 3-5 sets total, not per exercise!



Is this for you?

Let me be perfectly honest here, do you need to train like this in order to maximize your gains? The answer is no! I know a lot of guys who do not train hard and who are big as hell, but most of these guys have help in gaining that muscle. Besides, if you are a competitor in whatever discipline, the very thing that separates us from other men and woman is how we train! If you have two people natural or not, which one would get the call out? The one that trains hard or the other that does not. **YOU HAVE TO ASK YOURSELF ARE YOU A MAN OR A LION?** (Brad Pitt, Troy)

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