

the **CrossFit** JOURNAL ARTICLES

Recovery: The Next Generation

Dan John

At a recent workshop, Doctor Lonnie Lowry noted that we need to learn to “Quantify” recovery. Simply, we need a daily reminder and a daily checklist to make sure we are balanced in our fitness goals. Since this workshop, I have been having my athletes use a simple ten point scale: Nutrition (4 points): 2 points for a good breakfast, 1 point for two snacks, 1 point for two additional meals... for a total of 4 points. (Breakfast, snack, lunch, snack, dinner is a four point day.) I think “good” choices, the superfoods, are the key, but I will accept just about anything from an athlete who is just learning that success is more than just dinner and soft drinks each day. Sleep (3 points): 8 hours is 2 points. One or two hours more is 3, one or two hours less is 1 and less than that is none. Relationships (1 point): Things were good today: 1 point.

Fights, stress, break ups: No points, maybe even negative points.

“Alone” time (1 point): If the athlete had some time during the day to collect their thoughts and relax without any time or work or school issues... you get 1 point. You need to figure 15 minutes at least...but that is not on the internet, phone, or a car, either! Play time (1 point): If the athlete found some time in his or her day to simply laugh and enjoy themselves in the company of others...not with a television on nor a phone nor the internet...you get a point. Table conversation is the best, followed by old-fashioned games.

Tally this up each day. You should strive for “tens” across the board. If you increase your training load from

walking to full-time Olympic lifting, you need to really look at these five areas. Lowery also recommended comparing and contrasting your training profile to your recovery profile.

The single discipline athlete could have a chart from one to ten. Even if that athlete does nothing, that day should be assigned three or four points (out of ten). An exhausting workout would be a ten and you can gradually get a feel for workouts from a “four” to a “ten.”

Athletes doing two things, for example, sports training and general conditioning, should break each workout into five point clusters. Although you may have a sports workout of an easy nature, tactical preparation or game planning, an exhausting workout, and perhaps a

Lonnie Lowery Scale

For comparison, nutrition expert Lonnie Lowery offers the following scale.

Nutrition: 8 points
Hydration: 2 points
Sleep: 3 points
Rest: 1 point
Meditation/Relaxation: 1 point
Emotional Support/Relationships: 2 points
Warm-up: 2 points
Stretching: 1 point

Total of 20 points.

1 of 3

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Workout of the Day, would tally up to an eight - or nineday in that "Practice" might be easy, but your conditioning was very hard.

So, for the single sport athlete, an Olympic Lifter for example, a day's breakdown might look like this:

Nutrition: (4 points)

Made my snacks the night before... good idea

Sleep: (2 points)

Watched some T.V., up by 6:00

Relationships: (1 point)

Nice talk with an old friend today

Alone Time: (0 points)

Never a moment to myself

Play: (1 point)

Whipped everybody in Stratego

Recovery (8 points)

Workout (9 points)

Another day of nailing big Cleans after Max Front Squats...sore!

This athlete is in a recovery "deficit." Maybe not a big deal, but if you do this for three days or longer, you might find those nagging injuries and other issues showing up. Some argue that it might take up to two months to fully deal with overtraining! Maybe a little foresight early might save some issues later.

For the athlete who has an athletic practice AND a conditioning practice (or whatever you may call it), the workouts tallied together might look like this:

Nutrition: (2 points)

No time for breakfast today...made up for it all day

Sleep: (3 points)

Slept in...still a little tired

Relationships: (0 points)

Really tired of my significant other's family

Alone Time: (0 points)

Not really

Play: (1 point)

Does watching T.V. count?

Recovery (6 points)

Practice (4 points)

Not the toughest ever, but I was off my game

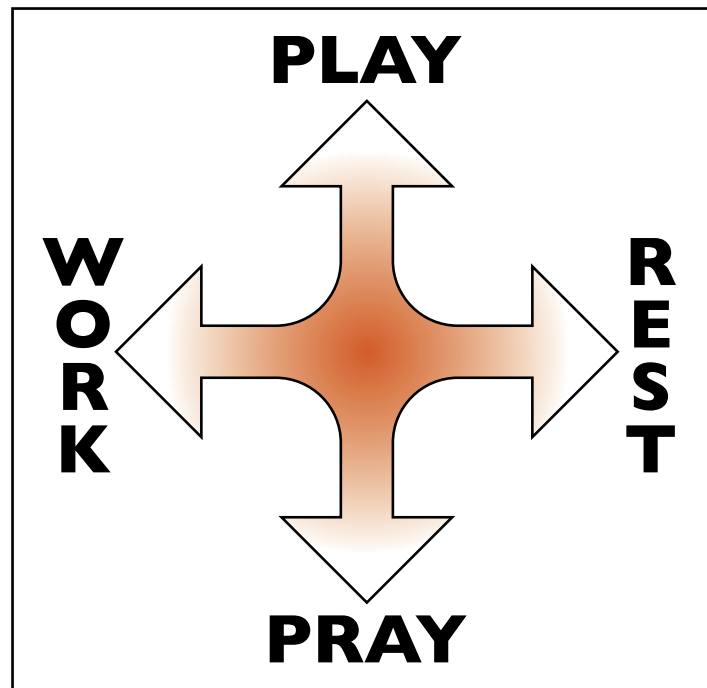
Workout (5 points)

CrossFit WOD just about killed me

This athlete is in trouble. A minus three deficit is obviously going to take its toll...and soon!

Additional Tips from Dan John

Minerals: Biggest Bang for the Buck I was sitting with Brian Oldfield, former World Record Holder in the shot put, at discus camp and he leaned over and told me: "None of these guys will listen, but they should be taking minerals." Brian was tired of throwers asking about the newest fad in nutrition, mostly this or that magazine's magic protein, and gave me the secret to recovery: minerals. "They are the biggest bang for the buck." Magnesium and Potassium are my two secret



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	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Net
Nutrition (8)								
Hydration (2)								
Sleep (3)								
Rest (1)								
Relaxation/Meditation (2)								
Emotional Support/Relationships (2)								
Warm-up (2)								
Stretching (1)								
Recovery Total (20)								
Workouts/Practice (20)								
Recovery Status								

weapons. Mg is the best single nutrient I can think of, see the Eades' book, "Protein Power Lifespan Program" for more information. K is great, too, as any low carb dieter will tell you. Those two supplements are a start to a better recovery.

Splurge I bought a hot tub a couple of years ago. I have a friend who gets a monthly sports massage. A visit to a chiropractor might help some lifters...a vacation might help others. That is what splurge means: spend some money or time providing recovery. I thought of this while sitting in my hot tub watching the stars.

Eat your protein. Eat your fats The greatest mistake of my life was listening to the high carb nonsense of the Seventies and Eighties. It is nearly impossible to recover, not to mention grow and improve, on a high carb diet. You need protein and fat to recover, grow and improve. Ignoring this advice will be very detrimental to your lifting career. Don't make my mistake! The Bulgarians are reported to get half their calories from fat, the Romanians discovered that ultra-high protein diets increased muscle mass (no surprise) and lifting ability. I favor the The Meat, Leaves and Berries Diet , but there are many other variations.

Hot tubs and cold showers Myth or not, I don't know, but the combination of hot tubs and icy showers is the best combination I have ever read about or practiced for recovery. The Bulgarians explained the benefits of both in the Seventies and I find the combination wonderful for joint recovery as well as a chance to simply "chill." Cold showers have even been touted as a fat loss tool, so maybe you get an extra boost for doing them. I am convinced of the ability of this combination's to help recovery.

