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Why Good Workouts May Not Be Effective

Having received a bachelor's and a master's degree from Adams State in sports science, I was quite sure I knew about exercise physiology and how to apply it to any athlete. On top of that, I was coached by two-time US Olympic coach [Dr. Joe I. Vigil](#). What more did I need to know? And if that weren't enough, I worked in the Exercise Physiology department at the Blackrock Clinic in Dublin (Ireland) under the direction of internationally renowned Strength and Conditioning coach [Dr. Liam Hennessy](#). And finally, I was the assistant coach for [Damon Martin](#), a former USTFCCA president and a 38-time National Coach of the Year. How could I possibly go wrong if I did what they did? To my horror, I did go wrong... **frequently!** Now maybe I didn't pay enough attention when I was with those gentlemen... which is probably highly likely as I was a high school dropout and got kicked out of college at one point... but that's a topic for *another* type of clinic. Anyway, whatever the case was, I had to learn and relearn a lot more things before I started having predictable success. Hopefully some of these things will be of benefit to you, and cause your good workouts to become more effective.

Here is a list of items we will be discussing in these two sessions (please click on the links below to learn more):

Journey versus Destination – [Goal setting](#) is said to be important... but how important is it? Why are you and your athletes a part of the program? So first of all, **Know thyself!** It's difficult to coach (help) anyone if you don't know why you're coaching. Also, understanding the [The 6 Basic Human Needs](#) by Tony Robbins may help you understand your motives, and those of your athletes. A [Personality Trait Test](#) by Myers-Briggs has been one of the biggest aids to my coaching in the last 5 years as it has helped me understand another component of my athletes' behaviors.

[Learning to effectively communicate with today's youth](#). This may help you find out what they want.

[P_o \(Potential or Talent\) + W \(Work\) – i \(Interference\) = HP](#) by Dr. Craig Manning. Possibly the greatest formula in sport! These talks will focus on Interference as it is the least addressed topic when dealing with youth athletics.

[Yakolev's Model of Super-compensation](#) and the **Stress Calculator** – Specific physical stress is necessary, but our athletes have a ridiculous amount of perceived stress nowadays. Defining these stresses and dealing with them is paramount to success.

Understanding your athletes' environment - Organisms react to a stimulus (e.g. a workout), but they adapt to their environments. "An organism's environment includes everything impinging upon it, as well as everything that is affected by that organism." Workouts are only one of the stimuli within an athletes overall environment.



More SLEEP! – This is unquestionably the biggest factor in my athletes’ improvements in their first year. Even if we haven’t been able to deal with their stresses, more sleep helps alleviate some of the problems. The National Sleep Foundation Research stated that teenagers (ages 14-17) needed a minimum of 7 hours and as much as 11. The Mayo Clinic and the Sleep Foundation have stated that teenagers (ages 14-17) needed a minimum of 8-10 hours. These statements are not focused on teenage distance runners! 100 years ago in the U.S., adults slept on average 8.7 hours per night. By 1942, it had dropped to 7.9 per night. In 2013 it was 6.8.

My Plate and the K.I.S.S. principle – Every one of your athletes was taught about the benefits of vegetables and fruit when they were very young. Keep It Simple *Superkid* – eat your vegetables! For most kids, the more ‘good’ food they eat generally lessens the desire for ‘bad’ food.

Good Form Running was developed by Playmakers, and 2004 US Olympian and Stanford NCAA 1500m Champion, Grant Robison. This is possibly the simplest and best method to teach good form. Some people believe that you should never try to change an athletes running mechanics, but if there’s one thing I’ve come to learn over the years, there are very few absolutes in this world.

Neural Plasticity (and possibly **Epigenetics**) is why **Repetition is the Mother of Learning** and **Consistency is the Key to Success**.

A “**1% Upgrade**” can help keep it simple – derived from the works of **Dave Brailsford** and **Eric Thomas**. Sir Brailsford initiated the 1% factor, or Aggregation of Marginal Gains, with British cyclists prior to Olympic and Tour de France successes. It involved dissecting every little aspect of his cyclists’ professional lives, and trying to make each part ‘1% better’. Dr. Thomas has spoken about how everyone wants to upgrade their phone, or car, or house, but few spend time trying to upgrade their own lives. At Cal U, we ask our kids to upgrade their lives/training/racing in small manageable increments. For instance, if they don’t sleep enough, we ask them to consistently get 15 more minutes per night.

Nature versus Nurture questions answered by the **MCTFR** (and possibly the movie *Three Identical Strangers*).

Vulnerability and Shame by Dr. Brené Brown and how understanding this can help strengthen your team.

If you’re interested in talking with me about any of these topics, or you have athletes that you think might be interested in Cal U, please don’t hesitate to speak with me during the convention. Alternatively, you can contact me at caulfield@calu.edu or by calling 724-938-5684.

Thank you for your time and attention!

