

EXPANDED AND UPDATED

SWOLE

THE GREYSKULL GROWTH PRINCIPLES

SECOND EDITION

BY JOHN SHEAFFER AKA JOHNNY PAIN

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Introduction

A lot has happened since I first published this book. Over the last three years I have had the privilege of working with and coaching scores of new clients who had a goal of achieving a physique of immense, Mastodonian proportions. I personally grew my own body into its largest and strongest form during that time as well, and as a result, have learned much about what those who are tremendously successful in this endeavor have in common.

This book “SWOLE: The Greyskull Growth Principles- Second Edition”, is the product of my continued education and experience with regard to the subject of mass gain. Owners of the first edition will notice several things about this copy.

For one, this book is not a mere repackaging of the material in the original with some new photos and anecdotes. While the majority of the material found in the first edition is also found in this volume, there is significantly more information that has been added. The original information is still here for one reason; it works extremely well and has been further proven and tested at this time. The primary methods that I have used with myself and trainees to bring about the type of growth that I am known for have not changed much. As I often comment, roughly twenty percent of one’s success in mass gain (or any other pursuit) can be attributed to the mechanics used to accomplish the task. The other eighty percent represents the mental components of success.

The single largest difference in this book is the inclusion of the methods that I use with my coaching clients to elicit their success through the creation of the appropriate mental condition for the task. Simply put, I’ve had a lot of people successfully gain loads of quality muscle mass in my coaching experience, but there have always been those who stood out from the crowd. While gains of fifteen to twenty pounds of muscle in twelve weeks are the norm for someone who is training with a solid program and applying the dietary principles outlined in this book, there have been those that have managed to add thirty or even forty pounds, in a span not much greater, with little increase in bodyfat.

What was it about these people that made them get so much more out of their efforts?

Was it genetics? No. Several of those who fit this bill are far from what I would consider genetic mutants when it comes to building muscle.

Was it money? No. I’ve had several guys who creatively budgeted their funds to accommodate the additional expenses of gym memberships, protein powders, and lots of food.

Was it steroids? No. While I have trained my share of enhanced trainees, the bread and butter client for me is still a natural guy who is looking to build a solid foundation drug free.

Was it age? No. I've seen standouts as young as sixteen, and as old as fifty-seven.

So what do these people have in common that propelled them above and beyond the accomplishments of the rest of the pack?

What common thread exists in this seemingly diverse group of high performers?

The answer is simple:

They all wanted it really bad, and were willing to move mountains to make it happen.

This was the first and easiest piece to observe. This crowd made the progress that they did in spite of not being the “most likely to succeed” by the standards of the masses. Their quest had to begin with an overwhelming desire to change in the most dramatic and efficient manner. From there, with coaching, they were all able to harness their desire and create the appropriate mental structure to support their mission. It is truly a thing of beauty to watch someone lock on to a target at the onset of their journey, and to know, unequivocally, that they will do what they set out to do simply by understanding how they are representing the task in their mind.

While desire in itself has allowed many to do amazing things without much else in terms of additional direction, a coach who is able to educate one to use that desire to allow a strategy to be built, is an invaluable asset to the trainee. I have dedicated much of my life to the study of success in a variety of fields, and unknowingly studied the same in the strength and conditioning world. This occurred by working with clients and helping them develop by applying lessons learned from my study of success in general. The result taught me much more about the subject of success, but also provided me with a wealth of data regarding the mental makeup, hygiene, and patterns of those who were overachievers in the strength and conditioning world.

This information has allowed me to synthesize the “body” portion of my “Blueprint to Beast” method that I use to help people build bigger, stronger, more rewarding lives. This topic was covered in great detail in my book “Drop the Panties: The

Greyskull Guide to a Better Body”, and I will be covering in this book as well, as it pertains to busting out of shirts, and building a body that makes the bouncers say “Oh Fuck” when you walk through the door (undoubtedly flanked by a pair of girls with great personalities- What? Did you think I was going to say something shallow?).

The mental muscle section of this book is intended to allow you to benefit from the observations that I have been fortunate enough to make working with these overachievers. If you apply the information, use the exercises, create the habits, etc, that these monsters among men do, then you will be building the foundation for your success with that eighty percent that we spoke of.

The physical application and diet information in this book will provide you with the mechanical tools necessary to ensure that you are not making progress “in spite” of bad information, but rather are using the deadly mix of sound mental tactics and the best mechanical info that you can find.

Simply put, this book is the balls and will give you the one-two punch necessary to turn your body into the hulking, beastly, panty dropping work of art that you want it to be (be sure to collect panties from the ground as they will be slick and will present a serious hazard to nearby pedestrians and other passers-by. I accept no responsibility for injuries that occur as a result of panty related accidents. We’re all grown ups here, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure).

Now that my second edition introduction is through, I encourage you to read the original introduction to this book provided below. You should do this for a few reasons, first, the information is still as relevant and applicable to you as it was three years ago, and two, it is perhaps my favorite introduction to any of my books.

So read on soon-to-be-stud.

Introduction (First Edition)

The decision to write this book came after working with several hundred people through phone consultations, seminars, via my internet forum, and in the personal training sector who shared the goal of adding significant amounts of quality muscle to their body without piling on a bunch of useless body fat in the process. This caveat was of particular concern to most due to either their own prior experience in attempting to pack on the muscle and “fat-fucking” themselves in the process, or simply from observing the lack of success others around them, either in person or on the internet, had in accomplishing the lean mass gain part of their goal without its ugly, fat, troll of a friend tagging along, being the cock-blocking third wheel.

In addition to working with those who were trying to better fill out their shirts and look like they actually lift weights while wearing sweats in the winter time, I have an equal if not greater amount of experience in dealing with those who were misled or misguided one way or another on their quest for greater girth where it counts. These poor souls had fucked around wound up doughy sacks of slightly stronger, though much less attractive and confident, jiggly, abstinent Jello.

There is a constant barrage of poor quality information on the subject of mass gain on the Internet, particularly within the communities in which these individuals are likely to find themselves as strength training beginners. It is then no surprise that they end up populating the wall of the club instead of finding themselves covered in glitter, making it rain on hoards of attractive women completely incapable of resisting their sheer primal masculinity and testosterone exhaust fume pheromones (ok, so the latter is not guaranteed or anything, at least not with *this* book, but a strong, muscular physique is definitely going to help you in the quest for that level of swag).

A very common “progression” (to borrow a cliché used all too frequently in these circles today) of thinking and influence that many of those who seek my services undergo seems to be as follows:

A guy decides that he wants to get in shape and look good so he pokes around online or by some other means and ends up joining a bizarre cult based around a sort of circuit training religion that promotes becoming “elite” and recommends a diet that is suitable for adequately feeding a small child who has had gastric bypass surgery for a few days to keep him alive but does not render him nutritionally capable of really doing any sort of extraneous movement.

He soon finds himself devoid of any and all muscle mass, but in possession of a sweet six-pack (if he is genetically pre-disposed to have them show at low bodyweights). His drawers are full of board shorts, his closet full of shoes that look like gloves which serve as birth control for normal females but are ironically

not needed for the females that he mates with, the gristly communal depositories that populate his cult headquarters. Their wombs are commonly incapable of bearing children due to the heavy Anavar and Winstrol use as well as their single digit body fat levels attained through the even more restrictive version of the aforementioned, cult-approved diet.

A few months to a year of cult life go by after which he realizes that maybe this isn't the life for him. He catches a bit of Conan the Barbarian on cable and remembers when he wanted to look like a sword swinging man's man and have women swoon over his god-like physique. He realizes that the weights that he is moving in the gym are considerably less than those of his 13-year-old nephew who just joined the high school wrestling team. He also comes to the realization that he is as close to going to the Olympics for weightlifting as I am to winning an award for smallest genitals on a grown man with tattoos on his face under the age of 30.

Some things need to change and they need to change fast.

This leads him to the next step in the chain of events that I see all too often.

The guy has been around the Internet a bit, read some forum posts and picked up a book or two off of Amazon. He's lurked for a bit on the forums and determined that he wants to focus on getting bigger and stronger for a while. The previous camp he was associated with had made him believe that strength was relative, and that strength to bodyweight ratio, and the ability to complete certain pre-determined tasks in impressive times were the most important things to train for.

His initial goals of looking better had been replaced or moved to the back burner. He was told that a focus on aesthetics was just plain vanity, ironically by a woman trainer wearing a sports bra, knee socks, and short lycra shorts. He believed that his new, greater purpose in life was to serve his cult and make the "leader board" in the spaceship motor pool, which they referred to as the "box".

Now in his new home, his new online friends are telling him that it is all about how much weight he can move from point A to point B. He is being told that in order to be a man he needs to weigh a certain amount, which he finds himself about forty pounds shy of after cult life rid him of his muscle mass. He really needs to change things for the better, and this is just the direction he needs to go.

He has his new shoes, his new belt, which he will wait to use until his working sets of course, and his expensive new rubber weight set. All he needs now is what?

You guessed it, a few gallons of milk.

Fast-forward a few months. At this point he is disappointed in how much body fat he has put on. He misses his six-pack and is frustrated that he has found himself looking at the sight he sees in the mirror.

How did this happen?

This is not what he set out to do at all. Where he envisioned sleek, chiseled abdominal muscles standing out in bold relief, he has stretch marks and love handles. Where his childhood wrestling heroes had their thick pectorals rife with striations and easily moved with conscious control he has a saggy pair of man boobs. Where his “guns” are supposed to be he sees a pair of smooth arms that lack any significant development and certainly do not turn heads in a tank top. This is just not going to work.

Some more Internet research ensues. Soon he finds himself visiting my site (strengthvillain.com); he’s heard my name. I am the guy that members of both camps trash talked regularly, he remembers that part, but he never really did understand why.

He reads through some of the threads on the forum, searches all of the back articles and buys a few eBooks. At this point he registers for the forum and is welcomed to the board by myself or one of my associates. He asks a few questions in the Q and A, bracing himself for the lashing that he is expecting for being so foolish as to ask a question on the Internet, only to discover that his question is answered politely and completely with a noticeable absence of any condescending bullshit. He’s hooked. What happens next is truly enlightening and influences the biggest physical change he has made in his life to date.

The Awakening: Getting Congruent and Re-Claiming *Your* Goals

The one thing that both of the camps he was previously associated with seemed to share were their contemptuous beliefs regarding the bodybuilding community. They both scoffed at their methods and labeled the athletes themselves with various pejorative terms, from meatheads to faggots (the latter making the least amount of sense to me; most of the guys I know who are interested in bodybuilding got into it to impress girls, myself included. I have an admittedly limited knowledge of homosexuality, but as far as I know impressing and attracting girls is not one of the top planks on their manifesto).

“Bodybuilders are not strong.”

“Bodybuilders can’t tie their shoes, walk around the block, jump on a 48” box” (insert any other human task here, it works, and has probably been said on one of the forums).

“Bodybuilding is a purely narcissistic endeavor.” (so is dressing well or applying makeup)

“Bodybuilders are dumb, meatheads, slow...” (Insert other derogatory remark about the intelligence of bodybuilders).

All of the above are statements that are perpetuated in the aforementioned circles and create the beliefs that lead the cult members to set their goals, their own goals that got them to set foot in the gym in the first place, aside in order to adopt their new goals that are conveniently assigned to them by those who are truly in the know (who ironically do not appear to possess the aesthetically pleasing bodies that they the impressionable trainee initially sought to attain by looking on the ‘net either).

The truth is, none of the above statements are by default true. Sure there are bodybuilders that are not mental giants, are gay, are not athletic, or are overly narcissistic. Those are characteristics that are present in individuals in any community however, including the ones that criticize the bodybuilders so openly and readily.

The one statement out of the ones listed above that always gets me however is that bodybuilders are not strong. This one I always found comical because of its blanket nature. I am not going to say that bodybuilders are all beasts or are all stronger than members of this group or that group, lest I sound as asinine as the others for speaking in such unsubstantiated absolutes. I will however say that I have seen some of the most impressive feats of strength I have ever witnesses performed by bodybuilders and that I have never met a bodybuilder (the serious variety now, not the guy at Gold’s who goes in on Monday and bench presses 135 for ten for ten years) who had an impressive amount of muscular development who did not have grossly above average strength to go with it.

Am I going to send you all out to by Jan Tana and a pair of posing trunks next?

Of course not.

What I am going to do however is clear the air of all of the mythical trash talk bullshit that gets in the way of you learning the lessons that you can learn from the bodybuilding community. Think about it for a minute, if your initial goal or the goal that you have now includes or included building an attractive, muscular physique that you could be proud to display, wouldn’t those who compete in that very endeavor be good folks to borrow lessons from? Logic would tell you so, but you’ve been told otherwise.

Slow-go cardio was stupid and was not as good for getting you lean as high intensity circuits or barbell complexes were; yet bodybuilders regularly get leaner than you have ever been able to by doing exactly that.

Isolation movements are pointless and serve no purpose; yet you’ve never been able to get your shoulders to look like cannonballs, or get your calves to grow.

Shakes and other supplements are useless, you can get everything you need from food or milk; yet bodybuilders make heavy use of shakes and supplements and have much better results with the very goal you set out to accomplish than you ever have.

I really could go on here, but I will spare you the obvious at this point.

There are many lessons to be learned from the wisdom acquired by those who have sought out to develop lean, muscular, healthy bodies for many years now. This collective “bro science” (as it is so lovingly referred to by its opponents) is some of the most valuable information you can receive if you are truly interested in changing your body for the better, building a masterpiece of dense muscle with little fat in the context of this book.

In this book I will serve as your guide and help you to apply some of these lessons. You will all be graduates of my University of Applied Bro-Sciences after reading and studying this work from cover to cover.

If you’ve been lying to yourself or accepting someone else’s projected goals as your own it is time to purge that crap out of your psyche. If you set out to develop a strong, aesthetically pleasing body that turns heads, causes large scale vaginal flooding in public places, and that above all you can be proud to inhabit, then it is time to get congruent and make shit happen.

Sync your beliefs with your goals, and make your day-to-day actions manifest what it is that you are after. Diet, training, supplementation, all are equally important in this quest, but all are trumped by the mental aspects of the game.

Get your mind right. Grow big, grow strong, and look good. You’ve got one shot at this shit and only one body to do it in.

Make it count.

Section One:

Mental Muscle

Chapter One:

The Success Formula

In my breakthrough book “Drop the Panties: The Greyskull Guide to a Better Body”, I go into great detail regarding my education in the world of personal development.¹ This was a process that has lasted over fifteen years at this point, and which has brought me much pleasure, and success in my own right. I describe in that work a pivotal time for me that occurred years ago when I seemingly had the world by the balls, but yet was lacking quite a bit in terms of gratification and aspiration for a greater future. A thorough course of soul searching and a renewed immersion in the principles that I used to attain the success that I had allowed me to break through what had been holding me back and ascend to a much higher place than I had yet to see.

After this revelation came an overhaul of my already successful coaching and consulting practice. The principles of success that I was applying with myself and others whom I coached on a more personal level began to seep into my phone and Skype sessions. This occurred on a subconscious level at first, with me “breaking down” the all-important mental components of success to those who I was coaching in this manner. Once the results and reviews from my services began to take a dramatic upswing from their already awesome standing, I decided that I needed to “standardize” a method that could be used with clients in order to tap into the “secrets” that I had been sharing with others. What resulted would form the foundation for my “Blueprint to Beast” methods, specifically the “success formula” which is heavily influenced by powerhouses such as Anthony Robbins, and the practice of Neurolinguistic Programming (NLP) as a whole.

The ensuing results from new coaching and consulting clients were nothing short of extraordinary. In typical fashion of a life-long student, I had found a way to take an existing model (my previous method) and improve it dramatically. I had always preached to clients the importance of the mental game when it came to training, and success in general, but I never had thought of creating a “standardized” curriculum for helping a client employ these methods to significantly increase the results from their efforts.

¹ Much of the information contained in this “Mental Muscle” section is heavily borrowed/adapted from the material found in Drop the Panties. If you own that book already, good for you. Pay special attention to the text that is in red, as it is the material specifically added for this book that pertains to the trainee looking to build as much muscle as possible.

That all changed in a hurry, and the “Blueprint to Beast Success Formula” became a standard point of education and application with all of my clients.

Later on I will be releasing a book under the name “Blueprint to Beast” that will detail all of the methods and principles that I use with clients to help them achieve higher performance in any of five key areas of their lives, body, relationships, career, finance, and mission, but for this book, I will be focusing on how to apply the Blueprint Success Formula to your quest for a bigger, stronger, more Herculean physique.

Let’s take a look at each of the three parts of the formula in detail, and then discuss how you can begin to apply the material in your situation. Trust me, if you overlook this portion of this book, your results will not be on par with the “standouts” that I mentioned in the introduction. All of the highest performers that I have ever worked with have applied these methods (whether taught by me, or instinctively activated due to overwhelming desire). You would be an absolute fool, having been exposed to this material, to fall into the trap that most do; focusing entirely on the “mechanics” of your approach (the program and diet), which make up roughly 20% of what is needed to succeed, and ignoring the other 80% made up by your mind’s involvement in the process.

My guess is that you bought this book because you want to grow. If that is truly the case, read the following thoroughly and take the time to think about what is being presented and how you can apply it in your situation.

Grow your mind first, and allow it to unlock the doors barricading you from developing your body to the level that wish to see it.

The Three Components of the Blueprint to Beast Success Formula

The Blueprint to Beast Success Formula has three major components, each as important as the next, and each of which works synergistically with the others. Without all three you have an incomplete puzzle. Some will naturally excel in one of the areas, but fall short in others. Some will be off in all three. In either case, you won't truly get what you want until you begin making all three work for you.

The three components are:

Standard

Belief

Habits

These are recurring themes in NLP, and have been used extensively by Anthony Robbins in his life-changing work with millions over his long career. I fully attribute my arrival at these ideas by the teachings of these people, and the resultant learning and growth that I experienced. Without them, there would be no Blueprint to Beast.

Let's get down to it and look at these three pieces, and then how to put them together in order to make a truly amazing finished product. Get ready to finally build the body that you have always wanted to inhabit, but that you thought impossible.

Standard

The first component of the Blueprint to Beast success formula is the development of a clearly defined standard. This is simply, as Tony Robbins describes, “The minimum that you are willing to accept for yourself”. Linguistically, you can hear the difference between that statement and “This is what I’d like to have”.

Clarity is paramount when it comes to accomplishing what you want in life. In my upcoming book “Blueprint to Beast” I will be laying out these principles in much greater detail as they pertain to success in general, but for our purposes in this book we will be looking at how to use this proven success formula with the objective of creating the physique that you truly desire.

When I’m working with a client, the first thing that we do is determine their individual standard. We use the idea that the subconscious mind is largely visual as a shortcut to “install” the standard. This is accomplished by finding an image that represents their specific desired outcome(s).

“Goals are Shitty”

During the interview process, I determine what it is that the client wants first by allowing them to tell me what their goals are. I’ve been quoted before as saying, “Goals are shitty”, and I couldn’t be more emphatic in my belief that this is true. My statement however requires a bit of explanation.

The idea of a goal is flawed in terms of getting your subconscious mind to work on your behalf. A goal is nothing more than a spoken or written wish. It is not even a statement of intent. You say to me,

“I want to pack on about twenty pounds of muscle”

“I want to weigh 225 (insert desired weight here)”

“I really want to be able to deadlift 500 and press bodyweight for reps”

or worse,

“I’d be happy if I could just pack on half of the weight I’d really like to”

or,

“I guess I’m ok with adding bodyfat in the process, I know I can’t have it all”

None of these goals sound bad right? I mean who am I to tell someone what he or she should or shouldn’t want from his or her efforts?

It’s not that their words do not make sense, I speak their language, and I understand the meaning of their words. Unfortunately however, their own subconscious mind is not as clear about what they want.

I frequently say that the subconscious is infinitely intelligent and yet relatively dumb at the same time. It is dumb in that it does not automatically take a half-assed, verbalized wish as a target on which to lock its sights and guide and direct behavior in order to see the wish materialize in reality.

That’s the problem with setting a goal. You are not using the single most powerful tool that you have at your disposal, your subconscious, to ensure that the job gets done.

In the latter examples of goals that I commonly hear that I listed above the client isn’t even really telling me what they want, but rather what they don’t need to have, or what they can do without.

How clear is this to an already confused, overworked supercomputer that is only capable of following the precise direction provided by your beliefs (which we will look at in the next section); your standard?

If you understand that your subconscious works like a guided missile to ensure that whatever it is tasked with accomplishing gets done, then you can begin to understand why I say that goals are shitty since they do not directly define a task for it to get to work on.

Creating the Standard

Ok so all of this sounds good, we know that a simple goal is not enough. We've all set goals, even written them down or made them public in some other manner in an effort to increase our accountability. We know that despite how convicted we may set out to be, we rarely see the idea come to fruition. We've also established by now that getting the subconscious mind locked on to a target increases our chances of success exponentially.

So how do we install this standard, this minimum that we are willing to accept for ourselves, into our subconscious so that it can do its dirty work?

It's simpler than you may think if you use the method that I use with my coaching and consultation clients.

First we have to understand and accept that the subconscious is largely visual in nature and responds to images better than any other stimulus. Once we do this, then we must determine what image will represent our target. This is where it gets a bit trickier.

You see, I can't give you an image to use. I am not in your brain, and therefore do not represent complex ideas in visual form in the same manner that you do.

In order for the image to represent the adaptations that you want, it needs to be derived organically from your own mind. I elicit the discovery of this image by asking the client a simple question.

Once I've allowed the client to answer the first question that I mentioned,

“What are your Goals?”

I follow with another question,

“If I had the ability to wave a magic wand and make all of the changes that you want to see happen instantly, **what would that look like?**”

Specifically I am referring to what the finished product would look like **visually**.

A brief silence, or the client asking me to further explain usually follows this question. Male clients in particular do not normally openly name another man who they would like to look like. This is something that is far more common with females (more on this in a minute).

On the surface this may seem extremely superficial and often spurs confusion in the mind of the client.

I mean after all, haven't we been taught by now that form follows function?

Haven't the majority of us dismissed the idea of aesthetics being the primary mission when training and eating right?

Aren't we supposed to be worried about getting stronger, more athletic, healthier, and *then* reap the aesthetic rewards as "side effects"?

There is a boatload of truth in all of those ideas, but you see we are not talking about conscious understanding or theory here, but rather the process of getting the subconscious, our secret weapon, on the job.

Follow me here...

Let's say our client tells me in the exposition of the interview that his goals are to build muscle, bench press 315 for reps, lose bodyfat, and become more athletic in general.

Then, after my question/challenge they tell me that they'd ultimately like to look more like The Rock.

I then follow with a series of questions such as,

"Would it be possible for you to look more like The Rock without building muscle in the process?"

"Do you suppose if you looked more like The Rock that you would be able to bench press 315 for reps? Do you suppose he can do that?"

“Would you have to lose bodyfat to have a physique that was more similar to his?”

“Do you suppose that The Rock is more athletic than you are, and if so, do you suppose that you would be more athletic all around if you had a body that looked like his?”

The answers to these questions are predictable. No one will select an image (in this case a person) that is less muscular, smaller, or weaker than they are. Why would they?

So, instead of a bunch of foggy wishes (goals) we now have an image that represents all of the changes that we want to make. Internally when we view this image it represents those adaptations, it is much more than a simple photo of someone who we'd like to look like.

Make sense?

So we immediately replace our goals with a standard, an image that we **view a minimum of two times per day** in order to re-experience the representations that we have anchored to it, and further instruct our subconscious to seek the target, the visual end state, which brings with it all of the other things that we ultimately wish to have.

Yes this means locating an image of another male (who usually happens to be shirtless) for the purposes of staring at least twice per day. Enter the concerns of the masculine man. Like I said, females will normally come off the top of their head within seconds with the name of a woman, a celebrity perhaps, that represents what they want. Males hesitate; though almost always have tucked away in their mind a physique role model.

Often times in order to lighten the tension and elicit the response that I want from the male client I will assure them that in all my years of doing this I have successfully converted a few lesbians to straight, or at the very least bisexual women, (hey when you've got it you've got it) but that I've never worked with a male client who has changed his sexual orientation as a result of working with me.

Simply put, using this method of creating a standard, which involves looking at a shirtless guy a few times a day, will not make you develop a love for “*The Big Bang Theory*”, Justin Bieber, or just plain dick overnight.

That is my promise to you.

So that's it. Think about what I said regarding the magic wand. If I waved it for you, who would you look like? Who is a visual representation of the characteristics that you wish to possess?

Once you've identified that individual, locate a photo, *the* photo that best represents your new standard. You'll know the one when you see it. Then put it somewhere that you will see it at least twice per day, remembering each time you view it what it represents to you.

At that point you will be actively installing the standard into your subconscious, and will be allowing it to work its magic and direct your behavior all day long towards getting what you want.

As bizarre and blasphemous as it may sound, the inconvenient truth here is that when it comes to the subconscious, function follows form.



Above are a few examples of images that clients of mine have used as their standard. Look at each and see if you can list several physical or athletic adaptations that would need to take place in order for you to look more like the image. I found each in about five minutes using a simple Google image search. This certainly isn't complicated stuff. While the above are all celebrities or athletes, sometimes the image is of a friend, or someone who most would not know, but who best represents the standard to the individual.

Each body has some similar characteristics, but each different in a variety of ways as well. If we look at Mariusz for example (bottom left) we have a 300lb behemoth. Statham (top center) weighs in at about 175lb in that photo, but

certainly displays a fine degree of muscularity and detail. A scrawny, 135lb teenager undertaking a mass gain program who is also rightfully concerned about his ever-important ability to dazzle the ladies with his definition might select an image like this one. That would represent a 40lb increase in bodyweight and, unless said teen was already rocking a serious six pack, a reduction in bodyfat. This kid would certainly not be “wrong” for selecting the sub 200lb Jason as his mass gain standard image. He very well may end up progressing to a “bigger” image more along the lines of old Dwayne there as the years go by. One of the beautiful things about this concept is that you can always adapt your standard image as you go, and as your goals change.

What’s right for you is what’s right for you. That’s why I ask the question instead of recommending an image to focus on.

That brings me to the next point that I want to reiterate.

The Importance of Determining Your Own Image to Represent Your Standard

As I mentioned before, the image has to be something that you discover. This is why I don't simply email the client a photo that I think represents what they want. It is imperative that the image is organic; you need to find the one that fits the bill for yourself.

I'll share a story from my consultation practice to further demonstrate.

Some time ago I was contacted by a man in his mid fifties who wished to hire me to help him get the "gusto" back in his life. Physically he looked like the kind of guy that you'd see in an anti-aging clinic advertisement, or on an underwear ad targeted at middle aged men. His hair was salt and pepper; his body was lean, muscular and tan. His teeth were whiter than white, and he had perfect skin that barely showed any indication of the number of decades that he'd lived.

In his professional life he was on top of the world. He was worth several million dollars, owned several lucrative businesses that he had either started from the ground up, or acquired and renovated.

He owned several properties in different parts of the world, and had a collection of cars that anyone would find impressive.

Anyone who spoke to this man, myself included, would wonder what exactly he could possibly need help with. After shooting the shit with him for about twenty minutes I finally came out with it:

"What is it that you need **my** help with?"

His answer was surprising, but made perfect sense. He told me that he had been married for close to thirty years, that he loved his wife deeply, but that the physical passion that he once shared with her was missing at this point in his life. He admitted to having had several affairs, to dating much younger women, and living the life of a rich, entrepreneur playboy with the world by the balls.

Though he said he didn't regret his decisions, he stated that he had simply reached a point in his life where he wished to rekindle the spark that had once existed with the woman that he had loved so deeply all of these years.

Since I use the Blueprint to Beast success formula across the board with life coaching clients (the principles apply to any area of your life where success is sought as you will see demonstrated in much greater detail in my upcoming book) I immediately worked with him to establish a standard with which to replace his simple, though seemingly complex wish.

I asked him if he could remember a time when the physical passion with his wife was at its absolute peak. He responded by telling me of a late honeymoon to Hawaii that he had taken with her about a year after they had been married. He was not financially well off in the early days, and it wasn't until after they had married that his first business really took off and brought the cash in enabling them to take the trip.

I asked if he had kept photos from his trip to which he replied that he had. He told me that they had stayed in a rented bungalow on the beach, and that the week that they spent there was the most intense seven days that he had ever experienced sexually and passionately.

He told me that he had a photo of the house that his wife had taken upon arriving, and said that whenever he dug it out and looked at it that he was instantly taken back in his mind to that magical week.

BOOM! There's our image for our standard.

I instructed him to place the image where it could be seen at least twice per day, in this case as part of what we call a manifestation map, a collection of images that represent standards in various aspects of life.

The important point to make note of here is that he was using a picture of a small house on a beach in Hawaii to represent his desire to live a more passionate existence with his wife. Other people looking at the image may think something totally different. They might see the house and think that they'd like to visit somewhere tropical, or to them it may represent the financial freedom to travel.

For him, the juices flowed when he saw that image, and he knew exactly what it represented to him. That is what is important in determining the image to use as the visual representation of your standard,

It has to elicit a shift in thinking upon viewing it. One that is empowering and that truly lets the old rods and cones fixate on something that makes you electric inside.

I cannot emphasize the importance of establishing a standard and determining a visual representation for it enough. In my opinion if you are not willing to do this step, then you should get used to settling for less than what you truly want.

Use this simple method everyday. "In Blueprint to Beast" we will look at more involved techniques to further install the idea, and exactly how to combine

images that represent standards in different aspects of life to create a masterpiece vision for your ultimate existence.

This is incredibly important to keep in mind when determining your mass gain image. Like I referenced with the sample images, what **you** want is what matters, not what someone else tells you that you need. I've worked with a lot of guys who look awesome, and were strong as hell at 180lbs or so (181 Powerlifters anyone?), particularly shorter guys. If this guy were to believe (foreshadowing) that he needed to be 200lb or more in order to "be a man", or some other horseshit, he would likely fall into the common trap of chasing scale PR's instead of lifting PR's, choosing foods based solely on caloric content, etc.

Chances are our (shorter, skinnier, or younger) guy would not pick someone who weighed more than 200 based solely on a picture. You show me a skinny high school kid who would not give a kidney to look like Statham in that picture and I'll show you a video I have of me blowing a moose (don't try to bust me on a technicality here by enlisting the help of a skinny high school kid to lie for you. The truth is I don't have such a video... since the fire that is.... And would therefore have to actually blow a moose and film it in order to make good. I'm seventy-five percent sure that I don't want to do that).

For this kid, that image might be damn good.

Find yours. If you think it's relevant, find out what your guy weighs and factor in your height to determine roughly what you would need to weigh to look like him on your frame. For example, if you're 5'7" and want to look like The Rock who is 6'5", you will not need to weigh the same 270lbs that he does to look more like him.

The coolest thing about that idea though is that you will instinctively, nine times out of ten, pick someone who's frame is damn similar to yours, and whose body you could replicate relatively easily given the right mindset and mechanics.

Belief

Belief is the second component of what I call the “Blueprint to Beast Success Formula”. Your personal beliefs are what make or break you on the road to reaching what you have defined as your standard.

One definition of belief commonly used in Neuro Linguistic Programming is:

“An idea, assumption, or pre-supposition about yourself, others, or the world around you”.

All of us have beliefs about everything in our world. Beliefs are interesting in that we are often unaware of how we actually represent something internally (belief) until we are met with a belief of another that challenges our own.

Beliefs fall into two categories:

Empowering Beliefs

Limiting Beliefs

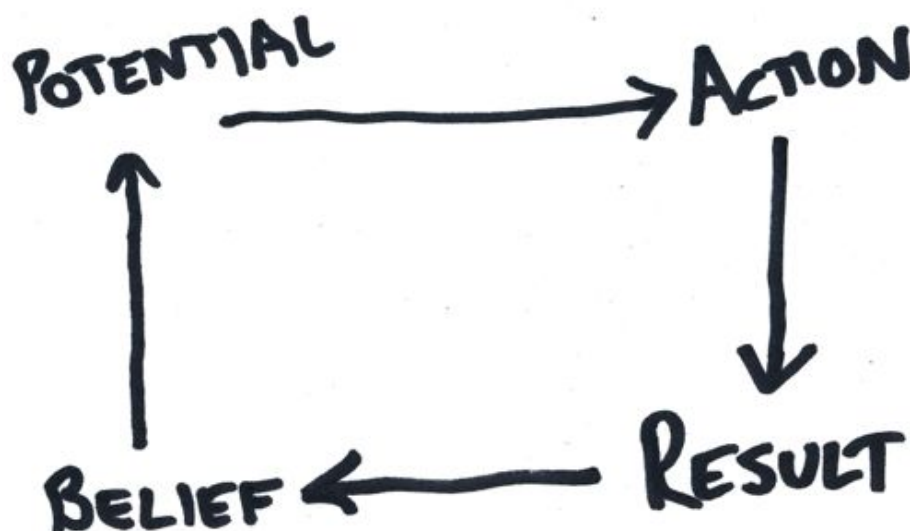
Empowering beliefs are the good ones. They are representations of reality that enable you to move forward and achieve success in your endeavors. Likewise, limiting beliefs put the brakes on your ability to get what you want.

Limiting beliefs are more responsible for an individual’s lack of success than any other single factor. Even with a solid standard in place, limiting beliefs will hamstring you on the road to greatness.

Identifying, and killing limiting beliefs is crucial, and must be done quickly, and definitively at the onset of a quest towards a body more likely to release the floodgates in the loins of the women who you contact with.

Again, we will be getting into much more detail with regards to beliefs and their effects on your success in any endeavor in “Blueprint to Beast”, but are focusing on the specific beliefs that you must possess in order to develop the body that you have always wanted to inhabit.

The Belief Loop



Before we get into the process of identifying limiting beliefs it is important to understand the role that beliefs play in your subconscious. The above diagram is one that I have all of my consultation clients draw while we are working on their case.

Belief begins the loop in the lower left corner. Our beliefs determine our perceived potential to achieve our desired outcome. Our subconscious perception of our potential is what in turn influences our actions. Predictably, actions yield results, good or bad, and our results provide feedback that then strengthens our belief about the matter through our experience.

Let's look at a few examples of how this works.

If a client has a limiting belief that he does not have the time to train adequately in order to develop the body that he wants, his subconscious perceives his potential to accomplish said goal as very low. It essentially kicks its feet up and says,

"I can relax, he can't do this, he doesn't have the time".

With a perception of low potential for success, ones actions are chronically poor. The guy with no time to train continually finds ways to not train; after all, his belief is that he doesn't have the time. So despite having the same twenty-four hours, and probably many less responsibilities than others who train in spite of time restrictions, he continues to watch TV, spend way too much time looking for the right video to nut to on a porn tube site, or do whatever else it is that is occupying some of the time that he could easily allot for training.

The results of his actions, or inactions as they may be are then predictably poor. Shitty actions produce a shitty result, that's nothing new. Continuing to produce the same result on a day to day basis, which in his case is not getting any closer to having the body he wants further solidifies his belief that he doesn't have the time to train.

I mean after all, he hasn't produced the results that he wanted, so there has to be a reason (excuse).

Limiting beliefs are nothing more than that, excuses. They masquerade as ideas that make perfect sense, and are often perceived to be impossible to change. It is critical to understand that any limiting belief can be identified, challenged, and replaced

Identifying Limiting Beliefs

In order to identify the limiting beliefs that an individual possesses that are holding him back from the success that he deserves and desires, I use a simple process.

Revisiting the idea of the magic wand that I discussed in the section on standard, I ask him to imagine that end state, the standard which he has created and then ask him a simple question:

*“Why are you not there **now**?”*

Again, I inevitably get a pause, often times followed by a short laugh, and then something along the lines of

“Wow, that’s a really good question”.

After a minute of reflection, he will inevitably begin telling me the reasons why he believes that he has not gotten where he has wanted to go to his point. Some of the most common that I have heard over the years are:

“I’m not consistent enough”

“My diet is inconsistent/poor/all over the place”

“I don’t have access to the right type of gym”

“I work so much that I don’t have the time to commit to it”

“I’ve never been good at _____”

“I have bad genetics when it comes to _____”

“I’ve never had proper coaching”

“I suck at _____”

*“It’s hard for me to _____ because I’m
_____”*

My simple question has just elicited a response from him that exposes exactly what his limiting beliefs are.

Each of the above statements are exactly that; statements. The person is stating something that he is representing as truth, though it almost never is something that he is destined to have to live with for the rest of his life.

If he told me that he lacked leg development because he’d been paralyzed in an accident and was wheelchair bound, then he’d be in a different position. But if the reason that he lacks leg development is:

“I feel like my squat technique is off, so I haven’t gotten above 205 despite several resets on the GSLP”

then it is clear that it is a limiting belief, and not a definite, physical limitation that is keeping him from success.

Let’s revisit the loop now.

“Tim” says that he wants to build more muscle mass and bench his bodyweight for five at least (examples of the “goals” that he tells me before we create an actual standard).

Now, when asked why he wasn’t there yet, he tells me that he lacks consistency in his diet, chronically not eating enough calories, and that he has always been a shitty bencher.

Let’s plug each of these in the loop and see what happens.

In the case of consistency, I will ask him if it is fair for me to translate what he is saying into:

“I am inconsistent with my diet, and do not eat enough calories to grow”

He will invariably answer **“yes”**.

If we take this statement and plug it into the belief corner of the diagram, we see that his subconsciously perceived potential to accomplish his mission is determined by this belief. His potential is essentially shit under these circumstances. He has about as much of a chance of building the muscle and benching his bodyweight as a guy has of getting away without an arrest once he hears the words “I’m Chris Hansen with Dateline NBC” and is told that he is free to leave the house of “Tara13” that he has been chatting up and promising beer and a good time online for the last three weeks.

With a shit potential directing his actions, he is predictably going to do very little outside of what he has been doing. His actions will be those of someone who believes that they chronically do not eat enough in that he will not eat enough (more on why this may not even be the case in a minute), and his bench press will continue to not move because he will “fail” early, obsess about his need to learn more technique, or outright skip bench press sessions altogether seeing as how he “sucks at the lift” anyway.

Actions like these will yield for him nothing in the way of favorable result. He will essentially continue to fail in the areas in which he wishes to succeed, and those results will strengthen his belief that he can’t do it.

He keeps fucking himself basically.

Take a look at the common examples of limiting beliefs that I listed above, and see if any of them sound like something that you have said at some point. Play with the loop, plug some of them into it, and see how the belief may influence action and ultimately result.

Take a look at your standard that you’ve now created and ask yourself the question I asked above:

“Why am I not there yet?”

Understand that with a foggy string of wishes that aren’t in the language of your subconscious, coupled with a load of bullshit limiting beliefs about your reasoning for not having been successful in the past, you have been doomed from the beginning.

In the next section we will look at how to use my dirty trick of creating habits and “hijacking the loop” as I call it in order to produce better results, and strengthen a recently adopted, empowering belief, and soon we will look at how to flip the script on a limiting belief, but first, let’s look at one more thing...

Challenging a Belief

In the case of just about every limiting belief (excuse) out there, there is a tale that I can relate that destroys the logic that is needed to accept that particular belief as true. Having done this for quite a while, I have a vault of go-to stories or analogies that I use when working with clients to shatter their limiting beliefs and realize that they’ve been hamstringing themselves out of the gate.

Let’s look at Tim who says that his diet is inconsistent and is not calorically rich enough to build muscle.

I will usually ask him to tell me what a typical day consists of in terms of diet for him.

What he will tell me is normally something like this:

“I wake up in the morning, drink a shake like the one you talk about in SWOLE. Then I go to work where I eat at around 10, usually a bagel with egg and ham or something like that. Then I eat dinner leftovers or something similar for lunch, which is normally a protein source and a carbohydrate. Dinnertime I’ll have some sort of meat and a pasta or potato, then it’s off to the gym. After my workout I drink a post workout shake that’s 75/25 carbohydrate to protein ratio like you recommend, then a protein only shake or some eggs or other protein only meal a few hours later before bed”.

Now, you may not make your living in the strength and conditioning industry or anything, but does this sound like a guy that has a shitty diet when it comes to building muscle and developing an aesthetically pleasing body?

No, it doesn't.

You probably imagine that with the slightest bit of charisma, this guy probably pull some high quality ass, instead of the girls that look like "Pepper" from "American Horror Story: Asylum" that he has determined are the only ones he can land using the same logic he used to convince himself that his diet is holding him back.

After I inform him that his diet is better than my own, and that scores of guys who I associate with that have bodies about which he would say,

"Yeah, that's what I want to look like"

do not eat anywhere near as well as he does, I fuck him up with some more food for thought.

I ask him to imagine a maximum-security prison filled with hardened criminals. I might ask if he's ever watched "Lockup" on MSNBC or any other sort of show featuring inmates in such institutions. Unless he's lived under a rock his whole life, chances are that he has an image in his mind within about a half of a second.

I ask what he thinks of when he imagines those inmates. His response is normally something like:

"Oh they're jacked. Lots of muscle and no discernable fat, I'd love to look like that".

Then I ask him whether he thinks his diet is better or worse than theirs. This almost always gets a laugh as he realizes that his diet, and his freedom to manipulate it to suit his needs is infinitely better than the rigid, American school lunch style diet of the inmates he is picturing.

Would they care if they were using Whey Isolate, Whey Concentrate, or Casein protein?

No, they'd quite literally **kill** to get their hands on any of the above.

Are they concerned that they won't be able to build their suit of armor like everyone around them has done for years unless their meals are timed correctly or do not have enough essential fatty acids?

No, they've been piling on muscle using bologna, cheese, and egg substitutes combined with a ton of hard work for quite some time.

Do you think they'll skip dessert?

Skip cookies or cakes in the mess hall?

Of course not, and they'll still have abs sharper than the toothbrush handle they have honed down to a point under their bunk should shit pop off or you come on the block after your aforementioned run in with Chris Hansen (you're disgusting).

The point here is that those people have built the type of body that Tim wants ***in spite of*** their diets, not as a result of it. Tim has an easier time at this point realizing that his belief that his (awesome) diet is what has been holding him back.

Now, am I saying diet be damned, eat whatever you like?

No, I'm not. Most of you are not incarcerated (shout out to Little Ryan and Beast who are undoubtedly reading this) and therefore would be foolish to not responsibly wield the diet sword when attempting to develop a panty-dropping body. Take advantage of the fact that you have all of the freedoms in the world, have access to the best food, supplements, and training information in the world, and generally stop whining about diet holding you back from becoming the type of man that other men fear and dislike because their girlfriends won't avert their gaze when you walk in the room.

Let's stay on the prison tip for a minute.

My friend Jay was locked up for a little less than a year a few years back. A few days before he went away, by coincidence he happened to be at my house for a cookout. In my back yard some of my friends were doing chin-ups on the bars. He jumped up and managed one shaky, half rep chin-up before dropping from the bar and returning to his beer and consort of the day.

Fast-forward nine months to his release. I decided to throw him a welcome back party at my house. Very casually he tells me, after several drinks and some female attention, that he has something to show me. He walks out to the bars and proceeds to perform twenty-one of the cleanest, dead hang chin-ups I have ever seen consecutively.

Now, when asked how he went about it his answer was simply:

“I don’t know, I just did a lot of chins until I got better at them.”

Now before you say, **“yeah but he had all the time in the world to do chins all day”**, understand that he was only able to do chins when he was on the yard for an hour a day, and later on a few more times more on a door jam when he was given more freedom and became a trustee.

He didn’t need some complex Soviet method involving percentages. He didn’t only do chins on Tuesdays and Fridays after his pre-workout drink and his favorite Katy Perry song on his iPod.

He just did chins.

He did chins regularly, and without any bullshit preconceived notions about one’s ability to progress at chins. He doesn’t visit forums; he doesn’t read books about strength training, and despite his friendship with me, has never asked me a single question regarding training, preferring to keep our friendship centered around money, women, and fistfights.

See where I’m going with this.

Tim’s friend Tom tells me that he has been unable to build a more solid, lean, and muscular physique because the CrossFit gym that he used to train at has become inaccessible due to his relocating to another state, a big beach state on the west coast. He is now relegated to lifting weights in an old-fashioned basement gym filled with over the hill, has-been bodybuilders.

Now what do you think I’m going to say to this sweet tart?

Let’s just say that it’s a good thing no one has ever built a hard, lean body in a bodybuilding gym filled with old timers who were fucking girls in bikinis and roller skates behind the .22 target range on the boardwalk decades before he was born.

Am I right?

No really, I’m just kidding, that question was just a formality; I know I’m right.

Ok, ok, one more story and then we’ll get on to how to replace a limiting belief with a better one using my micro/macro trick.

So I’m working with this guy who tells me that he’s built a ton of muscle in the last six months of following my program, and that his strength has shot through the roof. The only thing that sucks for him is that he’s been trying to get visible abs for the last two and a half months and hasn’t seen the results that he wants.

We go through the normal line of questioning during which I discover that his training regiment is straight from my book *“The Greyskull LP: Second Edition”* and he has been following it to the letter. He’s even busting out burpees, push-ups, and chins using the frequency method (one of the most commonly omitted yet awesomely effective components of the program).

We talk diet and he tells me that he feels it’s the missing link that is holding him back. I of course ask what his diet looks like and he offers to provide me with a spreadsheet of exactly what he’s eaten for the last three months. I tell him that this is unnecessary, so he proceeds to tell me his diet day by day, outlining a picture perfect setup right from the pages of the first edition of this book. No problem there.

So what’s his deal?

Why can’t he see those abs yet?

His training is intense and perfect in design. His diet is on point.

Then it comes out.

“I think I know what it is,” he says.

There’s one small detail he hasn’t told me.

It seems that he has a love of barbecue sauce and has been using it too liberally on his chicken breasts, which he grills every three days in advance for the upcoming days.

I’m speechless.

After a deep breath I say to him,

“Ok, I want you to imagine a man who is in his mid twenties. He is completely dedicated to building a monstrous, hard physique. He lifts heavy weights in big compound movements in a progressive manner three times per week. He runs hard, one hundred meter sprints twice per week, goes for walks on an empty stomach five to six mornings per week, and does burpees on the clock each day except Sunday.

In addition he performs nearly fifteen hundred push-ups spread out through the week, and knocks out close to two hundred chins per week as well.

He also eats a perfect diet in terms of building muscle. He splits six meals per day between solid foods that are clean and nutrient-dense, and high quality protein shakes.

*Now, this guy **would** have an amazing body except for one thing...*

He uses a few too many tablespoons of barbecue sauce on his chicken breasts when he cooks them”.

As you can imagine he roared with laughter and was about as embarrassed as he would have been had his Mother, Grandmother, and Kindergarten teacher walked in on him jerking it to Tranny porn.

He immediately realized how ridiculous it was for him to believe that such a minor detail was holding him back. He realized that it wasn't the fact that he was liberally using the barbecue sauce that was messing him up, but rather the **belief** that the barbecue sauce was the culprit that was actually responsible.

Remember the loop? Plug it in and see what happens.

Armed with a new belief he plugged away as usual and, lo and behold, a mere three weeks later I get an excited email from him telling me that for the first time in his life he has visible abdominals.

What is amazing to me is that he thanked and credited me for being the cause.

Ok, I'll admit it wasn't amazing. I know I'm awesome.

Clearly beliefs will fuck you up beyond repair on your quest to greatness if you do not ball gag them and make them your sub. Learn how now...

Come with me grasshopper.

***Bonus* Common Limiting Beliefs that Prevent Guys from Packing on the Pounds**

I don't make enough money to buy all of the food I would need.

This one we will cover in the section on buying food later on. You will see that it is entirely possible to eat loads of food without spending much more than the average American does buying far less, lower quality food. This statement in particular cracks me up when it comes from a young guy who spends 40% of his income each week in one or two nights at the bar buying single beers at a 400% markup. How important is growing really to him if he cannot prioritize?

My knees, shoulders, testicles, etc. are bad and I therefore can't lift as I should to grow.

I routinely work with guys who have had surgery on some body part at some point, and a few who have been putting off an inevitable surgery for years. Guys with shoulder problems tend to do better with the close grip bench press, guys with "bad knees" commonly have no pain when they learn to squat correctly, and to depth, and/or start using knee wraps.

My genetics suck; my body wants to be tall and skinny (or short and fat). I don't have the genetics to build a lot of muscle and be lean.

I'm a natural ectomorph that gains fat like an endomorph. I'm the genetic equivalent of ostrich shit when it comes to building muscle and losing bodyfat. Despite this fact, I've been able to walk around at over 250lb (at 5'11") with low teens bodyfat on more than one occasion. I have a stack of client profiles of guys who have done the same, working with a similar deck.

I have a hard time sticking to a diet or a program.

This one stinks badly of an excuse. You have no harder time than anyone else. Keep telling yourself this one and you will create and manifest every possible reason to not train or adhere to your diet. You have a built in excuse as to why this is acceptable since it fits the pattern of actions that you've taken previously.

I don't have enough time to train.

We all have the same 24 hours each day. Some have more demands than others for sure, but plenty of active duty military guys, contractors, CEO's, guys with five or more kids and two jobs, etc. have been able to do what needs to be done in order to make things happen. Your weight training sessions take 45 minutes max; you can't creatively allot 2 hours and 15 minutes total training time out of the 168 hours in a week?

I don't have enough time to eat enough.

See above.

I'm allergic to dairy (or some other food).

I once worked with a guy who could not eat dairy or oats. Hmm... what to do about his shakes? No whey, no milk, no oats. Answer: I got onto trueprotein.com and designed him a 50/50 Beef Protein Isolate and Brown Rice Carbohydrate powder shake that he was able to buy five pounds of for less than a two pound container of Whey at GNC. Obviously he could have packed on the pounds with solid foods only, avoiding his allergies, but there wasn't even a need to sacrifice the convenience of shakes. Simply knowing there was a shake that he could actually use pushed this guy over the top and set him on track to make serious progress.

There aren't any good gyms/coaches in my area.

Make one. I did. Build a home gym, or change your definition of what a "good gym" is. I've got guys following my programs in every corner of the world, often times with equipment that looks like it was purchased at a "Play it Again Sports" in Somalia. Online coaching is available (I do it), and a little goes a long way. Adapt and overcome, I have no sympathy for those who say they lack gym or coaching resources.

Every time I've done a mass gain in the past I just gain a lot of fat.

You mean "every time I did a program out of a certain book that advocates lifting weights three times pre week to the exclusion of all other physical activity and drank a gallon of milk per day" I got fat? Please. Read on and learn young, impressionable guy.

Last time I did a mass gain phase, it took me six months to lose all of the fat, and I lost most of the muscle in the process.

Again, this arises from past experience with poor advice (actually it's awesome advice if getting a rockin' set of love handles, man boobs, and looking like Mr. Potatohead while building a marginal amount of strength is your goal). There is no need to pile on fat while growing, and even if you're starting out chubby, there is no reason it should be that hard to lose the fat.

I have low testosterone.

If this is true, do something about it. Your quality of life is your decision, not someone else's. Prescriptions are easy to get if you truly are low. Otherwise, relish in the fact that lots of natural **female** powerlifters are way stronger than you. I bet you have more test than they do, and if you can get strong like them, you **will** gain muscle.

I don't get enough sleep to grow.

I've got a list of about four dozen active, special operations personnel that I can refer you to that would love to hear you tell them this one so that they can provide you with their caring and sympathetic feedback.

I train at home; I have no good lifting partners or limited equipment.

Make friends, real ones. Guys you talk to on your headset playing "Call of Duty" don't count. See "no good gyms" one for limited equipment.

I like to run 5k's with my girlfriend occasionally. She says if I get "too big" I won't be able to do that anymore.

First of all, stop listening to your girlfriend. In my experience they have horrible advice and horrible things to say in general. Second, no, gaining muscle and turning into the behemoth that she is afraid you will, lest you have an inevitable threesome with her way hotter sister and her best friend, will not impede your occasional, recreational (read: to shut her up) 5k performances.

Replacing a Limiting Belief

So how do we get rid of a shit belief and replace it with a newer, better one that will serve our purposes?

It's easier than you might think.

I use a simple process involving the adoption of what I call a “micro” belief for one single day. The basic premise is that as the micro belief cycles through the belief loop it becomes a “macro” belief; a larger, more global belief that begins to be accepted as truth without much thought.

I rely heavily on the adoption of new habits, which we will be looking at in the next section, in order to accomplish this. First let's look at what an example of an empowering, micro belief, used to replace a limiting, macro belief might look like.

We'll do this by using our previous example of a client, whose limiting belief is,

“My diet is not good enough to facilitate my physique goals”

I'll use some go-to tools in order to establish some new habits; sometimes only one is necessary (more on this soon).

Armed with his new habit(s) I'll have him replace his above statement regarding the inadequacies of his diet with something like this,

“Today I'm taking action toward my desired outcomes”.

The emphasis is placed on the word “**today**” because that is all that he needs to worry about in that moment. We know by now that if he completes a cycle of the belief loop, that whatever belief is at the start of it will grow stronger.

After several days or weeks, his limiting belief is destroyed, and is replaced with his new, empowering belief that his diet is the balls when it comes to making him more beast-like.

The sample micro belief that I used above,

“Today I’m taking action toward my desired outcomes”.

Works wonderfully as a somewhat universal micro belief, encompassing all of the small changes in action that are being implemented, and the language “desired outcomes” is pluralized in order to represent all of the changes that he wishes to make in his life. “Blueprint to Beast” will demonstrate much more of the potential of the application of these principles to manifest massive changes in virtually any area of life in which one seeks to be more successful. In this instance, the pluralization of “*desired outcomes*” covers all of the physique adaptations that are represented in the image of the standard that he has created, and has worked through repetitive viewing on a daily basis to install into his target-focused subconscious.

It’s simple really.

I’ve demonstrated how a limiting belief cycles through the loop, determining perceived potential to accomplish an objective, influences action towards the objective, and by extension results. We’ve seen that negative results stemming from a limiting belief provide feedback to, and strengthen that belief.

Garbage in, garbage out.

So you can understand how replacing the limiting belief with an empowering one like the micro belief above (and later a more powerful macro belief) will have a profound, positive impact on the end result.

Again, using the above example our subject begins the loop with the belief:

“Today I’m taking action toward my desired outcomes”.

In this case at least one of his desired outcomes is developing a leaner, more aesthetically pleasing body. With that micro belief in place his perceived potential to accomplish his task is very high seeing as how he needs only be successful

today. He needs to take the proper actions necessary to move him closer to his target for one twenty-four hour period.

Not such a difficult task once you stop telling yourself and everyone else that your diet sucks.

As a brief aside, this is one of my fundamental issues with the methods used by the organizations *Alcoholics Anonymous* and *Narcotics Anonymous*. Both organizations instruct a member to identify him or herself as an “*Alcoholic*” or an “*Addict*” when introducing themselves or addressing the group.

Now imagine that a member has decided today to stop using, and does not touch whatever it was that they were addicted to for ten years. At this time in their life they have zero intention of using again, and have moved on from that destructive chapter in their life. However, each time that they meet with those whom they share support they are once again saying,

“I’m _____, and I’m an Alcoholic”.

Can you see how continuing to identify yourself by the behaviors or habits that you once had, that you are no longer demonstrating, can be detrimental?

If the person has not used in ten years and has no intention to do so ever again, must they still wear the Scarlett Letter of their past?

I say no, and therefore do not encourage those that I work with that have demonstrated the behaviors of an alcoholic or drug addict in the past to not identify themselves as such, but rather as a “**Victor**”, “**Survivor**” or some other empowering title. The effect of such a statement of identity in their subconscious belief loop is much more favorable and positive.²

Back to our guy now who is concerned only with taking action that will yield favorable result towards his goal for one day.

What do you suppose his results will be for that day?

Obviously his behaviors will take him closer to his target. His results will be evident immediate in the intrinsic sense of knowing that he has done good things,

² At the time of this writing there are plans for an upcoming book co-authored by myself and another individual on the topic of using these success principles to overcome addictions.

and will become measurable results in short order, both of which strengthen, and reinforce his belief in his ability to accomplish said task.

BOOM! A beautiful baby macro belief comes screaming out of the vagina of his subconscious, and enters his life for good. The baby is easily weaned off of the tit because his favorable actions become habits, and getting kick-ass, panty-dropping results becomes the norm.

He is no longer a guy with a shitty diet. His diet is solid, and he knows it.

The power of belief is extraordinary.

Habits



Habits can be really, really good

Habits make up the third component of the Blueprint to Beast success formula. Once the standard has been created, and the beliefs involved in the situation have been identified, challenged if necessary, and strong, empowering beliefs have been adopted; it's time to talk about the creation of habits to get the work done.

Habits are the workhorses of the Blueprint to Beast triad. They are the repetitive, consistent actions that are taken in order to continually produce the desired outcomes.

One of the presuppositions of Neuro Linguistic Programming is that you do not ever fail at anything that you set out to do. If you do not accomplish what you set out to then you have simply produced a different outcome than you intended. We now know that your beliefs dictate your actions via the belief loop, and that creating and adopting a clearly defined and understandable standard will direct your actions subconsciously, but it is also necessary to consciously address the idea of action.

Just as beliefs can be limiting or empowering, actions can obviously be productive or destructive. It is our mission to ensure that we are consistently taking actions that are conducive to eliciting the result, and hence the desired outcome(s) that we are seeking in our standard.

One of the most effective, and fortunately simplest, methods for ensuring that this is the case is by using our subconscious ability to develop habits. This process is easier than you may think, and is one that I have written about elsewhere before in many of my books and articles.

Let's take a look at that process now.

Building a Habit

Creating a new habit is as simple as performing a repetitive action for twenty-one uninterrupted days.

Three weeks, that's it.

Where does this number come from?

The three-week figure has long been accepted in the NLP world as the time that it takes for an action to effectively permeate the subconscious and become habit. I can attest to this personally both in my own life, and in the lives of those with whom I've worked with and coached.

While this book is specifically about mass gain, I will share with you another story from my consulting practice that serves as an excellent example of the power that developing productive habits has in producing the desired outcome. While the woman's goals in this instance were different, the outcomes being reached by hijacking the belief loop and installing habits is the takeaway lesson for you.

Shortly after I had first started heavily using the Blueprint to Beast principles in my consulting with clients interested in changing their bodies, I was contacted and hired by a woman in her early thirties.

She had formerly been heavily involved in CrossFit, and had even done well in some local competitions. Like many in that world, she had been a devout follower of the Paleo Diet principles. She was an avid advocate of my good friend Robb Wolf, whose work in that world is extensive and outright phenomenal.

Predictably she had developed quite an attractive body, and had a tremendous amount of confidence in herself. She was the envy of all of her friends (something that we all know is very intrinsically rewarding to females) and could not have been happier with what she had accomplished.

Then she gave birth to an Anarchist.

In Dennis Lehane's book *"The Moonlight Mile"*, the sequel to the popular *"Gone Baby Gone"*, the main character refers to his toddler as an Anarchist, a term that I find terribly fitting as I'm sure anyone with kids will agree. His logic was that they are horribly inconsiderate in that they wake you up whenever they damn well please, will flat out refuse to do something as simple as put on their shoes, and completely change their tastes in foods at a moments notice at the most inconvenient times. I have two kids of my own (both five at this writing) and am

working on another one. I love the hell out of them and love being a dad, but I love the “Anarchist” term when used to described children.

Ok so back to our CrossFit broad.

Having the baby obviously changed things for her for a while. She had the child to tend to around the clock, lacked a normal sleep schedule, and had developed some poor eating habits during the pregnancy that carried over and intensified post-partum.

Specifically, she had taken to skipping breakfast, craving and seeking out fast food in the afternoons, and eating meals primarily consisting of junk carbohydrates in the evenings.

She was very upset about the changes that occurred in her body as a result of the deviation from her previous path, and was generally depressed about the situation. Something had to happen to get her out of the funk she was in, and get her back to the smoking’ hot, confident goddess that she had been less than a year ago.

My usual interview process identified her standard using the magic wand approach. Interestingly enough her image for her standard was herself; high quality, professional photos that she had taken in her prime. This happens sometimes, and there is nothing wrong with using yourself at a different point in history as your standard, so long as the image represents the positive changes that you wish to make in the present.

After her standard was identified, I followed up with the second question

“Why are you not there now?”

She was ready with her answers. She had no lack of knowledge of how to accomplish what it was that she wanted to accomplish. She knew what she had been doing wrong, but was not able to pinpoint why she was seemingly unable to overcome the funk, and get back in the powerful groove that she had been in before.

Her reasons revealed, as you should be able to predict by now if you’ve been reading close, her limiting beliefs that were holding her back.

“My diet is shitty now”

“I don’t know why, but I’m not training, I don’t have the motivation”

“I skip breakfast in the morning, and binge on fast food in the afternoon, I did this through most of my pregnancy, and can’t seem to stop doing it”

You don’t need to have mastered this material yet to see how those beliefs would certainly be holding her back.

I took the time and plugged each into the belief loop for her, after explaining its concept and how it was in the subconscious and unavoidable. She was quickly able to see how this was wreaking havoc on her life and her psyche.

“So what do I do? How do I bust out of this mess?”

She looked to me for answers on how to return to the practice of using the tools that she was knowledgeable in, had been accustomed to using, and had used with tremendous success just a short time before.

The answer was what I call “hijacking” the belief loop by creating productive habits while instituting an empowering micro-belief, in a one-day-at-a-time manner.

Let’s look at this and how it helped her.

Hijacking the Belief Loop

“Hijacking” the belief loop is one of the most powerful tools that we have available when it comes to changing a limiting belief to an empowering one, and consequently producing dramatically different results.

Accomplishing this is simple. We simply identify an action that, if performed everyday, would have a favorable effect towards the desired outcome. Once we have done that, I task the client with performing the task for twenty-one days straight without interruption. As I noted before, after the twenty-one day period (usually even sooner, as we will highlight) the action becomes a habit, and the subconscious, in turn, directs you to perform the task daily without having to think about it consciously.

Consider brushing your teeth. Unless you're gross, this is something that you do daily before venturing out into the world. This is not something that requires a tremendous amount of conscious thought to maintain. It is simply a repetitive action that you perform due to a subconscious compulsion to do so.

A habit.

Now think what would happen to your body if doing push-ups daily were as strong of a habit as brushing your teeth was. You can make it that way. It only takes three weeks.

In this particular woman's case, it was necessary to install a few habits in order to hijack the loop, produce measurable results, and become congruent with the micro-beliefs that we were installing in order to overtake the limiting beliefs that she had developed.

We took things that she knew how to do, remember; virtually none of my clients suffer from a lack of knowledge of the mechanics necessary to accomplish their missions.

She acknowledged that skipping breakfast was a poor habit that was directly contributing to the problem. I tasked her with eating a solid, Paleo breakfast, like she had done every morning for so many months before, every day for three weeks. I also told her to drink a protein shake every night before bed in lieu of the junk carbohydrates that she had been eating.

Notice that I didn't jump in, send her a .pdf with a recommended diet that I had written two years ago and recycled with high-paying clients as so many other “consultants” do unfortunately. I didn't attempt to turn her life upside down, and I did not even mention training to her. I didn't give her a laundry list of things that needed to happen, but rather I simply gave her those two tasks to perform and

that was that. We build habits one or two at a time. I told her I wanted to speak with her again in four weeks. I looked forward to the follow up, knowing that if she did what she was asked, that there would be predictable results.

Four weeks later, like clockwork, I received an email requesting another session. We spoke and I asked her had she implemented the changes that I had asked her to. She was overjoyed and I could tell was anxious to tell me all about the last month. I interrupted her however, and asked her a question,

“Do you still have a shitty diet?”

I asked this knowing what the answer would be, that if she had in fact done as I instructed that she would not be able to say that, at least not with a straight face.

As predicted, she laughed, and then proceeded to tell me,

“No way, my diet is awesome now, I’ve been killing it”.

After this I let her speak. She went on for a solid ten minutes telling me how productive and successful she had been in the last month.

She had begun each day with a solid, Paleo breakfast. It was the same breakfast that she had been accustomed to eating before the pregnancy (see the influence of the standard). By the second week she made two major improvements, dropping the fast food binges (which I will remind you that I did not even list as one of the changes, choosing to focus on productive additions to her routine as opposed to restrictions), and getting back in the gym.

The momentum that she had created as a result of cycling through the loop successfully each day had spilled over into those two areas. She was no longer telling herself that her diet was shitty, so she was not acting like someone with a shitty diet. The fast food binges left, who wants to eat crap when they are doing so many other good things and no longer has a belief that they are a person who is identified by their previous behaviors? The motivation to hit the gym followed suit as well. Who wants to eat right all of the time and not do anything on the physical side to influence their results?

Remember, she already knew how to do this, she just wasn’t doing it.

The most interesting thing that she said though was the story that she told me next.

“So about two weeks ago (less than three weeks into the habit building process I might add) I went to bed without having my protein shake. I had drifted off to sleep after a long, tiring day, when I shot up in bed.

“What is it babe, is the baby crying?” said my husband.

“No, I forgot to have my protein shake.”

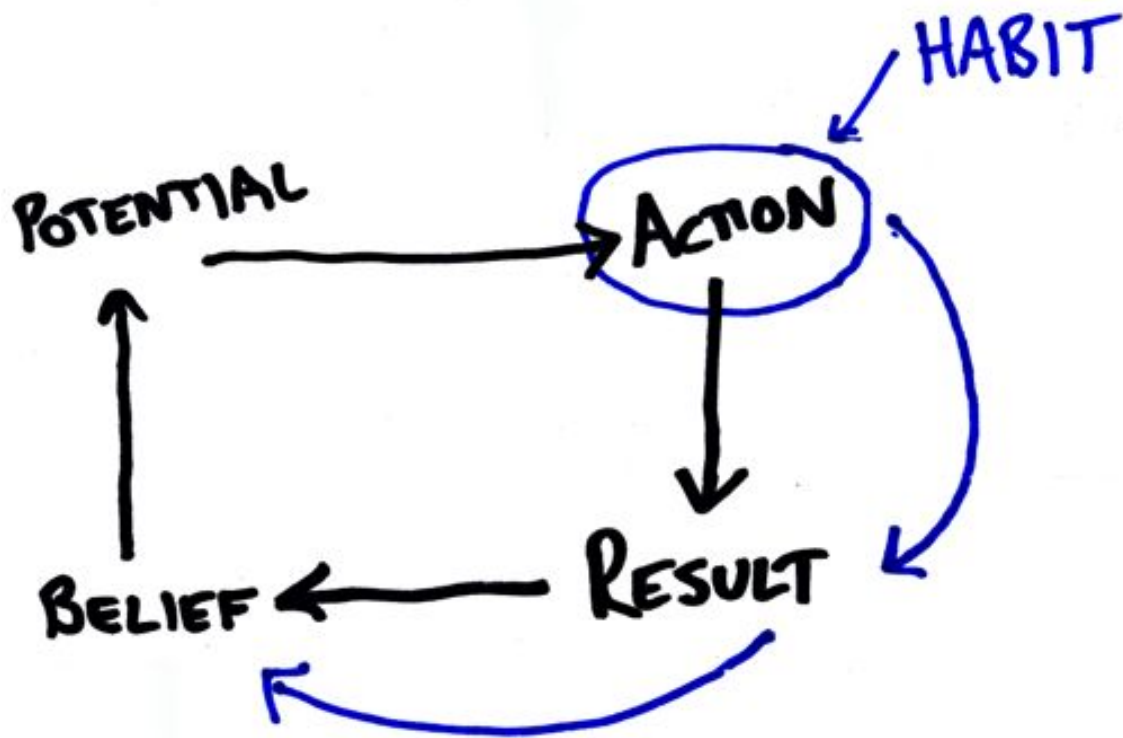
What was so cool to her about this story was that she had woken up after falling asleep because she had not taken a specific action. She said that she didn't stress it because of the task I'd given her, or approach it with a

“Damn, I forgot”

sort of approach, but rather woke up in the same manner, with the same sense of neglecting an important task as she would have had she left the oven on or forgot to lock the front door.

Certainly sounds like a habit to me.

She was so excited that the effect of building the habit had become that powerful, and the excitement only served to provide the type of motivation, and affirmation of her efforts that reinforced the positivity of what she was doing. She only continued to grow from here.



What happened in her case was a prime example of hijacking the belief loop using habits in order to produce a global effect.

The diagram above illustrates this idea, whiteboard style. The acquired habit hops in the loop in the “actions” corner. The action (habit) elicits a result, which in turn provides feedback to the new belief.

Presto! No more limiting belief.

Making sense now?

The key with adopting habits is to do them one or two at a time. In the case we just examined, the woman was able to completely change her beliefs about herself, and her ability to get back to her old self (her standard), by simply performing two simple actions per day for three weeks. Her entire situation was affected for the better by simply adopting a micro-belief:

“Today I am taking action towards my desired outcome”.

Once she adopted this belief, she performed the assigned actions each day (which turned into habits in less than three weeks as per her bedtime story) and was able to completely turn her situation around inside of one month.

She was more than elated to tell me that her strength and performance was back up, and that she had lost nearly ten pounds of fat in the few short weeks that she was pushing forward with her new mental makeover.

Her beliefs were completely different.

Her diet was obviously no longer shitty.

Her belief that her breakfast skipping, and fast food binging was ingrained as a habit was gone (though by our criteria it had certainly developed into one).

Her late-night carbohydrates were replaced with a protein shake, and were no longer part of “who she was”, her perceived identity.

And last but certainly not least, her motivation to hit the gym and affect things on the physical side was back (though if you recall, we had not even discussed this part).

Mission accomplished. Belief loop successfully hijacked, progressive, favorable, productive, successful homeostasis restored.

Putting it all Together

So there you have it, the basics of the Blueprint to Beast success formula. Use it now, and push past the walls that you have built in your mind throughout your life.

Remember, these are the steps to follow:

Define your standard

Use the “magic wand” analogy and ask yourself what your standard looks like visually. What is the minimum that you are willing to accept for yourself? Set your sights high; remember this wand is magic, no boundaries here.

Locate the image that represents your standard, encompassing all of the positive changes and adaptations that you need to make in order to realize your dream(s). Place the image somewhere that you will be able to view it, and reflect on it, at least twice per day.

View the image frequently, imaging visually, and with your other senses, what it would be like for you to be there. Begin to live “as if” you are already there. Let your subconscious lock on the target and begin to guide your actions and behaviors towards that objective.

Identify Your Limiting Beliefs

Ask yourself while viewing your standard image,

“Why am I not there yet?”

Remember that the answers that you provide will be your limiting beliefs. Make use of the belief loop and plug that belief into it. Realize how detrimental that belief has been, and immediately vow to replace it with something that empowers you.

Remember to begin feeding the loop with a micro-belief such as,

“Today I’m taking action towards my desired outcomes”.

Let that belief cycle through the loop each day, changing your perceived potential, influencing your actions, producing results, and ultimately helping to craft a more global, macro-belief.

If you come up with something that you feel that you truly can’t overcome in your interview of yourself, shoot me an email. It may be time for a consultation. I can pretty much guarantee you that whatever the belief is, I’ve heard it before, and can probably shatter it for you within a matter of minutes.

Determine Habits that are Conducive to your Outcome and Create Them

Think of one or two actions that (if repeated daily) would take you closer to your objective each day.

Use the twenty-one day rule to implement the habit. Perform the action each day for twenty-one days without interruption, and I can assure you that you won’t need to think about doing the task each day after that.

Hijack the belief loop, plugging your habit into the actions corner, and allow the results derived from your efforts to solidify your recently adopted micro-belief into a powerful macro-belief.

Do not skip over any of these steps. They are all equally necessary and when combined will provide you with a “can’t lose” formula for greatness.

***Bonus* Sample Habits for Mass Gain**

Begin each morning with a high protein/high calorie shake (after your walk if you're doing one that day).

Train everyday. By this I mean that you should be either lifting weights, or doing your fasted cardio every day (minus one). It is easier to build a habit if it is truly a daily task.

Pack your lunch. The ritual of prepping and packing your lunch will save you money, and destroy the "I cant eat good while I'm at work" excuse.

Do some frequency method chins or pushups throughout the day. Anchor them to a specific activity or area such as the garage or basement. Every time you pass or enter that space, knock out your prescribed amount. Alternatively, set an alarm on your phone, and do some that way.

Post a log on my forum. The additional accountability, and the actual habit of posting has helped a lot of people make progress.

End each day with a protein-only shake, even your weekly "free day".

Section Two:

The Growth Principles

Chapter Two:

Accountability (Giving a Shit)

The most common reason that people are unhappy with their body composition, whether in the context of trying to add mass, lose body fat, or attempting to do both at the same time, is that they often lack the kind of accountability for their diet that is necessary to make the changes that they are after. If you want your body to change for the better, you need to be keeping score. Much like being completely unaware of your financial situation; where you stand in terms of net worth, assets and liabilities, or ignoring your bills as they come in won't get you on the road to building wealth and financial independence any time soon, not keeping track of your diet is certainly not going to do much to get you on the fast road to being an Ass-Pulling Adonis.

You need to have a plan, and you have to track the steps that you are taking in implementing your plan in order to determine whether or not the strategy is proving to be effective in helping you accomplish your ultimate goal. Getting the body you want is all about gathering data, and adjusting your approach based on the feedback you are receiving.

The Perils of the “Accidental Eater”

The majority of the people you will encounter have a very relaxed way of approaching their diets; they eat “accidentally” as I call it. Typically they will think about what they are going to eat about ten minutes or so prior to actually eating the meal. This is what “normal” people do these days in this society which allows such ready access to such a plethora of foods, some great, some not so great, to choose from.

The fact that you have purchased this book tells that you are very different from the “normal” person already in terms of how you approach your fitness level, overall health, and appearance.

As I have stated before on numerous occasions, if you adopt the habits of a particular group that you are attempting to emulate, you will quickly begin to transform yourself into “one of the crowd” so to say. Eating accidentally is a characteristic possessed by the majority of population, the majority of which are unhealthy, and unhappy with their bodies and their appearance. The Hollywood studs and pro athletes who you would like to resemble likely have a bit more structure to what they eat on a regular basis. If you eat accidentally as most normal people do, then chances are you will continue to look like most normal

people do, or at least a lot more like a normal person than the type of sex symbol you would like to become. If you get accountable, train, and eat a solid diet with consistency you will invariably begin to resemble a guy who trains hard, eats a solid diet, and gives enough of a shit about himself to have some level of concern with what he is feeding the fornication vessel that is his body.

You cannot affect very specific and desirable, deliberate change in your body by having an accidental approach to your diet and training. It's just not going to happen. The ideas and methods in this book will allow you to simply and easily take control of your diet and develop the kind of accountability required to achieve the success you desire.

Chapter Three:

The Base Layer and the Surplus

The Surplus

Bodybuilders have had the “secret” to growing lean body mass without adding boatloads of fat figured out for many years. The trick if you want to call it that is to take in a small surplus of calories over what is needed in order to maintain your current level of development.

There is something of a hierarchy of needs in terms of caloric intake for someone who is looking to add lean body mass, basically the hierarchy is as follows (Strap in guys it's BroScience time):

First you need to be taking in enough calories to satisfy your default need for calories at rest, call it BMR (basal metabolic rate), or RMR (resting metabolic rate), I don't care which, pick one it's not important, the idea is however. Your body will burn a certain amount of calories per day simply to exist. This represents the first tier of caloric requirements.

Next, your body will require the calories necessary to fuel your day-to-day activities. This varies greatly from person to person since the daily activities that people engage in vary so much. This is one of the variables that make determining any type of accurate “maintenance” value for calories so difficult.

Once those basics are satisfied, you will need calories to fuel your training efforts.

Once that's said and done you'll need some calories to use during the recovery process

Though I very am very vocal regarding the idiocy of the “just eat more to recover” bullshit logic, the fact is that the task does require some raw materials, just not a dump truck full on a daily basis.

Once all of those troops are accounted for you will need something left over to build new tissue with.

Enter the surplus.

Trick here obviously is to have just the right amount to build the lean mass that you want without getting so much that you are spilling over the excess into the super un-sexy fat reserves.

As a quick aside, can you see (through my highly scientific explanation here) how silly the “you’re not eating enough to recover” logic is nine times out of ten?

Following me yet?

Ok, how many people who claim to be, or are being told that they are “not eating enough to recover” are fat?

I don’t necessarily mean obese, but fat. Unattractive, jiggly, fat.

If you said almost all of those who have been told they aren’t eating enough to recover either have fat-fucked themselves to some degree, or are in the process of fat-fucking themselves, give yourself a pat on the back. Then ask yourself how the hell they have enough calories to get fat, but yet not enough to recover with.

Mind blowing stuff, huh?

Okay, we’ll move on.

Base Caloric Requirements: The Foundation Layer on Which the Surplus is Added

Different formulas are in existence and have been used for some time to determine a start point from which to add calories and create a surplus, a “maintenance” level of intake. I have never been a fan of using them as hard numbers since there is so much variance between individuals in terms of metabolism and activity level, but they at least represent a desire to establish a plan and set some sort of foundation that can be built upon as the situation unfolds. In this book I will describe and outline the methods that I have successfully used to take the principles long trusted and proven by bodybuilders and simplify them for use by the more casual, less neurotic trainee to build quality lean body mass while keeping body fat at acceptable levels.

We will examine how the baseline diet is established and then how to layer in or out the amount of surplus calories without ever really focusing on any hard numbers or tracking much from day to day.

Small Incremental Increases: Letting the Diet Grow as You Grow

Like the weight being used on the barbell, dumbbells, or machine in a good weight training program designed to increase strength and muscle mass, the diet, specifically the macronutrient (and by extension caloric) intake needs to be increased in small, incremental doses. Much like loading a bench press bar up to 315 lbs and attempting to start your strength progression from there, launching headfirst into a diet featuring gross caloric excess from the start is not going to end well. A beginner is able to get a growth stimulus from a much lighter load than a stronger, more experienced trainee. Likewise, a beginner who weighs 160 lb will rarely need anything near the caloric intake that a 225 lb strong, experienced lifter will in order to elicit new muscle growth. Beyond a basic surplus you are simply feeding the accumulation of unsightly and unhealthy body fat. This is definitely not what the overwhelming majority of people that I work with are looking for when they say they want to gain mass.

The use of “layers” in the diet act as a simple and easy method by which one can add or subtract macronutrients and calories to or from the diet. The layering idea is one that I have successfully used with several hundred people at this point. It is the simplest method I know of to explain and implement the seemingly complex techniques for intake manipulation used by bodybuilders. By creating a “base layer” and then building on as needed, you are able to manipulate dietary variables with a surprising amount of precision without being completely neurotic about things.

Chapter Four:

The Importance of Food Quality

Logic dictates that in order to build a quality structure, quality materials need to be used. Surprisingly this idea escapes many who undertake the process of trying to add muscle to their frame. There are many reasons why people opt for less-than-optimal food sources in their quest for growth, a few of which we will look at in this chapter. The take away lesson here is simple:

Steak, rice, eggs, and oatmeal will build a more appealing and healthy body than milk, cheeseburgers, pizza, and ice cream every single time. Consider it one of JP's laws of modern BroScience.

Bulking and Cutting

One common approach that has existed in weight training circles for some time is the notion of “bulking and cutting”, spending a dedicated amount of time eating loads of food and training “for mass” followed by a period where the efforts are focused on ridding the body of the fat accumulated in the process. Most competitive bodybuilders use this method in varying degrees. The “off season” or time of year where the bodybuilder is not competing is spent pushing the weights and food intake hard in an effort to add as much new muscle to the frame as possible. The “pre-contest” phase begins normally sixteen weeks out from contest time and consists of a strict diet, lots of vigorous cardiovascular exercise, and a more moderate approach to the weights.

The above method works very well, and has long been the standard practice for the majority of successful bodybuilders though it is important to note a few things regarding its implementation.

First, most competitive bodybuilders (we will leave alone the enhanced vs natural topic, understand that my generalizations here apply to both camps) are dealing with a pretty solid genetic deck to begin with. Most are not likely to pile on the fat like a textbook endomorph with an office job that is new to lifting weights.

Second, the bodybuilder understands the value of diet, and though their off season phase may include a bit more less-than-optimal food, they are for the

most part very aware of their intake in terms of macronutrients and overall food sources.

Jelly Donuts, Snickers bars, Pop Tarts, and pizza do not an impressive physique make.

Bodybuilders know this and use their off-season time to pack in the good food sources (along with some looser offerings peppered in) in high volume to feed their expanding muscles, not their expanding love handles.

Third, most bodybuilders will enter their pre-contest phase with a body fat percentage not much outside of single digits, usually no higher than the low teens. The bodybuilder understands that shedding the fat takes hard work and discipline that, in my opinion, is paralleled by few other competitive athletes. They do not want to finish the off season out as a sloppy, over fat mess that will have to double their efforts in order to get their bodies looking contest ready in sixteen weeks.

Given these facts, it is clear that the more recreational lifter or gym goer often misunderstands the idea of “bulking and cutting”. Many have long used these methods, or at least paid lip service to them. In my observation, most are either always in the midst of a “bulk” or a “cut” when asked, and their explanation is offered in an almost apologetic fashion. This is done seemingly to serve as a cover as to why they are not where they would like to be in terms of their body composition. Doing a “Dirty Bulk” is appealing to many since it is viewed as an absolute excuse for completely irresponsible behavior in terms of one’s diet. The same half-assed effort applied during the inevitable “cut” perpetuates the yo-yo cycle of fat fuck to skinny-fat fuck that so many get stuck in for the sake of saving themselves the anguish of some hard work and accountability.

The fact of the matter (and the recurring theme in this book) is that manipulating one’s body composition in a favorable manner takes hard work and loads of consistency, few will demonstrate their willingness to put forth both of these and kick some ass. In this regard I am not a fan of the bulk and cut approach, and abstain from using those terms regularly in my vocabulary when dealing with trainees.

A mass gain program should always be implemented responsibly. This saves gallons of milk and gallons tears cried when the inevitable “before” pictures are taken in the mirror in the ill-fitting boxer briefs that you just can’t get to cover your ass crack because of your back fat, and ultra hot love handles.

Speaking of Milk....

“GOMAD”?

I was never terribly fond of that acronym. It always sounded a bit too much like “gonad” to me. The similarity in the way the words sound can be misleading as well since I often classify things that are the best in their class as being “the balls”. When it comes to building muscle and not becoming a barrel ass in the process, drinking a gallon of milk each day certainly is not the balls, frankly, it sucks balls (or GONADS if you prefer).

Remember, the purpose of this book is to teach the methods that are best for adding muscle to one’s frame, not to discuss the fastest way to add bodyweight, quality be damned, and make the needle on the scale move closer to a specific weight that you need to reach in order to feel good about yourself or reach a number that someone has told you is necessary for entry into some manhood club. I can all but guarantee you won’t be happy once you get there; who wants to be classified as an “adult male” at the cost of not being able to pull “adult ass” because you look more like Rosie O’Donnell than a weight training male if you actually sack up enough to ditch your shirt at the beach.

The use of whole milk as a mass gain tool is probably responsible for the development of more fat bodies than any other single food item. This is largely due to the common practice of designating one gallon of whole milk as the default daily supplementary intake to the diet of a trainee looking to build muscle and strength (GOMAD).

In my experience the fat building effects of using whole milk as the driving dietary tool for growth are exacerbated by the frequent implementation of a very accidental diet made up primarily of calorically dense junk foods to go along with the ever present gallon of the white stuff.

This is undoubtedly a result of the “more is better”, calorically driven beliefs that several possess when it comes to mass gain. The “calories are king” mentality is what causes people to adopt the practice of drinking a gallon of milk a day in the first place, so it is easy to see how the logic can be extended into the solid food (if you can call some of the sources that) component of the overall diet. There is no shortage of individuals on the Internet who gather in forums and discuss their “Eating PR’s” or celebrate their exorbitant caloric numbers they are able to rack up plugging their foods into an online calorie counter. Most rationalize that their habits are a means to an end, that they are taking this approach in order to “bulk” or add mass, and that they will later “cut” or take the fat off that they have accumulated during this cycle. Many say things like “it’s much easier to take fat off than to build muscle”, which is true for most, but few realize just what goes into the process of dropping 25-40 lb of useless body fat while simultaneously holding on to what muscle they’ve managed to gain in the melee.

Some take the stance that aesthetics are not important to them; that they are only concerned with their ability to move weight from point A to point B. I certainly cannot criticize these individuals if those are their genuine beliefs. More often than not however in my experience, that line of thinking is learned via Internet “support groups” for those who also are unhappy with their physiques. It generally serves as a cover the person uses to rationalize (to themselves and others) that it is ok to gain and hold a significant amount of body fat because they don’t possess either the know-how necessary, or the belief that they can in fact build a strong, aesthetically impressive, muscular physique without piling on hordes of body fat to conceal the work of art they’ve constructed underneath.

The human form is beautiful. It is a damn shame to see it covered in a blanket of gelatinous goo, particularly if it’s owner is not comfortable within its skin.

All of these things being considered, what is it about the GONAD approach that is so popular?

Well, aside from its simple promotion by influential individuals, I feel that the single most significant reason for the popularity and frequent adoption of this decidedly sub-optimal method is that is quite frankly very easy to implement.

Some will challenge that statement arguing the difficulty that they have in getting a full gallon of milk down on a day-to-day basis. This argument however is very indicative of the individual’s actual interest in affecting their current state, and just how much effort and or sacrifice they are willing to invest in their goal. Committing to drinking a gallon of a liquid daily on top of a normally quite shitty solid food diet hardly represents a large-scale sacrifice, or even commitment to a goal. Having a Herculean physique (or Apollonian for you bodybuilding history terminology nerds) is something that the overwhelming majority of the earth’s population will never experience. It is truly an extraordinary accomplishment, and therefore requires extraordinary measures. If sucking it up and drinking a gallon of milk a day was all that was nutritionally required in order to add loads of muscle, don’t you think there would be a lot more god-like physiques out there walking around?

This is an extension of the “magic pill” idea. Any company that releases a new thermogenic “fat burner” supplement with a solid mass marketing strategy is almost guaranteed to do very well in today’s market. Why? Because people don’t really want to work hard and be consistent with their diets in order to reach their goals. They’d much rather sit “dead of their ass” (as my Pop Pop used to say) and take a pill that promises them the body of the model in the company’s add who was born with model genetics, eats a model’s diet, and trains like someone who makes a living off of showing their model body.

Those results are coming any minute now, just wait.

I can’t knock these people. Who wouldn’t want it to be easier?

I know I would. I would love to take a pill and look like Dorian Yates. I've learned though by this point the hard way that it's flat out not going to happen and that hard work and accountability for my diet is the only way to get what I want. More and more often I deal with people who have learned the hard way that the GONAD approach was not the golden ticket that they were looking for, and that a four to six month detour from their quest to Jackedtown, Earth in order to shed a bunch of useless, unattractive body fat is not all that fun.

Getting the strong, healthy, attractive body that you envision when you picture your ideal day on this planet requires commitment and dedication, and the sacrifices are going to be greater than creatively developing techniques for crop dusting your co-workers with your milk farts so that you are not constantly taking the blame, or experimenting with different brands of baby wipes to determine which is best for wiping the black, putrid, peanut butter consistency shit off of yourself for the fourth time that day.

It's time to get some good information on nutrition and how to build up the body the right way. Be accountable, take responsibility and above all educate yourself about safe sex, because you will be having a lot more of it.

Section Two:

The Growth Principles in Application

Chapter Five:

The Lasagna Diet: Building it in Layers

Like all diets and training programs that I write for my clients, we will be discussing the idea of “layers”. The concept is simple; we establish a foundation or “baseline”, as we will be referring to it here, and then add additional layers to the baseline as needed in order to get the desired result. Likewise, if we overshoot our goal we can easily pull the diet back in easily by subtracting a layer or two and bringing things back a bit closer to the baseline. This super simple method has proven to be my most valuable tool in helping people ultimately get what they want out of their training in the most efficient manner possible.

Establishing the Baseline for Growth

It is very interesting to note that humans eat a “maintenance” amount of calories with remarkable reliability when they are eating “accidentally”. Many scoff at this idea citing the accidental eater’s lack of consistency from day to day in terms of diet as proof that this idea does not hold water. While it is true that they may take in a different amount of calories from day to day, when you tally up their caloric intake over the week, the numbers are surprisingly consistent from week to week. If you extrapolate further and look at monthly caloric intake instead, the numbers are even closer. Observing this trend is valuable in a few ways that we will address in this book, however in this instance we are going to use it to illustrate perhaps the most “un-scientific” method of determining “maintenance” calories for the “hard-gaining” individual, and yet the one that I have found to be the most accurate and reliable if a hard caloric accountability approach is to be used.

The simpler method I am referencing above is simply to log and track everything that you eat over the course of a week while eating accidentally. The trick is to “ignore the cameras” and do what you would normally do. Eat when hungry, and eat until you want to stop. At the end of the week, plug everything into a calorie counter and calculate your caloric intake over the last seven days. Once you

have determined that number, divide by seven and you have your daily caloric intake for “maintenance”. That value becomes the start point, which you then add to or subtract from in order to affect your body composition in the manner in which you desire.

As I previously stated, the above method has, in my experience, been the most reliable method with which to determine what “maintenance calories” are for you. However, there is a method that is simpler yet, and is my go-to in getting a client started on the road to their goals. We will have a look at that method next.

In the formula examples from before, the baseline caloric intake is determined by calculating basal metabolic rate plus activity level plus a small surplus. That’s essentially what we are going to do except in a simpler manner that is not going to rely on numbers. We are going to establish a baseline to later titrate up or down based on how the body is responding and, most importantly, what we are seeing in the photos.

In the plans we will lay in this book we will rarely be talking in terms of calories or grams, particularly when we are talking about the baseline layer. We will mainly be talking portions with everything. We will start by determining what constitutes a portion for you.

Portions

Ok, we’re going to make setting this up extremely easy. Take a minute and look down at your dick beaters. Now put those back in the refrigerator and take a look at your hands.

Your hands are going to be your main tools for reference in determining portion sizes for creating the baseline diet. We are going to concern ourselves with the two macronutrients that we are going to be directly assigning portions of to meals, Protein, and Carbohydrates.

A portion of Protein is going to be the area of the palm of your hand. This means the palm, not including the fingers (though in this context we will be using this measurement as the minimum amount acceptable not as the recommended serving). This means its width, height, thickness, girth, volume, area, etc. You get the point.

A portion of Carbohydrates is going to be the size of your clenched fist.

This “fist and palm” (you know what goes here) method allows for a surprising amount of consistency in the intake of macronutrients and calories when the numbers of portions per meal and number of meals per day are kept consistent.

This method obviously applies to the meals in which solid foods are used. We will be looking at building shakes soon since most reading this will include at least one or two shakes as meal replacements each day.

Here is the obligatory list of recommended sources of protein and carbohydrates.

Protein Sources for Mass Gain:

Steak: All kinds. Glorious, glorious steak should be a staple in a diet designed to add muscle to one’s frame. This extends to roasts in the crock-pot as well. (Note: One of my favorite mass gain staples is a chuck roast in the slow cooker.)

Ground Beef: No need to buy Extra Lean. When it becomes relevant you can drain it anyway.

Whole Eggs: I’m fond of the Omega 3 kind but it’s not the most important thing ever.

Chickens: Literally all of the chicken parts are OK, Legs, Thighs, Wings, etc. When packing it on you don’t need to be just a breast man.

Cottage Cheese: I can’t stand the stuff myself, never have been able to. Go for the Lower Fat varieties though here.

Ham: This is one that I am very fond of, and that gets overlooked all the time. Eat the hell out of it as a change of pace. Remember, the mass gain is the time to eat the fattier meats. This is why we stick to base diet before adding layers by default. Most are going to grow just off of the consistency of the nutrients and calories from the base layer.

Other Pork Cuts: Loin, chops. Get it in like a Jewish runaway pissed off at their parents.

Fish: All types. Seafood in general is a great, low-fat (except cold water fish like salmon which are loaded with healthy fats) source of protein. Use it liberally in your diet.

Carbohydrates for Mass Gain:

Rice: The king. Buy a lot, you should be eating it daily.

Oats: Old Fashioned or Steel Cut are the best. A classic, nutritious carb source.

Pasta: Yep, I said it. Portion control people; no salad bowls of Fettucine Alfredo before bed, save that for your free day.

Yogurt: One of my favorites. Is there anyone that does not like the taste of yogurt? Go after the fat free or low fat choices.

Dark Breads: Whole Grains are best. Stay away from white breads.

Fruit: You can definitely use it here. It's a good idea to have at least one carbohydrate portion come from fruit each day.

The above lists are by no means complete. There are plenty of excellent sources of both good quality protein and carbohydrates to choose from. What you are looking for is a single ingredient food more than anything else. Also, the closer the food to being a source of only one macronutrient, the better. This becomes more important in the context of dieting for fat loss more than it is with mass gain, but remember, we want to be able to keep score and single ingredient, primarily single-macro foods make this process much easier.

Shakes

Shakes make everything a lot easier. Most will find it difficult, at least initially to get in six or more meals made up of quality solid foods per day. This could be due to a lack of sufficient appetite, or even more often, just day-to-day schedule/lifestyle considerations getting in the way.

Most all will agree that drinking down a bit of liquid is a lot easier than gnawing away on a piece of meat and some rice or a potato while going about the activities of a busy day. Many will claim that shakes are much less desirable than whole foods for meals from a nutrient usage or overall health standpoint, and I agree with that statement when taken at face value.

I however work with real live human beings with real live psychology, most of who are not competitive bodybuilders. If the decision is to have a nutritious

shake made of high quality ingredients or skip a meal, which do you think is going to be preferred?

As I've stated before in my writings on the internet and in other works the general trend that I've observed is that the more emphatic and absolute someone is about there being one right way of doing something, the more completely full of shit they ultimately are.

The general rule is that I stick by with my people is to get a maximum of fifty percent of your days meals from shakes. This will mean three solid food meals, three shakes for most. Adding three shakes to the normal American diet of three solid meals (which less and less people actually follow these days by the way) is a simple way of getting the requisite meals in for the day in order to get after your goals nutritionally.

In the above instance you can see that there is not necessarily a need for a major lifestyle overhaul for most people who are already heading in the right general direction in order to get on a solid diet with good consistency and accountability.

Again people, the theme here is that this stuff is simple but not easy.

Building a Shake

As for constructing the actual shakes, my general rule is as follows:

For persons with a bodyweight of less than two hundred pounds I will generally recommend a shake with roughly fifty grams of protein from a high quality whey protein powder.

For those who weigh more than two hundred pounds, and who are holding a significant amount of muscle to be at that weight (no 170lbbers carrying 80lbs of fat) I will normally prescribe a shake with around seventy-five grams of protein.

If the shake is being used as a meal replacement for any of the meals other than the last meal of the day, then the person will add a roughly equivalent amount (in grams) of carbohydrates to the shake. Ultimately it is not terribly important what the carbohydrate source is here, though I am highly partial to the use of oats for this purpose.

If the last meal of the day is to be a shake, which it will be for most more often than not due to the recommendation that the last meal be protein-only (which we are about to discuss), the shake will consist of the recommended amount of

protein grams mixed in water or a zero calorie liquid such as diet soda or Crystal Light.

Goodnight Carbohydrates

One of the more controversial topics that I've talked about a lot on the Internet is the idea that one should taper their carbohydrate consumption out as the day progresses. For different individuals with different goals the time of day at which carbohydrates will be eliminated from the diet will vary. One constant among virtually every single person who I work with on the topic of diet however is that the last meal of the day will contain no carbohydrates.

None.

This means a meal made up entirely of protein (with attached fats being acceptable in the case of solid foods).

This recommendation, like many of my others, is met with a lot of opposition on the Internet from people who have much more classical education than I, though are inferior in both dance ability and good looks. This particular idea is one that the nerdier types tend to dispute saying that there has never been any research done to support that this is anything more than "BroScience". I am completely at peace with that. I have used this method with very predictable result myself with and hoards of trainees. The data gathered from those experiences is what leads me to continue making the recommendation that this principle be used.

BroScience Alert!!! Proceed with caution.

The explanation that I received for why this is so effective a long time ago is that by eliminating the intake of carbohydrates beyond a certain time of day, the body uses up the glycogen that it has stored during the later hours of the night and during sleep. In the event that fasted cardiovascular activity is being performed first thing in the morning, the body rapidly runs through the small amount of glycogen that is left and then proceeds to use body fat as the primary fuel source for the activity.

Sounds good, right?

I thought so, and still do. I always found that by doing this, people would consistently lose more body fat than those who would eat carbohydrates in each meal right up until bedtime.

So if this is a book on mass gain, why are we concerned about depleting glycogen stores, and burning more body fat during fasted morning cardio sessions?

Well there are a few reasons.

For one, remember that we aren't trying to fat fuck anyone here, we are trying to build a larger, more muscular, lean, physically attractive physique that is capable of both attracting and manhandling the caliber of female that you are proud to show off in public, not just via the perfectly lit, flattering facebook pic that she nailed on the thirty-seventh try.

You are not off the hook for cardiovascular training.

Besides desiring to keep the fat at bay and minimize its accumulation during a period of deliberate caloric excess, it is generally good to be able to tie your own shoes or take the stairs to the third floor in the event of an out-of-order elevator catastrophe. Keeping up with your cardio is very conducive to being able to accomplish either of those tasks.

Since we are by definition bodybuilding here, we are going to behave as such and do our cardio. Since we are going to do it we may as well maximize its effectiveness and do it fasted and glycogen depleted. Enter the first reason why we use the carb cut-off or curfew (use whichever terminology you prefer).

The second reason for the early bedtime for the rice and pasta is that at some point we are more than likely going to want to get leaner than normal. There is usually a vagina at the root of this one, or more specifically the pursuit of said vagina(s) in places where it is socially acceptable to go shirtless. Like the competitive bodybuilder who doesn't want to let things get too out of hand in the off season, a responsible he-man should endeavor to always be a few weeks away from "photo ready" during a mass gain period. Since habits are difficult to break and creating new ones can take a few weeks, it is a good practice to have your diet adhere to the same basic template regardless of the particular goal you are in pursuit of at the moment. If you do that, it is just a matter of manipulating a few variables and upping the cardio to get you ready for the hunt.

The last reason that I will list is definitely the simplest but most likely the most important and that is:

Those who tuck the carbs in after ALF tend to gain less body fat than during a mass gain than those that let them stay up late and not brush their teeth.

H-2-O GO!

So you want to drink a gallon of something?

I know, you've heard this one a million times. Your body is seventy percent water, water is needed for every cellular function in your body, blah, blah, etc.

Boring I know.

Fact of the matter though is that water is very important when you are trying to grow. It is difficult for a dehydrated body to do pretty much anything. A hydrated body with hydrated muscles is a happy body, and a happy body will give you the panties a lot sooner than a bitchy, pissed off body that hasn't been getting their water.

Simple enough?

Basically you need to beat your thirst to the punch.

Don't be thirsty, ever.

If you are, you are already in the beginning stages of dehydration. You will never get the most out of your training and dietary efforts if you aren't adequately hydrated.

I can't emphasize this enough. If you haven't been getting enough pure, cold, water, see what happens when you up your intake consistently for a while. Aim for a gallon of water each and every day, more if it is hot outside and you are active and sweating a lot from activity like working, dancing, rollerblading, or noodling (don't let the cool waters surrounding you fool you, you're dehydrating, take a break every fish or two and sip some Aquafina).

Call it GOWAD if you must, just do it.

Diet sodas and other diet drinks are great, I drink them a lot. I'm not a coffee drinker (UPDATE: Since the first edition of this book was published I have, in fact, become a coffee drinker), but it falls into this category as well. Make sure that you are adding an equal amount of water for each one of these that you have each day.

Bonus: The Greyskull Method for Rapid Re-Hydration

Ok so if you haven't been getting enough water, if your pee is yellow and not clear, you need to fix it. Don't worry; chicks dig clear showers as well, though stopping to piss three times during the act can be frustrating (see my comments on sacrifices). It can also be a sign of an enlarged prostate, which you may experience if you opt for the darkside route (steroids) after you have built a natural foundation. This is a minor inconvenience however, and only serves to increase your taint sensitivity, something that you will initially battle with in a moral manner upon discovering that it feels good when she puts a bit of pressure down there. Do not fret, as long as there is only minimal penetration, and you don't evolve beyond anything larger than a female finger, you're still not gay.

Here is my recommendation for getting hydrated in a hurry. This is what we do with fighters post weigh in. Drop MeleeMMA a message on the board on strengthvillain.com if you want to learn more about how we do it in that application.

For most of the readers of this book we are simply going to show how to get your hydration levels up within the context of the needs of an average dude.

Get yourself a large cup, a half-gallon of Gatorade or Powerade, and a half-gallon of water. Mix the two in the cup (you'll need to pour them in, drink them and then refill. Sounds like a no-brainer I realize, but I've actually had people tell me that they couldn't fit it all in the cup before) in a 50/50 mix. Add Promethazine/Codeine cough syrup and Jolly Ranchers as desired (Ok, don't really do that).

Drink until all of the liquids are gone. This will take a little bit of time, but concentrate it to the period of an hour or so. Do this early in the morning, and once again in the afternoon (long enough before bed that you don't need to make mom throw your sheets in the bathtub until morning, she needs her sleep if you want waffles before school).

Do this twice per day in the above manner each day for four or five days. Drink water throughout the day as you normally would.

Do it once per day after that period is over for a few more days. I tend to do this while I am training and have found that to be beneficial in both fueling my workouts and keeping me from becoming dehydrated in the event that my daily water consumption dips.

The Baseline Diet

Meal Frequency

Anyone desiring to add lean body mass to his frame needs to eat a lot of food, period.

This is understood at this point in the book, at least I hope. There are numerous benefits to eating smaller meals with a higher frequency (one more of which we discuss in the chapter on hunger) but arguably the most important here is that it is very difficult to take in enough quality food day in, day out without breaking it up into roughly six meals.

Eating should take place at roughly two and a half to three hour intervals throughout the day. This will work out to six meals for most people, so we are going to be speaking with the assumption that everyone is operating on a diet of six meals per day.

What Constitutes a Meal in a Baseline Diet for Growth?

Protein

All six meals of the day are going to have one thing in common, a quality portion of protein. This means a serving of meat, or another approved protein source, the size of the area of your palm.

Most who I begin on a mass gain program will start out with protein portions larger than their palm as the recommendation. This is true almost all the way across the board, so for the purpose of this book we are going to consider the area of the palm as the absolute minimum amount of protein to be eaten in each meal.

The more common portion for a mass-gaining ass slayer in training is the palm plus the fingers (to revisit our taint-sensitivity discussion, if she is getting a

“protein portion” all the way in there, you’re way gay and you just flat out like anal. I’d just own it at that point and go with it).

Pick one of the protein sources from the list and get a palm (and fingers) sized portion of it.

Carbohydrates

Each of the first five meals (See “Goodnight Carbohydrates” if you’ve skipped ahead) should contain carbohydrates as well as protein.

In a baseline diet for growth, the first three meals will contain two fist-sized portions of carbohydrates. The fourth and fifth meals will feature one fist-sized portion. The sixth and final meal will of course be composed of protein only.

Fat

In the baseline diet, we will not be deliberately adding foods that we consider to be either solely or primarily a source of fat.

The fats that do come into the diet at the baseline stage will be tagging along with the protein sources.

Due to its calorically dense nature, and its favorable hormonal influence, fat is typically our go-to tool for layering calories onto the base. We will be looking at this in greater detail in the next chapter on constructing and adding layers.

The Baseline Diet

So to put it all together, the baseline diet for a trainee looking to add mass will look like this:

Meal One:

One Portion Protein at least the size of the area of the palm of the hand.

Two Portions Carbohydrate the size of the clenched fist.

Meal Two:

One Portion Protein at least the size of the area of the palm of the hand.

Two Portions Carbohydrate the size of the clenched fist.

Meal Three:

One Portion Protein at least the size of the area of the palm of the hand.

Two Portions Carbohydrate the size of the clenched fist.

Meal Four:

One Portion Protein at least the size of the area of the palm of the hand.

One Portion Carbohydrate the size of the clenched fist.

Meal Five:

One Portion Protein at least the size of the area of the palm of the hand.

One Portion Carbohydrate the size of the clenched fist.

Meal Six:

One Portion Protein at least the size of the area of the palm of the hand.

I'll leave it up to you to fill in the blanks with specific foods. As long as you are getting the required portions of each macronutrient from good, single-ingredient sources like the ones on the lists, you are doing it right. I will also let you decide when and where you want to use shakes as meals. Just follow the guidelines on shakes from the previous chapter and you're good to go.

There you have it, the solid foundation that you need to build quality muscle. This base layer is going to be more than enough for many to see the changes that they want to see take place without any of the negative bullshit associated with the "more is better" "dirty bulking" approaches.

For those who have outgrown the foundation layer's ability to add mass, we will now look at constructing and adding layers on top of what we have already created.

Adding Layers

More Protein

This is what I commonly refer to as the “no brainer” layer. It is exactly what it sounds like. We simply increase the size of the protein portions in the solid food meals and/or in the shakes. This is typically the first layer that we will employ in the rare cases in which we do not start out with this approach from the beginning. This idea, though certainly not patented or anything, was first driven home to me by the writings of Dante “DoggCrapp” Trudel who said that the first thing he would typically tell people who claimed to have solid diets but who weren’t gaining weight was, “Double the serving size of your protein shakes”. This certainly worked for me when I was keeping the shakes lighter and messing more with some of the other layers. Do not let its simplicity fool you, this method is the balls.

When the palm method is being employed to measure the protein portions, we simply extend the portion size to include the fingers as well. If you are already using the palm plus fingers, then add another 1/3 or so of that volume to each protein portion. This can be done for all of the solid food meals, or for a few of them at a time, it is not terribly important. What is important is that however you are going about it you should be keeping track and monitoring the changes in physique that result.

With the shakes we will typically increase the amount of protein by a scoop or two per shake. Remember that a scoop of whey protein will typically contain roughly 100 calories, so it is easy to see to how a three to six scoop increase of the stuff per day can add a nice little boost to the caloric intake.

Likewise, increasing the portion sizes of your solid food protein sources will up the calories for the day even greater nine times out of ten due to the fact that virtually all of the sources you will be using will be bringing calorie dense fats into the picture with them, at least to some degree.

The interesting phenomenon here is that protein foods are much harder to store as body fat (BroScience alert) than carbohydrates or fat sources. Protein is extremely valuable in the muscle building process, and it is difficult if not impossible to be taking in “too much”.

Keep in mind that many top bodybuilders will take in 500 g or more in the off-season, so do not stress yourself in thinking that you are somehow going to overdose on protein.

More Fat: Olive Oil

Olive Oil is normally my first line of attack in terms of adding layers to the diet of a trainee who has built a baseline diet and is ready for more calories beyond the simple addition of more protein. This one I also adopted after reading the recommendations of Dante Trudel.

Extra Virgin Olive Oil is an excellent source of healthy fats. It contains a slew of antioxidants that aren't present in other oils. Likewise, the Extra Virgin offering has more mono-unsaturated fatty acids than your garden variety Olive Oil. The consensus at this point is that there are many health related positives associated with Olive Oil consumption. It has been shown to be very heart healthy, as well as lowering LDL cholesterol and raising HDL cholesterol.

For our purposes in this book however, the most relevant characteristic that it has is its calorically dense nature, being that it is entirely a fat source.

One tablespoon of Extra Virgin Olive Oil contains 120 healthy, hypertrophy-assisting calories. It is easily added to shakes to boost the caloric content of the mix and therefore the caloric intake for the day, week, and so on.

Generally speaking we will begin the use of the Olive Oil as a calorie-adding layer by mixing two tablespoons of the stuff into each of the shakes for the day. This could mean two or three (or more: see "Shot and a Meal") depending on the individual.

Let's assume an application where you are adding two tablespoons of Olive Oil to three shakes per day. This works out to a 720-calorie addition to the day, or 4,320 calories for the week (720 calories x 6 days= 4,320).

Based on the feedback from its addition, which we discuss in the section on monitoring progress, another tablespoon can be added to the shakes, or even up to two, though most will not find this necessary. I will strongly caution against getting overzealous and adding a bunch of oils to your shakes at the start, this will undoubtedly leave you stranded on the toilet long after you are out of paper (or wet wipes if you are not one of those inadequately clean "dry wipe" people).

We will watch the progress once we begin using the oil in the shakes and if we aren't happy with what we are seeing in the photos, in terms of the person getting a bit doughier than we would like to see, we will bump it back a bit. Normally we don't see this occur, but in the event that it does it is very easy to bump the intake back to one single tablespoon per shake, or even zero if the person was just a little trigger happy on adding the layers when they weren't necessarily warranted yet.

“A Shot and a Meal”

One tried and true method of beefing up the protein (and caloric) intake for the day in a simple, easy to implement is the practice of drinking a small protein shake with each solid food meal (in addition to any meal replacement shakes already being used throughout the day). This tip was passed on to me by a former high-level competitive bodybuilder and helped me get past some serious mass barriers when I was at my largest. The shakes need not be large, even a single scoop (20-25g protein from most manufacturers) shake added to 3 meals throughout the day amounts to adding an additional three scoop (60-75g) shake to the day's intake. For someone trying to push into the 400- 500g territory in order to grow this tactic is particularly valuable. The volume of the shake is easily managed since it amounts to little more than a shot of liquid. The use of milk and/or olive oil in the making of the shake can easily bump up the calories in the “shot” as well.

If a single tablespoon of Olive Oil were to be added to each of the three mini-shakes mentioned in the example above, the person would be consuming an additional 360 calories for the day. Use 4 oz of milk to mix the shot in and you're up an additional 225 calories for the day. That would put you at 585 calories up, almost the caloric equivalent of a quart of whole milk, in just the add-ons to the “shot” layer, which is in itself an add on to the base of solid food meals and meal replacement shakes. It's easy to see how simple and easy it is to add calories in small increments while maintaining accountability and easily tracking the effectiveness of each new addition.

Gorging: The Weekly Spike

As I mentioned in the section on establishing the baseline, humans have a remarkable ability to consume a very consistent amount of calories when the intake is observed over longer periods of time. Generally we look at the diet in terms of a seven-day cycle, we will typically have six days “on” and one day “off”. This applies for both those trying to add mass and those who are dieting to drop bodyfat. The “free day” as we refer to the seventh day is a free for all, no diet rules are in place on that day. This is done for both psychological and physiological reasons. Psychological in the sense that it serves as a break from the monotony and restrictions that a focused diet brings with it, and physiological in that the same break in dietary monotony serves as a (BroScience alert!) “reset button” on the week and prevents the body from adapting to the point of ceasing to progress.

Free Days will look totally different between individuals. For some who are dieting hard it may be an all day smorgasbord of pizza and ice cream. For those who are aggressively pounding large quantities of high quality foods all day throughout the week the day may look more like a day off from eating altogether. Many in this situation will eat two or three meals that day instead of all six to nine that they are eating on a normal day. Either way of approaching the day is acceptable, as the rule is that there are no rules on the free day.

Back to the original point here; we tend to eat roughly the same amount of calories from week to week. This is the case regardless of how the free day looks since most will have similar habits from week to week on their free days as well. What we are going to look at here is the construction of a surplus layer based on a large caloric “spike”, or a series of spikes taken at intervals throughout the week. We know that the weekly caloric intake is a more reliable figure in predicting growth than the daily intake is. The weekly number is what we need to increase more than the daily. This is where the use of less than ideal sources such as fast food can safely enter the diet and be used productively.

So what do I use for the spikes?

How big of a spike am I trying to create?

Those two questions come with pretty simple answers. In the first case, it doesn’t really matter all that much, though I highly recommend sticking to real foods that actually contain protein, think cheeseburger instead of ice cream sundae. As for how large of a spike we are trying to create, there is no hard and fast rule here. What’s important is that the meal is much larger than normal, and brings to the table a load of additional calories.

It’s no secret by now that eating a crap diet with regularity is going to produce a crap body. However, gorging on some sloppier food sources once or twice per

week as needed can be a valuable layer to add for someone who is having some difficulty seeing the scale and measurements move despite having a solid baseline diet and other layers already in place. Five Guys Cheeseburgers and All-You-Can-Eat Crab Leg feasts do the trick quite well for me. I used to be a fan of the Chinese Buffet, and still will hit one on occasion, but my gorging tastes have refined a bit in the last few years (yes my nose was turned up as I typed that). What you use for a spike is up to you, start with one per week and monitor progress, add them as needed but resist the urge to “need” them because you want to, we are not doing a dirty bulk here remember. This tactic is typically reserved for those who are truly the “hard gainers” of the bunch, it is often the “last ditch”, and is added once the others that we have already discussed have been implemented.

Don’t kid yourself, if that description doesn’t fit you, stick to limiting the junkier stuff to the free day.

The “Calorie Bomb”: Greyskull Mega Mass 1000

One of the methods I have used frequently with many, particularly the younger crowd, with much success has been the addition of the “calorie bomb” or weight gainer shake. For the underweight individual looking to pack on some mass in a hurry this tactic will usually do the trick quite nicely. Those prone to easy fat gain would probably be better off using the shot and a meal method or one of the other layers before opting to implement this one.

The method involves drinking a very high calorie shake as the first thing in the morning (after the cardio session if there is one). Generally speaking the shake will be added for all six days of the week. If and when the progress from the addition of a single shake is “outgrown”, a second shake is added in lieu of the normal number two shake sometime in the midday or afternoon. The second shake is usually added on weight training days only at first, not because of a difference in caloric needs between training days and non-training days, but because limiting the second shake to training days only reduces the size of the layer being added to the weekly intake. If you haven’t gathered by now, the idea of adding things in small increments is one of the most vitally important principles to adding mass without significant body fat accumulation.

The recipe for the basic Greyskull “Calorie Bomb” Weight Gainer Shake is:

3 scoops (75g) Whey Protein (~300 Calories)

2 Tablespoons of Peanut Butter (200 Calories)

1 cup Dry Oats (315 Calories)

8 oz Whole Milk (150 Calories)

Ice Cubes

What this amounts to is about a one thousand calorie shake. The volume is less than one quart of whole milk, though the macronutrient content is much better for our purposes and on the thermodynamics end it beats the milk out by about 400 calories.

This shake added once per day, six days a week amounts to roughly a 6,000 addition to the weekly intake. The addition of a second shake on training days would boost the intake up another 3,000 or so (though you have to figure that the shake would be replacing another, smaller, shake at those times so it's not truly a 6-9,000 calorie additional layer). It is easy to see why this is not a tactic to be employed by someone who is comfortably growing already on a base diet, or who is prone to accumulating body fat easily. Again this is most applicable for youngsters who are trying to add weight for sports, or for extremely ectomorphic "hardgainer" types who truly have difficulty making the weight go up despite having a solid base layer in place.

When/Why to Add a Layer

So now we have this toolbox of layers, where, how and when do we use them?

Here's the finesse side of things. The next chapter will deal with tracking progress and monitoring your gains. The trick to mass gaining and not getting fat in the process is to maximize your potential for growth within a certain time frame without having too much excess left over to be stored as fat.

We want to push the envelope on intake without seeing the goo come on. We have a few tricks up our sleeves to help us out with this. Remember, we're hitting the cardio (if not, start) a few days per week at least, fasted first thing in the morning, and we're eliminating carbohydrates before bed. Combine that with the fact that we're creating our surplus with healthy, high quality, single-ingredient food choices, and the likelihood that we are going to be storing a bunch of fat just keeps decreasing.

We want to build as much muscle as we can in as short of a time frame as we can. In order to do this we need to make sure our tank is topped off at all times. Stagnation is not an option, the weights need to be going up in the gym, and we need to be growing.

As I mentioned, we are going to be looking at how to track the progress next, but here is the simple rule for adding layers to keep in mind as you read on:

Run the base diet first (for at least four weeks), and if you are not seeing negative feedback in your data points, try adding a layer.

Likewise, anytime you stall on growth, add a layer.

If what you are doing is working, you do not need to change it. Resist the urge to add a layer for the hell of it; you'll probably just end up having to pull it back in after the next progress check anyway.

That brings us to subtracting layers. This should go without saying, but if you are getting poor feedback from your progress checks as in you are starting to look more like a roly-poly than desired, back it up a layer.

This is why it is so important to make changes gradually and add layers one at a time. If you come out the gate using all of the above methods, I promise you that you will be getting fat. However, some behemoths may graduate to using all of the above concurrently and still be getting awesome progress by keeping the fat at bay with the techniques mentioned before and keeping the sources clean.

What matters is that you are consistent and try something long enough to get an accurate measurement of its effect.

Add one at a time, subtract one at a time. Don't fuck with it if it's working. Simple enough.

Chapter Six:

Tracking Progress

Keeping Score

In order to gain muscle mass without gaining a bunch of body fat in the process it is important to track your progress. It's difficult to see where you stand and how well your current approach is working if you are not "keeping score".

Changing your body composition for the better is all about manipulating variables; making small adjustments, recording results, and adjusting again based on your findings. In the literal sense it is a very scientific process. As any scientist will tell you, data is king.

For our purposes here, we will be concentrating on a few key data points. They are as follows:

The Training Journal

The training journal should include sets, reps, notes on the individual workouts, everything that may be relevant to the overall process. This one's easy, get yourself a notebook, and keep a digital version in the training logs section on strengthvillain.com.

The food log

The food log should be detailed and accurate with everything recorded (in portions is fine) including free days.

Front, rear, and side full-body photos

Photos should be taken every four weeks (though sometimes I will request them at two week intervals) in as close to the same conditions as possible. This means same lighting, same clothes, same conditions (how recently you've eaten, hydration) etc. This is a requirement for anyone who works with me directly in the consulting realm, and it is one component of the data package that the client provides me with that I would be nearly crippled in terms of tailoring advice to his or her needs without.

The waist measurement

The waist measurement should be taken (at the navel) three times, and averaged, once every two weeks.

Scale weight

Should be taken every two weeks along with the measurements. We will be looking at this in more detail very soon.

The above points of reference should be tracked with as much accuracy as possible. I tell all of my clients that the more data they can provide me with the better. They are not presented in any particular order, however scale weight is appropriately situated at the bottom of the list. We will be looking at why that is momentarily.

Each of these data points provides valuable information by which the effectiveness of the current approach will be evaluated at two to four week intervals. The findings will influence what, if any, variables are to be manipulated in the weeks to come, and by how much.

Weighing the Value of the Scale

Chasing scale PR's, impatiently monitoring bodyweight from day to day, desiring to see significant increases in weight in short periods of time is a condition that is likely to lead to an undesirable body composition. The human body can only build muscle so fast; no amount of staring at the scale will change this fact. What a scale focus will do however is program one to be rewarded and feel good when they see a larger number. It is much easier to make the number on the scale go up by adding fat than it is by adding muscle (or by wearing more clothes next time you weigh yourself, some of you know what I'm talking about). Simply overeating will cause a person to gain weight any day, lots of hard work in the weight room and behind the table will make the number go up on the scale slowly and steadily while also making the image in the mirror more of a bipedal lubricant.

Bodyweight is easily manipulated up or down by adjusting variables such as hydration levels and carbohydrate intake. It is entirely possible to drop one's weight on the scale by 20 lb or more through dehydration and carbohydrate depletion, this is how fighters and other weight class athletes "make weight" and then show up to the event 24 hours later weighing 20 lb more on the scale. Likewise, Powerlifters have been known to "put on a bloat" to either make the next weight class up (for posterity's sake or to pursue a record in the class). Again the idea is adjusting the number on the scale by making a few changes to their diet and or exercise habits for a few days or just a day in some cases. The point in discussing these things in the context of this book is to demonstrate just how irrelevant scale weight can be relative to data points that are more indicative of true progress towards a stronger and more muscular physique, which is our focus here.

Despite its shortcomings when used as the sole reference for measuring progress in mass gain; the number on the scale is valuable data. When you add muscle to your frame you will weigh more, it's as simple as that. As we've discussed quite a bit by now though, weighing more on the scale doesn't necessarily mean that you have more muscle.

Compulsively checking the scale each day is not going to make the growth happen any sooner. I recommend weighing in every two weeks. It doesn't matter if you weigh in first thing in the morning or at night, just keep the conditions consistent. Don't try to compare your weight first thing in the morning after your morning pee with a weight taken fifteen minutes after your fifth meal of the day while you're en route to shit out something the size of a housecat.

What are We Looking For?

OK, so now we know what data points we are looking at, so what are we looking for?

In the Training Log

It is next to impossible to add significant amounts of strength without experiencing attendant muscular hypertrophy. Growth is a side effect of getting stronger. Weight training forces the body to adapt, and in since we are feeding it in a manner that is conducive to building lean body mass, the adaptation is growth. It is for this reason that I am concerned with how the performance on the workouts, whether in bar weight or rep records, is progressing. If the trainee is getting stronger, and is providing an environment that promotes growth, they will grow, simple as that.

What we're looking for in the training log is simple. The weights being used and/or the repetitions being completed (performance) should be on the climb.

In the Photos

The old saying "A picture is worth a thousand words" is perhaps as applicable to building a strong, desirable, body with a favorable body composition and loads of muscle as it is in any other context that I can think of.

The goal is growth. We want to see that there is "new muscle". Particular areas of interest in the photos will be the neck, shoulders (width), legs, and back. It's in those areas that growth will be most noticeable at first.

What we don't want to see is an expansion of the waist (see waist measurement), a dramatic softening of the neck and face regions, or the development of love handles. The photos do not lie. Most who take "before" shots are shocked when they see what they actually look like. We are unable to get an accurate feel for our appearance from a mirror, the photos are a must. If you are getting soft you will see it in the photos.

With the Tape Measure

We're only concerning ourselves with one measurement for the time being, the waist. Feel free to add other measurements such as chest, arm, neck, or thigh circumference, and log those as well at two-week intervals.

We are focused on the waist however because that is where we will see the fat-fucking process beginning to take place.

Now here is where it gets interesting, and why it is so critical to have multiple data points;

If your waist is expanding, it does not by default mean that you are getting fat.

Muscle takes up space too. When I was 17 and weighed 140 lbs I had a 28.5" waist. At my leanest 230 lbs I had a 34" waist. I was not fat at 230, as a matter of fact, my body fat percentage (notice how we haven't discussed that one as a data point) was probably very close to the same. My waist simply grew with me and you will see this too, especially if you are starting out without a lot of muscle and very "underweight".

This is where you need to consult the photos.

Is the expansion the result of growth, evidenced by the increase in shoulder and back size, which would indicate significant enough growth in the trunk to increase the waist measurement?

Or...

Is there little noticeable difference in the upper body musculature, but a small, noticeable difference in the appearance of the waist?

If it's the first one you're good. Drive on.

If it's the second one it might be time to bump it back a layer. Chances are you either got a bit overzealous in your application of additional layers beyond the base, or you just haven't been training or at least not training hard enough to drive the progress.

In any case, you should not see an increase in waist measurement of more than an inch in a month unless you are adding too much fat.

On the Scale

As I mentioned before, if you are gaining muscle you will be gaining weight, unless you are losing fat at the same time.

It does happen. I know you've been told you can't do it and all, but that's bullshit. This is another reason why watching the scale alone is dangerous in terms of poisoning you to fat-fuck yourself.

Imagine a guy who is carrying some extra fat and not a ton of muscle who embarks on a solid weight training and cardio program like my Greyskull LP. Imagine he's been eating "accidentally" for some time now and is relatively new to working out.

Now let's say he hits it hard for three weeks, kills it in the gym and doesn't miss a step on his base diet. He feels great, he's getting compliments from people at work, and he's happy with what he is seeing in the mirror. He's been holding off on weighing himself because he wants it to be dramatic when he finally looks. He picks a day and hops on the scale.

"What the fuck?!"

"I lost two pounds?!"

Suddenly his whole mindset changes; now the people who had complimented him were just blowing smoke, what he was seeing in the mirror was wishful thinking, etc. He needs to be two hundred pounds, and he needs it now. This losing two pounds bullshit is not going to work, that Johnny Pain is full of shit, he just wants to make guys lean he doesn't know shit about growing.

So faced with this disappointing information from this little machine in the bathroom, his only point of reference, he decides he needs to up his food intake.

"You can't grow on chicken and rice" he remembers hearing.

It's time to loosen it up a bit. He tells himself that he's growing and can handle hitting Burger King a few times a week, he needs the calories.

"Fuck that cardio bullshit, I bet that's why I lost weight".

He ditches the cardio and starts sleeping in the extra hour instead. The milk idea is sounding better and better, so he starts doing that. He hears my voice still echoing to a degree though so he says he's "only going to do a half gallon a day".

Two weeks go by and he hops back on the scale.

"WOO HOO, up eleven pounds! I knew I just wasn't eating enough"

He's now well on his way to reaching his goal of two-hundred pounds and even closer to his unintended but inherited goal of fat-fucking himself with a vengeance.

All of this because the scale was his only data point and he didn't realize that the two pounds that he had lost was part of the six pounds of body fat he had shed in those three weeks, and that the two pounds represented the net loss after factoring in the four pound muscle gain that he had experienced in the same time.

Use all of the data points and put them up against each other for comparison.

How Much Weight Should I be Gaining?

This varies a whole lot from individual to individual, however, the human body can only grow so quickly. If you are adding much more than five or six pounds per month, you can be sure that you are adding quite a bit of fat as well.

Remember this when you hear the tales of the three-month sixty-pound gains.

"It's mostly all muscle" or "I probably only gained ten pounds or so of fat"

Bullshit.

The scale should go up slow and steady each month (unless you are working the base diet, are relatively new to dieting and training, and started out with a bit of fat that you are losing at the same time) but if it's climbing at an astronomical rate and you aren't on drugs, you're getting fat my friend.

Getting Smooth

Before wrapping up this chapter I would like to talk about the idea of “getting smooth” versus fat-fucking yourself. This is generally going to apply to the guy starting out very lean. We see this a lot from guys coming under my influence from either a CrossFit background, or a bodybuilding style background, in the more ab-obsessed sense where they have yet to build any discernable muscle mass, but have gotten themselves pretty lean (see high school Johnny Pain).

For these individuals it may be difficult to accept any fat accumulation. Bear in mind that I don’t want anyone to get fat in this process, however, we will be creating a surplus, and really the only real way to know that we are in a true caloric surplus often times is that we are gaining a small bit of fat.

This leads us to the idea that if you are starting out very lean, you need to accept that in order to pursue a significant mass gain you are going to have to wave bye bye to your deeply chiseled abs for a little while. They’ll be back, I promise, and they’ll look way cooler when they’re a lot thicker and stronger.

Getting smooth means losing a bit of definition. If you’re striated through the chest, you’ll lose that most likely, if you’re vascular in place other than your extremities, you probably won’t see that for a little bit either.

Getting smooth does not mean getting love handles or a gut. There is a colossal difference. Google some pictures of some bodybuilders off-season to see what I am referring to (just not Lee Priest).

Remember what smooth looks like and understand that smooth is not only acceptable, smooth is good. Use the layering method to make sure that smooth does not turn into fat.

Get smooth, get huge. When you’re ready to strip it down a bit, do it and show the world your new super hero physique.

Chapter Seven:

Hungry Like the Wolf

The anabolic Boldenone Undecylate has long been favored by many in the bodybuilding world for it's ability to add to a testosterone base and facilitate, slow, but lasting gains of lean mass as well as vascularity and improved endurance in some. One of the most commonly reported side effects of Boldenone, or Equipoise as it is more commonly called, is the insatiable appetite that it can cause. The drug has been a favorite for a bodybuilder looking to get leaner for some time, but many find it's hunger inducing side effect to be counterproductive when looking to get leaner since the desire to eat is simply unbearable at times. This presents a serious obstacle for someone trying to reduce their caloric intake and stay consistent with a strict diet. Likewise, many will argue that Nandrolone (Deca Durabolin) or another anabolic may be better suited for mass gain cycles due to it's arguably better performance in adding mass by its simple inclusion. The fact remains though that many favor "EQ" for this purpose still because the appetite it creates trumps the other drug's edge on gains by simple facilitation of a greater and more consistent caloric intake, the most important variable in the mass gain equation.

My purpose in illustrating this point is not to advertise one drug over another for mass gain, and certainly isn't intended to recommend or condone the use of anabolic steroids. The idea I am pointing out here is that a big appetite is the most valuable weapon that a person looking to add more muscle to their frame can have in their arsenal. If you want to add muscle to your frame there is no way around that fact that you will need to eat a lot of food. In my estimation and in my experience the overwhelming majority of people who label themselves "hard gainers" would be more appropriately titled "under eaters". The fact remains that your body requires a surplus of calories (though not a gross surplus lest you "fat-fuck" yourself in short order as we've discussed) in order to grow, and those calories need to get down the hatch somehow.

There are several methods for making the process of getting adequate calories and macronutrients simpler and easier to consistently do, however few attributes would be considered more of a blessing to an individual looking to add mass to their frame more than a voracious, eat the ass from a skunk type appetite. Some are born this way as my girl Gaga would say, but most are not as gifted in that regard and will find getting the necessary numbers in for the day, particularly if they are not just getting started in the game of gains, to be quite laborious. Therefore, most will be very receptive to any and all help they can receive when it comes to making themselves hungry like the wolf.

Frequent Meals and Their Effect on Hunger

One of the recurring themes in all of the diet stuff that you will see from me is the use of frequent, small (though this is a relative term) meals. The reasoning behind the small meals changes with the application, but suffice to say that a grazing style of eating is going to be the way to go when it comes to working towards just about any body composition goal (at least the ones that people commonly strive for, the case of the sumo wrestler would be an exception here).

In the instance of mass gain the two main reasons for frequent feedings are maintaining a positive nitrogen balance (critical “bro-science” principle, highlight it), and just plain being able to get enough high quality foods in over the course of the day. An additional benefit however is the observable fact that frequent, smaller feedings tend to cause an increase in appetite once the initial adjustment to the increase in food consumption (if you were previously taking in considerably less food which is the case more often than not) is complete. In the beginning trainees are taught to “eat on the clock” or to feed at specifically pre-determined times throughout the day. This ensures that the numbers are hit for the day and that the timing is there. A common practice with many of my consult clients at this point is to set reminders in their smart phone to let them know when it is time to eat. This allows them to “automate” things a bit more so long as they create a rule that they are eating within fifteen minutes or so of the alarm sounding each time.

Perhaps the coolest part about this is the Pavlovian-like conditioning that the trainee experiences in that they start to anticipate the upcoming meals with a feeling of hunger. In the case of someone aggressively dieting in an effort to drop body fat (which will be the topic of an upcoming book) this hungry feeling is a bit more understandable, it’s simply a matter of the small, low fat meal from a few hours ago is long gone and they are eagerly awaiting more food. In the mass gain context though, the hunger conditioning is more of a blessing definitely, and is almost always perceived as such.

Fasted Cardio

We talked about the why behind the inclusion of cardiovascular training into a mass gain program in terms of the effects on how much body fat you gain and how much stamina you have for tearing up some ass. Now I'd like to take a minute to let you all in on another little benefit of this boring, monotonous activity.

Doing it first thing in the morning on an empty stomach will make you hungry all day long. This is also an excellent time to do your cardio (Zing!).

At least that has been my experience and the experiences of many others who I have had try this as a tactic to boost their appetite. I have yet to have it fail me in that role.

It's no secret by now that I am a fan and student of the writings of Dante Trudel. Though I have never met the man at this point, he has been one of the more major influences on how I go about training my clients. I was happy to see that he advocates this practice for the very same reason. His endorsement, when I read it a few years back, "validated" what I had always found odd about days that I did my cardio fasted first thing. I used to attribute the hunger to the fact that I was dieting at the time (hence the cardio), but quickly noticed that the hunger would show up like clockwork if I did the cardio fasted during a period of mass gain focus as well.

This influenced me to use it as a hunger-generating (and therefore growth-facilitating) tactic first and foremost, an interesting thing to point out to those who are apprehensive about doing the cardio while they are trying to gain weight.

Do it.

Chapter Eight:

Feeding the Sex Machine

This chapter is included to discuss what goes into feeding your ever-growing frame. It is obvious at this point that you will not grow without adequate fuel with which to do so. Planning is essential to your success, as failing to have a plan for food acquisition, preparation, and availability at crucial times will set you up to be pulled into the world of the “accidental eater”. As I discussed in the accountability section, eating accidentally is a fast road to nowhere when it comes to progress.

Eating Big on a Budget

You do not have to spend an arm and a leg to buy the food to grow huge arms and legs, bottom line.

The belief that buying the foods and supplements necessary to grow is outside of your budget is foolish; I don't care what you make. Basically, if you can afford to buy this book, you can afford to eat well.

Protein foods are where you will likely spend the most money. This is especially true if you buy all of your meats last minute at a grocery store. While I am guilty of this often as well, I have taken full advantage of more cost-effective (and convenient) routes in the past.

Meats are easily bought in bulk for massive savings. Check out a local butcher shop or “meat guy”. Buy big chunks of NY Strip or rib eye, trim some of the fat, and cut into portion size steaks. We recently bought a chunk like this for a party at Greyskull, which yielded roughly 20 man-sized steaks. This cost us around \$35. That's what you'd pay for one at a restaurant, and two, maybe three unprepared ones at the grocery store.

If you go this route, stock up on gallon-size Ziploc bags, or invest in a vacuum sealer. Package your individual cuts up, and freeze until you're ready to use them.

Aside from steak, it is very easy to find huge deals on ground beef. I stick to the 80/20 variety for mass gain, which already represents a savings over the leaner versions. Even at a grocery store the per pound cost will be much less on a five pound package than it will be on a one pounder. This stuff doesn't take a genius, just pay attention to cost per pound, or “unit cost” on an item rather than the actual price.

One of the best examples of unit price in action is olive oil. Check out the oil section at the store. Now look at the larger cans or jugs that might cost \$20 or more. Read what the unit cost is for each. Now read the unit cost on the \$6 jar that you're accustomed to picking up because you can't see spending \$20 on a big thing of olive oil which won't go bad if stored properly, and is used in virtually everything you cook.

Start looking for this on things like rice as well. You pay infinitely more when buying a 1lb bag, or worse, some bullshit "boil in the bag" nonsense, than you do when buying a 20lb bag from the bottom shelf. Save an empty protein canister and use that for your rice. Buy an inexpensive one-cup measuring cup, and leave it in your canister like you do your protein scoop.

Now you're thinking like a person who is far from an accidental eater.

Most of these things are what I call "uncommon sense". Many won't think to do these things, but once informed, can't imagine why they hadn't.

Buy your staple items in bulk.

Maximize your yield from a purchase.

Don't drop \$100 in one night at the bar and then bitch that it costs too much to grow, at least not if you want anyone to care or feel bad for you.

Buy your protein powder online from trueprotein.com this will save you loads of money. At one point protein powder was my single biggest food expense. This wasn't because I used more of it than real food, but because I bought my foods extremely wisely. Trueprotein lets you do the same with your supplements, they have my highest endorsement.

SWOLE Approved Meals

This added section is intended to provide you with some simple ideas to make your food a bit more awesome and enjoyable. Keep a few things in mind when reading this.

I am not a chef.

This is not a cookbook (though there is talk of making a huge cookbook of SWOLE approved recipes.

Writing recipes out in print is not my strong suit.

You will certainly be able to follow my instructions to prepare any of the meals listed in this section with ease. I'm sure that you will enjoy them, and I'm interested to receive feedback on them as you try them.

Keep in mind these are meals that were/are staples for myself and others that I have trained with or coached.

Have fun with this part. Monotony, while good for some, is often like monogamy in a relationship, not suited well to it lasting for the long haul due to boredom of having the same thing all the time.

JP's Chuck Roast

This is extremely easy to prepare.

You will need:

One Chuck Roast (normally two to three pounds)

One can of beef broth or brown gravy

One can of Tomato soup

One Crock Pot with variable temperature settings (I'm pretty sure yours will have a Low/High knob regardless of what hole in the wall you may live in)

Simply place the chuck roast in your crock-pot, and pour the broth/gravy and tomato soup over the beef.

Set your crock-pot to low, and let cook for anywhere from six to eight hours.

This is an excellent way to prepare some great tasting beef. The chuck roast is a fatty cut, which means loads of flavor, and a higher caloric content.

I would typically start one of these first thing in the morning. Once ready, I would graze on the meat and gravy over rice or pasta, which can be prepared in bulk beforehand, or fresh with each serving if you prefer it that way.

There was a period in time while working from home where I ate one of these daily. If I recall correctly, this tactic was useful in getting me over the 240lb hump for the first time. In addition to the roast, I would consume shakes throughout the day, and usually ate fish or some other protein source at night to mix it up a bit.

Grilling the Perfect Steak

Cooking a steak on the grill is something all men should be able to do, and do well. Steak is always one of my staple protein sources, and it would serve you well to make it one of yours if serious growth is what you are after.

For the longest time I was disappointed routinely by the taste of the steaks that I would grill, pan fry, or bake. I could never get them just the way I like them, and therefore sought out a good steakhouse when I really wanted to enjoy one.

I've since learned (and mastered) a simple method of getting my steaks to come out amazing with remarkable consistency.

You will need:

One big ole honkin' steak (I tend to get NY strip or porterhouse in large chunks from my "meat guy" and cut them into 12-20 oz portions to freeze)³

Kosher Sea Salt (preferably the kind with the grinder lid)

A steak-seasoning rub of your choice

A grill (preferably gas for accuracy)

Let the steak come to room temperature before you begin the process.

Coat the steak with a thick layer of sea salt on both sides. I mean douse the thing, think of "breading" it with salt.

Follow the salt with a bit of your steak rub. I really don't use a lot here, the salt does the majority of the work.

Heat the grill up nice and hot. I use the highest flame setting to let the temperature rise. It'll take a few minutes to heat up where you need it.

Sear the steak on one side for roughly two minutes or until it's got a nice browned color to it. Flip the steak **with tongs** (do not puncture with a meat fork lest you leak out vital juices) and repeat on the other side.

³ I recently learned an awesome way to defrost steak (or anything else frozen) in a hurry. Simply place the steak (in plastic bag or seal) in a deep container. Place the container in the sink and allow cold water to run over it. The water will spill out around the top of the container as it continues to flow in. It seemed counterintuitive to me to use cold water, but it works like a charm; your steak will be thawed all the way through in a few minutes.

For me that completes the process since I like my steak rare (I am a man after all). If you prefer it a bit more done, simply reduce the heat and let it cook for a little while longer until it is done to your liking, just be sure to follow the searing procedure first.

I typically hit each side with another quick dousing of salt before it leaves the grill.

The next step is critical...

Once you remove the steak from the grill with your tongs,

Place the steak on a plate and cover snugly with a piece of aluminum foil for ten to fifteen minutes before eating. This allows the juices to absorb back into the meat instead of rushing out when you cut or bite into it. Trust me, this step is really worth the effort.

Grilling steak is something that I used to loathe, since I lacked the skill necessary to do it well. Now it is one of my favorite meals, and I save a load of cash by buying big cuts and dividing them up.

I'm sitting about twenty feet from my grill as I type this. In fact, hold on...

OK, I just waved to my grill out my office window. I love it, it loves me, don't judge. Just use this technique and fall madly in love with your grill, and the orgasmic steaks that you will become addicted to cranking out as a result.

Seafood Risotto

This is one of my mass-gain go-to's when I get a bit tired of beef and want to mix it up a bit. It is quick and easy, and is packed with the nutrition you need to get those muscles of yours looking more like the big ones in my manhood.

You will need:

Cooked Rice (portion amounts depend on how much you are preparing and what ratio of carbs to protein you are eating)

Tilapia Filets (I buy them frozen in bulk)

Shrimp (make sure they're peeled and have no tails)

Butter (I go grass-fed here)

Salt (optional)

An electric skillet or non-stick pan

Using an electric skillet set to 350 degrees, or a med/high heat setting on your stove, drop a big gob of butter onto the hot surface and move it around to coat the pan.

Next throw in your sea creatures. Cook them until they look how cooked shrimp and tilapia should look (hey this is not a cook book, you know what shrimp looks like before you eat it).

Next, toss in your rice. Mix in a bit more butter as you move the mix around, distributing the meat throughout the rice evenly.

Continue to heat until the rice is up to temperature.

Next, stuff your face with all of it.

I really do enjoy this one, and have made it for others on many occasions. It's super simple, and you'll score major points with a seafood-loving gal if you pull this one off. If you don't want to share, that's ok. She'll think that's weird and you probably won't get any, but hey, you're the one working for those gains right?

On second thought, share, decimate her lady parts, and then house a bunch of cheeseburgers (minus the buns) from a drive thru after the fact.

The Mighty SWOLE Burgers

This recipe I stole from my mother. She made these when I was a kid probably once a week. My brother in law and I ate these once a day for roughly eight weeks during my latest mass gain push (I got twenty pounds in that span, he went from 245, to 270). These are nothing short of glorious.

You will need:

One pound of 80/20 ground beef (makes about 4 burgers)

Italian style breadcrumbs

One egg

About four or five stalks of celery

Two jars of brown gravy

Beat your egg in a coffee cup (like you would to make a scrambled egg)

Place beef in a mixing bowl and pour in the egg.

Add chopped celery.

Sprinkle in enough breadcrumbs to cover the top of the entire mix.

Mix the ingredients thoroughly with your manly hands.

Form fist-sized burgers with your hands, and place in an un-greased pan on medium/high heat

Cook until burgers are nice and brown (dark brown) and then flip.

Once the burgers are browned slightly less on the second side, pour in your gravy and reduce the heat (my electric stove's dials are numbered one through nine. I do the browning on a six and reduce to between the three and four for this step).

Pour the gravy into the pan, covering the burgers with it.

Cook on the lower heat for twenty minutes and serve.

I know you'll love these simple burgers. I generally make a bag of home style egg noodles with these, as well as a vegetable. Normally for me it's collared greens, a byproduct of me living in the south during my Army days.

Use the drippings-enhanced gravy to cover everything on your plate.

I swear if you had a blood test before and after consuming these, your testosterone levels would be higher. These babies are just that anabolically delicious. If you like red meat (which you damn well should) these will quickly become one of your favorites.

I'll also add that I make my burgers exactly the same way when I'm going to cook them on the grill. I prepped dozens of these for my birthday party this year and they were gobbled up by all in attendance, meathead or otherwise. Just make the patties, grill as you would a normal (read: shitty) patty, top with cheese a minute or so before pulling off of the grill, and put that mofo on a bun. Prepare to be inundated with questions about where the hell you got these burger patties. Reply by shoving your hand down your pants, scratching the hell out of your big balls, and calmly stating

"I bought all of the ingredients fresh and mixed and formed each patty by hand".

Stuffed Peppers

I have a passionate love for these. I love stuffing things.

You will need

Several large bell peppers

One onion

Two big cans of tomato soup or tomato sauce

One pound of ground beef

Two cups of cooked rice

Begin by dicing the onions and placing them in a skillet set to a medium/high heat. Add your ground beef, and let it brown. I generally coat the skillet with olive oil to get things going, but once the ground beef hits the pan it will stay sufficiently lubed.

If you don't have rice prepared yet, prepare it by using twice the amount of water as rice in a pot with a lid. Add some butter and bring it all to a boil. Once the water is rapidly boiling, drop the temp back to low and let cook with the lid on for twenty minutes. Perfect rice every time.

In another pot, place your peppers in boiling water. Before doing this, cut the tops off of the peppers to make little "cups" (come on, you know what a stuffed pepper looks like). Use a paring knife to remove the innards, seeds, etc. and hollow out the pepper.

Let them boil until they are fork tender.

Once your beef is browned, add your rice, and one of the cans of soup or sauce. Let cook for a few minutes to heat up the mixture as a whole. Your mix should be roughly 50/50 rice/beef (unless you're eating double carb portions in which case you adjust your mix accordingly).

Once your peppers have been made tender, use a spoon to scoop your mix into the openings, stuffing them.

Place them in a baking dish closely together, top with the other can of soup or sauce, and bake for fifteen minutes or so in a 350 degree oven.

Serve.

These are awesome.

Beef and Pasta

Here's a really easy one.

You will need:

Ground Beef (how much depends on how much you are preparing at once. I used to make big containers of this for easy eating throughout the week).

Pasta (see above)

Tomato Soup (again) and/or spaghetti sauce

Onions, peppers, mushrooms (optional)

Chop your veggies if you're using them. Cook on high heat in a pan coated with oil until pretty much done.

Add your beef to the pan and brown

Add sauce/soup once the beef is browned

Cook your pasta in a pot. Once it's done, strain it, add butter, and stir

Add your beef/sauce mix to the pot with the pasta and mix thoroughly. Add more sauce as desired.

I would aim for a 50/50 mix on the main ingredients here. This meant that two big fist-sized portions would equal a one and one meal.

This is too easy and too tasty to not be a mass gain staple. This dish is responsible for a lot of my growth during these phases.

“Mexican Mix”

Prepare this one precisely how you prepare the stuffing for the stuffed peppers, with the exception of stirring in a large can of pinto beans instead of the tomato sauce with the beef and rice.

Add a packet or two of taco seasoning (ridiculously cheap), and let the whole shebang cook for a few minutes all together.

Put this delicious blend in a large Tupperware container, and scoop out portions as needed for meals throughout your week.

This super simple one was taught to me by a Mexican broad whom evidently used the anabolic properties of this dish to target growth in her glutes.

She was a sweetie.

Polish Pork Chops and Sauerkraut

Mrs. Bartecki, my elderly neighbor as a kid used to make this one for me. She was off the boat Polish, and could cook her old, housedress-wearing ass off.

You will need:

One package of boneless pork chops (or you can use a pork loin)

One package Sauerkraut

Kosher Sea Salt

This is stupid easy. Put your chops (or loin) and your kraut in your crock pot set on low.

Sprinkle some sea salt over the mix and stir

Come back in a minimum of five hours and scream “Polish Power” as you decimate these awesome vittles.

I normally make potatoes or home style egg noodles to go with these as a carb source, or eat it alone as a dinnertime meal.

Grilled Chicken Thighs

These are a much more palatable alternative to the mundane grilled chicken breast. When it comes to mass gain and chickens, be a thigh man, not a tit man. The busty chickens are used to getting all of the attention from muscular dudes, and the ones with smokin' thighs will hop all over you for noticing them, showering you with their fatty, oily, goodness.

Simply place your boneless, skinless thighs in a large resealable plastic bag. Pour in a whole lot of low fat Italian salad dressing (use as much or as little as you like).

Seal the bag and mix it all up with your hands (from the outside).

Lay the bag flat in your fridge and come back to it tomorrow.

Through these thick girls on the grill at a medium/high heat, flipping occasionally until you can tell that they are done by cutting into them a bit with a sharp knife (while still on the grill).

Package these hotties up and use throughout the week as you would have previously done with breasts.

Alternatively, eat the entire grill full of them in one sitting like my bro-in-law and I did daily during our last trip to jacked town (on the same days that we would eat the SWOLE burgers).

SWOLE Chicken Noodle Soup

A SWOLE spin on a classic favorite.

You will need:

Boneless Skinless Chicken Thighs

One bag of thick egg noodles

Several large carrots

Several stalks of celery

One large onion

One large can of chicken broth

One container chicken stock

Sea Salt

Use a big soup pot for this one.

Cover the bottom of the pot in a thin layer of olive oil.

Chop your veggies and add to the pot (on high).

Use poultry scissors to cut your thighs into bite size pieces before tossing them into the pot.

Move everything around in the pot until all of the chicken and veggies are cooked.

Dump in your big can of broth, your container of stock, and two of the broth cans full of water.

Add a bit of sea salt.

Pour in your bag of noodles, and bring the whole kaboodle to a rolling boil.

Let it boil until the noodles are cooked, and then it simmer on a low heat for 20 minutes or so (it gets better the longer it cooks on low).

The trick here is to add way more chicken than you would normally use for soup. Instead of a piece of chicken every so many spoons, you should have a bite on each. This gives it a more “stew like” consistency.

This is one of the best soups you will ever eat.

Shake it Baby (coincidentally what I used to often day to the Mexican broad from the “Mexican mix” recipe)

Here are a few of my favorite go-to “recipes” for a before bedtime shake. Whey in water gets old after a while. There’s nothing saying your shakes have to be bland and boring if you want to mix it up a bit.

Root Beer Float

Diet A&W Root Beer, Vanilla Protein Powder, Ice.

Add Root Beer to create desired consistency.

Orange Creamsicle

Diet Sunkist Orange Soda, Vanilla Protein Powder, Ice.

Add Orange Soda to create desired consistency.

Black Forrest Cake

Diet Black Cherry Soda or Cherry Coke Zero, Chocolate Protein Powder, Ice.

Strong Island Ice Tea

Diet WAWA (or something else for you less fortunate, non-wawa having people) Lemonade Ice Tea, Vanilla Protein Powder, Ice.

Chapter Nine:

A Few Words About Training for Mass

This is not a book on training. These principles apply regardless of what program you are using so long as it is a solid weight training program that focuses primarily on adding weight to big, compound movements.

Routines based around isolation work are not going to be nearly as effective for building muscle as a good, basic program that is centered around free weight exercises being performed in a moderate rep range.

I highly recommend you pick up my book “The Greyskull LP” if you are at a loss for what to do on the program front to accompany these methods. That is the basic program that I use with my clients nine times out of ten while they are applying the very methods in this book.

I also have authored “The Greyskull Guide to Powerbuilding” which might be a bit more suitable for you if you’ve been training a while and have already built impressive strength. Additionally there is “Mastodon” which is a sample, twelve-week, day-by-day program that you might thrive on if you have access to a commercial gym.

Regardless of what program you decide on, the most important thing is that you are consistent and intense in your sessions. Remember that you have a goal and that that motherfucking barbell is telling you that you can’t reach your goal.

Show it who’s boss, and bring it panties to prove your dominance over it. Barbells love panties.

Chapter Ten:

Drugs

Shortest chapter in the book, hands down.

The principles in this book apply regardless of whether you are taking drugs or not. Many of those I learned the methods from were using drugs when they used these methods.

I have very successfully used these very methods in this very manner with both natural and enhanced trainees.

Growth is growth; drugs don't do it for you. The principles still apply.

If you are interested in the subject of performance enhancing drugs, I encourage you to pick up my...er, I mean Brent Larson's book:

"The SV Beginner's Guide to Anabolic Steroids"

It will serve as an exceptional reference for you, and will educate you on how those that choose to go to the dark side do it the right way.

Conclusion

Well there it is. I've given you the proverbial keys to the kingdom. What you have been presented with are the principles that I have successfully used and will continue to use to help people get the bodies that they desire.

The fact remains that making this stuff work just right is much more art than it is science. A good trainer is part artist, part scientist. The topics presented in this book represent the science end of things. The art portion is the intelligent application of the correct technique or principle given the individual's unique situation.

There is no reason why this cannot be learned. The more practice one gets in doing this, the more proficient they become, as is the case with any skill. The important part now is that you are armed with the fundamentals and the tools needed to build up your body the right way without an ass-load of fat coming along for the ride.

As always, I remain accessible through my website strengthvillain.com if there are any questions that arise regarding any of the material in this book.

Additionally I do offer consulting services to help connect the dots for you (or your client) in a very direct manner should you desire to shorten the curve.

I do hope you've enjoyed this book; it certainly was a fun project for me. This topic is one of my specialties and is one that I am truly passionate about.

There have already been numerous requests for a book on getting lean, and I think that one would make a stellar companion to this volume, so I will be working on that title in the near future. Watch for it.

As always I appreciate your support and your purchase. I wish you the best of luck in your training and your life.

Make it count.