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Recently, Iâ€™ve begun to question the logic of my training. In the past I chose fast-paced, high intensity interval training-style workouts with a fair amount of success. I say fair because, although I burned a lot of calories and dropped weight quickly when I wanted to, I realized that I was burning to many calories during the week (when my workouts took place) without eating enough to compensate for the long, intense workouts I was doing. This made it nearly impossible to resist binge eating on the weekends, which led to my weight staying where I wanted it to be, but caused me to feel underfed all week and to make unhealthy choices on the weekends.

After I realized this, I decided to reduce the volume and increase the intensity of my training and to eat more all week, hoping to prevent the underfed feeling that led to my weekend overfeeds. Now, I only do five or six lifts per workout, three to four strength-training workouts per week, and â€œcardioâ€• training only really happens when I play pick-up basketball. Overall, Iâ€™ve found this to be a much more manageable and enjoyable way to maintain my weight and increase strength.

The beauty of this approach is that it gives a greater purpose to training. If you track your lifts (which your should), itâ€™s rewarding to notice that youâ€™re stronger each week.

Now, Iâ€™m not completely knocking HIIT-style training. I think itâ€™s the most effective and efficient for exercise in regards to calorie burning and muscle preserving; however, Iâ€™ve recently come to realize that itâ€™s a lot more logical and less time-consuming to simply eat less. The idea of burning off the extra calories that you eat to lose weight seems flawed at its very foundationâ€”why eat them in the first place?

Along with this new method of training, Iâ€™ve started to follow Martin Berkhanâ€™s â€œLeanGainsâ€• s intermittent fasting, as I covered in my previous post. Iâ€™d estimate that the time I save between the change in training styles and the reduction in time spent eating clocks in at roughly an hour on rest days and two hours on training days. Prior to the switch, my workouts would take 1.5-2 hours. Now they take an hour at the most, and thatâ€™s only three or four times per week. Also, the time spent planning and preparing six meals a day was an arduous process that is more time-consuming than people realize. The switch to three big meals a day in an eight-hour window really helped free up time to think about other areas of life.

For someone with a busy schedule, I would definitely recommend an intermittent fasting and minimalist training style. If you have any questions about the way I do either of these things, feel free to comment below.

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