

H.I.T. It

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I am always intrigued when I see a new infomercial from a “fitness expert” touting their “new creation” training routine of H.I.T. or High Intensity Training or “Mix me up” or whatever has a cool new name. Guaranteed, of course, in 20 minutes 3 times a week, to make you drop 50 pounds in 21 Days and stuff your size 16 into a size 1 two piece thong bikini just in time for summer and your trip to Hawaii. Or to turn those man hooters and Dorito beer filled abdominal POTosis into flat slabs of rock solid muscle in one week. “And only for the low price of \$19.99 in 3 easy payments for the “how to” DVD. But wait, wait there’s more folks...if you act today we will throw in that hot pink thong bikini or man thong, a \$50 dollar value, absolutely free.” Hilarious.

H.I.T or High Intensity Training or H.I.I.T. or High Intensity Interval Training is not New

Nor is Cross Fit, nor is P90x, nor is your Boot Camp or anything else you want to term that would be considered interval training, or not, incorporating a variety of linked functional movements or exercises or postures in dynamic 3 dimensional multi-planar, multi-directional short bursts of energy with or without exogenous resistance utilizing the entire kinetic chain incorporating proprioception, triple extension, neuromuscular control and sensorimotor integration or in isolated restricted movement incorporating 5 count slow negatives with or without additional partner resistance.

What did all that mean?

Here is the deal....

H.I.T. is a variety of abstract thoughts turned into myriad of training routines that can change. H.I.T. can take on many meanings and choreographic illustrations depending on what you are doing in your training. What are you doing?

Are you training for athleticism, are you training for heart attack, cancer or orthopedic surgery rehabilitation, are you training for fitness or weight loss, are you training for a specific sport or event like a triathlon, are you training to sculpt the magnificent human body or are you training for neuromuscular control? Because that will determine how much, how often, how long and how you choreograph the routines. You need to know your objectives in training otherwise you are simply doing the greatest latest fad workout with no understanding of where it is taking you other than everyone else is doing it and you want to be cool, as well.

Most of you want to look better. Otherwise you would not spend hundreds of dollars per month on hair dyes, weaves and nails and makeup and endless diet scams and whey protein powders, gym memberships you use for 2 months and DVD’s from a former high

school cheerleader putting herself out there as a fitness expert that turn into dust collectors after two weeks.

You really don't wake up one morning at 40 or 50 or 60 years old and say to yourself, "Biff, I think I want to be a world class big wave surfer and shred Mavericks, better get Laird on the phone." You wake up, look in the mirror naked and say, "Mother of Mercy and all that is Holy, Lord how did I get to look like this? Is it even possible to FREEZE this much fat off?"

High Intensity Training takes on a whole bunch of different meanings and you need to know precisely what it is you want from your training. What most of you want is to sculpt so you can be more aesthetically pleasing. And you are not really going to attempt to qualify for the Tour de France anytime soon. You want to look in the mirror and say, "OMG, you are Fa-Bue-Lus" with two snaps and a go around, In Living Color style. Let's focus on what H.I.T. means for sculpting and structural architecture and have fun.

So, what to do? First of all if you are very deconditioned which most folks in this country are (just take a look around you), you should simply get outside and WALK. Go out your front door walk down the street for 20 minutes, turn around and walk back. It is so painful to watch very deconditioned and obese good folk trying to run to workout. Very well intentioned however the worst thing you can do in that condition. WALK, first. And for most of us, walking is just as good as running. Check out Joan Vernikos, PhD's research for NASA back in the 70's with astronauts and walking vs. running.

Do that everyday and how about twice a day until you get to some semblance of conditioning where you can then throttle it up a bit and get in a weight room and start resistance training? Or could you possibly use your body weight as resistance? If you have never lifted weights, you should use your body weight first as resistance to learn how to control your movements and then move into weights if you choose to do so or not. Body weight squats, squat jumps, Bulgarian squats, pushups, pullups, jumping jacks, skip rope, etc. and lots and lots of balancing. And you can turn a simple walk with body weight exercises into a very high intensity workout if you knew what you were doing.

There really is no need to join a gym. Training in the soft sand at the beach can be one of the most intense routines you can do, once again, if you know what you are doing.

Go to our website, lifestylequixotica.com, check out the Plyobalance essay, under Education, for examples of what I am referring to. "Plyobalance" is a term I coined 25 years ago to illustrate a collaboration of proprioception and plyometric training for Professional Ski Instructors and Racers. Plyobalance was designed to train the nervous system to control musculoskeletal performance. That is the key in performance, not brute strength. That body of work was published, internationally; in Professional Ski Instructor magazine and National Ski Patrolman magazine.

Then what? If you are a 30 or 40 or 50 or 60-year old deconditioned person, 50 to 100 pounds overweight, you might want to hold off on H.I.T. for a bit so you don't risk injury.

So, how about Supersetting? A superset is where you would perform 2 or 3 consecutive different movements in a row prior to resting. For example:

1 set of flat bench press followed by 1 set of tricep pull downs followed by 1 set of rhomboid shrugs at 12 to 15 reps, then a 30 sec rest and repeat 6 times. Or you can do “ass to the grass” squat set with light weight, then Bulgarian Single leg squats with a Physioball followed by body weight squat jumps. You can turn that into a very high intensity training session if you chose to do so or not. Focus on 5 count slow negatives. Negatives are the eccentric or lengthening contraction of the muscle. For example, if you were performing a deep squat, as you go down, you would control that at a 5 count. Going down is the negative and moving up is the positive. It was once thought that negatives were not important. They are critical for a whole bunch of reasons. Always control the negative.

BTW, if anyone ever tells you to not squat deep, “ass to the grass” or your knees should never come out over the toes, tell them to skip back to Romper Room and to not bother you again. They just told you they don’t know “squat”.

Oh, ya and one more thing about “experts” that don’t know “squat”. If anyone ever tells you BMI or Body Mass Index is valid and has anything whatsoever to do with health, obesity or fitness, ask them what a Mesomorph is. BMI is rubbish with an exclamation point! Refer to our website for all the reasons why

Oh, oh one more thing plus...ask these “experts” if they know what Fartlek means. And, no, it is not something that escapes your body under cover of a single cheek lift and clears a room. “The single cheek lift” workout, coming to a neighborhood near you soon for only 3 easy payments of \$19.99. Batteries not included.

Here is how one must look at the progression in exercise and training:

*First is Proprioception, BALANCE, development prior to extremity strength

*Second is Core Strength prior to extremity strength

*Third is Extremity strength

*Then you have efficient functional integrated performance

You can bench press 400 pounds and squat 800 pounds all day long, however if you can’t balance and initiate movement from the center, you got nothing except brute strength.

All functional movement requires Deceleration, Stabilization and Acceleration in all 3 planes, sagittal, coronal and transverse. If you cannot decelerate efficiently you cannot accelerate efficiently and as a result you cannot dynamically stabilize. So, the more efficient you are in eccentric deceleration, the more efficient you are in performance. Most all injuries occur during deceleration. **The most important part of training is to train and develop an efficient nervous system that can control your musculoskeletal movement.**

This is not for athletes only, you are doing the aforementioned every single day all day long with your Activities of Daily Living and you don’t even know it.

A weak core is a fundamental problem of inefficient movements, which lead to injury. Do you think the core of a 60-year old deconditioned, overweight person is strong? I didn't think so. And that is why they get injured when trying high intensity training, as does a 25 year old with a weak core and inadequate balance ability. Training the core does not mean endless mindless flexion sit-ups or crunches or leg lifts. It means focusing on the Transverse Abdominus and the Internal obliques. The mm's that corset the lumbar spine and stabilize force reduction. I also focus on the Multifidus, to reduce or minimize IVD shear force. The majority of MRI's I order and review of low back patients rarely come back with a strong Multifidus. There is almost always fatty infiltration and atrophy. So, to re-train the Multifidus, grab one of those physioballs, lay prone on top of it, toes on the ground and parallel to the ground from you head to your low back. Slowly move your low back into extension as far as you can and hold it for 15 counts, then repeat. You can also repeat the motion without holding however you never go beyond parallel into flexion of any sort.

Performing a "Long Lever Core" movement on a Physioball or Stability ball is one tool, among others for TA/IO. As you lay supine on the ball, you draw in the navel 50-75% to engage the TA/IO, then raise the shoulders, straight up, with your eyes toward the ceiling. As you do that, gently bring the pubes toward your head. There is absolutely NO FLEXION and the movement is controlled in the negative and positive with "approximation" as opposed to flexion. The Physioball allows for a more dynamic movement along with developing proprioceptive efficiency. Traditional abdominal crunches or sit-ups with flexion on the floor or board lock the body in statically and increase Lumbosacral pressure via the psoas or hip flexor activation increasing intradiscal pressure raising the risk of ligamentum flavum buckling due to chronic flexion. The same is true for Abdominal Resistance Weight Machines. Never, ever use them unless you desire back surgery. And never use an "ab roller", the exact same reasons illustrated above. Ab rollers do absolutely nothing for core strength or abs.

And just because you have a six-pack does not mean you have a strong core. Six packs are not the result of endless, mindless, senseless situps or ab work. They are the result of great genetics and proper nutrition. That 6 pack did not come from an ab roller or machine.

So, the priorities prior to thinking you are going to do the latest and greatest H.I.T. routine is to focus on Proprioception and Core Strength because extremity injury is a function of a weak core and inefficient balance causing a Force Reduction Injury. **You need to understand and utilize proper structural biomechanics when you train and you need to know why you are doing what you are doing.** Regrettably, most trainers, coach's and physical educators have no understanding of this issue because they have no training in fundamental joint kinematics and physiology. Ask them if they know what Kapandji is. That will tell you if they have studied the aforementioned. And that does not pertain only to training. It pertains to all activity including vacuuming the carpet and mowing the lawn

etc, etc, etc. That is why DC's are so effective, they know joint physiology and they know what Kapandji is because they have studied it, intensely.

You best know what you are doing if you want to play this high intensity training game. Most don't. And those videos you buy and play with for 1 or 2 weeks and then become dust collectors could possibly injure you if your body is not prepared. I am not suggesting they are bad as some are pretty good, I am simply suggesting your body needs to be ready to participate. The majority of bodies are not and that is why folks get injured and then do not return to exercising the body. At the very least, if you really like your video then start out slow and don't try to keep up with the instructor until your body is ready. It is the same thing if you take a class. Stay within your limits and do not attempt to keep up with the instructor or others until your body tells you to push the envelope a bit.

There is so much you can do with training. It is wide open. I am simply scratching the surface here to hopefully clarify some of the confusion many of you have had with high intensity training routines and all your questions. When I was recruited as a graduate assistant D-1 University strength and conditioning coach and athletic trainer, while pursuing a Masters in Exercise Physiology, it was my philosophy of less is better and continually shocking the body with variation and diversity (high intensity intervals) that garnered attention from sport coaches at those Universities, along with optimal nutrition and more rest. That went against the conventional wisdom of the time of bigger, better stronger with no focus on optimal nutrition. 40 years later, my philosophy from then is what you see at the elite level and for most of us that simply desire a level of fitness and health. And were my principles any groundbreaking revelation? No. I took much of what I learned from my professors and the real pioneers in this field like Jack LaLanne and Vern Gambetta to include Dr. Mike Clark in recent years, tweaked it to what I thought was relevant as I saw it work in real life. And that is all you see today. Just someone taking someone else's stuff, putting a different twist on it, and experimenting. And that is great. We build on top of what is there collaboratively and hopefully, give credit where credit is due and it keeps getting better.

Four years ago when I was asked to volunteer as the strength and conditioning coach for the football team at the college I teach at, I suspended the heavy lifting during the season and focused more on dynamic interval Plyobalance training offseason & in season. That year, the team won a league championship and a bowl game after they faltered for years losing many of their games in the fourth quarter because they ran out of gas. They had the talent however the strength and conditioning program was obsolete or non-existent. It is all in the preparation and training.

You simply need to be creative and change it up constantly to shock the body. Doing the same thing each workout for months and years will not benefit you to the degree you would experience if you continually changed your workouts. I see many folks in the pool that are really good swimmers, swim 1 mile each day without stopping. I find that extremely boring and a sure fired way to, in swimming terms, contract a bad case of

“Black Line Fever”. It is much more fun to break it up in intervals and you will actually gain more results from mixing up the training and shocking the body into shifting.

More importantly, you need to LISTEN to your body. High Intensity Training places a significant amount of stress on the body, particularly joint articulations. Training too frequently without allowing the body adequate recovery will only lead to injury and lack of progress leading to frustration and bailing. The majority of people on high intensity training should train no more than 2-3 non-consecutive days per week depending, again, on what you are attempting to do. Understand the body grows and repairs during rest, not during your training. So, adequate rest for recovery is critical. And you need substantially more as you age.

Functional Recovery and Efficiency in performance is not possible without adequate Rest. And recovery is not the same as rest. Do not confuse the two. Many progressive conditioning coach's today focus on less training, more rest and optimal nutrition and so should you, especially as you age. And performances are improving with that approach sans the stress on the body.

“Nutrition is the Medicine, Exercise is the Catalyst, and Rest is the Healer”

Watch lions. The hunt is the workout, then they eat to replenish, then they sleep to recover, A LOT. Especially the males. Just like men, huh? Making the lioness do all the work then they wander over to have a meal, expect sex and go to sleep!

We are designed to rest after feeding. This nonsense that you should be energized after eating a major meal and go back to work for several hours is rubbish. You are supposed to rest for proper and effective digestion, repair and growth.

Our current frantic, unsustainable society tries to squeeze a weak 20-minute workout in during lunch, and then you eat some processed fast food meal back at your desk while working another several hours. Or you rush to the gym at 5 am, stop off at Starbucks for your Vente mochapoopoo, non-fat of course, and off to your desk for the next 8-10 hours. Now, that is a great post workout recovery meal, huh? You're better off with bud-lite and a big mac. And don't forget the hot-cheetos!

And if you ever bring a newspaper or magazine to read or text while you are training, don't waste your time and stay out of the gym. Unless you are listening to Metallica leave your cell phone at home when you train. You need to focus on training and honor the miraculous body God provided you with. You cannot do that when you are texting and talking on your phone while you train. You need to listen to your body as you train and speak to it. If you want a toned butt and thighs you need to focus and discuss that with your body and tell it that is what you want. Seriously. Ask any professional body builder if they speak to their biceps when doing curls. Arnold talked about that repeatedly. I saw a woman in the gym today on the ground doing mindless senseless flexion crunch's snapping her head back and forth while watching a video on her cell phone for 10

minutes straight! She might as well just stayed home eating bon bons and watching her video there. She was getting no benefit from what she was doing, whatsoever.

And you have to make it fun or you won't stick with it. For most of us, there is no reason to take our training to the level of pain. That is for the elite, not us. And if your body is not changing, you are doing something wrong. And that is usually in the arena of Nutrition or the food you eat especially those "Mega Mocha Latte, 2% soy, fumigating frapapoopoo's with orange extract and the foam on the side" that you pay 6 bucks for and you wonder why you have "Jiggle Belly" Syndrome.

Stop this insanity of always chasing and throwing your money at the "new and improved" workout experts. If you really look at the history of training, we have had public gyms for only about 65 years or so thanks to Jack LaLanne and Vic Tanny. And really, it has only been the last 25 years or so that we have had fitness centers with decent resistance equipment. And many still have antiquated equipment. When I started training at 12 years old, I used to pour concrete into empty 1 pound and 2 pound coffee cans and stick a pipe between two of em and that was my dumbbell for resistance. I used to sprint intervals around the school across the street and use the planter walls for step-ups, push-ups, tricep extensions and I would climb the fence up and down repeatedly. And I used to skateboard a lot, for balance. I still skateboard albeit more cautiously today as the concrete is not as forgiving as it once was.

There were no videos or books or personal trainers or physical educators that knew much more than how to hike a football, throw a baseball or shoot a basket. I learned, with great respect, from watching those that paved the way before me like Jack LaLanne, Dave Draper, Larry Scott and Bill Pearl at muscle beach in Venice in the mid 60's and incorporated my own creations and paid attention to the results. That was 50 years ago.

There are no "experts", no "healers" or "prophets" of anything. There is nothing that will crack me up more than someone introducing himself or herself as a healer or an expert. Being a model and a quiet example teaches the path. **The only Healer resides in all of us.** You simply need to tap into it. Respect your magnificent body or lose it to disease and a broken disease management system for profit, as many are.

Stay consistent, stay persistent, show up and stay hungry for the next session and change it up, alot. That is what those videos are all about; changing it up. You can do that without throwing good money away. Just be creative. Watch children play. Is there a personal trainer out there telling when and how and what to jump over, crawl over, roll over, jump over, ride over.....? No. They are just being creative with high intensity. Get back to that and have fun without the restrictions of someone telling you what to do all the time. You don't always need lessons to learn how to play. Just go play

I was once climbing up and down a fence, repeatedly, several years ago, on a workout. A Hermosa Beach police officer pulled up and asked what I was doing and I told him I was training. He told me I was not allowed to do that, as the fence was "public property"!

Knowing full well we now live in a police state in this country and I was within a hairs width of having to call Bad Boy Bail Bonds, I respectfully replied “yes sir”, however I did politely ask, “Sir, if that is public property and I am the public, does that mean I own it?” Well, that did not go over too well, as he called for back up, which prompted me to quickly exit, “stage right” on my skateboard! He actually trailed this criminal menace to society until I was out of Hermosa Beach. Hilarious. Something about a shaved head tattooed 25 year old with a gun that was bigger than him and a badge and baggy Bermuda shorts, that hasn’t had his first shave, yet, telling an old grey haired guy he is not allowed to “play” kinda is an interesting experience of sorts. I am just not sure what sort.

When I teach Yoga, I will incorporate a class where I ask the students to just do what their bodies tell them to do. Well, for about 10 minutes they are in shock because they have never listened to their body speak to them even though it has been crying out for their attention. Although, some of us have voices in our heads that we should not listen to! Most folk want to be told what to do or they don’t know what to do because they have been told what to do since they were born. After about 20 minutes that class looks like a room of gyrating bodies with people just allowing themselves to break loose of the constraints that society places on them. So much fun and you just might meet a new friend if you’re catchin the drift.

Look, there a lot of folks out there that want to separate you from your hard earned dollars and could care less about your well being because they know you want the quick fix.

There is no quick fix. Let me repeat that...THERE IS NO QUICK FIX! It takes work, the patience of Job and time to reverse disease, maintain health, prevent disease, and to be an architect of your body. It does not happen overnight or because you bought a video or a book or hired a personal trainer.

You are not going to lose 50 pounds in 21 days and you are not going to reverse cancer in 1 week. It took you 20 years to manifest cancer and obesity and you think it is going to go away in 21 days?

If you EAT strict and TRAIN strict, you can still affect change in the body for aesthetics and, of course, physiology regardless of age. **And you can reverse disease, however there is a point of no return so be very careful.** You simply need to just start and then stay with it. **Remember you will lose what you gained in training 80% faster than it took you to achieve your goals!** That is a fundamental fact in exercise physiology. So, don’t take too much time off. Even if you are injured or sick you can still train. Unless your condition is grave, those are not excuses.

At my weakest point in my 2-year cancer recovery journey where I could barely get out of bed, Lisa would drive me to the gym and pool and I would sit on a recumbent bike and spin with no resistance at about 5 rpm and then get in the pool and walk back and forth. It would take me several minutes just to walk across the pool and then I had to rest for a

while because my heart would race at 200+ beats per minute because they messed up the surgery, but I kept at it. I went from 200 pounds competing in 10-mile Open Ocean rough water swims in 60-degree water with no wetsuit to 140 pounds barely being able to walk 25 yards in an 80-degree pool, without shivering, uncontrollably.

I use that example for no other reason than to illustrate the longer you don't use the body, the longer it will take to heal and get you back to function. It will deteriorate extremely quickly, especially when you are challenged with dis-ease. The quicker you start rehabilitation from injury or illness, the quicker and more effective is recovery.

With exceptions, of course, most folks can always consciously choose to do something to restore health and wellbeing. Regrettably, most lack the discipline to do what it takes. And then they wonder why they got sick or the cancer came back.

Cancer has not returned in my body for 16 years and it never will nor will any other disease. **It is called DISCIPLINE that takes work feeding the body, mind and spirit every single day, 24/7.** Remember that word, Discipline? Almost non-existent in this current society of irresponsibility, huh?

It is a collaborative effort on the path to recovery and fitness, which means you have to take an active part. **A VERY ACTIVE PART.** And do not delay in seeking the right path. Chemotherapy is the absolute wrong path. I wasted two years and trusted in that system that was slowly killing me in body, mind and spirit and it was almost too late.

Now, go H.I.T. it, have fun and play, again. Seriousness is a disease, not an attribute.

Vaya Con Dios