



## RESILIENT!

LEADERSHIP & THE INTEGRAL LIFE

July 2008

Edited by Dr Sven Hansen

Welcome to RESILIENT! - Our client newsletter which aims to bring you topical and practical ideas to improve leadership, build resilient organisations and create a meaningful life.

### Physical Fitness – Part 2 of 3

By Dr Sven Hansen

In our last newsletter we refreshed our knowledge of the current ACSM exercise guidelines and encouraged you to start a daily practice of walking. In this newsletter we will focus on finding the right intensity to get the cardiovascular benefits and focus on building complementary strength and flexibility. Please remember that these guidelines are for those wanting to start exercise and establish a routine that works rather than for elite athletes.

#### **Aerobic Intensity**

Most failures in establishing physical fitness and the range of health, lifestyle and happiness benefits are due to the wrong intensity. These failures are due to the perception of undue pain, injury, lack of challenge boredom or burn-out. You are the one responsible for this decision. Be cautious of overzealous or hyper-cautious personal coaches. By focusing on activity you have enjoyed, select a range of intensity that is sustainable and as pleasurable as possible.

We measure intensity by the heart rate (pulse) or perceived effort. Both can work safely. The pulse rates are rounded off for an average 40 year old.

| Effort          | Pulse        | METs  | Example               |
|-----------------|--------------|-------|-----------------------|
| <b>Light</b>    | 100 -<br>120 | < 3   | Walk, daily<br>living |
| <b>Moderate</b> | 120 –<br>135 | 3 - 6 | Brisk walk,<br>swim   |
| <b>Vigorous</b> | 130 –<br>155 | > 3   | Hill run/bike         |

Our suggestion as a first step is to establish five, 30 minute sessions of moderate intensity exercise into your week. In other words a brisk 15 walk every morning and evening gets you started. The new ACSM Guidelines ([www.acsm.org](http://www.acsm.org)) emphasize the significant health, mortality and morbidity benefits of adding 2-3 moderate to vigorous sessions per week. So your next challenge is to introduce one moderate to vigorous activity per week. This might be a run, a swim, a mountain bike or a gym session. While we can seriously enjoy the walk for this session we need to get puffing so

that conversation is a little strained. In the early days a pulse monitor is helpful – essentially to keep you above 120 and below 150 if you are 40 odd with no major risk factors.

Ideally, you can then introduce a second and third moderate to vigorous session as you feel ready. The bonus: These sessions only need to be 20 minutes!

#### **Muscular Strength & Endurance**

Evidence for the benefits of muscular strength training has accumulated rapidly over the past decade which is why the ASCM guidelines have been updated. The key benefits relate to bone strength, all cause mortality and glucose metabolism. While Class A research is still lacking there are suggestions that strength training helps sleep and enhances longevity. We actively support and encourage the inclusion of strength work (resistance training) as at least one and preferably two of your weekly sessions. Our clients also claim very positive resilience gains from strength.

However, this is a skill base for which we strongly recommend skilled help to get started. To achieve gains one needs 8 to 10 different exercises where each includes 8 - 12 repetitions – to muscular failure. It is important to establish the right exercises and supportive equipment. The simplest answer is to join a gym with a good personal induction program and modern equipment. Later you may like to take your learning to other options that might work for you:

- Floor exercises including sit-ups, push ups
- Vigorous gardening – digging, chopping
- Yoga – Iyengar or Hatha- style



- Sprint and hill work
- Rock climbing (and tree climbing)
- Home weights (barbells or gym station)

For those who will not go to a gym and suffer time pressure I suggest that you purchase a set of barbells. On purchase, make sure that after 8 repetitions of a standard biceps curl you cannot lift it again. Each morning set yourself a challenge to work up to 12 repetitions on no more than three different lifts. These can include biceps, bench press and squats. In addition you can add a set of press-ups, pull ups and abdominal curls.

Always take a recovery day after strength work.

### **Posture, Balance & Co-ordination**

For this final component of your exercise program it is harder to supply strong evidence. Most of us in the field expect it to follow as it has for aerobic and strength training. This postural component is perhaps the most difficult to master as the techniques are challenging and take some time to understand and master.

The purpose of this module is to enhance the safety, efficiency and enjoyment of your exercise. In elite sport this element is essential. Those who do not have the posture, balance and co-ordination to support their activity suffer injury, pain and competitive failure.

The trick is to find the right mix to support your body through your activities and a long, active life. Good assessment and advice can be sought from trained physiotherapists, sports physicians, personal trainers, yoga and Pilates

instructors.

The elements of postural integrity include:

1. A daily stretching habit following standard sports or rehab stretches
2. Attention to sitting posture
3. Balanced standing posture
4. Good abdominal and gluteal tone
5. Daily balance on one foot for 30 sec
6. Body weight exercises

The difficulty of postural integrity is that it is mostly an unconscious function. We are seldom aware of how we sit, stand, run or play our sports. It is really important to have a coach help you develop a conscious awareness of your body. Once you have developed this awareness it needs to be maintained and fine-tuned on an ongoing basis.

In the next newsletter we will look at some of the risks and benefits of different recreational and adventure sports from a physical fitness perspective.

### **Hot off the Press: 4 habits = 14 yrs**

A British Study of 20,200 people showed that those who did not smoke, exercised daily, drank moderately and wolfed down vegetables and fruit lived on average 14 years longer.

View online in *Public Library of Science Medicine*

### **About Us**

Based in Australia, New Zealand and Canada, The Resilience Institute works with senior executives and the entire employee base to build organisational and personal resilience. The Resilience Institute uses an evidence-based approach to introduce the personal disciplines of sustainable high performance within a meaningful life. The Resilience Institute achieves sustainable and measurable improvements using assessment instruments, consulting reviews, workshop interventions and personal coaching.

For further information...

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## Upcoming Resilience Programs

### Practical Resilience Program – 2 Day Public Program Sydney

We are pleased to launch our public Resilience program for the first time in Sydney.

This is a unique opportunity to explore an integrated approach to resilience and leadership with participants from other organizations. This 2 day program presents a holistic model underpinned by building personal resilience to create peak performance and facilitate reaching out to your full potential.

The program aims to help you:

- Develop emotional intelligence
- Master stress and peak performance states
- Build physical vitality and immune system through sleep optimization, nutrition and exercise
- Develop cognitive discipline and have more focused, realistic and optimistic thinking
- Reframe events and challenge/dispute beliefs
- Build authentic happiness
- Identify values and passions and design an Integral Practice
- Develop real-time practices for sustaining resilience and performance

### Health & Resilience Assessment

Participants will have the opportunity to use our Internet-based HealthCheck tool to assess their stress, health, lifestyle, nutrition, fatigue and readiness for change prior to attending the program.

### Program Dates

Sydney : 23-24 July 2008

Melbourne : TBA

### For More Information...

- Visit our website [www.resilienceinstitute.com.au](http://www.resilienceinstitute.com.au) and download a brochure and registration form
- Contact Stuart Taylor in Melbourne on +613 95092881
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