

The Philosophy of Strength

By Guy Jones Dip Pt. Nlc1

In this day and age one could be forgiven for believing that raw unadulterated strength is something of an anachronism. Only those who work in construction or down on the farm etc need brute strength. The rest of us can safely sit at our computer terminals or cash tills tapping away at the keys. Some may pay lip service to notion of becoming stronger by visiting our local 'health club' and pump some iron, or in most cases sit down take the load off while pushing or pulling on a fixed lever arm exercise machine. Building up the sarcoplasm within our muscles, the fat between our ears, and given enough time and practice, possible joint instability, But my lord 'how boring'. The rest of the general population seem to just sit in front of the T.V. and swell up eating crap that the marketeers try to pass off as food. So slowly, ever so slowly we edge towards a time of critical mass when a large proportion of the populations of the free west will be too fat to clear their asses off of the sofa, let alone fight the threat of global terrorism.

When I think of my paternal Grandfather I am instantly reminded of a small, wiry man who drank like a fish, smoked like a chimney, and could dig a 6' long by 4' wide by 6' deep grave inside of 2 hours on his own. He learnt his trade in the killing fields of the western front 1914 and in the mountains of Greece and Bulgaria 1915-1918. He ate frugally and always saved his weight watchers points for his beer in the evening. When at work though he was a machine that just kept going until the job was done. As an ex-Infantry man of 17 years service myself I have had occasion to dig a trench or two. So I know what I am talking about, he was strong, Real world strong. I believe that it was this strength that contributed to his longevity (93 years) and the nine children he sired, all of whom are fat and diabetic, except for those who have already passed on.

In times past strength was the main determinant of who lived free and got to eat, and who got to die young after a short life of being brutalised by capricious circumstance. Almost as important is that the female of the species, for that matter any species, prefers the larger stronger candidate to the weedy specimen. (I am sorry if my politically incorrect verbiage upsets the pencil necked lawyer types but it's the way mother nature planned it, oh yeah please don't sue me), and if the dude in question also happens to be of above intelligence (think Conan) then the chicks will be fighting each other to get a piece. And so the gene pool is strengthened and the next generation is assured of a head start in the race of life.

The trouble is the world we inhabit today is far removed from the one even my grandfather lived in. That is only three generations that have past, imagine how screwed up this world could be in three more? Going beyond the obvious elements of Maslow's hierarchy of needs such as sex and survival, we have to be aware that the human machine is designed to move slow, fast, faster, lift, carry, bend, throw, squat, lunge, pull and push. If you do not engage in these basic movement patterns on a daily basis then you might as well e:mail your body that you can't be bothered with the hassle of being alive. Because that is in effect what you are doing. You then start to feel ill and then take a pill to make the icky-ness go away. That was the day you began to die, it might take as long as thirty years to complete the task but the end result is that the potentially best, most productive years of your life may be spent in the doctors waiting room desperately clinging to a life that is unfulfilled and devoid of god given vitality. As a sports therapist and strength coach in the U.K. I see this situation every day in my practice. People who have studiously avoided effort for years are now coming to the realisation that they may become extinct if they don't start to reverse the trend. This is stage one, the realisation that they are fat and unhealthy and heading for a fall. Stage two usually comes in during the initial consultation when I enquire what their motivation is. Somewhere between the 'I want to lose weight and the live longer comes the I also want a six pack and I read an article in some piece of crap magazine that I picked up at the end of the donut aisle that said ...blah.....blah...blah. (It never fails irritate me how the arse end of the journalistic world holds the reins when it comes to informing the more gullible members of the public on matters of health and looking great naked). Stage three can

go either way, after a massive sigh of resignation from me and the acute sadness of a small child who has had its balloon burst by a horrid man (me)!!! They either come a couple of times and then fade, or the ones who make me love this job dig deep, suck it up and achieve their goals. They are in their own little way heroes and inspire me to push harder in my own training. As far as looking great naked goes it should always be as a consequence of being stronger and not the other way round, because the later never quite delivers in my opinion. When ever I have tried to cut up for the beach, or when my body fat percentage was low after coming off of manoeuvres or operational tours I always felt weaker. Since I have eschewed the rigours of bodybuilding and have since focussed on strength and conditioning my body fat percentage has never been above 13 percent and I am lean and strong and getting stronger every day. This is pretty cool when I consider that I am approaching the big four oh, but am stronger and healthier than when I was in my twenties

In conclusion, if you read magazines you pick up in supermarkets, or bodybuilding magazines. Which all have vested interest in liberating you from your hard earned money. Then stop! Go out and pick up a copy of super squats by Randall Strossen PhD or one of the works of old time strongmen such as 'How to live' by George Hackenschmidt , then read it , apply the principles to your own body. Then you too can become stronger, fitter and a better person to boot. Then log onto www.dieselcrew.com which is in my opinion the best web site out there for strength related information.

As an ex-British soldier, I have had occasions where air conditioned training facilities have been a pipe dream. For example when I was in Kosovo in 1999 our 300 metre running track was a 3 foot wide path circumnavigating a Serbian mine field.

We had to make our own equipment, and 'Improvise, adapt and overcome' became our motto. This is why I love the Diesel crew website, because it shows you that you don't need a 1000 buck gym membership to get a beast of a workout, and that you can do it with stuff that you can purchase with minimal investment of time and money.

For Advanced programme design and nutritional advice emphasising Metabolic Typing contact.

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