Easy Strength

Daniel John
Think Like a Freak

Knowing what to measure simplifies life.
(Strength Coach: Load?)

Conventional wisdom is usually wrong.
(“Arm Day” “Cardio”)

Fear of the obvious
(To get stronger, lift weights)
The Barbell Model

“Safe and Sound AND Wildly Insane...nothing in the middle.”

Fundamental Human Movements and Breakfalling

Sports: Principles and Outliers
Is there an “easy” way to get strong?

• Lift Heavy.
• Do the Fundamental Human Movements
• Keep your reps and sets low.
• Stop your sets and your workout before you get fatigued.
• Don’t even struggle.
• Basically, never miss a rep; keep plenty in the tank and keep coming back.
# Easy Strength

## Pros
- Deep Roots in Lifting History
- Positive (and Shocked) Feedback from Users
- Excellent for non-PED Using Athletes
- Great for QII Athletes, Fat Loss Clients and Everybody Else(s)  
  (Stop letting football wag the tail of the Strength Coach’s job)
- Time Friendly for Busy People

## Cons
- Arnold didn’t do this.
- Since the advent of anabolics, you don’t see this kind of thing in popular fitness writing.
- QII athletes still need armor building and lots of other qualities from the weightroom.
- Since it doesn’t take very long, athletes discount it.
- The big one: It is tough for the modern athlete to “think on their own” and logically pick loads that “feel right” today.
How do we know *IT* works? It does!
South Park’s Underpants Gnomes
The Two Tests I Use to “Prove” Things

Farmers Walk for Distance
(100 yards)
(Use a Trap Bar)
• Under 135: 135 pounds
• 135-185: 185 pounds
• 185-205: 205 pounds
• Over 205: 225 pounds
• Male or Female

Standing Long Jump

• The SLJ and Farmers Walk assess the program.
• SLJ up...universally good.
• Farmer Walk up...
  universally good.
• Other variations (down!) need discussion. It’s not “bad,” to pack on 30 pounds of muscle and not improve your SLJ, for example.
Epistemology

• The Study of Knowledge

• We “know” that lifting weights makes us stronger.

• How?

• Don’t know!

Authority, Deductive Logic and Phenomenology
Authority, Deductive Logic and Phenomenology

What do the BEST coaches do?
What do the BEST athletes do?
(Ask! Tom Fahey and Dave Davis’s method)
What works for you in your situation?

This last one is big...nothing worse than going to a place with a 10 million dollar budget and you have a $100 budget!
Science is The Fourth Method

DeLorme (Watkins) and Janda

Tragically, it was Polio that connects them all

• Sets and Reps
• “The DeLorme Protocol”
• Three sets of Ten (Eight)
• RM
• 1 x 10 @ 50% 10RM
• 1 x 10(5) @ 70(75)% 10 RM
• 1 x 10 @ 100% 10 RM

"Restoration of muscle power by heavy-resistance exercises” (1945)

Tonic/ Phasics of Janda

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phasic – get weaker</th>
<th>Tonic – shrink</th>
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<td>Hamstrings</td>
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<td>Abs</td>
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The Physiology of Strength
Theodor Hettinger, MD:

- The calves can increase in strength 6% a week; the glutes 4%; the triceps 3%; and the biceps 2%.
- Men are stronger than women. In tests, some parts of women are 55% as strong as men (forearm extensors), but in the hip area it rises to 80%.
- Strength peaks in the late twenties and maintains for a long time, and then gradually declines, especially in untrained populations.
- It's easier to train in the summer, and Vitamin D might help that, too
- Injecting Testosterone seemed to make everybody train better for a long time.
All this science! So, let a Strength Coach sum this:

Increase your strength. Absolute Strength is the glass and “everything” else is the liquid..

Get the biggest glass you can’t get and you can fill it with more “stuff.”
Key Principles of Strength Training...for Strength Coaches

1. Strength Training for Lean Body Mass and Joint Mobility Work trumps everything else.

2. Mastery of Fundamental Human Movements is Fundamental.
Janda and the Fundamental Movements

• Push: Deltoids and Triceps
• Pull: Rhomboids
• Hinge: Glutes
• Squat: Glutes
• Loaded Carries: Glutes
• Sixth Movement: Abs, Obliques, Glutes...all the Extensors
Now, I can expand on this...

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<td>Rack Walk</td>
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The World’s Fastest “Personalized” Program...

• Whatever they are not doing...Do!
• **Rocky**: I dunno, she's got gaps, I got gaps, together we fill gaps.

• Push
• Pull
• Hinge
• Squat
• Loaded Carry
• Sixth Movement: Groundwork, Brachiating
Goblet Squat and Farmers Walk

“These don’t hurt!”

“What muscle does this build?”
All of them...
Is there an “easy” way to get strong?

• Lift Heavy.
• Do the Fundamental Human Movements.
• Keep your reps and sets low.
• Stop your sets and your workout before you get fatigued.
• Don’t even struggle.
• Basically, never miss a rep; keep plenty in the tank and keep coming back.
The Threads of Easy Strength

George Hackenschmidt and Percy Cerutty
Letters first, then meeting a few times.
Cerutty’s advice to RUNNERS:
Run Hills
Lift Weights
A Marathoner should BP **bodyweight** and DL **Double Bodyweight!!!**
Percy’s Template

1. Deadlift.

2. Press.. Cerutty liked the bench press.

3. An explosive full body move. He liked the heavy dumbbell swing.

4. Pull. Cerutty liked pull-ups and cheat curls. Cheat curls are like a power clean with a curl grip (power curls) or that bouncing heavy bar curl you see every many trainees do.

5. Ab Exercise. If deadlifts make you go one way, the ab exercise should strengthen you in the other.

After going heavy on these lifts with two to five sets of two to five (save for swings and abs where the reps go fairly high), you hang from a pull-up bar and stretch for a few minutes.
Pavel’s Advice to Me in 2003

“For the next 40 workouts, pick five lifts. Do them every workout. Never miss a rep, in fact, never even get close to struggling. Go as light as you need to go and don’t go over 10 reps in a workout for any of the movements. It’s going to seem easy. When the weights feel light, add more weight.”
Total **Time** Allotted for Athletes

Discus Throwers:
Throw!

Swimmers:
Swim!

*You get the point...*

(Josh Hillis on Fat Loss:
80% of TIME on Food Prep/Shopping!)
The Quadrants

Understand that the IMPACT of the Strength Coach has to be clear. “Looks like Tarzan, Plays like Jane”
The ROLE of the Strength Coach: Fuzzy or Clear?

Make people stronger?

“Look with favor upon a bold beginning.”
Virgil

• Gray Cook and Mike Boyle: “increase the number of quality workouts/performances.”
We Have Been Crushing S and C
Hammer and Stone/Bow and Arrow
Hammer and Bow Work

**Hammer**
- Basic skipping, bounding, and sprinting.
- Hill Sprints and Stadium Steps
- Rack Deadlifts
- The Olympic Lifts
- Medicine Ball Work (serious stuff, not what you usually see)

**Bow**
- Mastery of the Glute Bridge or Pelvic Tilt...
- whatever you call it.
- Loading the Hip Thrust
- Doing the whole Deadlift family
- The Kettlebell Swing
- Olympic Lifts
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Stone and Arrow 101: Loaded Carries

- Loaded Carries
- “Integrity Under Load.”
- These are natural and easy to learn
Three As of Stone Training

STONE

- Armor Building
- Anaconda Training
- Arrow
Only Quadrant II needs “all of this.”
Hammer and Stone
Bow and Arrow

Hammer
Hill Sprints
Stadium Steps
Sleds/Prowlers
Double KB Jerks
Rack DLs

Stone
Anaconda
Bear Hug Carries
Goblet Squats with Curls
Goblet Squats with Heartbeats

Armor Building
Double KB Cleans
Double KB Front Squats
Tumbling

Bow
Olympic Lifts
Swings

Arrow
Planks
Deadlifts

Bow and Arrow:
Swings!
Olympic Lifts
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Arrow Training is High Tension/High Arousal

Diagram: Yin-Yang-like symbol with arrows indicating high and low physical tension, arousal, and heart rate. Heart rate is labeled as 'barely beating' to 'rapid pulse'.
Teach RELAXing in Training.
The Strength Coach can support Elite Performance...

Appropriate Physical Tension/Relaxation: Technique

Appropriate Heart Rate:: Focus

Appropriate Arousal: Recovery!!! (Huh?)
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Jim Gaffigan on Programming

“Mexican food’s great, but it’s essentially all the same ingredients, so there’s a way you’d have to deal with all these stupid questions. “What is nachos?” “...Nachos? It’s tortilla with cheese, meat, and vegetables.” “Oh, well then what is a burrito?” “Tortilla with cheese, meat, and vegetables.” “Well then what is a tostada?” “Tortilla with cheese, meat, and vegetables.” “Well then what i-” “Look, it’s all the same s--! Why don’t you say a Spanish word and I’ll bring you something.”
Rules of Easy Strength/40 Day

1. For the next 40 workouts, do the exact same training program every day.

(For the record, I find that most of my goals are reached by day 20 or 22, so you can also opt for a shorter period.)
“Just” Five Exercises

2. Pick five exercises.
I suggest you do a squatting movement like the goblet squat or overhead squat as part of the warm-up, as you don't want to ignore the movement, but it might be fun to focus on other aspects of your body.

Squatting in the 40 Day really makes it much harder.
“Increase your Hinge, Maintain your Squat”
3. Focus on THESE Five

• A large posterior chain movement (the Deadlift and Variations)
• Upper body push (bench press, incline bench press, military press)
• Upper body pull (pull-ups, rows, or, if you've ignored them like me, heavy bicep curls)
• A simple full-body explosive move (kettlebell swings or snatches)
• And something for what I call an "anterior chain" move (an abdominal exercise). I think the ab wheel is king here, but you can also do some movements best suited for lower reps. (Hanging Leg Raises/L-Sits)
4. Reps are minimal

Only do two sets of five reps per workout for the deadlift and push/pull exercises.

One set of 20 to 50 for the explosive move.

Do a solid single set of five reps for the abs.
Two Sets of Five
Five Sets of Two
Three Sets of Three
Six Singles
Five-Three-Two
75-250 Total Reps on Swings

OTHER REP SCHEMES THAT HAVE WORKED
The HARDEST Two for Great Ones

5. Never plan or worry about the weight or the load. Always stay within yourself and go heavy "naturally."

6. Don't eat chalk, scream, or pound on walls. Simply do each lift without any emotion or excitement and strive for perfect technique.
The Strength Coach can support Elite Performance...

- Appropriate Heart Rate
- Appropriate Physical Tension/Relaxation
- Appropriate Arousal
Easy Strength

• Supports the need for Strength
• Can be used in conjunction with appropriate HR, Tension and Arousal
• Takes little recovery
• Gets people strong.
Links for More Insights

https://megametaman.wordpress.com/2013/02/10/even-easier-strength-days-3-12/
http://www.strengthessentials.net/easystrength.html

The “Next” Program, Even Easier Strength
http://danjohn.net/2011/06/even-easier-strength-perform-better-notes/