

In Focus

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SUPER SLOW-THE REAL DEAL

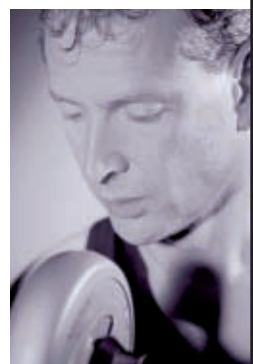
Super Slow has received its share of media attention in recent months, including Newsweek, the New York Post, The Today Show and WYFF News 4, exposing millions of people to this valuable, unique philosophy of exercise that Focused Fitness introduced over three years ago. The fact that Super Slow goes against mainstream teachings (people are becoming stronger, better conditioned, more flexible, and leaner by exercising less than an hour a week) makes it "sound to good to be true". Super Slow is not a fad, or miracle workout regime. It is simply the logical and rational application of some basic principles of physics, stress physiology, and exercise science. There are five basic reasons why Super Slow is our protocol of choice:

Effectiveness: Progressive resistance training is the most effective method to build strength, increase lean body mass and increase resting metabolic rate. Resistance training requires that muscles work against a resistance to be stimulated. In conventional methods of training, excessive movement speeds cause momentum to limit muscle resistance. Super Slow reduces the effects of momentum, keeping muscles continuously and meaningfully under tension throughout the entire range of motion, and therefore most effectively stimulated. Super Slow protocol also stimulates improvements in cardio respiratory efficiency, flexibility, and bone density.

Efficiency: The purpose of exercise is to stimulate. For optimal stimulation, intensity must be high and therefore work must be brief. Every second of Super Slow is done with a purpose in mind. Stimulated muscles need adequate time to recover, adapt, and super compensate so that improvements can be made. Higher intensity requires that most people train no more than twice per week, ensuring optimal gains are realized. The fact that cardiorespiratory conditioning and flexibility are addressed also makes the workout more efficient.

Safety: Exercise should help prevent injury, not cause it. Yet many people are injured during exercise each year. One major cause is excessive force. It is simply a matter of physics that when a force is placed upon a material that is greater than its structural integrity, the material will eventually break. With exercise, this can be muscle, tendon, ligament or even bone. What is most misunderstood about this especially concerning resistance training is that it is not the weight that causes high force, moreover how that weight is moved. Physics states that $F=MA$. So when a lighter weight is jerked or lifted explosively the force can be very high. This is evident in many injuries occurring as a result of simple weight bearing activities (running, aerobics classes). By lifting in a slow, controlled manner as prescribed by Super Slow, dangerous forces are kept under control and that, combined with proper lifting mechanics, greatly reduces the chance of injury.

Mind/Muscle Link: Super Slow, primarily involving weight lifting (either machines or free weights,) focuses less on moving weights and more on working muscles slowly. What the muscles are doing is more important than what the weights are doing. Focusing on fatiguing the muscle allows greater development of this kinesthetic awareness. Establishing greater mind/muscle link leads to more effective and safe exercise.



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Bullseye By Billy



This time of year can be challenging. With 2001 well under way, and the newness of this year's goals worn off, many people have hit the first plateau of exercise progression. With that in mind, I encourage you to consider the principle of Kaizen, a Japanese word meaning constant improvement. This principle refers to small, incremental change on a consistent basis, not by leaps and bounds. It's a principle to live by and, when applied to exercise, can lead to long-term success. In our society of immediate gratification, one of the biggest challenges people face when exercising is expecting results too fast. Results from an exercise program can be tremendous, but not overnight. The key? Focus on improving a little every day. What I have found in my experience is those who are consistent and focused in their effort do the best long term. This is evident in the area of weight loss. I'm sure most of us know someone who has lost weight at a fast rate on a rigid diet, only to put the weight plus more back on a few months later. However, those willing to take a long-term approach, including lifestyle, diet and exercise changes may lose weight at a slower rate, but tend to make the loss permanent. Losing a pound each week, increasing chest press resistance by a pound each week, or increasing muscle by a pound every couple of months may not seem like huge improvements, but when made on a consistent basis, they allow almost anyone to reach their goals. So stick with it! Persevere, and apply a focused, directed mind-set toward your goals and together we'll achieve them.

Billy Fletcher



Training Tips

Focusing on your workout

Proper breathing throughout a workout is important, especially during resistance exercises. Conventional resistance exercise typically teaches breathing in as the weight is lowered, and breathing out as the weight is lifted. Due to

the duration of the ten-second positive and negative phase during Super Slow, this type of breathing is not recommended. During Super Slow, breathe or ventilate as freely as possible. The face should be relaxed, with the jaw feeling as if it is hanging from your face. There should be no grimacing, groaning, screaming, or other guttural sounds. Breathing should almost sound like a Lamaze class. This method of breathing is important for two primary reasons: first, and most important, for safety.

The tendency during exertion is to hold your breath. Never hold your breath while exercising. A Val Salva maneuver (exertion of pressure against a closed glottis), simply put, blocks venous return, raising blood pressure to dangerously high levels. Elevated blood pressure during exercise is normal, but not to the levels elicited by holding one's breath. The second reason for proper breathing is to help focus on target muscles. Holding breath and grimacing takes focus away from target muscles, often resulting in an unloading of the muscles as well. Incorrect breathing also results in energy being spent unproductively. By remaining focused and breathing properly, all energy is spent productively working the muscles.

A great example of this is a world-class sprinter. When we see races on television, nearly every muscle in a sprinter's body tenses, yet the face remains relaxed. This takes practice, but the resulting safety and productivity makes it worth the effort.

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Standardization: Measure effectiveness of exercise by results. Super Slow provides a specific, standardized way to perform exercises, making the tracking of improvements easier.

This application requires thinking "outside the box" so we are not limited by dogma and beliefs about what's needed to reach optimal levels of health and fitness. Focused Fitness clients hear this many times during workouts to help increase focus. For people reading this newsletter who are not currently exercising, we invite you to learn a different perspective on exercise. For those who are not clients and are exercising differently, consider these ideas, honestly evaluate your current progress, and think about what you could do with the extra few hours per week you currently spend exercising.

Client Testimonial

Name: Martha Long

Super Slow Success Story



For over 20 years, Martha Long was an avid runner. Seven days a week, at least five miles a day. Martha's struggle, however, stretched far beyond the miles of highway. The struggle, she recognizes, was from within.

"I never could get comfortable with the way I perceived my body," says Long, now 41. For years, she struggled with Anorexia and ulcerative colitis. In March 1999, Martha met Billy Fletcher, and was so intrigued by Super Slow that she went to Florida, home of Ken Hutchins, founder of the Super Slow workout. "I wanted to see how the machines were developed, and how much was expected of someone like Billy with a 'Master' designation. I was amazed."

The transformation didn't occur overnight. Today, however, thanks to Focused Fitness and a commitment to long-term positive change, Martha is 5'9, 135 pounds, and, "I can bench press more than some men!" For someone who, for over 2 decades, believed in long, frequent workouts as the key to achieving a healthy lifestyle, the adjustment to the principals and dramatically different foundational beliefs of Super Slow were tough to adjust to, according to Martha. "You can't imagine how long three minutes can feel like when you're weightlifting at a Super Slow Pace. I wish every woman who reads this testimony would give herself the gift of trying Super Slow at Focused Fitness." According to Martha, in addition to increasing bone density as a defense against osteoporosis, "It defines feminine curves, provides strength for self-defense, enhances poise, and puts the fun back in working out." Today, Martha admits she also lives more like, in her words, "a normal person. I only work out twice a week, and I now eat three meals a day, with two snacks. It's just incredible what a victory it is for me, what Super Slow has done for me."

Congratulations Martha. Thanks for trusting us, and allowing us to play a part in your life and your success, and for being willing to share your story to help others!

A. Answer to last issue's trivia:

35 miles per week is the number of miles an average person weighing 160 pounds would have to walk in one week, assuming no change in diet, to burn off one pound of body fat!

Our Winner: Blaise Bettendorf. Congratulations, Blaise! Stop by and pick up your Focused Fitness Prize Pack!

Q. "How many pounds of muscle would a person have to add to increase their metabolism by 3500 calories per week (the amount needed to burn one pound of fat)?"

The winner this month will receive a Focused Fitness Prize Package, which includes 20 Greenville Braves tickets to opening night at the ballpark (April 13, 2001) and a Focused Fitness t-shirt.

Submit your answers in writing, including your name, address, phone number and email address (if applicable) to Focused Fitness at the contact information listed in this newsletter. For more information, contact Focused Fitness at 675-6183. In the event of multiple correct answers, we will conduct a random drawing to determine the winner.

Look for the correct answer and winner's name in the next issue of "In Focus."

Trivia Question



Referral Program

Growing With You!

Have you heard about the new Focused Fitness Referral Program? We appreciate it when our clients, happy with the results they are achieving through us, refer friends and family to Focused Fitness. In fact, we appreciate it so much we want to reward you!

Every month, if we successfully sign up a client referred by you, we'll give you a \$50 discount on membership dues, in the month following your referral's contract. It's as easy as that! As a special bonus, between now and April 8th, we'll also include a Focused Fitness Family Pack, including 6 prime box seats for you to attend Opening Night at the Greenville Braves on Friday night, April 13th, including a spectacular post-game fireworks extravaganza, sponsored by Focused Fitness.

So, if you know someone who's interested in improving their health and quality of life, refer them to Focused Fitness and earn \$50! For more details, see a member of the Focused Fitness team, or call 675-6183.



"For your convenience.."

Focused Fitness now has Thermoplex shakes, customized for each client, to give the proper high-quality protein/low glycemic carbohydrate balance needed to stay in the zone. We also have PR bars for a convenient snack, and muscle matrix bars for a protein supplement to balance out a meal. While you're in, don't forget to check out the new Focused Fitness merchandise, including squeeze bottles, shirts and more!



"Have a ball, Have a blast!"

Focused Fitness is proud to be the title sponsor for the Greenville Braves on Opening Night, Friday, April 13th. Gametime is at 7:15pm, gates open at 6:00 pm. Get there early, and receive a complimentary Focused Fitness/Greenville Braves magnetic schedule. After the game, Focused Fitness will also sponsor a fireworks extravaganza, in conjunction with Whistle 100 WSSL and the Greenville Journal. Interested in free tickets? Simply refer a new member to us between now and April 12th, and receive 20 tickets for you, your family and your friends. See you at the ballpark!



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