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- 1 - Draper here... Overcoming Discouragement and Disappointment

Good morning, bombers. Nice to see your cheery faces. This week's subjects of study are discouragement and disappointment. No, I'm not kidding and you can't leave, the doors are bolted from the outside.

Initial research reveals the most popular fixes for discouragement and disappointment, or the Double Ds, as they're known in musclebuilding circles, are consuming pizza and drinking beer, followed by bowls of ice cream while watching television. Bags of chips are usually within reach. It is noted also that at this point sufferers of the Double Ds run out of original ideas.

Discouragement and disappointment in large or small doses affect everyone in every area of life. These negative conditions, if they are severe and recurrent, can lead to depression. And depression can be more than a temporary misery; it can become a chronic and crushing disease. We are then confronting the awesome Triple Ds, discouragement, disappointment and depression.

Gratefully, we are dealing with states of mind and facts of life over which we have control, more control than we think. And where we have control we must apply it, or we have no control at all. We have submission... the Ds control us.

As weightlifters and musclebuilders, our hefty bouts with the iron diminish or eliminate many of the causes of these debilitating emotional assaults. We set uplifting goals and, engaging our talents, desires and potentials, we strive to achieve them. We fight, we fall, we pick ourselves up, wipe ourselves off and press on, developing always as we go. It works every time, all the time.

Yet discouragement and disappointment are unavoidable, almost necessary. The fact that we are alive and self-directed makes us vulnerable to discouragement, and the fundamental need to put one foot before the other leaves us wide open to disappointment. Any of our crushed hopes, ordinary mistakes, everyday accidents, accumulated malfunctions, misunderstandings and tribulations can trigger the crude assailants.

"It's always somethin'," said Gilda Radner with a crooked smile and natural resignation to her universal, sympathetic and howling audience. If it's not one thing, it's another.

As always, bombers, we are specifically talking about situations relating to musclebuilding, fat loss, weight training and getting in shape. A review of our efforts to improve in these areas indicates many of us experience more disappointment and discouragement than fulfillment and success. This disproportion is an illusion, unfair, insufferable and deadly to our mission. It can lead to quitting and can cause depression. And failure in one area of life distresses the entire life.

I call the success-and-failure balance an illusion 'cuz weightlifters and musclebuilders are seeking regular, measurable development. Hopes are naturally high and the creepy, greedy pushers of so-called cutting edge supplements guarantee quick, almost sudden, growth. When struck with reality, the lifter encounters the Ds. He falters, seeing only his lack of swift progress, unaware of or unimpressed by the slow, hard-earned benefits of his efforts. Here's where the strong are separated from the not-so-strong, the weak. Press on or pull back.

I suspect we're dealing with two natures of the twin beasts: there's disappointment and discouragement we bring upon ourselves, and there's the discouragement and disappointment that broadsides us while we're innocently occupying our space. Both are destructive, the former requiring preemptive action in the form of consideration, caution and discipline, and the latter, strength and finesse from the heart and soul as the conditions envelop us.

Allow me to offer a couple of general examples, a field upon which we might study the wild beasts in their habitat and render them harmless... or, at least, less harmful.

Foremost, the disappointment and discouragement that result from the idiotic things we do by our own hands, the things we have immediate control over. Your imagination, please.

1) The periodic -- more than occasional -- treat of sitting on the couch watching television, eating pizza and drinking beer (or something as common and hideous) engenders the Double Ds or contributes to their increase. Variations include ice cream and cookies while reading Flex, cola and fries during a rerun of Pumping Iron, chocolates and cell phones, and chips, dip and video games.

I don't care if it's leap year, NASCAR tryouts, Thursday night with the girls at the Bowlorama or you're just hungry and pooped. Random gorging is trouble. This is a large, waist-sized problem and it's gonna cost you big time... later, tomorrow, next week and the next. The dominoes have begun to fall. Discouragement and disappointment hover like buzzards. You're digging yourself a pit.

You have just set yourself up for hardcore D&D. Are you willing to pay that price? Think about it. There is no forgiveness. At some point you will feel weak, fat and stupid. There will be times alone when you pinch the skin around your belly... oh, crap... notice how tight your underwear fits... rats... and say in disgust, "Why do I... burp... do it?" This is to say nothing about the bloat and indigestion you'll experience, sure signs of disregard for your health and well-being. Guilt is a mean companion, unrelenting, almost sadistic.

Disdain and rationales accompany this self-cast disappointment. I'll do what I want, when and where I want, you'll say, I'm free. No, no, no. That lie is as old as the hills; you won't accept it and you'll continue to berate yourself.

You want to get in shape, you want to build muscle and you want to be strong. Noble! Admirable! Swell! But you lack discipline and are unable to deny yourself for a day. You don't have a chance, do you? Or it's going to take forever, with a mountain of cliff-hanging discouragements and rocky disappointments along the way. But you don't understand, some of you say, it's my mother, my father, the kids, the stress, the deeply engrained habits, the culture, the career... yeah, yeah, yeah. A society of tolerance will give you a hundred excuses why you're in the pickle you're in. Excuses have no place in the life of a bomber. Fact is, you ate pizza and drank beer while you sat on the couch and watched the tube, period. You did it before and you'll do it again and that's the way it works. Pardon me, Muscles, you have vanilla fudge dripping from your chin.

The solution I offer is composed of 10 two-word commands, uncomplicated, unequivocal, indisputable and darn near sacred: Stop it. Right now. Don't submit. Train hard. Eat right. Be strong. Know thyself. Love thyself. Be happy. Be wise.

Take heart, seekers of strength and health. We'll break these commands, experience them, and break them again before we can know them and keep them... kinda like the other commands we know and live by according to our own authority and the authority of powers mightier than us. Keep them handy; line them up on the shelf with your supplements and Bomber Blend. Use regularly and generously, but not carelessly. May be taken separately or together, with food or on an empty stomach. Savor them for maximum absorption.

Some folks have real problems. To them I offer my heartfelt understanding and best wishes and prayers.

So much for messing up the menu. The second loss of control, equally devastating, deals with the iron, or, rather, not dealing with it.

2) I'm skipping a workout because I feel icky; I'm snoozy; there's a chill in the air and the shadows are long; I have a knot in my shoelace; it's Vice President's Day. Very creative! The list of excuses is endless and embarrassing.

There are times when we are absolutely compelled to miss a workout -- worldwide floods, plagues, earthquakes, the fiery end of civilization as we know it, we're out of... gasp... Bomber Blend -- and times when we don't need an excuse, rhyme or reason. We are liberated souls, after all. Whatever... I'm talking about those times that indicate the development of chronic misbehavior, neglect and irresponsibility. Several discarded workouts a year are permissible, three or four a month and we're in trouble.

An authentic weightlifter does not skip workouts. A true seeker of muscle and might cannot omit a training session, a musclehead wouldn't know how and a bodybuilder would rather die. Unmotivated imposters miss workouts. Fraud, fakes and puffy pretenders miss workouts. Hapless wimps and doodlers let their workouts slide, sure, but not men and women of steel. To decline his training, the lifter foregoes his purpose, joy and respect. Think, for a moment, of life without oxygen, water, light and love. Now you understand.

Next time the urge to skip a workout arises, will you regard it as an opportunity to exhibit strength or a moment before a catastrophe? Will you submit to the moment or fight it with all your heart, mind and strength? If you choose the former, you lose. The catastrophe and you become one.

A workout abandoned is an opportunity lost. It weakens the structure. Worse yet, it indicates a structure already weak.

Go to the gym, train hard and grow. Every bad gym-day becomes a great gym-day, once you pass the front door. The cold ugly weights melt in your hands and become as a sculpture to the lover of art. Soreness dissipates like the morning dew, and the strength of the warm sun fills your veins. What was lifeless or hopeless is revived by the renewed power of inspired limbs. The gym enables, enlightens and excites. The workout creates, restores and fulfills. And you receive, respond and progress.

“Get on with it, Draper.”

I'm almost done, bombers. Some of you are ready to fly; I hear the rumble and feel the vibrations.

The disappointment and discouragement that result from circumstances beyond our control -- natural disaster, illness, accident and injury -- must be met straight on and handled with courage. These are the dreadful incidents of which, it seems, half of life is comprised. Where there is happiness, so is there misery. We know pleasure to the degree we know pain. Joy and sorrow are doled out in near-equal proportions.

One thing I know: The backbone and guts needed to lift weights develop as do the muscles, and these collective attributes are essential in countering enemies of all sorts, shapes and sizes.

The disciplined characters who work out, eat right and meet the tests regularly are the ones who survive the thrusts of disappointment and discouragement, and are seldom depressed. You see, like osmosis, the iron and steel has a way of entering the body and lining it with strength and durability. The sets and reps provide resilience and internal energy. And their combined application heightens the spirits. The three Ds -- disappointment, discouragement and depression -- enter the ranks of the bombers, do their dastardly deeds and are exhausted as hot air. We regard them as fuel to propel us.

Beyond personal courage, fortitude and mettle, there's something to be said of western medicine in diminishing depression and its unlikable precursors, disappointment and discouragement.

Encouragement is the antidote to all three. Prayer is priceless -- God's strength.

We have too much to live for to be grounded and weak. Fight for height and might... DD

2 - Laree here, taking over with online news

In the September 2006 issue of Flex Magazine, Julian Schmidt writes:

A DVD That Delivers

Bill Pearl and Dave Draper erected the pillars of Hercules decades ago, and no one, not even petulant progress and the sport's modern supercelebrities, has been able to go beyond. Who could? Pearl and Draper are the liver and lights of bodybuilding. Their physiques have been envied for more than 40 years, but their wisdom, knowledge, character, passion and principles are what impel us to sit raptly at their feet, keep our mouths shut, and listen eagerly for hours to their every revelation.

Pearl/Draper is a joint seminar the two held at Dave Draper's Santa Cruz, California, gym, and it's surely the most compelling and valuable bodybuilding DVD ever. Come, now, what more could you ask? In the midst of a packed house of idolaters, who are literally hanging from the rafters and draped over railings, Pearl and Draper stand bowling-ball shoulder to bowling-ball shoulder, sharing their perspectives on "bodybuilding then and now, revealing truths, expelling myths and offering priceless insights" to all who ask. So rich and profound is the content that, when the 75-minute DVD ends, one feels he's lived a lifetime with these legends. No one, or 20, could have done it better, and the exclamation point to it all comes when revived Ed Corney joins them from the audience.

Included as liner notes is a 32-page booklet of a separate private conversion between Pearl and Draper at Pearl's sprawling penitentiary in Oregon. Priceless, all of it.

<http://www.davedraper.com/go4x.mvc?ID=Pearl-Draper-DVD>

By way of Critical Bench, here's The Power Bench Press by Tom McCullough (famous not only in the competitive powerlifting world, but also as a leader of email weights lists in the early days of the commercial internet). Competitive dreams or none, benchers will profit from Tom's coverage of technique issues, hand, foot and body placement and much more.

<http://www.davedraper.com/go4x.mvc?ID=Power-Bench-Press>

CrossFit is a real favorite around the IronOnline forum. They've built a substantial community of hardcore trainees -- police and tactical op teams, military special ops, martial artists and elite athletes who excel at that which the regular world would find impossible. This link will drop you off at their extensive and impressive exercise video instructions. Work on your form on these basic and advanced exercises will benefit one and all.

<http://www.davedraper.com/go4x.mvc?ID=Crossfit-videos>

Here's a freebie for ya: an online book on stretching and flexibility by Brad Appleton. I expect this will cover every ailment you might buy a flexibility book for; if your back pain allows you to sit patiently reading your computer monitor, you'll save yourself the 25 bucks you would have spent on a stretching book.

<http://www.davedraper.com/go4x.mvc?ID=Flexibility-Book>

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Pearl/Draper seminar DVD:

<http://www.davedraper.com/go4x.mvc?ID=Pearl-Draper-DVD>

IronOnline forum:

<http://www.davedraper.com/go4x.mvc?ID=Forum>

IronOnline health and fitness database:

<http://www.healthandfitnesswiki.com>

Dave's Bomber Blend whey protein powder:

<http://www.davedraper.com/go4x.mvc?ID=Bomber>

Dave's Top Squat:

<http://www.davedraper.com/go4x.mvc?ID=TopSquat>

Dave's thick bar handles:

<http://www.davedraper.com/go4x.mvc?ID=ThickBarHandles>

IronOnline bookstore:

<http://www.davedraper.com/go4x.mvc?ID=Books>

Super Spectrim, Anabol Naturals, NSP, NOW Foods, Ageless Growth, Udo's, Body Ammo:
<http://www.davedraper.com/go4x.mvc?ID=Supplements>

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