

AUGUST 2009

Making a Change

Last month we challenged you to make just one change as relates to your eating. This month, we're going to talk about how our brains and bodies respond to change.

If you regularly read this newsletter, you are likely familiar with the concept of the SAID Principle — the body always gets better at exactly what it does. While we generally talk about this idea in relation to movement and performance, the brain works the same way with regards to everything we do (or don't do).

Habits are easy. Our morning ritual is our morning ritual because we don't have to think about it. We frequent the same stores, take the same routes, buy the same brands, and return to the same restaurants because it's the path of least resistance. This is precisely why habits are so hard to break.

While this may all be common sense to you, what you may not be aware of is that the body actually prefers it that way. We are hard-wired for survival as opposed to performance, which means that we want to conserve energy as much as possible — you simply never know when you need to outrun a cheetah (or, in more modern terms, avoid hitting swerving car next to you because the driver is chatting on their cell phone). And, making any sort of change requires additional energy — the brain literally burns more glucose when we have to do something out of the ordinary.

So, when you decide to "go for broke" and make several changes at the same time, any unplanned events in your life can easily derail the change you want to make. Your body literally runs out of energy to manage all of the changes, and falls back to what it already knows in order to make it through the day. So, while it may be frustrating to make changes gradually, it is a much more realistic approach for guaranteeing success because both emotionally and physically it requires less energy and won't place unrealistic demands on the body. Remember, success breeds success, so it is much better to have many small successes that add up, than to take on TOO much at once, fail and have to start all over at square one.

With that in mind, let's look at a few examples of places where people often struggle to make changes, and some ways to ease in to change.

Get More Sleep

Americans are notoriously sleep-deprived. Accidents

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EVENTS CALENDAR

Be sure to check [our website](#) regularly for updates.

R-Phase

Atlanta, GA
Aug 7-9 & Sept 25-27

Minneapolis, MN
Aug 14-16 & Sept 18-20

Denmark
November 2-7

I-Phase

Denver, CO
October 8-11

San Diego, CA
November 12-15

Minneapolis, MN
November 19-22

S-Phase

Phoenix, AZ
December 3-6

T-Phase

Phoenix, AZ
October 22-25

related to sleep deprivation have been estimated to have an annual economic impact of \$43 to \$56 billion, and recent studies even indicate a link between chronic sleep deprivation and obesity. If you need to sleep more and improve the quality of your sleep:

- Create a nighttime ritual. 30 minutes prior to bedtime, unplug. Get away from the computer, put the phone away.
- Work to standardize your hours of sleep to a consistent amount 7 days a week.
- Finally, shift your schedule in 15-minute intervals to work up to 7-8 hours/night. Move it back just 15 minutes one week, and then 15 minutes the next week. In virtually everyone's schedule, there is 15 minutes that can be given up somewhere.

Eating Behaviors

Make just one change a week. Here are some possibilities:

- Cut out a snack.
- Add one vegetable.
- Change one spice.
- Move just one meal out from in front of the TV.
- Throw out one trigger food.
- If weight loss is your goal, count your calories for one week. The next week, reduce caloric intake by just 100 calories per day. Each week thereafter, continue to reduce your calories by 100 calories per day until you are eating at your appropriate caloric volume to lose weight.

Fitness Training

85-90% of individuals who start a training program quit within the first 90 days, and 85% of that group quits due to injury. Given the large number of adults who claim to be on a training program, that is an awful lot of false starts. So, how do you start a training program you can stick with? As you have probably already guessed, slowly.

- If your problem is you just don't feel like training, then our first recommendation is to choose something that you enjoy. Research shows your rate of success is much higher if you choose something you like, because you are considerably more likely to stick with it. So, this week, pick one thing you like, and commit to it for a minimum of 5 minutes and have fun. Soon, you'll find yourself getting your full training program in.
- If time is a problem, realize you don't have to spend an hour a day in the gym to get or stay in shape. Look for 10, 15, or 30 minute windows in your schedule. It all adds up.
- Lastly, if you are one of those 85% who quit due to injury, a mobility warm-up such as [Neural Warm-Up 1](#) will make you more resilient against future injuries. That, combined with starting the first week at no more than 50% of what you think you are

capable of and remembering the Z-Health principle of never push into pain, will go a long way towards injury-free training.

To summarize, 1) pick something you like to do, not something you feel like you have to do, 3) it doesn't have to be an hour, make it short fast and realize it is effective, and 3) ensure that your body is prepped for success by being prepared for movement.

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Web Site News

If you haven't been out to the web site lately:

Free Shipping on product packages. Our Free Shipping* offer continues on all product packages. Simply add the [Level 1 Package](#) (R-Phase & Neural Warm Up 1), [Level 2 Package](#) (I-Phase & Neural Warm Up 2), [R-Phase/I-Phase Package](#) (R-Phase & I-Phase), or [Level 1/Level 2 Package](#) (R-Phase, Neural Warm Up 1, I-Phase, Neural Warm Up 2) to your cart, and be sure to select Free Shipping during checkout. No coupon required. (* Free Shipping applies to US addresses only. Non-US orders will receive \$15 off of their order at the time of checkout.)

New ways to read and share the [blog](#). We've added an RSS subscription as ways to share the blog via email, Facebook, Twitter, StumbleUpon, or other social media sites.

Trainer Store. Z-Health trainers have always enjoyed a discount on product purchases, and we have just launched a trainer-only store to simplify purchasing and provide exclusive add-on materials available to certification attendees. (If you are a current trainer who has not received your login, let us know.)

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Newsletter Archive

Did you miss an issue of the Monthly Newsletter?

Delivered on the 15th of every month, the newsletter is filled with interviews, articles, reviews, and all of the goodness that is Z-Health Performance Solutions.

Are you receiving our Weekly Training Tips? Delivered to your inbox every Sunday, these brief training nuggets will be sure to enhance all of your activities.

Catch up on all of [our back issues](#) on the Z-Health web site or click on the "Manage your Subscription" link on the bottom of this email to ensure you are getting the latest news.
