



Becoming a Burnout Proof Executive Athlete

Key Takeaways

- 1 Viewing Yourself as an Elite Athlete
- 2 You Need to Oscillate to Perform Optimally
- 3 Learning to Live Like a Lion
- 4 Making Your Work Binary & Eliminating the Grey Zone
- 5 The Difference Between Active & Passive Recovery
- 6 Active Recovery Regulates Your Nervous System
- 7 How Does Active Recovery Work?
- 8 The Grit to Recover

Quote:

“ A mindset is a self-perception or “self-theory” that people hold about themselves. ”

— *Dr. Carol Dweck*

Diagnostic
N/A

Exercise

Charting Your Active Recovery Protocol

See next page for details

Exercise

Charting Your Active Recovery Protocol

Annual	Quarterly	Monthly	Weekly	Daily
Two Weeks	Ten Days	Four Days	One Day	Intra Day

Glossary

The Distinguishing Trait of an Executive Athlete: An executive athlete understands that the time in a day is fixed but the quantity and quality of energy available are variable. Energy is viewed as a lever point for performance.

Linearity: The enemy is what we call linearity. Linearity is the failure to oscillate between energy expenditure and recovery. Oscillation is the key. Remember, oscillation is all about rhythmically moving between stress and recovery

Oscillation-The Rhythmic Life of an Executive Athlete: To perform optimally, you need to systematically increase your exposure to stress through energy expenditure and then enter periods of deep recovery, which you should emerge out of “super compensated”—rejuvenated and charged up with expanded capacity that allows you to expend more energy and thus perform better than you were previously capable of.

Binary Work: Working in a binary fashion means always being in one of two states:

1. Working as effectively as possible, operating with 100% intensity, fully engaged in sixth gear.
2. 100% off and fully unplugged, recovering deeply and enjoying life.

Ruthlessly eliminate everything in between, avoid the “half working, grey zone” in between.

Passive Recovery: Passive recovery is simply a period of inactivity, In passive recovery, you’re doing nothing but passively allowing your system to recover. Example: “vegging out” in front of the TV, drinking alcohol, eating crappy food, etc..

Glossary

Active Recovery: Active recovery involves some activity that actively promotes healing and rejuvenation—both mental and physical. The “active” component in active recovery accelerates and enhances the recovery process which both gets you back to baseline far faster than passive recovery and actually gets you further past baseline. It delivers supercompensation by expanding your capacity so that when you move back to expending energy you’ve got more energy to expend.

Central Nervous System: The central nervous system includes the brain and spinal cord.

Peripheral Nervous System: The peripheral nervous system is split up into the somatic and autonomic nervous systems.

Somatic nervous system: The somatic nervous system is involved in the movement of our skeletal muscles.

The Autonomic Nervous System (ANS): The autonomic nervous system – which as the name suggests is involved in a number of typically automatic, regulatory functions – is then further split up into the sympathetic nervous system (SNS) and the parasympathetic nervous system (PNS).

The Sympathetic Nervous System (SNS): SNS activation leads to a “[fight or flight](#)” response. It changes activity in the body to help prepare for a perceived threat and includes: inhibition of the digestive and immune systems, increases in [pupil size](#) and heart rate, expansion of the lungs, and the release of epinephrine/norepinephrine. These processes are meant to optimize functions in the body when it’s under attack – you won’t benefit from digesting food, but you’ll likely need more oxygen from the lungs.

The Parasympathetic Nervous System (PNS): PNS activation leads to a “rest and digest” response. It PNS alters a number of functions in the body to help it recover. These functions are largely mirror opposites of SNS activation and include stimulation of the digestive and immune systems, decreases in pupil size and heart rate, and contraction of the lungs. These processes optimize functions in the body at rest and allow it to focus on maintenance.

Glossary

Chronic Stress: During chronic stress, if the stressor is above a certain intensity or duration, the sympathetic response is more intense; if there is an inadequate defensive response, the system as a whole may fail to reset to normal functioning, remaining “tuned” to excess sympathetic and deficient parasympathetic activation. This state may persist indefinitely, giving rise to a state of “chronic stress,” where the system responds inappropriately to environmental challenges with excess activation.

Acute (Mild) Stress Response: In response to a mild stressor the ANS (and the whole CRN) responds with sympathetic activation, accompanied by a reciprocal lessening of vagal (parasympathetic) tone. Usually, this activation will support an appropriate response to the stressor; this response will be accompanied by proprioceptive feedback that the response has been successfully completed. Sympathetic activation then diminishes, vagal tone returns to normal, and the whole CRN resets to normal resilient functioning.

Allostatic Load: Allostatic load is "the wear and tear on the body" which accumulates as an individual is exposed to repeated or chronic stress.

Notes

Lesson Resources

1. [TED: Grit,](#)
By Angela Duckworth
2. [How to Develop Grit,](#)
Flow Research Collective Radio
3. [Mindset,](#)
By Carol Dweck
4. [Grit, The Power of Passion and Perseverance,](#)
By Angela Duckworth
5. [Character Lab](#)
6. [Goal-direction and top-down control,](#)
Buschman, T., Miller, E., 2014
7. [Mindfulness training modifies subsystems of attention,](#)
Jha, A, et al., 2007
8. [Attention regulation and monitoring in meditation,](#)
Davidson, R., et al., 2008
9. [Alterations in Brain and Immune Function Produced by Mindfulness Meditation,](#)
Kabat-Zinn, et al., 2003
10. The FRC Top 20 Active Recovery Protocols:
 1. Cold shower
 2. Ice Baths
 3. Cryotherapy
 4. Sauna
 5. Steam Room
 6. Hot Bath
 7. Breathwork
 8. Meditation
 9. Floatation Tank
 10. Nature Immersion
 11. Exercise
 12. Massage
 13. Sleep
 14. Yoga
 15. Myofascial Release
 16. Stretching
 17. Aimless Play
 18. Pressure (Weighted blanket)
 19. Belly Laughing
 20. Yoga Nidra