

The Downfall of the Personal Trainer:

Advanced training versus Proper technique

By Ben Harris

In a world where good is often not good enough, we are striving for perfection in every aspect of our work. We take much pride in the things we do in the gym environment and getting the right results for our clientele.

We like to start with the basics before we even think about initiating complex exercises. If a person struggles to perform basic movements such as squatting or a simple overhead shoulder press then placing them on a BOSU, (half ball) for instance will only teach them how to perform a bad version of what could potentially be a beneficial exercise.

During exercise, the body will try to remember its last movement, and if this is bad for example tilting the head forwards on a seated chest press machine, the next time you go to use the machine your head will naturally want to move forwards. Over time, this can develop into a condition known as anterior head carriage. Therefore, if your training is poor then this will have obvious negative effects on your posture.

So why is it that with so much training and knowledge available that we still come across people being taught good exercises badly. I assigned a team of five “undercover” gym goers to conduct a survey on their respective local gyms and these were just some of the main observations.

Common poor teaching practices often seen on a daily basis...

- Trainers giving clients exercises that are too advanced for their level of competency resulting in the technique being poorly executed.
- Trainers trying to keep up with new trends with regard to exercise, as they believe performing a complex exercise will win them more respect. Even though a more basic exercise could be twice as effective.
- Trainers getting their exercises from magazines and websites and using them on their own clients- when clearly they are not specific to their goals. E.g., the client doing sports specific training when they came for weight loss!

The number of times where I have witnessed gym members training with improper or poor technique even though they are performing an impressive range of exercises is astonishing (lets put a stop to this and do things the right way!).

We have had to correct many people in the gym environment to ensure their health and safety & promote better posture because a lot of people are still not sure what area of the body or muscle group they are supposed to be working and have only been shown very briefly before having the exercise put on their training programme.

We like to train our clients to use common sense as much as science. If you are swinging your Dumbbells about during the exercise, is it not common sense that you are more than likely to be employing poor exercise technique?

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