



PRESENTS



PURPOSEFUL PRIMITIVE THE TAO OF FITNESS

PHILOSOPHIC OVERVIEW

Why do we train? Why do we diet? Why do we take supplements? Why do we join gyms? Why do we invest time, money, energy and effort into all things strength, health and fitness-related? What motivates us?

ANSWER: The Overarching Goal is Radical Physical Transformation

MENTAL AMALGAMATION: PROVEN PSYCHE-UP PROCEDURES

Regardless your level of athletic proficiency, psychological recalibration of your mental state for the purpose of performance enhancement will dramatically improve your training and competitive placing. **Brain Train** is the most overlooked and underutilized aspect of fitness as it relates to the common man and his Sisyphean effort to transform from geek into god.

We work with all levels of athletic strata and one obvious difference between the athletically ordained and the athletically ordinary is the elite have an innate ability to center and focus the mind on the athletic task at hand, whereas the civilian, the normal person, attacks weight training with the same approximate level of mental commitment they muster for watering the lawn or brushing their teeth. Training to the mortal is a chore, a bother, manual labor without compensation; whereas for the elite, training is a transcendental experience and mind prep an indispensable ingredient in the quest to excel.

Regardless the athletic battleground – ordinary training session or head-to-head competition – the elite effortlessly access the mythological **Zone**, a mental state where athletic performance exceeds all realistic expectations. You can do the same.

There are specific procedures used by Zen Masters to establish concentration and focus and specific procedures used by Iron Curtain athletes to peak the psyche immediately prior to a limit attempt. Our suggestion is to learn each and then link them. Our mental amalgamation uses the Zen procedures to achieve a quiet alertness, then gently segues into an intense visualization process

designed to peak the psyche and pre-program you for immediate athletic success. Best of all, the techniques we relate are simple and battle-proven. These are mental tactics that obtain quantifiable results; results that separate 1st place from 9th place, or transform the ordinary, mundane training session into a mind-boggling, muscle-expanding, result-producing event.

The first order of business is to understand *when* and *how* to use **Brain Train** as it applies specifically to weight training. The optimal time for the serious fitness trainee to jack-up their psyche, to enter into what Arnold Schwarzenegger labeled the “maximal arousal mode” is just prior to performing a limit set. Before you become maximally aroused you need to become maximally quiet. First, we calm the *mind* then we focus the *mind*. It is important to strip away extemporaneous thoughts and eliminate external distractions. This is accomplished by taking conscious control of the breathing process by applying targeted techniques and tactics.

In Stage I you take a few minutes use a specific breathing procedure known in Zen meditation as *Shikantaza*. Understanding and implementing this technical procedure is deceptively simple; yet mastery is elusive and requires repeated and systematic practice for a protracted period of time. Use this simple and straightforward mind-centering technique to instill clarity, centeredness and quietude. Avoid a sleepy, groggy, dreamy state-of-mind and instead seek a vibrant, electric, crackling alertness.

Using *Shikantaza* the athlete becomes wordlessly focused, internally and externally silent. Inevitably and invariably this procedure alone produces superior training results. This Zen concentration technique serves as the perfect launch pad for Iron

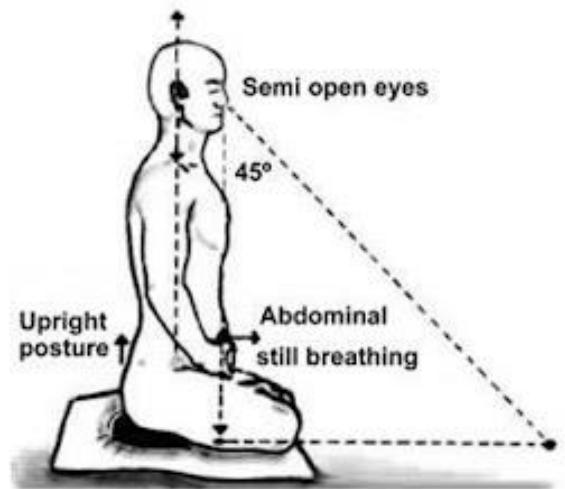
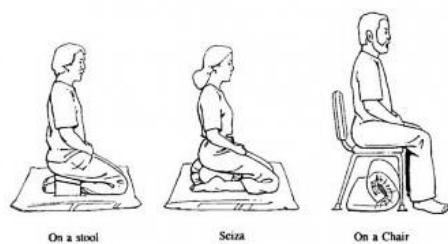
Certain auto-visualizaiton techniques, the type used by elite Communist athletes prior to World Record attempts. We link these two classical mind meld tactics together in a one-two, **Brain Train** punch. After two minutes using *Shikantaza*, open your eyes, stand up, walk to your battle station and turn internal fantasy into external reality.

Auto-Visualization (AV) teaches you to vividly imagine yourself hoisting ponderous poundage using exquisite technique while projecting ease, power and precision. The idea is to picture oneself performing the limit lift. Imagine in your mind's eye a movie, repeatedly shown with an ever-increasing degree of detail, played in real time.

Save the Shikantaza/Auto-Visualization procedure for the big sets of the day. Give the procedure a test drive on a set using the top poundage in a given exercise. The body has a limited amount of adrenaline and done correctly, every time you get seriously fired-up using our one-two, Brain Train procedure, the body will dump precious adrenaline reserves into the bloodstream. With a finite amount of adrenaline available, don't fire your hormonal guns off on meaningless warm-up sets. Practice makes perfect. Give our two state, Brain Train tactic an extensive test run; to be fair about it, make a commitment to use the procedure for at least two or three weeks on the top set of all the cor exercises. The more you practice the quicker you'll be able to rid yourself of clinging thoughts and the more vivid your visualizations will become. See our Shikantaza Checklist and Auto-Visualization Ideo-Motor Checklist on the following pages.

SHIKANTAZA CHECKLIST

1. Count from one to ten in a rhythmic fashion, syncopate counting with breathing. Sit on the floor or position yourself on the end of an exercise bench keeping the spine straight with head erect and eyes looking straight ahead. Don't let your chin drift upward as this denotes a lack of attention. Avoid the dreamy unfocused mindset of dream sleep. Strive for razor-sharp, super-alertness. Eyes may be left open or shut; if open-eyed, fix on a particular spot and don't let the eyes wander.



2. Inhale lightly through the nose and silently say the word "one." When you have a full breath, mindfully hold the breath for a split second (the turnaround) before exhaling slowly through the nose. Try and sync the slow, steady breath exhalation to coincide with a slow and silently uttered "two." At complete exhalation, pause for a split second at the turnaround. This completes one cycle, or repetition.

3. Continue in the fashion for ten complete breath reps. A complete breath pattern has four parts: Inhale, turnaround, exhalation and final turnaround. We mindfully pause at each turnaround. Often the mind wanders in the instant between in and out: these are the “gaps.”
4. Two types of thoughts arise during our 4-part Shikantaza breathing process: pass thoughts and clinging thoughts. Passing thoughts are just that, little unrelated mind-snippets that pop into your head and vanish as quickly as they arise. Ignored, the passing thought passes and does not interrupt or disrupt our breath counting. A passing thought appears and disappears in an instant without taking root. It doesn’t “cling” and turn into a “nen,” in Zen lingo.
5. A clinging thought is one that “takes root” and leads to further internal dialogue. The initial clinging thought hatches a whole succession of subsequent though changes known as “nens.” When nens cling together and start to stack up, you lose count; concentration is broken and the Shikantaza breath pattern disrupted. When this occurs go back to “one” and start over.
6. The idea is to maintain an electric alertness without any internal commentary, without any internal dialogue. Just count the breaths, observe the mini-pause at the turnaround, go from 1 to 10 without allowing any clinging thoughts to take root and don’t turn passing thoughts into clinging thoughts. Sounds easy?
7. Inhalation starts in the pit of the stomach and expands the waist before lower lungs and finally the upper lungs fill at breath’s conclusion. Exhale using the exact opposite procedure. Deflate sequentially; upper chest, lungs, waist and navel area.

8. Optional: The Cosmic Mudra. Zen practitioners hold the two hands in a specific pattern, palms placed face up in the lap of the sitting practitioner, left fingers on top of the right fingers, the two thumb tips are held aloft and lightly touch, as if holding a sheet of paper between them. Thumbs drifting apart or squashing together are a surefire indicator that the mind has drifted or fallen into a somnolent sleep state. The two lightly touching thumb tips serve as a Zen biofeedback device.



9. Rinzai Zen adherents will breathe so subtly that they make no sound inhaling or exhaling – try it – this is a lot tougher than it sounds.
10. Shoot for two uninterrupted, successful Shikantaza rounds. Then without moving or changing position or breathing pattern (cease breath counting) shift wordlessly into the Iron Curtain auto-visualization procedure.

Psychological Segue: Shikantaza leaves you alert, centered and focused. The mind is extremely susceptible to autogenic techniques using imagery, self-visualization and auto-suggestion. The Shikantaza breath control procedure provides the perfect foundation into Stage II.

AUTO-VISUALIZATION CHECKLIST

1. With eyes closed imagine the gym. Detail and accuracy are all important. The more accurate your visualization the more tense and effective the result. View the scene as if you were looking at yourself through a movie camera and the camera is head on from about 10 feet away. Picture yourself sitting and visualize your current posture and surroundings. What color are your clothes? Mentally zoom in on the exercise equipment. We set a visual scene.
2. Assume you are doing squats and have already completed 2-3 warm up sets and are about to attempt a new personal record in the squat: 375X8 with collars. Where is the squat rack? Picture the loaded bar; six 45 pound plates, two 25's and collars
3. Imagine standing up and moving to the bar. Crisp details please! Place your imaginary left hand on the bar, then your right hand. Dip underneath the center of the bar on your back. Feel the knurling dig into your traps. Take a huge breath and break the barbell from the squat rack. Sense how incredibly lighter the weight feels.
4. Imagine yourself as you step backwards; right foot, left foot and adjustment step. Picture yourself sucking in a massive breath of air in final preparation for the first rep. Imagine the exhortations of your training partners. What are they wearing? How are your feeling?
5. Visualize yourself unlocking your knees and descending to correct squat depth utilizing perfect technique and incredible control. Imagine squatting super deep, the firing the weight

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5. back to lockout without hesitation. Imagine each subsequent repetition... don't rush through this mentally! Pay particular attention to the speed and propulsion of the final rep.
 6. If the auto-visualization is detailed and realistic, upon opening your eyes there should be some sort of physical manifestation: increased heart rate or increased breathing, goose bumps might appear. Mentally, you should feel fired-up! Coach Cassidy manifested goose bumps.
 7. Try one or two visualizations prior to a top set of an exercise. As with anything else in life, practice improves performance. Once you've completed the final visualization (the last "movie" should be far more intense and focused than the first) open your eyes and recreate your waking dream; turn internal vision into external reality.
 8. Pitfalls; if you are interrupted during the psyche-up procedure, the process will be demolished. The delicate mental image you were constructing is smashed to bits. The audio stimulation actually amplifies psyche-up efforts and wearing headphones makes it impossible to be interrupted or distracted. I sue music to seize control of the audio element and prevent outside Intrusions.
 9. Don't overplay your hand. There is nothing holy or sacred about this exercise and don't load it down with extemporaneous, superfluous philosophic or religious baggage. No visions, hallucinations, gods or demons will appear. This is a mind exercise, pure **Brain Train**; a no bullshit approach, refreshingly free of touchy feely New Agism or Hitlerian exhortations.

10. A smart man can perform his Shikantaza procedures and follow up with a few rounds of auto-visualization without a single other person being aware of the incredible internal transformation taking place. Please don't use this profoundly personal method egotistically.