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## **Fitness is Not Religion or Politics, and there are Many Ways to Construct a Good Training Program** **By: Bret Contreras**

Most lifters start working out to look and feel better. Along the way, they get sucked into one of the numerous fitness cults out there and turn into annoying fitness snobs.

No matter what anyone tells you, many roads lead to Rome. There are many ways to see great results in the gym.

Chances are the person whose physique you envy so badly doesn't train harder than you. He or she simply eats better than you and is more consistent.

As long as you're consistently getting stronger in the primary movement patterns, revving up the metabolism, and taxing the major muscles, then you're achieving a great workout.

Don't let a guru dictate the way you train, grasp a hold of the reins and figure it out for yourself.

If you like training your arms directly, then train your arms directly.

If you don't like squatting, don't squat – do a single leg squatting movement instead.

If you don't like deadlifting, don't deadlift – do a single leg deadlifting movement and/or heavy kettlebell swings instead.

If you don't like bench pressing, don't bench press – do weighted push-ups and/or dumbbell horizontal pressing.

If you prefer performing shoulder pressing from the seated position rather than standing, do it seated.

If you love Hammer strength rowing movements, do them.

If you like performing American kettlebell swings rather than Russian kettlebell swings, do them American style.

If hip thrusting makes you feel terribly uncomfortable in the gym, don't do them – just do single leg hip thrusts and/or cable pull-throughs and/or kettlebell swings.

If you love squatting and it doesn't hurt you, then squat.

If you love deadlifting and it doesn't hurt you, then deadlift.

If you love to leg press, go ahead and leg press.

If you like isolation movements, then by all means, do isolation movements.

If you hate conditioning work, don't do it.



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If you prefer the inverted row over the bent over row, choose the inverted row.

If you enjoy kettlebells, use them. If you don't, then don't use them.

If you enjoy machines, use them. If you don't, then don't use them.

If you like resistance bands, use them. If you don't, then don't use them.

If you prefer the hex bar deadlift to the conventional deadlift, then go ahead and use the hex bar.

If you prefer front squatting over back squatting, then go ahead and front squat most of the time.

If overhead work such as pull-ups and military press cause you problems, don't do them. If they don't cause you problems and you enjoy them, do them.

If you don't like directly training your core, don't train your core.

There are many effective ways to squat, I'm sure you can find one that suits you well (bilateral, unilateral, full range, partial range, etc.).

There are many effective ways to deadlift, I'm sure you can find one that suits you well (bilateral, unilateral, full range, partial range, etc.).

If any exercise consistently causes you pain or injury (assuming you're using proper form), then drop it permanently.

If close grip benching or floor pressing feels much better on the joints than regular benching, then close grip or floor press more often.

If high box squatting feels much better on the joints than deeper back squatting, then high box squat more often.

If Romanian deadlifting feels much better on the joints than regular deadlifting, then RDL more often.

If you hate good mornings, don't do them. If you love them, do them.

If deadlifting kicks the crap out of you every week and impairs your subsequent workouts, then consider solely using the dynamic effort method for pulls.

If squatting kicks the crap out of you every week and impairs your subsequent workouts, then consider solely using the dynamic effort method for squats.

If you prefer high reps, then focus on getting stronger in higher rep ranges.

If you prefer lower reps, then focus on getting stronger in lower rep ranges.



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If you prefer medium reps, then focus on getting stronger in medium rep ranges.

If you enjoy all rep ranges, then get stronger in all rep ranges.

If you prefer bodyweight training, then get really good at bodyweight training and learn advanced bodyweight exercises.

If barbells are your bread and butter, there's nothing wrong with solely performing barbell lifts.

Fitness is not religion or politics – you are free to decide how you should train. And there are many ways to construct a good training program.

