Lawrence Neal:      Simon, welcome back.

Simon Shawcross:    It's great to be back, Lawrence.

Lawrence Neal:      It's a pleasure to have you, and I'm very jealous of your recent travels around the US.

Simon Shawcross:    That was a lot of fun. That was a lot of fun.

Lawrence Neal:      Yes, I'm sure it was. Don't rub it in. In the part one to this, you kindly came on again before, and we talked about how to instruct the perfect high-intensity training work out. It was really, really awesome content. So to encourage the listeners, the members, to refer to that before listening to this one ideally, although this could be listened in isolation. In that one we covered how to instruct the workout, the type of language we use, like looping. What not to say and stuff like that, when to be silent. How to provide the necessary motivation, to help people train of a high level of intensity for maximum results, and stuff like that.

There was a bunch of stuff that we left off, we ran out of time, so really awesome that we can now chat about some of those other bits, which we can talk about in the context of instructing the perfect workout. Let's kick off with this, with the challenges in training men versus women. Now as someone who's trained many, many people, and supervised thousands of workouts, what should new trainers be thinking about when training men and women? Is there any differences that we need to think about, or ways we could be more effective at training the different genders?

Simon Shawcross:    Well a big starting point is, how has that client come to you? Have they come to you because they've seen something about high-intensity training online? Have they read [Body By Science](), and they're coming to you forewarned and forearmed? They're, as it were, a more educated client, or are they somebody who's just happened to have found, you're the local facility. You're the local trainer, and that's the reason they're turning up on your doorstep.

The reason I mentioned that, it doesn't necessarily make a huge difference, but let's take guys to start off with. When you're working with guys, especially as a male trainer, and actually, you know what? Maybe even more so with a female trainer. Sometimes there's something about the male-driven ego and the desire to be macho, that will make guys look to work beyond their bounds, especially during a first or second session. They want to kind of show off how much they can lift, how strong they are, and how capable they are. Whereas, women are far less likely to have that tendency. In many ways, they're more receptive, can be more receptive to the message of high-intensity training, and quality of turn arounds, and control of movement. All of that intrinsic stuff comes first, and the external comes as a by-product of that.

Whereas many guys, to start off with, are coming from a reverse perspective. They want to show how much they can do, how much they can push and lift, and their strength. That is something that I think is, or can be, a specific difference between training men and women. That then, therefore, for requires a little bit of extra special attention to the guys, in explaining how, "Look, this isn't about hoiking out reps like you may have had experience, or you may have seen your mates do at a gym in the past. This is more about these factors, and this is what I need to see you doing really well on."

Outside of that is, I suppose another thing to be aware of just is the male, female dynamics. So whether that's a woman trainer training a male client, or a man training a woman, it varies. So there is a sexual dynamic, sexual as in opposite sex, is dynamic going on there. Some clients, some men prefer being trained by a guy or a woman, and vice versa. It's just like finding a rhythm that works for the person you're with, because obviously you can't easily change your own sex. You are who you are, so it's about working with that client.

Lawrence Neal: Well-

Simon Shawcross: It is possible nowadays, but it might be something that you transition over a period of time, rather than you get the opportunity to deal with it in the moment. When you're working with somebody, I think if you're in the luxury of it, if you're not just working by yourself and you have male or female trainers, that's something you can actually tailor to the client in front of you. As the owner of a facility, you can say, "This person gets the best when they're working with X."

To me, when I'm trained by other people it makes no difference whatsoever. All I'm interested in is, can you motivate me? Can you excite me in the workout? Can I feel your passion for the exercise you're teaching? Are you appropriate in the language you use, to enable me to get the most of a workout? Whether that's coming from a man or woman makes absolutely no difference whatsoever to me, but it does to some people. So that is worth considering. That's also something, as a trainer, that's worth considering for your target audience. Let's say for instance there are some women who would prefer to be trained by another woman, and would feel uncomfortable about being trained by a guy, at least initially. Perhaps even moreso on a one-on-one personal training environment.

So if you're a female trainer who's starting out your own business as a HIIT trainer, then that's a niche that you can go out and target, because you can service the needs of those clients. Whereas, probably 70% of the trainers in your area are guys, and therefore you have a little ready inbuilt niche. I think these are things we're considering. To me, ultimately, at the end of the day, when all this stuff is figured out, it doesn't really make a difference, but it can do to start off with. It's just about bridging the gap, and learning how to be comfortable and lucid as a trainer in your ability to coach either of the sexes.

Lawrence Neal:    Yeah. I think you raise a good point there about the marketing opportunity. In terms of, if you're a woman or a man and that's a trainer, and the majority of your competition are the opposite sex. Then that could serve as a differentiator, and you could choose to target men or women. I think the important thing to realize is the target market is not your total market, so obviously you're still going to attract people outside that target.

I think people get a little bit worried about alienating the rest of the market. Then they make the wrong decision, or try to target everybody, and I don't think that works very well either. Awesome, that was a really good way to start us off. One of the things I'm really also interested in learning from you, Simon, when it comes to tracking. So tracking workouts, there are a number of different methods people employ, stopwatches, wristwatches, clipboards, apps. What's your thoughts on all this stuff? What are your recommendations when it comes to tracking performance?

Simon Shawcross:    I personally found the easiest to work with is just a straight up stopwatch, and just track the metric of time under load. Some people prefer to count reps. What I found is, so long as that person's reps are under control, and they're good reps, I'm just looking for that individual to reach a fairly broad parameter time under load. I don't find it necessary to count reps at the same time, although having said that, you can do via click counter as well. So if you've got a click counter on your finger, you can time with a stopwatch on the one hand. Then a click counter to count the reps as well, which will give you a more detailed and accurate breakdown, ultimately.

Which can be useful, I would say, for trainers who are maybe even newer, so people who haven't seen it all yet. So long as tracking those metrics is within your ability, because remember you've got to be coaching, you've got to be watching, observing, and clicking a click counter, and starting and stopping a stopwatch. So long as you're confident in doing all of those things at approximately the same time, then in some ways, the more metrics you gather the better as a new trainer, because it gives you more information. It lets you know, so for instance the tempo of the reps at the start of the set compared to the end. Is that person changing over time? Are you missing things visually that are actually happening in front of you, but are perhaps too small for you to observe?

I think that's useful as a beginner trainer, an intermediate trainer, and sometimes just to check yourself as an advanced trainer. At the end of the day, it is possible to get too bogged down in all of this. What's really important is safety and the client's experience. If you've got those two things covered, and you're then getting them as close to momentary muscular failure as that individual in front of you is currently capable of getting, in a timeframe where at one end of the spectrum, it's not so heavy. They start to tense up and use body English to lift the load, it's not so long they start to get bored. Then the onset of fatigue is really uncomfortable, because it just goes on for so long.

Then really, from the perspective of the research and what I've seen with clients, is that you've done everything you can. Whether that was done in a tempo of 6, 6 or 8, 8 matters not. You can get bogged down in metrics, but I do think it's useful to start off with. If you've got equipment which automatically tracks those metrics for you, great, because that's something that's been taken off your ... If you've got a computer screen and a force gauge readout that's happening all the time, and that's being tracked for you, and you can look at it afterwards, even better, because it's less for you to have to deal with in the moment.

I think it's really key. This is something I consider a very important point for trainers, is that you don't get bogged down with the minutiae when you're meant to be coaching the client in front of you, when it's about their experience. One thing I do see sometimes with new trainers, is they're using the clipboard and the stopwatch and the rep counter as a crutch to hide behind, because they haven't found their confidence as a coach yet. That doesn't come across as great. They might be aiming to look scientific, or feel like a lab technician in a white coat, with all their data they're collecting.

Remember it is about that client's experience, and your ability to coach that client. That's really important. So do be aware that these things, these toys, these metrics, can actually get in the way of a good experience, as well as tell us about how good the experience is. So it's about finding a balance between the two places. In terms of clipboard, I like Google Sheets and an app, because I don't think ... Sorry, using Google Sheets as a way of keeping all the metrics, because then you can keep it on Drive. You can share it between all of your trainers and all of that stuff.

Lawrence Neal:    I love me some Google Sheets.

Simon Shawcross:    I don't think, to my knowledge there's not an app out there I'm really happy with, that does what I can do with Google Sheets. It is that simple. Like you say, you love them. It works, and it's simple, and it can be shared across trainers. I would say that's a really good way of doing it. Some people are old school, they like pencil and paper, and that can work too. I mean, it's not a hard and fast rule. It depends what you're comfortable with.

It is quite cool at the end of the day, if you've got a wadge of papers of all your clients to look through, if you're a very kinesthetic, physical touch person. So whatever works for you, really, to keep those maybe. I think so long as you do. You need to keep some information on the client, so that you can look at their progress over the long term. Get a sense of what works better for that individual, and what might work not quite as well for that individual.

Lawrence Neal:    Yeah. I know that I was talking to Doug McGuff and Luke Carlson about an app. I think Luke's actually, I think he might've even finished up the creation of some app to track these metrics. Because I know what you mean, there's a lot of ... I need to find out. I know I need to get back to

Luke, actually, an email about that. There's a lot of apps that have attempted, I think, to serve this function. It doesn't seem like anything's really caught on yet.

I was actually talking to one lady on email. I think she was a software developer background. She was really into high-intensity training. She had a prototype app, and she seemed to really be determined to turn it into something. I'm not sure what's happened to that, but there's certainly an opportunity there. If someone can get the feel right and nail it, it's certainly worth looking at. Yeah, until that happens, Google Sheets is an obvious go-to, because it's free, and it's accessible over multiple devices. It's what I use for clients, and also myself, my own progress. So no, I think that's good advice.

Okay, so yeah. Okay. Stopwatch, counter, clipboard, or Google Sheets. I suppose you'd want to use clipboard in the moment, because then you can just write it down. Perhaps update Google Sheets later, or update whatever system you use later on perhaps, and maybe schedule a time to do that. Yeah, I get what you're saying. I remember at Keiser they had the physical cards where you'd write down your numbers. As archaic as it sounds, I did enjoy writing it down, and then looking at them back and seeing my strength go up 150% or something like that. That was quite-

**Simon Shawcross:** It's a moment in time captured.

**Lawrence Neal:** Right.

**Simon Shawcross:** Whereas a Google Sheet, you look back and it's digital. It's all digital. Whereas, if you put your handwriting, writing in the time under load, and the weight you were using and all of that, there's something more, a sense of time about the thing. So yeah, it can be cool.

**Lawrence Neal:** Right. Yeah. Okay, cool. All right, let's talk about progress. I think this is a common challenge people have, in terms of when you're instructing workouts, knowing when to change the workouts to optimize results for your clients. There's a lot of variables in play, stress, sleep, diet, genetics, fill in the blank. Sometimes it can be quite difficult to know when to add recovery or change a workout. So I guess this is slightly outside of the realm of instructing workouts. I'd just like to hear what your view is on that, and how you personally have managed that, to help clients continue to progress.

**Simon Shawcross:** If most of your clients run a once a week schedule, I think you don't have to be particularly concerned about optimizing or drawing back frequency, because they're already on what I would consider to be pretty much a minimum effective dose. I think once you start getting further away from once a week, it might work for some people, but I think it tends to start to get less optimal. Even from a scheduling and convenience point of view, and a habitual point of view for clients.

You've got to remember, trainers need to remember that 95% of your clients are not as into exercise as you are. They need something to get

them into the gym. If it drifts longer than a week, it tends not to be something that people stick to. So if somebody's training once a week, I really don't think you have much play on the frequency side of things. On terms of the volume side of things, if all of those sort of lifestyle factors are out of whack, and they're struggling to recover. I mean, I would be concerned about somebody struggling to recover from one workout a week, of six to eight exercises. If they're unable to recover from that, I would be concerned as to what else is not happening for that person, and why are they not able to do that? Because I do think that's a minimum.

If somebody's trained twice a week with you, and I would typically have people train one or twice a week. I think if somebody's training twice a week, now that's something where it can be more challenging. Because if somebody's really going to momentary muscular failure on a routine, I don't know, let's say a five to eight exercise, and they're really pushing hard in that workout. If the lifestyle is good, and stress levels are good, and nutrition is good, that's very doable for most people. Once one or two of those things starts to come out of sync, that becomes less doable.

That's where I would start to look at, "Okay, so this person might need to drop back to once a week." One way I use to describe it with my clients is your energy levels and your lifestyle, and everything that's happening to you, your energy goes in waves. Sometimes the wave is high, and it's cresting, and you've got bags of energy. You can do two, heck, you might even be able to do three workouts in a week, if you really wanted to push it. Other times you're troughing, and the wave is broken, and you're on the down slope. When you're in that trough, you may very well only cope well with only one workout a week.

It is nice to have the luxury of being dynamic like that. Now, the issue for trainers is that you don't typically want to have somebody who can be a bit schedule, so is it twice or is it once? That can be an issue from a scheduling point of view, because if you're looking to get regular slots in, and you're suggesting that you can be free and easy as you match your energy levels, you might find your diary becomes a bit higgledy-piggledy. That's really in the nature of having that process.

It worked for me. I would say, "Look, if you want to invest the time and finances in training twice a week, it can be really good for you. It may be a little better than just doing it about once a week." There maybe times when you need to step back. Sometimes these things are inbuilt into our lives as well. So when it's Easter holidays, when it's Christmas holidays, when you go away for the summer. We have these natural ebbs and flows and fluctuations anyway. Throw in if somebody comes down with a cold or a flu once a year, as well, and may need to take a couple of weeks around that.

You'll find that there are these natural ebbs and flows. Probably they can stick to twice a week with those summer holiday, Christmas holiday, Easter holiday, the long weekend away somewhere [inaudible 00:20:28]. So they might only come in once a week a couple of times, or have a

complete 14 day period off at times. There is a natural ebb and flow to it. I think that is highly appropriate. That works really, really well for most people, and sort of matches what's doable and sustainable over the long term.

Then in terms of volume, I think for most people, for most people who are not coming from a place of having a chronic, low-grade illness or being unwell, most people to tolerate that five to eight exercises in a workout really well. You don't really need to go up the scale or down the scale too much, away from that kind of parameter. You might want to push it if you've got a particularly strong client, or a particularly athletic client who really tolerates exercise well. You might want to push the volume up a little bit, get them really adhering to that twice a week, and see what happens for them. See, does it work better for them? Does it work less well for them?

The other thing you've got to consider is what else do they have going on outside of the gym? Are they engaged in a sport? Do they run? Do they play tennis? Do they play cricket? Do they play rugby? Are they engaged in other taxing physical exercise, which complicates the matter? Actually, it gives you a little bit more to get your teeth stuck into as well. So it comes down to lifestyle. I think the one thing that's so awesome about this HIIT approach is really, it's fantastic for just about everybody. You don't have to deviate too far from it to get optimal results for the individual at hand.

Maybe one of the reasons you might taper it up or down a little bit, too, is psychological reasons. Maybe you have somebody coming who's always been an athlete, has always been a triathlete, is used to doing a crap load of exercise. You might need to have them on a little higher frequency, just from a psychological purpose, until you can segue them into this perspective on exercise. So there are those type of considerations as well.

Lawrence Neal:    That's awesome. What about when, if you have someone come, and let's say they've been training for a while. They're still trying to figure out their optimal frequency and recovery requirement, things like that. If they come to a session, and let's say maybe not the next session, but maybe two or three sessions in you start seeing the numbers fall. You start seeing repetition count or time under load to fall. Would you stop the workout, and say, "Go home"? Because obviously there are other benefits, like disposal of glucose and insulin sensitivity and stuff like that. What do you do in those scenarios where you start seeing that someone is perhaps over trained?

Simon Shawcross:    Okay. If I started to see that happening 10 weeks into working with somebody, 12 weeks into working with somebody, it might be the fact that they're getting better at recruiting and fatiguing their muscle tissue. So there can be a stalling on the loads, because, okay, they got those initial jumps because you, as a trainer, you started off with a load that was relatively easy for them. You brought that up, and now actually you're hitting what is a truly challenging load for them. At the same

time, they are developing the skillset where they can actually recruit and fatigue their tissue much, much better.

So you might see a slowing down, if not a stalling for a period of time, with somebody that new to exercise, or that new to this form of exercise. I wouldn't be in a rush to have them drop in frequency, or to do less in a session. Now if you're saying we know for a fact that person is over-trained, and they've made it to the gym, and I was taking them for a workout. I was seeing on my first two, three exercises their times were lower. I would not send somebody home. I think that's something I would be really unlikely to do.

What I might say is, "Everything you've told me and what I'm seeing suggests that you've done too much. So for the next three exercises, as challenging as this is going to be for you now, I'm going to ask you to hold back for momentary muscular failure by a couple of reps." So they're still going to get their full workout, they'll still feel they got the value of a workout session. It will have done something for them, without really grinding them into the hard end zone, as it were. Which, if they are over trained, they are going to struggle to recover from.

Lawrence Neal:    Last question before we wrap up, Simon. How do you differentiate between someone who has improved their ability to recruit muscle fiber, and therefore be more efficient with their training. Which might represent itself, as you were saying there, as a lower time under load, versus someone just being over trained? I don't know how, even in myself I don't know how you figure that out. Is it just over a certain period of time, or ...

Simon Shawcross:    I think this goes back to a conversation we had one of the times we first met, is I wouldn't jump to looking at the numbers being suggestive of anything. I think we can be too quick to do that. I'm sure it was Doug who mentioned, Dr. McGuff who mentioned at one point, it's like those numbers week to week. Don't get lost in the noise of those numbers, because they will tell you stuff that isn't necessarily actually there physically. Look at them six weeks apart from each other. So you're seeing over the long term, is there a positive net effect?

Because you can have a couple of weeks where you might be a bit off because of stress, or other things that were going on. Or your mindset, your mental gain wasn't 100% in the workout, and the following week from that it was. If we look at that micro detail workout to workout, I think we're going to be too quick to try and use data in a way that it isn't telling us truly what's been happening holistically for the individual. Whereas, if you pass that out over the longer term, and look at a broader number of workouts and see the general trend. You could use your Google sheets and plot that as a general trend chart, and put the line through the middle. If that's on average going up, then we know we're all good.

I think that's what to look out for. I mean, real over training, it's a seriously dysfunctional state to be in, that professional athletes tend to suffer from. And will tend to take a lot, if they're generally over

trained, it will take them three months to a year to get out of over training. It's not something that's easily done, unless that person outside of your workouts is going off and doing a ton of other stuff, physical stuff as well. In which case, that's when I would start to look at it. Is like, what else are they doing physically, outside of our one of two sessions a week? I think somebody training once or twice a week and not doing much else physically, not taxing themselves much else physically, is rarely going to over train.

Lawrence Neal:     Good answer. Simon, I will let you go, because I know you've got another appointment. Thank you so much again, for contributing some great content to the membership. So this is part two on how to instruct the perfect high-intensity training workout, with some extra stuff on progress there, which I personally found really helpful. You reminded me of our little, our first meeting in Starbucks there, which is a good memory. Yeah, I'll let you go now. I'll talk to you soon, mate. Take care.

Simon Shawcross:     Lovely. Bye for now.