

Features

Get Fit Now



Bodybuilding

by Brian Nelson
Collegian Staff Writer

Last November, I decided to set a goal for the simple purpose of proving to myself that I could reach it. Everything that I have done since, has targeted toward March 25, the date of the state regional bodybuilding contest in New Castle. After much dieting, hard training, and preparation, that long awaited date has now since passed. How did I do? Let's just say I didn't win, but I didn't do too bad either, considering it was my first contest. Above all that, and more importantly, I emerged feeling like a winner. To me, that's all that matters. The whole experience turned out to be one of the most memorable and rewarding times of my life.

When I decided to enter this contest, I had no idea of what to expect. I heard a lot of other bodybuilders talk about how great it was to compete, but I was still somewhat skeptical. Even though I actively participated in bodybuilding, I still adopted the views that many outsiders generally take. I figured that these contests were probably riddled with super-egos, empty brained, muscle heads, and steroid monsters.

What I found was quite to the contrary. True, there were a few jerks, but the majority of the competitors were super guys, who like myself, had set a goal and pursued it vigorously. Instead of the expected clashing of egos, there was an overall feeling of unity. Winners were congratulated and losers were encouraged to try again. All around, it was a great scene that I was proud to be a part of.

The sport of bodybuilding is misunderstood by many. Actually, it goes beyond being a sport. It is more like a lifestyle. Beyond the physical aspect of working out and competing, bodybuilding can be compared to life in general. Nine times out of ten there is going to be someone that's better at a certain task than you are. Instead of accepting defeat, you need to pick up the pieces and work toward becoming better. Unfortunately, this is a lesson that many people never learn.

As for bodybuilding, not everyone can possess the genetics of an Arnold Swartzenegger, but they can possess the drive to be the best that they can be, regardless of the limitations.

For those who are contemplating the challenge of competitive bodybuilding, there are a few guidelines you must follow to be successful. Around 80% of your success will depend on your diet. Believe it or not, this is the hardest part. You have to learn to regulate how much you eat, what you eat, and when you eat. Instead of eating three bulging meals a day, you need to reduce and eat five small meals a day, making sure not to eat four hours prior to bedtime. You must only eat all natural, low sodium, low sugar products.

Finally three days prior to your competition, you need to raise your carbohydrate intake substantially, while depleting your protein intake. Through dieting you will learn much about the needs of your body and its functions. In the process you'll also gain much mental strength and self-discipline. You'll finally learn how to say no when mom entices you with that fresh baked pecan pie. The rest of your success depends on the quality of your training program and the amount of rest that you get between workouts.

I fully encourage anyone who is into bodybuilding to set a goal and compete at least once. It won't be an easy goal to reach, but the challenge will make it all worth while. This is one sport where there is never a loser, regardless of the outcome.



Ask Louanne

The Collegian Advice Column
by Dr. Louanne Barton,
Psychologist

*This week:
No energy; depression*

Dear Louanne,

I'm really screwed up. I guess I'm depressed. I don't have any motivation. I sleep all the time and cut classes. I don't feel like eating and I've even lost interest in sex! It looks like I'll fail two classes even if I could get up and get going so why bother. This will put me on academic probation, but I don't even know if I care except I have to tell my parents. I've heard about medication for depression. Do you think it could help me? Can you get dependent on it like Valium? Is there any hope for me?

Signed, Going Crazy

that black cloud descends over them lasting for as long as two weeks or more before it lifts. There may be other members of the family who also are depressed. Medication can be very helpful in this kind of situation, and, no, it is not habit forming.

There is also depression which is triggered by external situations. We can respond to losses or stress in our lives by becoming depressed. In these situations medication usually isn't very helpful, but counseling can help to work through problems.

First we should assess the severity of your depression and your history. If it looks like medication is indicated you would be referred to a

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Dear Going Crazy,

No, you're not going crazy, but it certainly sounds like you're suffering from depression from the symptoms you've described. It sounds pretty painful. This is a time when counseling could really help. I urge you to make an appointment so we can talk.

There are two types of depression. One is endogenous which is more physiologically inherent having to do with brain chemistry. The neurotransmitters in the brain aren't functioning properly. Often people who suffer from this type of depression have a history of feeling depressed since childhood. For no apparent reason at all

physician. In addition, cognitive therapy would be helpful to correct negative thinking patterns which often result in depression. If medication is not indicated, counseling could help you to restructure your pattern of thinking, to set goals, to structure and manage your time, and to explore career options.

Maybe college isn't where you really want to be right now. Maybe you need to consider some other options. If this is the case practicing some assertive skills will be helpful when it comes time to inform Mom and Dad.

Feeling depressed can be worse than any physical pain we might suffer. I hope you'll drag yourself out of bed and come over so we can talk.

Send letters to: Dr. Louanne Barton, Personal Counseling
213 Glennhill Farmhouse, Behrend College, Erie, Pa 16563

