

# Breaking The Continuum

*Thousands of gym devotees, young and old, cling tightly to outdated training methods and beliefs. To put it bluntly, this is not efficient.*

*A monthly publication by Andy Chasse'*

*September 2009, Vol. 3*

## About The Author



While earning his Bachelor of Science in Kinesiology, Andy Chasse' finds joy in competing at state and national levels in powerlifting as a member of the SHSU Powerlifting Team. He has been certified through the National Academy of Sports Medicine (NASM) and has pursued careers at various well-standing gyms. Andy currently works full-time as a freelance writer. He has been published by a number of fitness outlets including Bodybuilding.com, LiveStrong.com, and John Izzo's *Trainer Nation*, among others. Check him out at [andychasse.com](http://andychasse.com)!

## Testimonials, Testimonials, Testimonials

Honestly, where would any professional independent contractor be without them? Definitely not as far as they could be, that's for sure. The beauty of testimonials is two-fold:

- Praise often results in a gigantic morale boost, allowing you to keep keepin' on.
- Clients see that you have done great work in the past and are more likely to ask for your services.

It's a win-win situation. So how exactly do you go about building up a stack of testimonials?

First off, perform well. If you do poor work for a client, why in the world would they praise you for it? Don't try to get away with trashcan work thinking you will still walk out with a slur of kind words. You might walk out with a slur, but it sure as hell won't be kind.

Secondly, ask your client. After you finish a big project that he or she absolutely loves, pop the big question – "Hey, would you mind writing me a quick testimonial that I can put up on my website?" If you don't ask, you are missing out on some crucial portfolio-building.

Don't be afraid to ask. In my experience, clients rarely have a problem providing a quality testimonial, especially if the work performed is top notch. Ask you and shall receive!



## ***In The Zone – The Psychological Aspect of Exercise***



Although I rarely venture into this particular area of fitness in my writing, it has always been an interest of mine. It's something that I think about only occasionally, often

when a certain event occurs that pushes me to think a little deeper into how both the body and mind work. More importantly, these precarious events focus my attention on something even more crucial – how the body and mind work **together**.

I'm going to start off with a quick recap of the occurrence that got me back to thinking about this point. Deep thinking is something I generally try very hard to avoid, but I guess we all have to fail from time to time, right? I participated in a powerlifting meet on August 2<sup>nd</sup> – USAPL Summer Powerfest. This meet was a national qualifier. I usually wait to qualify until November, but I figured there was no point in holding out that long. Fast forward to meet day – I was in the waiting area and the announcer called my name. Being in the hole, it was time to wrap. I quickly tightened the wraps over my knees

and moved towards the front. I had no real back-up this time around, so I grabbed a nice-looking guy on the sidelines and asked him to call my depth. Thankfully, he agreed. As I casually lifted the bar off the rack, my mind was completely blank. I began descending slowly, waiting for the up-call and desperately hoping that I would receive it soon. Seconds later, still not hearing the up-call, I decided to wing it and blast the weight up, locking it out and re-racking it. The lift was good, but I approached my handler-in-training and curiously asked him why I didn't receive an up-call. He gave me a very confused look and assured me that I did indeed receive an up-call, a very loud and distinct one at that. To add to my confusion, he also informed me that I began moving up at the exact moment it was called.

With that long and drawn out story out of the way, let's sum up what happened. I hit depth without hearing an up-call so I squat it up. I then inquire as to the lack of an up-call and am assured I received a thunderous "UP!" and blasted upwards accordingly. Well, why didn't I hear it? If I could answer this question myself, I wouldn't be writing this. Honestly, I'm not sure why I didn't hear it. I am sure of one thing, however – this has happened before in previous meets. So what do I chalk it up to?

Obviously, the brain is mysterious and devious. That being said, I'm going to title this concept "in the zone." Okay, so it's not original – bite me. In short, when we're in the fierce arena of athletic competition, our brain accepts information and relays it to the muscles without us being 100% aware of the communication. My brain clearly registered the up-call, as did my muscles. Although I wasn't consciously aware of this event taking place, it still happened.

Need another example? I enjoy a Guitar Hero session here and there – don't judge me, it's relaxing. I'm not trying to brag, but I'm rather good at it. However, that's not the point. Let's take the song Satch Boogie, one of the most difficult on Guitar Hero World Tour. This particular song contains a ridiculously long and mind-boggling solo. Although I generally have no

problem completing this solo, I am rarely conscious of the movements of my hands. In fact, each and every time I finish a solo of this difficulty I make a comment along the lines of "I still don't know how I make it through this stuff." My hands feel as if they are moving of their own accord. Although I'm not consciously aware of the movement taking place – as I'm "in the zone" – the communication is still occurring between my brain and the rest of my body.

If I could scientifically explain why we are able to complete tasks without being consciously aware of the actions taking place, I would. Unfortunately, that's not my area of expertise, so I just take great joy in ranting about it here and there. The next time you find yourself "in the zone", sit down and think about what just happened. Maybe you can figure out what I can't.

## **Shameless Plugs of the Month**

Check out my blog – [Breaking The Continuum](#). Recent posts include "[Transitioning From Personal Training to Writing](#)" and "[NaNoWriMo](#)."

Recently Published articles – [Why Exactly Do We Exercise?](#)

# Notes from the Classroom



Don't let the title mislead you – I'm not actually learning anything of particular importance in school. However, the occasional classroom outing proves at least somewhat interesting. This specific experience was pulled from just another Tuesday morning in Motor Learning.

Previous to this Tuesday, we had been covering material relating to visual and auditory learning. While some learners are visual, others are auditory. Some require pictures for optimal learning and others get by just fine using only their ears. To illustrate this point, the professor had us partner up. Partner A became the student and partner B became the teacher. Each of the teachers was given a sheet of paper with a fairly cluttered picture of random objects. The jobs were simple:

- The teacher's role was to describe the picture as best possible without using hand motions or correcting the student's work.

- The student's role was to draw the picture to the best of his ability based on the instructions provided by the teacher.

Each of the partners took turns playing each individual role. Both roles were difficult in their own way. As the teacher, it was extremely hard to articulate clear and concise directions without following up with some kind of correction. On the student's end, it was even tougher to draw a somewhat complex picture without anything more than a few words and locations given. The result was total failure, for the most part.

What was the point of this activity? Our professor performed this exercise with us for one main reason – to show us the importance of incorporating both visual and auditory teaching techniques. Without one, the other often falls flat on the ground. With both teaching methods employed, however, students of all learning predispositions have the ability to pick up and understand the material.