

ATP

What's your Absolute Training Potential?

ATP Athletics Newsletter

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Who's "ON" This Month?



(Melissa C – My Better Half)

Mel has been training with us for 4 years now. At our starting point she had 0 – Push Ups, 0 – Chins Ups, a Deadlift of around 115lbs, a Back Squat of 80lbs, a Run of about 2 light poles, and about 30% body fat. Since then her determination and never quit attitude has launched her forward into immense progress. Currently not only has push ups can do 3 Strict Dips, can do 5 strict chins, and a Chin with 10lbs added, Bench Press over 100, Deadlift over 220, back squats around 185, Front Squats around 160, and is down to 17% body fat. It hasn't always been easy but it has been consistent. She willingly admits a daily struggle with nutrition (like we all have), yet is more determined and focused than ever. I am still amazed to see how she is able to put everything together being a nurse in labour and delivery, dealing with the stress of nightshifts, and of course the added stress of putting up with me. She has refocused and set some strict goals this year for training and nutrition and is on tract to hit every one of them.

Very proud of what you have accomplished so far! Congrats and keep it up!

Got Wood?

No? How about Fire? Earth? Water? Metal? I know what you are thinking and no this is not an article about captain planet it's an article on weight training and the Chinese elements. We will get into energy systems and other lifestyle modifications in an upcoming article.

What can you expect to get out of this article?

Maybe knowledge on how you can train or coach smarter,
Maybe the missing piece of your training puzzle,
Maybe the reason why you don't seem to get the gains you want off
your perfect training program,
Maybe just a different perspective about people and training effects,
or
Maybe just another tool for the box

Why use Chinese Elements?

People are unique.

Just by knowing how to differentiate between a "Fire Type" and an "Earth Type" can make the difference between making an individualistic, directed, results oriented program and a program based on an educated generalization.

By the time you figure out if a program is not working you may have lost your client, or wasted too much time to recover. Using the Chinese element theory as your tool to help narrow the programming gap or to better communicate with someone can be extremely beneficial.

What are they?

There are 5 Chinese elements: Fire, Wood, Earth, Water, and Metal. For the sake of this article we are going to focus on the first 3. Most people who tend to workout fall into the fire, wood, or earth category. That is not to say water and metal types do not work out.

Fire Types: As the name implies tend to be very intense, and carry that intensity into their workouts. They are typically strong and powerful. They tend to get excited easily, are very passionate, empathetic, affectionate, warm, intuitive, imaginative and articulate, with strong desires. Tend to have a good sense of humor, and wear their hearts on their sleeves.

When too stressed they tend to have problems with anxiety, an explosive temper, nervousness, hyperactivity, and have trouble focusing attention. They can be prone to unrealistic expectations, and become crushed when not realized. They tend to hate surprises and when become overextended they have trouble slowing down and turning off the brain to sleep.

Physically - Tend to have longer necks, arms, and legs, stretchy skin, flexible joints, rosy flushed complexion, and tend to sweat profusely. They also tend to be genetically predisposed to heart disease. A good OPT Coach will catch that.

Training - Fire types tend to be more fast twitch in nature, and should be trained as such: Heavier weights, more sets, and lots of variation.

Wood Types: The typical Wood type also called the Pioneer; a real Risk taker and entrepreneur. They thrive on a challenge and pushing themselves to the limit. They are Confident, assertive, bold, and decisive. They have extreme difficulty holding back. They shine under pressure, and likes to be first, the best, and the only. They are amazing at devising plans and adhering to them.

Not patient, they want things done yesterday. "How come I am not feeling better yesterday?" They tend to have volatile emotions. They Lean toward extremism and impulsiveness. They tend to use and abuse supplements. They are the type to take something to wake up, and then something to go to sleep. They tend to be driven to overdo, and over perform. They can be aggressive and very stubborn. When over stressed tend to flow through stages of exaggeration and collapse.

Physically – Tend to be muscular, square, sinewy, lean, long, thicker skin. They are most likely to complain of tendon injuries, and they are genetically predisposed to liver problems.

Training - Wood types tend to one of the hardest types to program for because of their problem holding back. Taking this into account you will have to program rest cycles in with lower volumes every couple of weeks to keep progressing. They tend to be in the middle ground on the fast twitch/slow twitch spectrum, meaning they can handle some higher volume, and some higher loads, which is why they will want to do it all.

Earth Types: Love to be involved and needed, they love to be called upon for help. They tend to like to be in charge but not in the limelight.

They tend to be agreeable, accommodating, sociable, happy, supportive, reliable, and consistent. They want to be all things to all people. They will seek out harmony in a situation. They tend to have an extended social network, and have to ability to gain peoples trust easily.

When too stressed they tend to have a hard time holding them selves up and staying together. They tend to get stuck in self pity and dissatisfaction. They can become worrisome, obsessive, meddling, and overprotective. They can be so worried about what the right thing to do is, that they do nothing.

Physically - Tend to have more round and robust frames, thicker musculature, smooth, peachier skin, and tend to be a little broader in the shoulders. Tend to lean out well with low carb but have a really hard time cutting them out. They are the types that respond well to typical bodybuilding protocols.

Training - Earth types, tend to be the slower twitch athlete, training for earth types lives more in the higher rep ranges, with short forays into heavier loads.

People tend to have a dominant type within their training; this does not mean they do not show other types in different situations. Someone can present like a fire type because of toxicity, previous training, or other issues, but actually be an earth type. It takes a while with good testing to be sure. Keep in mind there will also be differences within types, you will have to tweak for each individual the elements just gives you a head start for success.

Remember if you or your client is an athlete, no matter the element type they have to be ready to perform the demands for that sport. You may just have better tools for preparing them.



From Left to Right: DJ Wickham (Fire Type), James FitzGerald (Earth Type), Michael FitzGerald (Wood Type), Sean Guevremont (Wood/Fire Hybrid). Four great athletes, 4 different types, that can all compete at the same sport, just needing different considerations with regards to optimal training.

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Supplement Talk: “Detox Coming Soon”