

# THE MYTHICAL 110%

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Editor's Note: Coach Freeborn has been at North Valley three years. His football teams have won one state championship and have made it to semis and quarterfinals the other two years. His combined win-loss record is 31 and 4.

Those of us who have participated or coached sports long enough have seen it happen. A coach is exhorting his team on to higher levels of performance, "I want you to go out there and give me 110%! Don't – you can't – let your team, your school, your community, or yourself down." This is possibly the worst thing that can be said.

Think of your own athletic endeavors. We have all been there many times in racquetball, at the plate, on the number 18 tee, at the service line, wherever. We assume the ready position with determination and say to ourselves, "I'm going to hit that ball just as hard as I can." What happens? More often than not we take the big backswing, approach the ball, execute the great swing and hit the worst shot of the day. We have even, at times, missed the ball entirely. Can we expect the athletes we coach or perform with to do any different?

Recent research into peak performance training indicates that personal best performances as well as record setting performances are not the result of 110% effort but more at the rate of 80-90% of that effort. When one tries too hard, one often "chokes," you tense up, become overly concerned, they inhibit their performance (paralysis through analysis). To compound the obstacles facing the athletes by having a coach brow-beating his athletes with mythical 110% performance objectives is assanine. One hundred percent is the absolute maximum that anyone has to give and at that level, one performs on the "ragged edge."

What's the answer? How do we achieve peak performances in our athletic performances?

There exists both at the personal and team levels, certain flow zones within which we operate.

There are many factors that enter into the graphic function, but the fundamentals would boil down to the challenge at hand (the level of difficulty of the competition), the anxiety of the athlete, and previous training.

Put an athlete on a team into a too difficult situation, and they get into an overload situation and cannot compete. Too challenging, too much anxiety. This is why we have state classifications in athletics and weight classifications in wrestling. Would it be fair for a school with an enrollment of 200 to schedule a football game with a school with an enrollment of 2500? Obviously not. Just as it would not be fair for a 98 pounder to have to wrestle a 270 pound heavyweight. Too much anxiety, too big of a challenge. Of course, the opposite is also true. If the challenge is not high enough we also do not perform at desired levels. How

often have we seen a team "play down" to the level of inferior competition? In both situations the athlete is out of his flow zone.

To increase your performance, one has to raise the level of his flow zone. Through training, i.e., practice. This is the fundamental underlying principle of the BFS program. I firmly believe that success does lie at the intersection of opportunity and preparation. In athletic competition and in this great country of ours, the opportunities will always be there. The number one thing that we can have direct control over is preparation. How prepared will you be to meet the opportunities you have to face in the future?

We control this. Success in those things we choose to do can be orchestrated. We choose the opportunities. We determine our preparation. We can orchestrate success.

By training at 100% plus one, we increase our flow zone. In the BFS weight lifting program everyone is encouraged to do more. Every time you enter the weight room you have a goal and a purpose – break records. By breaking 60 records a month you are slowly increasing the limits of your flow zone. When you have completed your third set of three, but still have some left, and you do that one extra rep and try for yet another and don't get it, you have given 100% plus one. You've maxed out. The record is broken. Peak performance achieved.

By training at 100% levels such as these, your flow zone actually increases. Step by step, little by little. Try this experiment. Find a corner of your closet that your mother does not vacuum regularly. Each day take a salt shaker and sprinkle some salt in the corner. The first few days you might not even notice that you have sprinkled any salt there at all. But I'll guarantee you that if you sprinkle it there everyday, week in – week out, month in – month out, a bigger and bigger pile of salt will develop. So too goes the advancements in our athlete performances – increases made little by little every day.

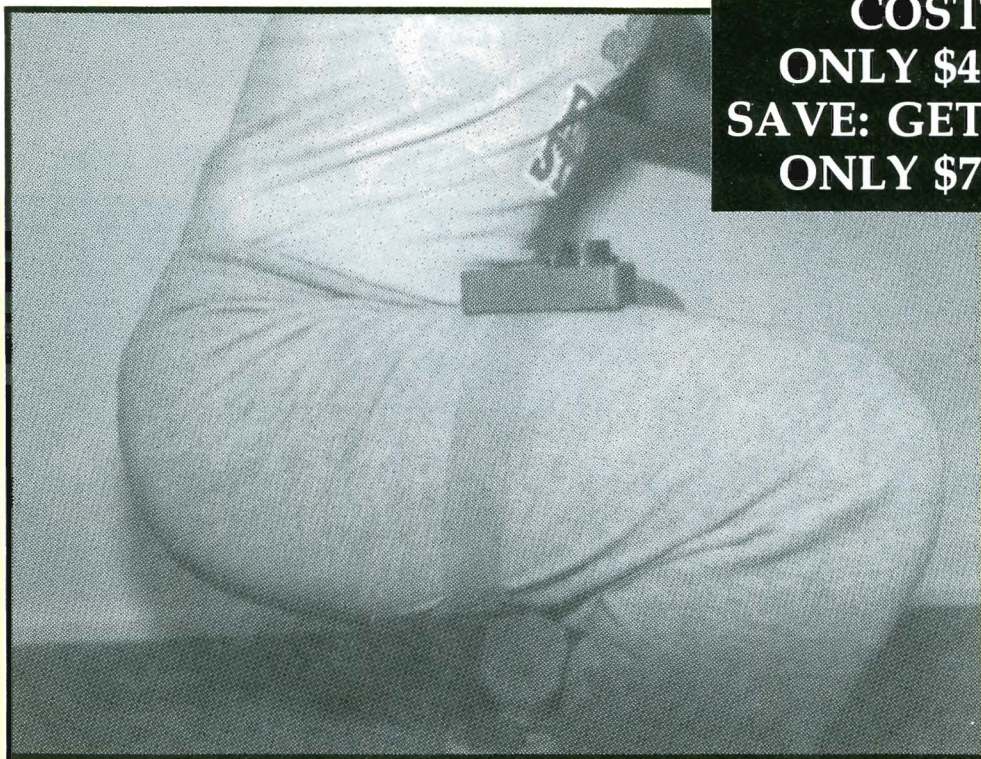
Train at 100%. Max out. Increase your flow zone level. Handled properly when the day of competition arrives you can relax and win. You can, and should, ease off, think 85% effort, perform within your capabilities, effortlessly, smoothly, successfully. And in the end, the day will come when you are competing that records will fall, peak performances beyond expectations will be achieved. It will happen almost without you knowing it.

Full realization of the accomplishment discovered only in retrospect. I believe this might be the basis for peak performances such as Bob Beamon's electrifying leap in the Mexico Olympic long jump. The record that Beamon broke was 26'8.25". His jump was an incredible 29'2.5". A full two feet six and one quarter inches further. Figure it out – 110% achieved.

Train at 100% – Perform at 85% – Relax and Win – Good Luck!



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