



#BetterThanYesterday

Episode 002: Putting Down Sport

An important decision in the path of any athlete, however one element of the athlete's daily actions can become lost from this moment onwards. That element is intent. Most athletes are extremely driven individuals, and therefore have a fantastic level of intent when training or competing. Often the difference between the elite and sub-elite is the level of intent the athlete has.

But when the reason for the intent is removed, it so often happens that the intent dwindles completely from the athlete's life. This is most commonly seen with the athlete's nutrition and physical activity regime following the decision to put sport down. Instead of eating for a body composition goal or thinking of food as fuel, mindless eating creeps in. Instead of targeted fitness training, long drawn and unstructured training sessions ensue.

We recommend a phase of refocusing to help align those once thought "performance parameters" to general health and fitness. Follow our 2 step guide below:

1. **Eat for health, enjoyment, and to maintain a healthy body weight** - Thinking of food as fuel should not be your top priority at this stage. Reverting to a healthy balanced diet will ensure you maintain your health into your later years.
2. **Train for functional strength, not performance or aesthetics** - The time spent training will be nowhere near what you used to require to perform at a high level or maintain a certain body composition, however this does not mean you should neglect the principles of training that you had been following. Functional strength training maintains healthy bones, a healthy heart, and promoted lean muscle mass retention whilst we age. This all means we can remain functional and independent for a far longer period, extending to making those day to day jobs like mowing the lawn a little easier!

There is so much outside of sport. Athletes should re-direct their intent into looking after their body to promote healthy living and optimal physical function.

Jason Varoxis
BHlthSc (Nutr&Diet) Hons, APD, AN, ASD
ISAK Accredited Sports Dietitian

Visit www.enlivennutrition.com.au for more health and nutritional information.