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Your Personal Trainer

Slow and Steady

 Written and moderated by David Ganulin, PT
 May 15, 2001

Walk into any health club and you'll see a lot of people moving awfully fast. They're the folks in the aerobics classes going through their gyrations. There's the chick on the elliptical trainer moving like a bat out of hell. There's the guy who is doing three reps per second on a bicep machine. There's another guy who is lifting waaaaay too much weight trying to impress the babe next to him. Then there's someone in the corner—built well—who's lifting slowly and deliberately. He doesn't look like his face is about to explode while he's exercising. Hmm.

Does He Know Something the Rest of Us Don't?

Maybe so, says Sensei John Mirrione, head instructor and founder of the **Harmony By Karate** dojo. Sensei John is one of the few martial art teachers that actually managed to bring a classical art into **The Reebok Sports Club/NY** and the **Sports Club-LA on the Upper East Side**, two of the more hipper-than-thou health clubs in New York City.

He and I talked about this "new" thing called "slow training." Fact of the matter is, slow training has been around for a long time. It pops up in the news every now and again as a technique that may decrease your workout time, get you over a plateau, and offer other benefits along those lines.

Sensei Mirrione employs a lot of slow training in his Shorenji Kempo classes. He feels that slow training might be making a comeback.

He says, "The foundation of fitness is to maximize strength and flexibility. If you practice proper breathing and meditation, you don't need increase your heart rate. To me it's all about decreasing the heart rate and stay relaxed and moving. That's really the elite way to train. The old way of the Oki masters is going to become the way of the future. That's my prediction."

Well, what about the multi-billion dollar fitness industry? What about all the fat machines? John has a very Zen way of putting it.

"This whole thing about getting on a machine and moving as fast as you can n such a smart idea. The heart is a muscle, and if that muscle has an off day, th die— plain and simple. Every exercise a person is doing should be done as slov possible to not only perfect the form but to work every single muscle and fire

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