

Starting Strength

Strength is Money in the Bank

by

Mark Rippetoe

There are more important things in life than money. There is family, learning, music and art, love and friendship, and your health. There is joy, laughter, passion, triumph, the rebound from failure, and the pleasure of accomplishment.

Time to grow up, son. All these important things have to be paid for, and some of them can be expensive. Money is handy like that.

Physical strength is like money in the bank, in that it enables you to do the things you want to do with your body. Work, play sports, hunt and fish, and be physically independent well into your later years – physical strength is the basis of all these things.

I know that sitting around the table at The Academy, solving calculus problems, grappling with tough philosophical questions, writing art criticism, calculating reparations payments, and making decisions for other people might seem to be a more satisfying use of time and intellect. If you're physically lazy, it certainly is.

But you can still do all these things while getting your deadlift up to a respectable weight. I manage.

Intellectual pursuits are indeed important, but having a strong enough body to host an intellect effectively, and to enjoy the fruits of intellectual accomplishment into old age is part of the equation. Strength is the antithesis of ill health, and ill health is not how an intellect flourishes.

In fact, the muscle mass that comes with the development of physical strength has been proven to prevent the diseases and afflictions that come with *careless aging*, the irresponsible lack of attention to maintaining the strength that is everyone's birthright. Everyone can get and stay strong, but this requires work, and excuses are easier than squats and deadlifts.

The muscle mass that is the hallmark of physical strength is the key to longevity, to health, and to the maintenance of physical function. In its absence, a towering intellect in a weak and sickly body is a sad legacy of physical laziness or profound misfortune.



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Unless you plan to get killed, you'd better plan for getting older. All the "cardio" in the world will do nothing to maintain your muscle mass, while effective strength training both grows muscle mass *and* keeps your heart and lungs in shape. If you have enough sense to know you must devote some time to exercise, strength training is the far more logical way to spend that time.

Money in the bank, muscle on the frame. Both are the consequences of effective planning, and both are among the most important things you can do – if you're thinking ahead.

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