

Make it Simple

Today's tip: **Make it simple.**

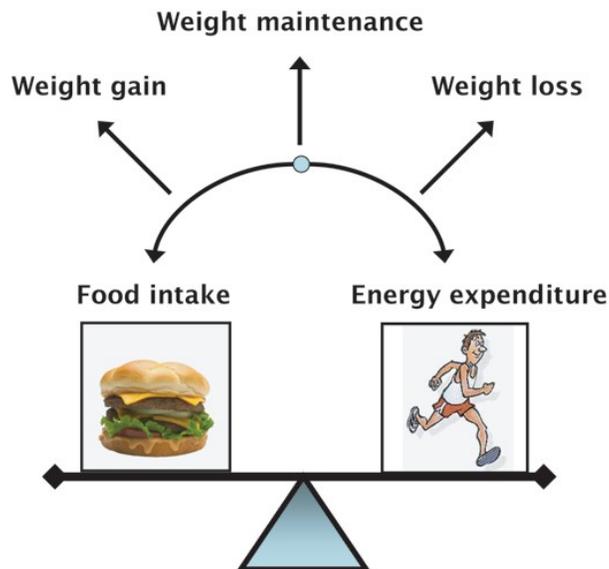
All day long, all across the web, folks are posting questions about why they're not losing weight, why they're not gaining weight, why their body comp isn't changing. They're frustrated, confused, and feeling helpless.

But if most of them just made things simple, progress would follow.

What does "make things simple" mean? Isn't the body, y'know, complicated? Well, we know that weight loss happens only when the body is in a negative energy balance (in other words, when there are fewer calories coming in than going out). And we know that weight gain happens only when the body is in a positive energy balance (in other words, when there are more calories coming in than going out). From this knowledge, we can infer two things:

1. If you aren't losing... you're not in a negative energy balance.
2. If you aren't gaining... you're not in a positive energy balance.

Of course, it does get a bit more complex than this but again, most folks get lost in the details. So let's keep it simple for now.



The energy balance spectrum. Image from scienceinschool.org.



Weight loss

Assuming you're eating right, training at least 5 hours per week, and still not losing, the explanation is simple: You're not losing because, for whatever reason, you're not in a negative energy balance. So, you must create one. How can you do that? Well, there are three viable ways:

1. Eat less
2. Exercise more
3. Eat less and exercise more

In the end, it's pretty simple, no? Typically I recommend the following strategy (again, assuming you're following KRE FUEL style eating and training at least 5 hours per week yet have stagnated):

1. Increase exercise volume to 7 hours per week
2. If stagnation occurs again, decrease calories
3. If stagnation occurs again, increase exercise to 9 hours per week
4. If stagnation occurs again, decrease calories

Your upper limit of exercise volume may be 10-12 hours per week, so make sure to cap it there while manipulating calories the rest of the way.

Weight gain

Assuming you're eating right, training at least 5 hours per week, and still aren't gaining, the reason is simple: You're not gaining because, for whatever reason, you're not in a positive energy balance. So, you must create one. How can you do that? Well, there are three ways:

1. Eat more
2. Exercise less
3. Eat more and exercise less

(Note: when trying to gain weight, it's important to maintain your exercise volume at about 4-5 hours per week as you still need a strong stimulus for muscle growth. Judging by the overall health status of the North American population, "Eat lots and don't exercise at all" doesn't appear to work very well for making you buff. So don't take this argument to its logical conclusion.)

I recommend the following strategy (again, assuming you're following a healthy eating plan and training at least 5 hours per week yet have stagnated).

1. Increase calorie intake
2. If stagnation occurs, decrease non-weight training calorie expenditure and make sure your weight training is stimulating growth
3. If stagnation occurs again, increase calories again and continue to manipulate them as you don't want your exercise volume to fall too much



That's it.

Most of the time, it's just that simple.

- Eat right, not half-assed "Oh, I sometimes eat vegetables."
- Train at least 5 hours per week using adequate intensity and well-chosen workout routines.
- Follow the steps above as indicated for meeting your goals.
- Lather, rinse, repeat until ripped and/or huge.

99.9% of all of the individuals I've worked with in my career who have properly followed the steps above have succeeded. Only those with serious medical issues don't respond. So make sure that during the course of your own transformation, you remember these simple lessons. Having learned them there's absolutely no excuse for not getting closer to your goals.