

Lesson 9 Supplemental

Optimizing Shock.

A brief outline of the sections in the Lesson 9 PowerPoint presentation:

- A theory of progressive adaptation.
- The three phases of the training cycle.
- Proficiency and the optimal entry level.
- Establishing a workout incrementally.

Training and Stress. Training for competitive distance running is a stress-producing activity. Stress occurs on a hormonal level in the human body. For example, stress hormones (such as adrenalin) are part of a syndrome that gears you up for exertion.

- **The more stress you produce** during a workout, the more your body has to adjust to it. We need an intelligible theory that explains that adjustment process.
- **The training cycle** (shock, adaptation, and exhaustion) is one way your body responds to a training regimen and its deluge of stress hormones.
- **Stress occurs** at a hidden physiological level, yet it's relatively simple to recognize and measure the physical effects of training-induced stress.

Measuring Distress. Although a “no-pain, no-gain” approach to training is currently out-of-vogue, many athletes accept and even expect a certain amount of distress to be associated with the process of establishing a new workout.

- **Anytime** you do something new in training, your body goes into shock, which lowers your resistance to stress at a time when you may want immediate results.
- **Certainly**, some distress can be a warranted sign that a new workout regimen is having the desired effect. But how much distress is optimal?
- **The following scale** measures the range of noticeable distress one might experience in response to a new workout regimen.

Which of these five levels do you think comes closest to an optimal number of stress symptoms and an optimal amount of distress?

- Extremely noticeable and debilitating.
- Very noticeable and problematic.
- Noticeable but not excessive.
- Barely noticeable; minor symptoms.
- Not noticeable; no symptoms.

Optimal Distress. Different coaches and athletes will have diverse opinions to the optimal stress issue. I believe the lowest, “no-symptom” level is ideal. In other words, your training needn't manifest distress in order to manifest positive results.