

# Pre-Workout Tips to Quickly Improve Your Workout Energy | Dr. Andy Galpin & Dr. Andrew Huberman

If the answer is no we're in a peaking phase then we're actually gonna use what I call acute state shifters So this is a whole host of little tricks that I have that can change HR V or any recovery metric within seconds Again these are not chronic fixes This is just I'm having a bad day today I feel like crap Can I make myself feel better right now And so I kind of call these parlor tricks a lot of the times and there's a 1000 of them We are certainly not gonna go over them but I'll give you some examples Um you can pull out first of all physical movement We do it You you'd be stunned I'll just doing some yoga moving around doing some jumping jacks starting your workout I mean you've probably experienced this It's sort of cliché in our world at this point But um if you ever do any serious lifting over a serious amount of time there will be days when which you walk into the gym and you feel awful and somehow that day you said a lifetime pr Yeah that's a strange strange phenomenon I uh I I've experienced that more than a few times Um It's rare The inverse is rare however you feel great you have a horrible workout It happens Um and it can happen for any number of different reasons But yeah I think the the former when isn't feeling very good and then somehow it's a terrific workout does set a kind of a seed of doubt as to how good our subjective assessments really are which I guess is why we're talking about um objective assessments like HR V And remember if it's a single day here uh you can even do hard training Uh people sort of have this idea like well if you get up and your recovery scores down do a lighter day that's probably like I'm probably never making that choice to be honest Uh Not in this situation Remember this is one bad day and we are in a phase of even trying to improve performance right now Like we're probably still training hard You will again often see I felt terrible when I trained super hard and it totally changed my day around this all can happen So exercise is my first love here Um Absolutely breathing Um any sort of upregulation breathing So we talked a lot about down regulation breathing just do the opposite right And so this is when hyperventilation strategies can work uh instead of accentuating the exhale you accentuate the inhale or you restrict the exhales this is working in the exact opposite situation you can also play little This is where things like music motivational quotes Um If you're the type that follows people on Instagram that motivates you or can work with these

things Um Coaching tactics these can be things like um finding out or talking about that person's why um you sort of shared something that a mantra you use Um when you're training hard to keep you go better I'm not gonna ask you to share that now But some people have this sometimes right Or you may have this conversation with your athlete that we we call this Finding out your why right So finding out like why are you really here What are we doing here And a lot of times you'll hear things like it's because I grew up poor and I don't ever want to be poor again Ok Great Well this is for my Children or like any number of things and and you can pull that out on these days You need to be really careful This is why I call these parlor tricks because when you play that card too often it starts to lose effect right And you can only dig to a hole so often before it's sort of like a um the same thing is with music right If you every time you go to the weight room it's blasting Death Metal at level 10 Well eventually it's not it's no longer motivating Right It's no longer helpful So um you want to deploy these things strategically Yeah the the phrase that comes to mind is signal the noise you know the nervous system especially the dopamine system and the adrenaline system which are a part of this larger system called the catecholamine system So that's dopamine epinephrine or epinephrine the the get up and go focus on external goals uh movement associated it and on and on that that system responds best to high signal relative to noise So if you're as you point out um listening music every time drinking a ton of caffeine energy drinks pre workout uh new tropics and then you know stacking all those things Uh I sometimes refer this as dopamine stacking informally referred to as dopamine stacking You're doing all those things and then you know first of all then you're wondering why later that afternoon or the next day you're feeling like you're you're under a cloud It's obvious your your catecholamine system crashed But it's also that um you don't necessarily become dependent on it It's just that you start to wonder whether or not you have the internal mechanisms and motivation to train without those things And so one tends to use them more and more and then they have a diminishing effect over time Um The rule that I've been um sort of applying has been I never do two workouts in a row where I'm stacking in um stimulants loud music and any kind of uh that sort of high potency inspiration However every set in the gym or when I run I really try and be diligent about form and attention to what I'm doing The one exception would be the long duration endurance work Part of the reason I do that work is to let my mind go into states of drifting Uh I'm not trying to think in complete sentences or even close to it Just let

my my brain kind of idle at a at a low hum Uh And for that reason generally listen to something that's more of a story or don't listen to anything at all and just let my thoughts kind of spool through anyway I don't want to take us too far off track but I think this um idea of signal to noise will resonate with the engineers out there But since most people are likely not engineers it is the way that the nervous system works Um Evidenced by the fact that whatever area of your body right now is in contact with a chair or um any other surface that's been in contact with for more than a few seconds you forget that it's in contact with it because there's low signal the noise at that point A similar note you actually mentioned stimulants basically there whether you're talking caffeine or any other stimulant any other cortisol modulators or adaptogen any of these things fall in the category If you're not using them consistently and you're having a rough day and all of a sudden you throw down 200 mg of caffeine Uh it's gonna change real fast the strong performance enhancing effect Yeah absolutely And for these reasons right Um so we mentioned a couple of them breathwork um food more calories just eating some food Uh sometimes we'll give people like what we call comfort foods So this is just like hey you're uh you know you're from Georgia and we know you love grits So we're having grits for breakfast Oh my great like just something to change your mood uh acute state shifters um to alter it The other couple of tricks here are light So if we know that maybe you see multiple people are struggling that day maybe we'll put on the lights extra bright we'll bring in some extra things and just get it more light in there and not it doesn't even count actually going outside and seeing the sun but perhaps we'll do that Um And then other little tricks that I've learned over the years is uh one particular thing I love is literally drawing a line a physical line on the ground And you look at that line and you say like I'm going to train today and I'm going to accomplish this effort Uh I'm not going to walk past this line and into that training space until I'm ready to give that effort And that may take a minute or 10 or whatever but it it it's the physical barrier is very important to saying like I'm not just gonna get through it I'm going to actually perform the way I want to perform or I'm not gonna do it and I'm not gonna cross this line until I'm ready to make that happen I I really like that tool It also brings to mind the importance of at least thinking about how your relationship with your phone during training um can perhaps help but also impede workout motivation and performance In an earlier episode you mentioned that if people are using their phone to play music during their workout that they establish the complete playlist prior to initiating the

workout and then not deviate from that playlist as opposed to changing it in the middle because there's just too much of a uh of an impulse to also check social media check email check text messages I mean the way I think about the phone actually is it's a bunch of um brain areas It's got a memory system for you It's got look up tables for look up tables it's got websites to look things up on the internet It's got photos I mean it is so rich with sensory data and it's so closely linked to our own brain architecture The algorithms are designed for those to be that way that I always think about it as bringing in a second person with me but that person is my twin that um has severe attention issues and for those that already have attention issues just think about this as a twin that would then compound you by tapping on your shoulder talking to you all the time interrupting you Uh somebody that you like a lot but that frankly is um is a little bit irritating in that they're they're interrupting your ability to really show up and also your ability to show up for them So I started to think about the phone as um an entire individual and that it represents me and and certainly not the better version of me Exactly You actually mentioned something else that we use uh occasionally in which uh what we call brain games or puzzles whether this is a crossword puzzle or something where you actually lose your thought of self for a second and your brain gets engaged in a task that you weren't regretting or even thinking about these can be stupid little games Uh it could be little challenges especially if you're like a group or a team setting Right Like we're gonna play one round of dodgeball or we're gonna play one round of of Thumb wars So you do encourage this Yeah I see So you would play like a thing instead of warming up It's like all right get it and everyone get going we you know get your foam roller your dime or whatever thing It's just like all right everyone line up and we're gonna play thumb ros to see who wins right Just like whatever Right And all of a sudden you snapped into a new mental shift um or literally playing brain games playing Tetris on your phone like any of these things um can work in this acute setting