

## ***Six Elements of the Total Athlete***

For 12 months I have been training to attempt another weightlifting world record in a different category and duration than my first hour long squat record. On September 29<sup>th</sup> 2012, in Niagara Falls, I will attempt to set a new category for the most amount of weight lifted in one minute. Whether I establish the new record or not remains to be seen. However, I can honestly tell you the only way I could even attempt this record is by training as a “total or whole athlete”!

When I talk about the “total or whole” athlete I am talking about the entire human system – physical and mental. There are countless fitness, health, nutrition and motivational programs across the US, however I have found that is just not enough. There are too many bigger, stronger, faster, taller and quicker athletes being born and trained on every day of every week. Then there are those who go a step further and enhance their performance with drugs or other forms of enhancements.

In preparing to set a new world record, I have once again learned that the total or whole athlete is comprised of:

1. Maximizing Activity specific technique or skill
2. Physical preparedness
3. Nutritional preparedness
4. Physical recovery
5. Injury avoidance
6. Mental performance

In my opinion, without these 6 separate but interconnected elements, reaching elite athletic performance at any age in any sport or activity is a challenge at best. If you are over 50, combining these points are even more critical to success and top performance no matter what your activity.

From what I have seen, most amateur programs cover 1 to 4. Some elite amateur programs or clubs may even cover 1 to 5. However, few programs cover and combine 1 to 6.

Adding the element of mental performance to elements 1 to 5, takes performance to a whole new level and, in my opinion, can take athletes beyond even elite status.

From my personal experience over the last 12 months, I have used mental performance as a focus enhancement and withdrawal tool. It has even allowed me to push beyond normal training and push my lactic acid tolerance to levels I thought not possible for myself, drug free.

It remains to be seen how well I perform on September 29<sup>th</sup>, 2012 in Niagara Falls. A lot can affect my performance on that day, sleep, nerves, focus, the weather (doing it outside),

overtraining, peaking early, however, no matter what the outcome I will know that I did my best by combining the 6 elements for a “total or whole” athletic training. Wish me luck!

As always, check with your doctor before starting any exercise program. Your doctor may even help you find an exercise program that’s safe and effective for you to start.

To find more information on Walter Urban and his World and National records please visit [www.walterurban.com](http://www.walterurban.com)