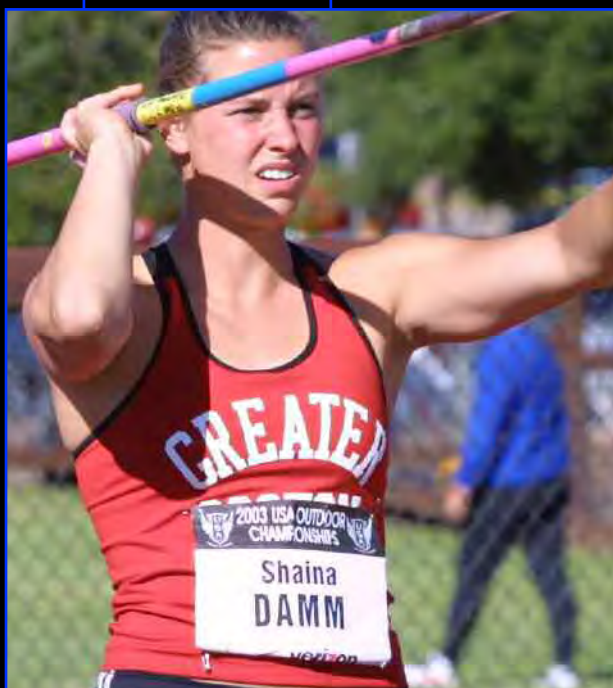


STRESSED STRENGTH

How stress can reduce the effectiveness of your training



Original Research
Bartholomew, J., et al. Strength gains after resistance training: The effect of stressful, negative life events. *Journal of Strength and Conditioning Research* 22:1215-1221, 2008.

IF PERFORMING AT THE HIGHEST LEVEL IS IMPORTANT TO YOU, THEN YOU, YOUR COACH, AND YOUR TRAINING PARTNER NEED TO ATTEND TO THE LIFE STRESS YOU MAY BE EXPERIENCING.

Science is really great. You know why? Because if you follow advice on how to train that is based on scientific inquiry, you are almost guaranteed that it will improve your performance just as it did in the study's subjects. With a 95% confidence interval, a method of mathematically detecting statistical significance, improvement is a heck of a lot higher than what you can expect from some athlete's or coach's "personal experience" or some coach's "success formula." Though the gains you make in a science-based program may vary from your training partner's—just as you may have an aptitude for math while your training partner has an aptitude for language—that does not invalidate what the research has found. There is, however, something that might indeed impact the gains you will make following that science-based program or any other program, for that matter—life stress.

Power Key: max strength, stress, social support, muscle growth