

A photograph of a man and a woman in a gym setting. The man is in the foreground, smiling, wearing a black tank top and a bright green towel draped over his shoulders. He is holding a black 5kg dumbbell. The woman is leaning over his shoulder from the left, smiling and looking down at him. She is wearing a white button-down shirt. The background is a bright, out-of-focus gym environment.

# Bodybuilding Makes Not Only Fit Body, But Fit Mind, Too



**Danijela Crevar** IFBB Pro Athlete, Mediterranean Champion, International Fitness Model, Personal Trainer, Author of the book: "Where Your Mind Goes, The Body Will Follow", Former Host of the TV Show: "Fitness for Everybody", Fitness Motivational Speaker.

## By Danijela Crevar

**W**ord bodybuilding says everything. It is so easy to understand meaning of this word and what this sport is about. Bodybuilding is the best sport when it comes to making your body proportionally shaped and fit.

This sport is not only about the body. More important, this great physical activity is about health, too. Are you looking for health benefits of weight training and aerobic exercise? Bodybuilding has it all. Bodybuilding decreases risk of developing coronary heart disease. By engaging in physical activities such as weight training and aerobic exercise you have more chance to reduce and control high blood pressure, obesity and high cholesterol. Bodybuilding has such great and healthy impact on muscle, bones and joints. Bodybuilding keeps your body and muscle strong and flexible. Bodybuilding and weight training can definitely help you with osteoporosis and arthritis.

These health benefits of weight training and aerobic exercise are already well known. Can our brain and mind benefit from bodybuilding, weight training exercise and aerobic exercise? What do we know about that?

Since, I was a little girl, I heard for sayings "In healthy body, healthy mind". Having over twenty years of experience in bodybuilding and fitness, I can tell you that this saying makes so much sense and it's so true.

Keeping your body healthy and fit, your mind will keep healthy and fit, too.

Bodybuilding, weight training exercise and aerobic exercise can boost our mind and mental well being. Weight training and aerobic exercise can help with reduction in stress, anxiety and depression. Weight training and aerobic exercise can help in rising of self esteem and confidence. This is so important for people who have low self esteem. Bodybuilding exercise can boost your self esteem and confidence, by helping you to develop positive self image. Developing positive self image will happen as the result of changes in body shape as you begin to lose weight or feel your body gets leaner, stronger and better.

Bodybuilding, weight training and aerobic exercise can improve your mood and help you deal better and easier with negative emotions. The way weight training and aerobic exercise can improve mood is because this exercise will make you feel good. Physical activity, weight training and aerobic exercise help releases of endorphin. Endorphin is brain chemicals which influence mood. Bodybuilding exercise can help you

sleep better, reduce fatigue and psychological tension.

Too much stress and anxiety can affect your mental health and mind. The negative effects of stress are:

- stress causes negative thinking
- stress takes so much of our physical and mental energy
- stress destroy enjoyment in life
- stress reduces ability to focus

Stress is body's reaction to physical or emotional change.

Physical symptoms may include headaches, muscle pain, chest pain, weight gain or weight loss, etc

Anxiety is different from stress. Anxiety is a feeling of nervousness, fear, worry. Anxiety could be caused by: stress at work place, stress and problems in a personal relationship, financial stress, emotional stress, and etc. Some physical symptoms of anxiety include: difficulty breathing, anxiety interferes with ability to sleep, upset stomach, dizziness, abnormal heart rhythms, restlessness, trouble concentrating, irritability, muscle tension, etc.

Body building, weight training exercise and aerobic exercise can help your mind and brain by protecting your thinking and memory. Millions of people experience memory and thinking problems as they get older. The worst case scenario is when Alzheimer's disease affects brain cells, which destroys memory and thinking. Alzheimer's disease brings gradually loss of mental functions like thinking, remembering and planning.

Weight training and aerobic exercise gets the blood flow-





ing and your brain needs a lot of blood to function correctly. Having a healthy blood flow can keep your brain and mind function properly. It can keep your thinking, remembering and planning skills work for you, not against you.

Depression is a medical condition and it could be caused by genetics, life difficult situations, and so on. But more than anything depression is the way people react to what happens in their lives.

Some symptoms of depression are:

lack of energy and feeling tired all the time

- ▶ weight gain or weight loss
- ▶ inability to sleep well and change in sleep patterns
- ▶ aches and pain in body and muscles
- irritability, anger or anxiety
- ▶ inability to enjoy life
- ▶ inability to focus and concentrate
- ▶ lack of motivation
- ▶ low mental and physical energy

Weight training and aerobic exercise can treat depression naturally. Bodybuilding, weight training and aerobic exercise increase self esteem, improve your health and body, lift your mood, reduce stress and frustration, improve your sleeping patterns, distract your mind from worries and difficult life events and situations, help you gain control of your life, body and mind.

Weight training exercise and aerobic exercise are very good stress and tension reliever. Physical activities will keep your body and mind relaxed, refreshed and calm. With weight train-

ing and aerobic exercise, you will have more positive impact on psychological and physical health.

Weight training and aerobic exercise gives you a feeling of empowerment over your mind and body. When you are physically active and you exercise, you are taking active control over your health and that improves your body and the state of mind.

Bodybuilding, weigh training and aerobic exercise improve your energy level, much needed for your body. In the same time your brain and mind needs mental energy so you can concentrate and focus better.

When you exercise you breath deeper, and that way you bring more oxygen to the body and brain. Oxygen keeps your brain healthy. Bodybuilding, weight training and aerobic exercise improve the efficiency of our mind. Overall health of mind and body will be enhanced when you are physical active. The bottom line... Weight training exercise and aerobic exercise are so essential and phenomenal for healthy mind and healthy body. Having healthy and strong mind and body, means balance and great connection between mind and body. To improve the health of your mind, the best would be to incorporate weight training, aerobic exercise, healthy nutrition and rest. Healthy eating habits and the food you eat can affect your thinking and memory. It is so important what you put in your body and from that depends how your brain and mind will improve their function.

Eating foods rich in antioxidants can improve focus and memory. Foods high in antioxidants include fruits and vegetables, such as spinach, tomatoes, oranges etc. Eating whole grains, fruit and vegetables will supply your brain with glucose. If your blood glucose level drops below normal, you can become dizzy. Try to maintain the normal glucose level in your blood without consuming the glucose in a form of sugar. Food rich in iron mineral provide your brain and mind with oxygen. Iron rich foods include lean meat, poultry, raising, dry apricots, and the like . Food rich in Vitamin B is very important for healthy mind. Good food sources of the B vitamin are: milk, cheese, fish, meat, potatoes, bananas, eggs etc. Eating organic foods reduces toxins that would go into your body and brain. Choosing organic food, your body and mind will benefit greatly. Water is essential for healthy mind and body. Your brain is 75% water. Staying hydrated benefits your body and brain by keeping you detoxified and oxygenated. Reducing fast food as much as you can will help keep you fit in your mind and body. To improve your memories avoid alcohol and heavy drinking.

Weight training exercise, aerobic exercise and right nutrition have beneficial effects on mental sharpness and strong healthy mind. Work on your body, work on your mind and they will serve you better in years to come.

Weight training and aerobic exercise raise your self esteem and sense of empowerment. Bodybuilding offers exercise which will make you stronger and more energetic. The more energetic and stronger you feel, the greater is your confidence and self esteem. With strong, healthy and positive confidence and self esteem, you will be able to fight more every day stress, anxiety and depression. You will be in control of your life, health, mind and body. **2**