

# Fitness gains occur after workout

By Brad Stulberg, *Outside*

Although it may seem counterintuitive, you don't get faster, bigger, or stronger during a workout. The main function of hard physical training is to break your body down so it can grow back stronger.

Fitness gains come later, during recovery, and recent research is revealing that simply being sedentary post-workout isn't enough: in order to maximize recovery, you must also relax your mind.

"More and more evidence suggests that stress is stress," says John Kiely, senior lecturer at the University of Central Lancashire's Institute for Coaching and Performance. "If you finish a workout and throw yourself into something that is mentally or emotionally taxing, even if you are seated with your feet up, odds are that you'll still obstruct the recovery and adaptation process."

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