

The Distance Coaching

Training Resource Material

*An educated approach to
running program
design*



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We care about your health



WELCOME: and thank you for choosing our program

On behalf of the team, I thank you for allowing The Distance to work with you to turn your running goals into a reality.

You know, it makes no difference whether your goal is to be faster, to lose weight, to run PB's or simply to just get active. By choosing to purchase a training program you have already taken a significant step to achieving your goal.

"turn your running goals into a reality"



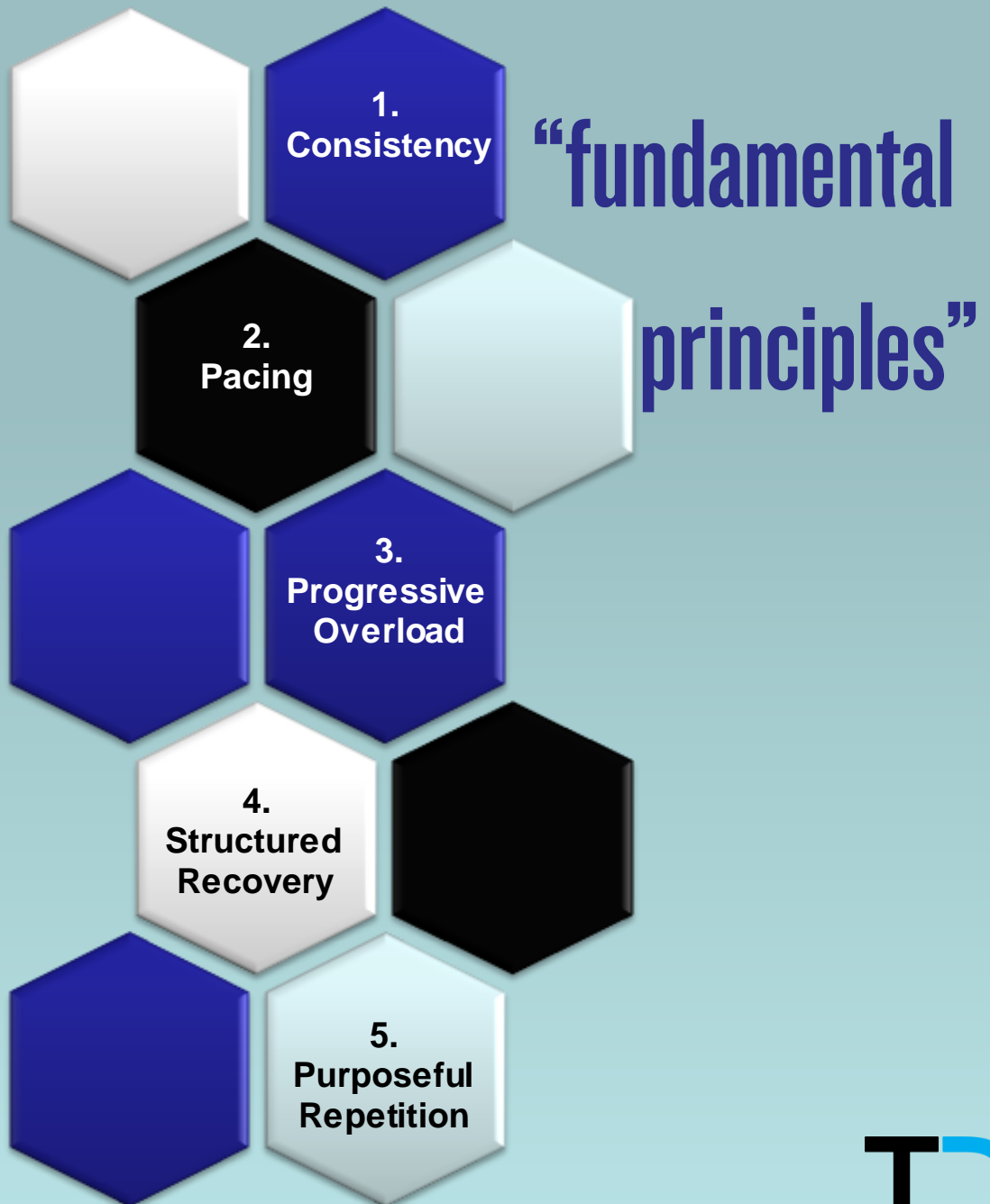
The purpose of the document is to provide you with some additional context, information and advice to guide you through your training program. Obviously, this is not a face-to-face coaching relationship so we aim to supply you with all of the training support material you may need, right here in this document.



PILLARS: the building blocks of our programs

Our programs are designed with 5 fundamental principles in mind. This document explores these principles in detail and will teach you **why** and **how** our programs are structured the way they are.

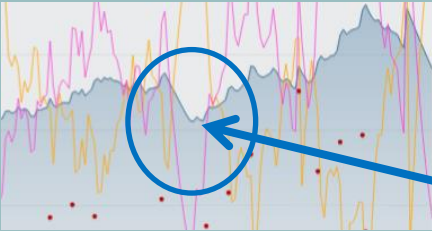
Our training programs ask a lot of our athletes, and we believe it is important that you understand **why** .



PILLARS : 1. consistency

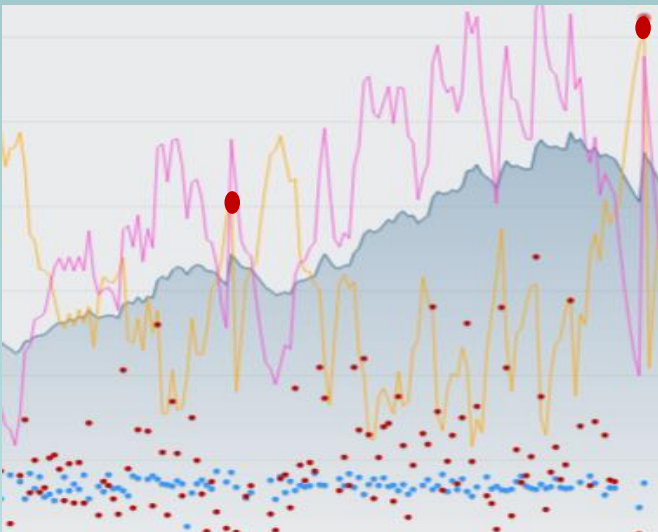
"A week of good training is valuable, but a month of good training is invaluable".

There is no single-training-session that will make you a better running, and very few of the individual training sessions in our programs are truly difficult. Instead, our programs will get you to the start line in really good shape as a result of the **overall** work, not one particular session. So do your best to complete every session.



To illustrate the impact of inconsistency, this is what happens after a week of missed training. The blue 'mountain-like' line is a measure of fitness and the noticeable drop in the line is a clear indicator of lost aerobic conditioning. Once lost, you have no option but to resume training sensibly and build your fitness back up from where it fell.

Consistency Pays Off.....



This chart displays a 4 month training lead up to a significant event (red dot at top right) with 1 lead up event during the program (the next highest red dot just left of the middle).

You will notice the continuous overall improvement in aerobic conditioning, as depicted by the climbing blue 'mountain-like' line. Note the 'dips' in fitness for taper, and light week after the lead up event. This steady increase in fitness is the sum of many sessions over an extended period of time and a consistent approach to training.

PILLARS : 2. pacing

Pacing - "Instinctive Intensity"

"The art of pacing"..... We've seen countless races ruined by poor pacing, and as a result, our programs focus heavily on **teaching** and **reinforcing** the importance of pacing (instinctive intensity).

Most athletes use a GPS and Heart Rate based device and these tools are fantastic for reinforcing intensity and pace, but heart rates can vary between athletes. For example, a prescribed session at 150bpm for one athlete may be an easy paced run, but for another, the same heart rate may be a solid or fast paced run.

Because of this, our programs are designed around "Instinctive Intensity" (aka 'feel' or 'perceived exertion') which can be uniquely applied to every individual athlete.

"perceived exertion"

"feel"

"good pacing makes great racing"

Every session in every program we write has a prescribed pace. In fact, we often prescribe multiple paces within individual sessions.

Throughout the program, you will be asked to run at the following paces:

PACE DESCRIPTION	INTENSITY
F = Fast	(95%+)
S/F = Solid / Fast	(90-95%)
S = Solid	(80-90%)
M/S = Moderate / Solid	(70-80%)
M = Moderate	(60 – 70%)
E/M = Easy/Moderate	(50-60%)
E = Easy	(up to 50%)
R = Race Pace	(pace that you will aim to race at)

PILLARS : 2. pacing : stick to the prescribed pace

"Don't be tempted to run too fast"

Every session in every one of our programs uses the pace/intensities described previously. The importance of sticking to the prescribed intensity cannot be under-emphasised.

As an athlete, it is important that you know the impact of changing the intensity of a session or part of a session - it actually changes the physiological outcome of the session.

"physiologically suitable"



For example, a session that prescribes 5x800m @ "S" pace is likely to have been prescribed in the program to target an athletes' aerobic strength and capacity. But, if the athlete changes the intensity to "F" pace simply because 'they are feeling strong', this same 5x800m session becomes more of a VO₂ or lactate session, and no longer fits into the rhythm of the overall program and may not be *physiologically suitable* for the athletes' current conditioning.

"simply because they are feeling strong"

PILLARS : 2. pacing : easy means easy

"Save your legs"



"let go of the stigma of running slowly"

Easy Means Easy & Not Much Fast - here's why:

As athletes, we know how difficult it can be to run "**slowly**".

But it is crucial, and you need to let go of the stigma of running "slowly".

Validating a run based on its average pace is a dangerous proposition and often leads to 'over reaching', 'under-recovering' and 'injury'.

Our programs often prescribe long blocks of 'easy' paced running. On the contrary however, there is not a lot of genuinely 'Fast' running. Remember, we are coaching you for long-distance running, not middle distance or sprinting, so it's important to have a well-developed aerobic capacity, strength and the ability to pull it all together with the right pacing.

As a junior athlete, my coach once told me to "save your fast running for when the Program asks you to run fast – and for race day. Otherwise, save your legs and run easy".

Running at **fast** pace (95%+ intensity) certainly has its place and these types of sessions are strategically placed into our programs. Performing good quality 'fast' paced sessions is how the body becomes efficient at mitigating lactic acid and more efficient at burning carbohydrates as fuel.

easy paced running develops physical strength, reinforces strong technique and trains the body to utilise fat as a source of fuel rather than carbohydrates. Amassing many km's at an 'easy' pace will allow you to run at a faster 'actual pace' before your body begins to shift from drawing upon fat as its primary fuel source.



PILLARS : 2. pacing : training in the middle

The 'other' pace

Now that you know a little more about the importance of running '**easy**' and running '**fast**', here is a little more about "the other" pace – '**moderate**'.

Training "in the middle" is not usually hard enough to elicit any meaningful physiological adaptation like those mentioned previously.

Yet it is often too hard to permit any required recovery or increase fatty acid usage – so training entirely at moderate pace really doesn't hit-the-mark in any area specifically.



'Moderate' pace has its place

Training at '**moderate**' pace isn't all bad and our training programs often prescribe '**moderate**' pace, for a purpose.

We will ask our athletes to incorporate blocks of '**moderate**' paced running, usually as part of a long weekend run – these sessions are referred to in the programs as "Aerobic Build Run's" that start at an **easy** pace and progressively get faster in pace and perceptually more difficult.

These types of runs simulate race conditions where the opening km's feel "**easy**" and progressively feel 'harder', even if the actual pace has not changed significantly.

So, training "in the middle" does have a purpose but our athletes will generally only see this pace for periods within a longer session.

Example Session – Aerobic Build Run

30min steady **E** pace run
20min steady **M** pace run
10min steady **S/F** pace run
10min **E** cool down

Notes:

Be real with the pace changes. Make them noticeable, but they are a pace you can hold for the prescribed duration.



PILLARS : 2. pacing : yesterday's pace vs today's pace

"Developing *INSTINCTING INTENSITY*"

Not All Days Are Diamonds..... and the run you did yesterday, and the day before that, and the one before that, all add up to equal **FATIGUE**.

Picture the run that you did yesterday – you cruised through it at an 'easy/moderate' pace and averaged 5:00/km. But today, the same run at the same 'easy/moderate' pace may yield a pace of 5:15/km. Your Heart Rate and GPS device can confirm this.

"Not All Days Are Diamonds"

The moral of the story here is don't go chasing the clock. Yes, acknowledge what your device is telling you, but forget how fast you are actually running and focus (as the program dictates) on the prescribed Intensity.

Learn to become comfortable relying on what your **body** is actually telling you – ask yourself; *"how does this pace 'feel' today"?*

If the pace you are running feels more like **solid** pace rather than **easy/moderate**, then accept that it *is solid* pace and you need to slow down, (today).



This is what we call **instinctive intensity** – it is the key to running your race event at **YOUR pace** without becoming swept up in the pace of the crowd, the emotions of the day and the natural adrenaline that you will be flooded with on race day.

"Don't go chasing the clock"

PILLARS : 3. progressive overload

Build, build, build + recovery = improve

A long-held training principle in the world of running is that of “**Progressive Overload**”. Progressive Overload is the gradual increase of stress placed upon the body during exercise training.

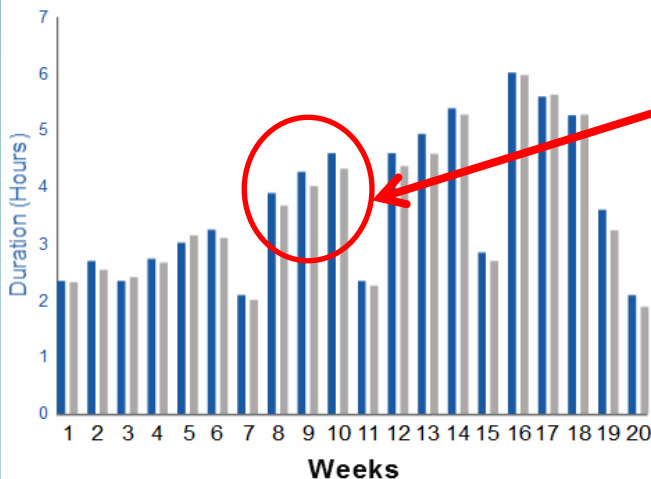


“gradual increase of stress”

Conceptually, when you complete a session, it places physical stress on the body and breaks your body down (sometimes leaving you sore). This stress then stimulates the body to repair (with adequate recovery) to a level **beyond where it was** prior to the completed session. The net result of this process is improved fitness.



Training Load By Week



In practical terms, each week the program will get a little more intense and a little longer in distance. Of course, Progressive Overload is limited by what an athlete's body can absorb before injury or overwhelming fatigue, both of which can be avoided by strategically prescribing recovery sessions and rest days.

The above chart exemplifies a well structured and gradual 'progressive overload', where the volume (distance, duration and intensity) all progressively increase, then reduce as the athlete approaches competition.

PILLARS : 4. structured recovery : rest days

Progressive Overload is a sound principle – it's proven to be effective but as humans, we can only overload our body's to a point. Our programs are designed with lifestyle, ability and adequate recovery in mind.

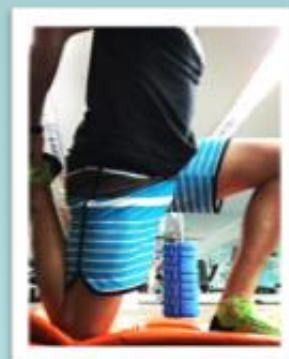
"we can only overload our body's to a point"

In most of our programs you will benefit from **TWO** forms of recovery:

1

Micro-cycle recovery – recovery **DAYS** within each week. Most of our programs have 3-4 non-running days. These should be spent recovering, stretching, walking and using a foam roller for myofascial release.

Day 64	65	66	67	68	69	70
 Rest or 20min Walk & Stretch Rest day. Optional 20min walk followed by 20-30min stretch	 8.00km Quality Run - Funky 800's (500/200/100) Quality Session 10min E warm Up 4x100m Strides with walk back recovery Main Set: 3x (500...more... P: 500/200/100, then straight into the next. Only have a walk recovery after the 3rd rep and 6th rep...more... P: 0:50:00	 5.00 km Recovery run - 30min E 30 minute super easy RECOVERY run. Really enjoy this run. Hold good form, but this is a no-str...more... P: Good stretch after. Hydration. Emphasis on Duration here, don't worry about distance. P: 0:30:00	 12.5 km Tempo - 4km, 3km, 2km, 1km Big Tempo Session 10min Easy warm up 4x100m strides with walk back recovery 4km, 3km, 2km...more... P: Last session of this Tempo block. By now you should know the pace you want to run this reps at. N...more... P: 1:10:00	 Rest Day Give your body the chance to absorb the recent training load, repair and refresh.	 Rest or 20min Walk & Stretch Rest day. Optional 20min walk followed by 20-30min stretch	 15.5km On the CLOCK! Build Run Aerobic Time-Based Build Run 30min E 20min M/S 15min F 10min E P: The 30min E is as much for warm up as it is to add a bit of fatigue to your legs before ramping u...more... P: 1:15:00

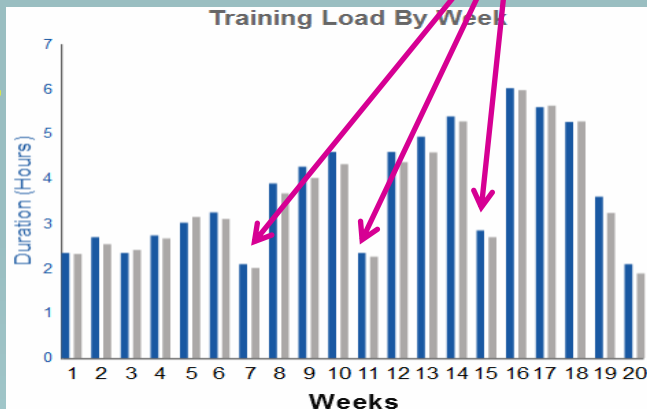


PILLARS : 4. structured recovery : light week

Lets explore the 2nd form of recovery that we build into our programs:

2

Macro-cycle recovery – a **LIGHT WEEK** of training after a block of heavy intense work. Most of our programs work on a 3-1 cycle (3 weeks of training load / 1 week recovery load). Designed to allow the body to recover and repair from a longer block of intense training and allow your body to absorb and adapt to the recent training load.



The importance of recovery after a session is well documented, and I won't add to this topic here.

Lets briefly discuss the importance of the right amount of rest **during** a session, in between

reps or sets, using the example session of 6x800m @ 'fast' pace.

"to allow complete aerobic recovery....."

Typically, this type of session would see about **3min static** recovery. This type of length of recovery is prescribed to allow complete aerobic recovery between reps so that you can attack the next rep with full intensity which generates the intended physiological outcomes that the session is designed for.

Now, lets say we shortened the recovery to **1 min**, or made the recovery a **'jog'** rather than a static/walk recovery. The effect of this is that you would start the next 800m rep before you were fully recovered which would reduce your ability to attack the next rep with the same intensity and miss the physiological outcome of this highly intense session.

PILLARS : 5. purposeful repetition

"Learn, apply, adapt, progress"

WE love repetition.....for good reasons. As mentioned previously, most of our programs operate on 4 week blocks made up of 3 week's of quality training followed by 1 week of lighter recovery.



During the 3 week training cycles you will often notice progressions (or patterns) in the sessions, for example, 5x1km, 7x1km, 9x1km.

Rather than seeing this type of repetition as boring, athletes should see the opportunity that repeating a similar session provides.

Below are a few benefits that you should keep in mind:

"It's hard to see improvements if there is nothing to compare to"

Why Repetition Works....

- Apply lessons learned from previous attempts
- Gauge performance – it's hard to see improvements if there is nothing to compare to
- Monitor fatigue and illness – a significantly inferior performance may indicate over-training, excess fatigue, under-recovery or illness.

Adding subtle progressions to well-structured sessions that have a particular physiological objective is the art of program design.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: About Us
Appendix B: Disclaimer

About Us :

With a passion for anatomy and the physiology of exercise, our head coach, Grant Hornsby, is an accomplished age group Marathon and Cross Country runner, Ironman Triathlete and 3 time World Championship representative.



Grant is an accredited Lvl 2 Advanced Athletics Australia running coach, former Athletics Australia course facilitator, certified TrainingPeaks coach and holds a B.App.Sci. (Human Movement) and Post Grad.Dip. (Exercise Science).

As part of his studies, Grant spent extended periods of time at the Victorian Institute of Sport, Cricket Victoria, and later spent several years in the AFL industry as a high performance conditioning coach.

With over twenty years of competitive endurance sport, Grant is passionate about applying his broad knowledge to the educational and physical development of athletes. Grant prides himself on his tailored and thoughtful approach to running program design.

Grant Hornsby

The Distance Coaching

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We care about your health :

ATTENTION: Always consult a physician before starting a workout program, changing your workout routine, or changing your diet. Not all workout routine, exercises and/or activities are suitable for everyone. If you feel discomfort or pain, you must discontinue any exercise and consult a medical expert. The training plans and advice presented to you are in no way intended as a substitute for medical or psychological counselling

The fitness, nutrition, and related information and recommendations provided by The Distance Coaching are for educational purposes only and are not intended as a substitute for medical advice from your health care provider. The Distance Coaching is not a medical organization. We encourage and advise you to seek professional medical advice before beginning any physical fitness effort or program. Do not start a diet or fitness routine with us if your health care provider advises against it. Services provided by The Distance Coaching are intended for use only by healthy adult individuals.

