

PEAK PERFORMANCE

UCSF Cycling to Health
March 28, 2018

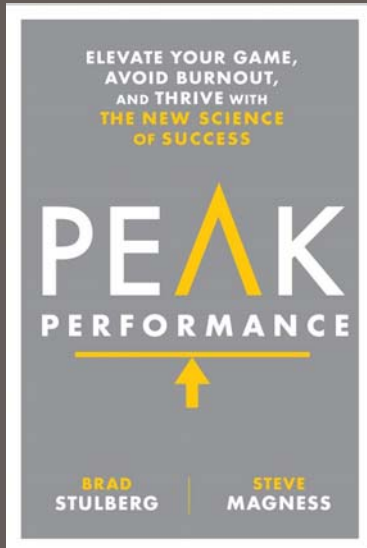
Brad Stulberg

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**Ideas on how to achieve your
best as athletes and people.**

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Behind the Book



- Two-plus years researching and reporting on the science of human performance:
 - Athletes, artists, intellectuals, entrepreneurs
 - Cognitive science, neuroscience, psychology, physiology, philosophy
- Looked across traditionally siloed domains and disciplines, common themes emerged.
- We wanted to get as close to the “truth” as possible
- Over 150 references! Not “bro-science.” No “hacks.” Real science.

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Three Major Themes

1) The Growth Equation: Stress + Rest = Growth

2) Priming: The importance of your surroundings

3) Purpose: The Power of Purpose, Self-Transcendence, to *Sustain* Peak Performance

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How Do You Make a Muscle Bigger?



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How Do You Get Better at Playing the Piano?



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How Do You Usher in Creativity, Breakthrough Thinking?

1. Immersion
2. Incubation
3. Insight



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Stress

**A stimulus that challenges you,
makes you uncomfortable**

- “Just-manageable challenges” that are slightly outside of your comfort zone

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Rest

Transition from fight or flight stress response, allow your conscious, effortful thinking mind to turn off, reflect and recover.



The Universal Growth Equation

Stress + Rest = Growth

- Too much stress, not enough rest = injury, illness, burnout
- Not enough stress, too much rest = complacency, stagnation

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Beyond just individuals



Process > Outcomes

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Surround Yourself Wisely

- Motivation is contagious
- Weakest link often more influential than strongest link



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Even matters for the most self-disciplined in the world...



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Deep-Focus Work

Studies show multitasking = 40 percent
less work, and with lower quality

1 percent of people can effectively
multitask. Odds are, that's *not* you.
(That's just how odds work.)

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And Yet It's Really Hard To Resist the Urge



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Self-Transcendence and Purpose



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Central Governor Model of Fatigue (Noakes)

Brain shuts down body when body still may have more to give

- Evolutionary protective mechanism
- Protect the literal “self”

Fear is ego-driven, to protect our “selves”

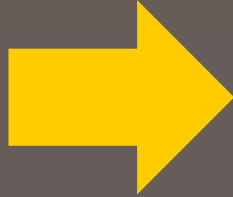
- Just think about why we don’t take risks?
- Why we don’t really go for it?
- Why we hold back?
- True in both physical and non-physical pursuits

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Psychobiological Model of Fatigue (Marcora)

- Perception of effort versus motivation

- Train to decrease perception of effort
- Increase motivation



Just ask yourself: are you more likely to hang in there and endure discomfort if you are doing something for someone else?

- Hospital janitors
- Office workers
- Artists
- Athletes

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Questions and Discussion

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