

## My Week With Rachel and Alwyn Cosgrove

by  
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Last week I had the opportunity to spend four days with Rachel and Alwyn Cosgrove. It was a great experience in which I learned a lot. Alwyn has trained several world champions and Olympians. He has also published a couple of best-selling books *The New Rules of Lifting*, *The New Rules of Lifting for Women*, and *Afterburn*. He has been featured in many magazines such as Mens Health. In the fitness world he is one of the top trainers in the business. Rachel has also written for many publications and is also considered to be one of the top trainers in the field.

Alwyn has built a reputation as being the “go to” trainer in the world for fat loss. While I was in his facility I was able to get an inside look at the methods that he uses to produce such unbelievable results. The approach that Alwyn uses has been refined through years of research and real world experience.

The question that everyone wants know when they speak with Alwyn is how does he produce such amazing results with his clients. He gave a detailed lecture on how he creates his programs. His first step in creating a program is to compare what the client needs with what their goals are and then develop a program that gives them both what they need and what they want. When he begins to create a program, he does so with the big picture in mind. With the big picture in mind he creates a program that will allow the client to reach a goal in 12-16 weeks. One of the keys to his success is that he creates the program with only one goal in mind. He says that too many times trainers and clients focus on too many goals at once. Instead you should pick one goal and work like crazy to accomplish it and then move onto the next goal.

When Alwyn creates programs for fat loss he has a hierarchy in which certain exercises take precedence over others. All fat loss programs should contain some type of compound movement resistance training and interval energy systems work. So if a client only has 2-4 hours per week to train then they will spend that time doing the things which will produce the best results, which are resistance training and intervals. If the client has more time than this, then steady state aerobic training may be added into the program. Alwyn feels that aerobics are very overrated in terms of fat loss. He says that he tried aerobics for a while and the results were not that great. The only place for aerobics in a fat loss program is when the client has endless amounts of time to train and has already done all of their resistance training and interval work. Very rarely is this the case though.

The programs that Alwyn creates for his clients are changed every 3-6 weeks depending on the individual and the program. One key area of all of his programs is his attention to what people in today's society need. He stated that people today are not as active as they used to be. For many of the people that he trains the only activity that they get is when they are training with him. Because of this he feels that today's programs must include things that never had to be included in programs of the past. Today's programs must teach people how to move properly, have better posture, and improve their body

composition. Today's programs must include some sort of mobility work, elasticity (being able to jump and land), core work, prehabilitation (injury prevention), strength, energy systems work, and recovery. All of these areas are addressed in every program that he writes.

Most everyone today has the same postural problems because we all sit too much and spend too much time driving and on the computer. These positions create tight hips, glutes that aren't functioning properly, tight shoulders, and forward head posture. Almost everyone who trains needs work on these areas.

Yes, while I was there he did put us through some workouts. All I can say is they were not easy.

Here are some other tidbits that he gave us during the week.

- If you are having trouble sleeping make sure that your room is completely dark. NO LIGHT AT ALL
- Strengthen your core and your major lifts will improve
- Many people need to improve the mobility of their ankles. The ankles are one of the keys to many postural problems.
- Make your weakest link your top training priority and everything will improve.
- Strength improves speed, agility, and quickness
- Aerobics suck for fat loss. Use resistance training to create your cardio.
- Focus on recovery by eating well, foam rolling, stretching, contrast showers, and sleep. Better recovery mean better results.