



Legendary Strength Podcast Episode 11

My Training Goals

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Hey, it's Logan Christopher here from the Legendary Strength podcast. I took a week off the previous one. I just had a lot of other things going on and wanted some time off with the family and all that for Christmas but we're back. This podcast is going out on the 31st so Happy New Year's Eve to everyone. Happy New Year! Happy 2013 coming up!

We survived the Mayan apocalypse and everything seems the same but you can choose to make this year your best one ever. That's what I do every year and actually I do believe it comes true every single year. Around this time, people talk about their resolutions and really they're not resolving to do anything. They might think of doing one thing.

I really use it as a time to spend a lot of time to review what I've done in the previous year as well as plan out what I'm going to do in the next on. By doing this, I've achieved a certain level of success in all different areas of my life because I do focus on all the different areas of my life because all the different areas are important.

This being the case here, we're going to be talking primarily about training. If you do want some more information regarding the business and actually, I talk more about the processes that I go through to do

this, I did a podcast with my friend Tyler Bramlett that is over at FitnessMoney.com. That's the other podcast both of us have where we talk about growing a fitness-related business whether as a personal trainer or doing the online thing like I'm doing.

I highly encourage you to go listen to that one because everything we talk about over there like the steps of goal setting, the processes I go through and that he went through, it's really important for all areas of life but they also pertain to your training goals as well. So I would encourage you to go ahead and [download or subscribe to that podcast](#) as well to get the details on that. I don't want to go over the same exact information on this one so I figured I'd take a slightly different slant on what we're covering today.

I actually want to go through my training goals. There are a couple of reasons to do this. One important factor, one powerful factor that can be used when you're setting goals—and there is a caveat with this so I will mention it as well—is **making a public commitment** with your goals. If you say you're going to do something, you put yourself on the line, and you do it live for a crowd or a whole bunch of people.

I'm going to tell you the goals that I have set that I plan to accomplish in 2013. When we come back a year from now in 2014, I'm going to have to say whether I've achieved these goals or not. By having this public commitment out here, that's going to put more pressure on me to make sure I actually go through with everything and achieve these goals no matter what. That is the plan. That's why I'm doing it.

With some people, this really does depend on a number of factors. With some goals, it is best to keep them secret. Don't even tell anyone. In certain cases, it seems the act of telling people you're going to do something replaces the actual act of doing it. If you say you're going to do it then that's where you spend all your things and you're a talking big. That seems to be the case for some people in some instances. In other cases, you don't want to tell other people because they're going to say, "Oh no. You can't do that." They're going to stop you. They're certainly not going to help you in achieving your goals.

I don't think either of those two things is going to take place here so I'm doing it in a public commitment type deal so that I'm more accountable for my goals and I have a little bit more incentive in order to do this. I've done this in the past and had success with it. For instance, when I did [that whole month of being a raw vegan](#) just for fun, I told people I was going to do it beforehand. I did it on the podcast back then and then when I actually went through with it, it was no problem to eat that way for an entire month. That's why I'm doing it.

Let's dive in. I have a number of different goals, something like 15 or so that I want to talk about. Now this may sound like a whole lot of goals or it may sound like not that many. In the past, I used to have a much larger list of goals. I've really narrowed it down and on that note, it may sound like I still have quite a few but a lot of these are related and I want to be sure that I cover my whole body. Let's just dive into them and I'll discuss a bit as we go along.

My number one goal for the year is a one-arm chin-up. This has been a big goal of mine for quite some time now. I was planning on achieving it in the past year and didn't quite get it. I do think it is within

reason that I'll be able to achieve this goal by the end of the year. Right now, in my current training—I have been training actively towards this goal for some time—I'm using a lat pulldown machine but doing it with one arm or one-armed hand grip and with that I'm able to work with different weights. I've been varying it, working with lighter weights, working with heavier weights, and just increasing what I can do.

At this point, I'm able to pull—I forgot the exact weights on there but I think it's like 137.5 pounds, maybe I'm in the 150 range. I don't have that far to go according to this. I don't believe this is going to carry over 100% to the exercise but I think it is for a large part. You're still doing the thing. I'm not hooking my legs in when I'm doing this movement, which is one thing that would throw it off because you're anchored in place. While doing this, there is still some other work on actual bodyweight pull-ups but this is something that I'm enjoying doing and I'm seeing progress within it so I believe that it will carry over to doing the one arm chin-up. By doing this, I think within a year's time I can achieve that goal.

With each of these goals I also do have sub-goals that I'm going to hit. I may address some of them but might not talk about all of them. Another major goal I have is to achieve the straddle press handstand as I've written about and talked about quite a bit recently on my site, LegendaryStrength.com. I am getting much closer than I've ever been to achieving this just in my ability to do a negative on this movement or what I feel when I'm doing the movement. There is still a ways to go but this is basically my number two goal so I'm going to be spending a lot of time with this.

That brings up something else I want to address here. When you're working with some training goals, for many of them you can only do so much work. For the one-arm chin, for stuff like the deadlift I'll be talking about, you can only do so much work because you have to recover with those exercises and everything.

With something like the straddle press handstand, while it's still muscular and you do need recovery from it, it's a lot more skill-oriented. Because it's so skill intensive, you can spend a lot more time working on it. You can work on it every single day in possibly the same way but in a couple of different ways because that is quite the multifaceted move. You can do a whole bunch of stuff. You can work on it regularly and consistently. You can work on it daily. That means you're going to take a different approach with that because it's more skill-based than something that's really more strength-based.

That's something that I'm certainly keeping in mind. I'm actually committed to doing some daily practice towards the straddle press handstand, something I'm doing every day whereas with the one-arm chin, I'm not practicing the technique on that every single day. I'm actually doing that twice a week although there are some other things like levers that I'm working on as well that may have some carryover with that just because they're working the same muscles.

The straddle press handstand is my second goal. After this, these are in no particular order: a 605-pound deadlift. My [previous best ever was 505 pounds](#) which was pretty good. I was really happy with that, to break the 500-pound mark. That was over a two and half times body weight lift. I'm kind of light at 180 right now but even if I increased by 20 pounds, 600 pounds will still be a three times body weight deadlift. In order to hit this goal, it will definitely help to increase my body weight. I think I was up at 190

or somewhere around there when I fit the 505. I think by working at this over a year's time, I can build back up to that point because I certainly couldn't deadlift 505 pounds right now because I haven't been working on it that much. Then after that I should be able to surpass it.

The deadlift is a lift that I love to do. It's a really good one that I feel strong in and have a lot of fun with so it's something I wish to pursue further. I like it a whole lot more than squatting or deadlifting so I'm choosing to go much further with that.

One thing that was a big change in my training over this past year which may have actually led me away from hitting some of the goals I had wanted when I started the previous year but I've had a lot of fun with and want to continue with is I started rock climbing. I have some goals related to that. If you're not familiar with rock climbing, they have ranking systems for how you do different climbing.

When it comes to bouldering, for some reason—I don't know the details if this—it starts with a V then it has a number. So there's V0, V1, V2, V3, V4. I believe they go up to V15 or something which is just ridiculous climbs. Each level is more difficulty on the climb. So far, I've been able to accomplish up to V3 in about six months of training. Over the next year, I would like to hit both a V4 and a V5. That's what I'm going for and that's specifically with bouldering. With the other ones like using a belay, they have some other kind of ranking system but we're not going to talk about those so much. I just seem to enjoy bouldering because it's tough although in a different way. I seem to like it a little more. Those are my rock climbing goals. There are a few other goals and sub-goals along with that.

Another goal of mine is to hit the front lever. This past year, I succeeded in hitting a complete legs-together, [legs-straight back lever](#) and even holding that up to 15 seconds. It's not easy to hold for 15 seconds but I did accomplish that and was very happy with that because previously I think the best I had done was the little bit of a straddle back lever. I accomplished that goal but still have not accomplished the front lever which is quite a bit of a harder move in my opinion. I am getting closer to it. I am definitely closer now than when I started last year, that's for sure. I figure that I will be able to hit and hold it for something at least like 5 seconds this year.

I'm following a progressive system just working at levels where I increase the leverage on my body. Right now, I'm specifically working on what I call the advanced one-leg tuck or advanced one-leg front lever. With this, I held on leg out completely straight and then the other leg isn't tucked really close to the body because I've held that for quite a long time but it's halfway tucked, halfway untucked. I keep the foot next to the knee of the other leg. This makes it harder just by every inch you uncurl your legs increases the leverage and makes this a tougher move. So the front lever is a move I'm working on.

I'm also working on the human flag. I've been able to hold that in a tucked position. I'm going to start working towards the straddle position and then finally work in the complete human flag position where both legs are out straight. Once again, I've found some interesting things with this. One is it really does take practice to learn the position, how to get your arm structured right through your shoulder in the pole and everything so this is something that should be practiced quite often in the beginning.

Once you get a really good position, then I think it's going to be more strength fatiguing once you're actually levering out in the position. It also highly depends on your hand placement and the bar you're using. For instance in parallel bars, I've had a lot more success in those earlier than when I went to a normal vertical bar like you would a signpost or something. It becomes much harder to do. So there is far more lot of technical ability in this than in most of the other moves like doing a front lever. There is some skill in there but you really just have to be ridiculously strong.

Some other [hand balancing](#) goals include five freestanding handstand push-ups. I just recently hit three so this is a goal that I should be able to accomplish probably in maybe a month or maybe two months. We'll see. It should be a pretty easy one for me. Along those lines, I also want to do a tiger bend. If you're not familiar with a tiger bend, it is when you go from a forearm stand where you're resting across the full length of your forearms and then press up into a handstand. Now in order to do this move, it's not just a strict press where you're basically doing a tricep extension but there is some body movement as you're doing this exercise.

That being said, it still takes a whole lot of strength to be able to do it. It's not some easy move. It's not something that you can really just, if you have all the skill in the world, do. You still need a good amount of strength and those freestanding handstand push-ups are something that will really help lead up to this movement, which is why I've been working on those. So I plan to get the tiger bend really soon. I'd say I could probably achieve that by the half year mark.

I have a couple of flexibility goals. I would like to be able to do the full pancake drill. This alone would help me big time towards the straddle press. To be honest, I haven't been focusing too much on my flexibility lately. I just let other things get in the way but I'm starting to really get back into doing that regularly. Down the line further because I don't think that one's too far off but I'd like to be able to do the complete side splits. I've never gotten really close. I can do close to the front splits at any time. If I really work on it I can get down to pretty much the bottom of it but the side splits have not been something I've been close to so that will take quite a bit more work to get it. If I do the work, I know I can achieve that.

I already mentioned the 605-pound deadlift. Another goal I have, which I had the previous year but I actually just never worked on, is a 1,000-pound support in the wrestler's bridge. If you've seen it, there is a [video on YouTube](#) that I have. It's over 600 pounds where I support in this position, that is supporting a barbell overhead then having someone sit on my legs—in this case it was Bud Jeffries also holding additional weight—and in total it was over 600 pounds. I'd like to do half a ton in this position. I think if I consistently worked on it, I'd be able to do it. One hard part is I need to have a good set up and people that weigh enough weight. Probably for that I would need multiple people in order to do this lift. But I can be training for it regularly and then when I have the opportunity to do that, then I can go forward with it. That is something I would like to hit as well.

Something else that I haven't been doing lately but at some point this year—not right now because I'm focusing so much more on the other stuff including the [kettlebell juggling](#), just finishing putting together that course—once that's wrapped up, I want to start to shift my goals a little bit. I'd like to get back into

the kettlebell snatch. At this point, just because of the controversy and everything , I don't really want to work with the 24-kg kettlebell so much, trying to go faster and faster with that.

I have two goals here. I would like to do with a 32-kg kettlebell 200 snatches with multiple hand switches in ten minutes. That is very difficult to do. The whole secret service snatch fest that's usually done with the 24-kg and the goal is to hit 200. If you can do that with a 32-kg, that's doing something pretty amazing. I'd also like to go to the GS route with this just with the snatch. I do not wish to pursue the kettlebell jerk with two kettlebells just because it is uncomfortable for me and in order to become good at it, I'd have to deform my body. I'd have to basically permanently curve my upper spine in order to get good rack position to be able to go with it. At some point in the future, maybe that will change but I just want to pursue the snatch and actually work up to a Master of Sport ranking level.

Many years ago, maybe it was like four or five years ago I'd say, when we just learned the GS style of the [kettlebell snatch](#) and all their movements after going through the AKC, I was focused on it for a while and I worked up to a best of 150 total snatches with the 24-kg kettlebell in ten minutes. This was with one hand switch. That would get me to a rank 1 in how they rank according to the AKC.. To get the master sport, I just looked at my numbers at my current weight. I would need to do 65 reps in each hand total with the 32-kg kettlebell. That's going to take some dedicated work to do. I just know right now with all the other things I'm focusing on besides a little bit of work without going too heavy or too often, which I might do a little bit but I can't be focused on that one. So that's something I'm going to put towards later in the year.

This makes up all my training goals. I'm also actually planning on resuming my martial arts training. Since moving away from Medford, Oregon, I basically just stopped but I want to get back into it so I'm going to be doing that as well. That's going to have to be incorporated in all the other training time that I'm doing.

These are my goals for the year and I'm now publicly committed to doing them. Of course as I achieve the, you'll see videos and all that stuff as we go along. Now what I want to bring up is something fun. As a public person on the internet doing what I do, I get hate mail sometimes or hate comments. In this case, this one came from YouTube and actually relates to what we're doing here today so I wanted to talk about it.

This comment came [on one of my videos](#), "Why do you have a channel about hand balancing when you can't do anything beyond a handstand and a crappy stalder press,"—the truth is I can't even do a stalder press so I'm not sure why he's talking about that, "no one arm handstand, not even a straddle planche. Some teacher you are. You teach skills you can't even do."

Well truth is, I don't really teach the skills that I can't do. I teach stuff I can do like [how to get into a handstand](#). Most people can't do that so I feel fine teaching it and I've republished older works and bring stuff in from other people. Occasionally, I comment on this is how I would approach going toward this skill but I don't really teach so much things that I can't do.

Anyway, back to the comment, “and you’ve been doing it for four years now. What’s your excuse for not doing harder skills? All you do is some weird kettlebell shit no one even cares about. Pathetic.” So this is quite a fun comment but he does have something of a point. I have been doing hand balancing to some degree for four years now, give or take a year or something like that. Why am I not better than I actually am?

The truth is during that time, I truthfully have not practiced hand balancing all that much. If you look at anyone who is really good at hand balancing, look at how much they practice. One guy that proves this point is Ido Portal. If you have not heard of him, I would highly recommend you go check him out. Look at his videos online. This guy is a master of movement. Ido Portal trains something like four, five, six hours a day on these skills.

How much do I spend per day on hand balancing? Ten minutes. For large periods of time, I’m not even working on it. I’m doing that weird kettlebell shit that no one cares about apparently except all the people that say, “Hey, your kettlebell juggling is amazing.” I don’t spend all that much time on it. Still I would say yes, at this point, I should be better at the skills that I’m working on so I am spending more time with my hand balancing and guess what? I’m seeing more improvement by doing so.

In those four years, there were even times when I couldn’t even do a handstand because of my wrist injury so there are things that held me back. After learning everything I’ve learned, I’ve been able to get rid of those things. You could say these are excuses. Why aren’t I doing harder skills? Well, I’m devoting myself to more hand balancing practice so I’m going to start improving.

The truth is most people can’t even do the few hand balancing things I can so there’s nothing wrong with me teaching those people how to do a basic handstand because most people don’t want to get to a one arm handstand. They can’t fathom the difficulty, the skill, and the amount or practice it takes to get there. I’d like to get that skill at some point and if I dedicate myself, I know I can truly do it. It will take a lot of time.

But because hand balancing is just one small part of all the things I want to do and I’d say it’s not even primary compared to my strength goals, it’s not something that I spend a lot of time on. Also I’d say my physical training as a whole—you might not believe this—it’s not like my number one priority in life right now. In fact, I’d say a number of other things are bigger in priority. I’m always going to do and I’m always going to have as a fairly good priority when I train, I train but it’s really not the number one thing that I want to do.

It’s kind of funny. I’m working so hard in my business so that in the future when the business is bigger and more automatic and everything, I can take more time to train but the truth is I could just spend a little less time in building it in order to have more time to train. So I go a little back and forth on these things. As you can see through my list of training goals, I have quite a bit I want to accomplish.

Just to go over those again: one-arm chin-up, a straddle press handstand, climb a V4 and V5 in bouldering, do a front lever, a human flag, five freestanding handstand push-ups, a tiger bend, get the pancake drill to where my chest is flat on the floor, the complete side splits, a 605-pound deadlift, 1000-

pound support in the wrestler's bridge, 65 snatches per side with a 32-kg kettlebell with one hand switch, and a total of 210 minutes with multiple hand switches, once again with a 32-kg kettlebell.

Those are my goals right now. The truth is I'm likely to get more goals I'd like to accomplish in the year. Just at some point during the year, that always happens but right now where I'm at this moment, these are things I like to hit. An important thing is I'm working towards, at this time, nine out of the twelve that are in here. That's an important thing.

What I used to do in the past is I would have huge lists of goals and I'd actually be working toward a couple of them at any given time. By having these goals' public commitment, I'm going to hit them. This is the year I'm going to do really good with my training, I promise you that. So this is what I'd like you to do. If you like to join in with the fun.

Go to LegendaryStrength.com, and go to the blog where you'll find this podcast, this specific post on this podcast. I believe this is Episode 11 right now. Go into the comments section there and write down your **top three training goals**, whatever your top three training goals you can make a public commitment to, and I will hold you to these goals. We'll actually do a review maybe halfway through the year how you are doing toward these goals. I'll do it in a podcast or something like that and just call you up on them. Then in a year's time, see how you did on your training goals. I think by doing that, by getting the public commitment out there, you can have some fun with it and it can also help to propel you forward on your goals.

That's going to wrap it up for today. I had a lot of fun. I hope you are getting ready to make 2013 your best year ever. That's what I plan to do and I hope to share with you a number of things over this year that will make sure that that does happen for you. Thank you.