



# **SUPERHERO SIMPLIFIED**

**COLLECTED, SELECTED,  
REVISED AND EXPANDED**

**SCOTT BURR**

**TRAINING ADVICE AND PERSPECTIVES FROM THE  
AUTHOR OF "SUSPEND YOUR DISBELIEF: HOW TO BUILD  
AND BUILD STRENGTH WITH THE WORLD'S MOST  
RUGGED SUSPENSION TRAINING DEVICE"**

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*Also by Scott Burr*

**SUSPEND YOUR DISBELIEF**  
**How to Build and Build Strength with the**  
**World's Most Rugged Suspension**  
**Training Device**

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[WWW.SUPERHEROSIMPLIFIED.BLOGSPOT.COM](http://WWW.SUPERHEROSIMPLIFIED.BLOGSPOT.COM)  
**SIMPLIFIED**  
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## **DISCLAIMER**

Martial arts and / or strength training and / or related activities including but not limited to weight lifting, rock climbing, running, fabricating, etc., ARE DANGEROUS.

Always consult your physician before beginning any exercise program. The general information contained in this volume is not intended to diagnose any medical condition or to replace your healthcare professional. It is advised that you consult with your healthcare professional to design an exercise program that is right for you. If you experience any pain or difficulty with any exercise, you are advised to stop and consult your healthcare provider.

The instruction and advice contained in this volume are no substitute for hands-on training with and / or supervision from an experienced and qualified professional. It is advised that before you attempt anything described or shown in this volume you consult with a qualified professional / trainer. Superhero Simplified and Scott Burr take no responsibility for any injury or death resulting from anything you attempt based on anything you read in this volume.

## **AUTHOR'S FOREWORD**

I started the Superhero Simplified blog in August, 2013. At that time I'd been running The Fight Gym—a mixed martial arts training center-turned Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu dojo and Strength & Conditioning gym—for almost six years, and I felt like I had some ideas to share.

The original concept was to give regular people (read: non-fitness professions / athletes) practical advice and simple instruction on lifestyle, diet, fitness, martial arts, etc., and in so doing help them surprise themselves. I felt like I had finally sorted through a lot of my own misconceptions about training, and could see where other people were struggling.

I stopped posting new content on the Superhero Simplified blog in 2016. I felt that my overall perspective on martial arts and physical fitness had evolved, and I wanted a new venue whose tone reflected the change. That effort, however,—[www.JiuJitsuDoMaeda.com](http://www.JiuJitsuDoMaeda.com)—never grew into much beyond a few blog posts. I have included those posts in this volume, along with some materials that I prepared for private clients during this same time period. I have also included essays and excerpts that I wrote in the years since, but have not published.

When it comes to posts relating to fitness and physical conditioning, I have retained pieces where I felt the content might offer some food for thought to readers for whom fitness and working out are already a fact of life. I have, however, left out content where I simply describe a workout or a protocol. These pieces will be compiled into a later volume.

The contents of this book have been proofread for errors and selected for relevance, but except where noted they have not been edited for content or updated to reflect my current thoughts or training methods. That being said, I have not included here anything that I no longer feel to be fundamentally sound.

These materials represents a distinct era in my own martial arts

and fitness journey, and compiling them into this volume has given me the opportunity to reconnect with that time. It is not often that you're given the chance to look at the world through your younger self's eyes. It has been an interesting and often illuminating experience, and I am grateful to have had the chance.

As always, it is my hope that what I have written here will help you discover or rediscover just how much potential you have, and just how super you can be.

I wish you all nothing but the best that life has to offer.

*Scott Burr  
Cleveland, Ohio  
May 11, 2019*



## **START HERE**

*Originally published on SuperheroSimplified.blogspot.com*

*August 27, 2013*

Welcome to Superhero Simplified!

My name is Scott Burr. I'm a Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu instructor and Strength & Conditioning coach. I run a training facility called The Fight Gym located in Chagrin Falls, Ohio. Over the years I've developed, adopted, borrowed and co-opted a wide array of training methods, training philosophies, diet plans, and equipment designs; I've tinkered and created, refined and redesigned my methods and my tools, always looking for new ways to achieve the best results for myself and my students and clients. This blog is a place for me to collect these ideas and share them with any like-minded individuals out there.

Why the name Superhero Simplified? Because when I was a little kid, I wanted to be Batman.

No, I really, really wanted to be Batman. How bad? I could tell you about the time I jumped off the porch wearing a set of collapsible hang-glider wings I'd fashioned out of wood scraps and garbage bags. Or I could describe the time I swung off the tree in our backyard with a rope tied to my "utility belt." I could recite any of a number of incidents that took years off my mother's life, but maybe it's better if you just believe me when I say that I really, really wanted to be the Caped Crusader.

Then, like all little boys, I grew up. I went off to college, studied English Literature, and bounced around out West. I studied martial arts (first the Korean style Kuk Sul Do, then Muay Thai, Boxing, American Freestyle Wrestling, and Gracie Jiu-Jitsu), spent a good deal of time rock climbing, and eventually settled back in the small Mid-western town where I was born and raised.

When I turned thirty, as people do when these milestone birthdays come around, I took stock. Like everyone else who has ever

walked the planet my life's story was a mixed bag of successes and disappointments. On the one hand, I wasn't the bestselling novelist I thought I would be. On the other hand, I was nearing the rank of black belt in Gracie Jiu-Jitsu and, as I was (and still am) working as a GJJ instructor, this was a big part of my life and personal point of pride. I wasn't living the life of the "climber bum," following the seasons from Southern California to Yosemite, but I had helped to build a unique martial arts and strength & conditioning facility, and in the process had become part of a community.

Looking back it occurred to me that, while my stated goals had evolved with my age, my various pursuits had actually pursued another, earlier goal. I'd learned to fight, to ascend and descend fantastic heights, to condition my body and challenge my mind. Wasn't this the mold of the comic book hero I'd most emulated as a child? What was my life, if not an adult's implementation of a child's wish to be the Dark Knight?

This blog is meant to be an online resource for any and everyone looking to change their diet, increase their fitness level, learn an awesome skill (How to choke a bad guy unconscious! How to rig a rappel!), and basically become a superhero. Will I teach you how to leap tall building in a single bound? No, but I will show you the methods I've used to maintain and increase my health, fitness, and competence.

So what are you waiting for? It's time to be super!

## **MEN SEEKING FAILURE**

*Originally published on SuperheroSimplified.blogspot.com*

*September 13, 2013*

Take a second to think this through with me.

If you come to the gym and work out with me, and at the end of the workout I'm beat and talking about how hard it was and you say something like, "It wasn't really that bad," or, "the only really hard part was \_\_\_\_\_," to what do you attribute this discrepancy?

There are two options, right? Either 1) you're stronger / tougher / in better shape than me, or 2) you and I did different workouts.

Logically it must be #1, right? Because you know that we did the same workout, right?

But do you really think that's the case? Really?

I'm not trying to claim that I'm the toughest, fittest guy on the planet. I am trying to say that if 1) you think I'm fitter / stronger / tougher than you, and 2) you work out with me and I have a harder time than you do, the discrepancy probably lies in what you're doing. And it might hold the key to why you're not seeing the kind of results you want to be seeing.

Before I go any further, then, I have to ask the question: What is the purpose of exercise? What does it do? Why should I do it? What am I doing to myself or for myself when I go into the gym?

The answer is that exercise conditions your body to greater stress—mechanical, cardiovascular, etc.—than it was previously acclimated to. It's not a great tool for weight loss when compared to diet change, and cosmetic alteration is more dramatically and more effectively achieved through body fat loss (via diet change) than through exercise. Further, the extreme stress of a prolonged high intensity workout cannot in and of itself be called "healthy." (Is throwing yourself down a flight of stairs or running from an angry dog healthy? This is the kind of stress / damage you are subjecting yourself to.)

So let me ask you: Do you have this purpose in mind when you come to the gym? Do you go in with the intention of challenging yourself, or do you go in with some vague notion that exercise is “good” for you, or that you’re going to work off the six beers and the chocolate cake you had last night? (News flash: you’re not.)

Play a quick little mind game with me. I’ll make a statement, and you rebut.

I am not physically able to do twenty-five strict push-ups. I fail around fifteen.

You can’t do twenty-five, either. I bet you fail sooner than I do.

What did your brain just do? Did it say, “Wait a minute, Scott doesn’t even know me!” Did it say, “This cocky, know-it-all, so-and-so.” Did it say, “I can totally do twenty-five push ups! I’ll do them right now!” Did it say, “I must have been wrong, thinking Scott was strong / tough / handsome / a worthwhile coach / trainer / fighter.”

Or did you say: “Jesus Christ, what do those push-ups look like? Show me those!”

So let me go back and say, I can do twenty-five “push ups.” Hell, I can do fifty. So can you, I’m sure. But I don’t care (and you shouldn’t care, either) about the push-ups that I (or you) can do fifty reps of. I care (and you should care) about the ones that make me (and you) fail at fifteen.

If you come to a workout thinking of it as a test of your physical ability then the tendency is for you to do the versions of the exercises that you are already able to do. If I tell you to do ten push-ups and you see that as a test (is “I,” the entity, capable of overcoming this challenge?) then you are emotionally invested in the outcome (I don’t want to fail! If I fail it reflects poorly on me / diminishes me / affects the way I see myself and the way others see me!) and you have a strong emotional incentive to perform those push-ups in a manageable way, so that you can pat yourself on the back at the end and think better of “I” (“I” did it! “I” am capable! “I” am as strong as Scott! Scott’s challenge was no match for “I”!).

My question to you is: WHAT IN THE HELL IS THE POINT OF THAT?!? You came to the gym to work out which means that you came to the gym to condition your body to greater stress than it was previously acclimated to which means you came to the gym to FAIL. If you do the push ups you can already do then WHY WOULD YOUR BODY ADAPT? It was already capable of doing those ten garbage push-ups!

This is not about you and me. This is not about which of us is stronger or fitter or better looking. This is and always was about YOU and YOU. Good for you that you don't think the workout was very hard. 6 months of your half-assed version of my workout is going to leave you exactly where you were six months ago.

Really think about this for second. You are not wasting my time or energy when you do those wide grip, partial range of motion push ups: YOU ARE WASTING YOUR TIME AND ENERGY. The emotional bolster you gain by "beating" my workouts isn't worth one iota of actual improvement.

I want you to be strong. I want you to be a superhero, mutant, animal strong. But the borderland between what I can do for you and what you have to do for yourself is forever your domain. I can tell you that push ups follow squats, I can challenge you to a certain extent, but I can't make you challenge yourself. If you come in looking to bolster your ego by overcoming "tests" then you are interested in what you ARE, not what you're trying to become. And that, frankly, is a stupid, stupid waste.

Don't come into the gym afraid of failing. Come into the gym seeking failure.

See you on the mats.