

The +1 Protocol

Every hard rep comes with a thought that wants you to stop.

This is how you turn that thought into proof you didn't.

In over a decade of coaching people through movement (group classes, HYROX, 1:1 sessions) I have learned that the hardest moment in a session is never really about the body. It's the thought that shows up right before someone wants to quit, and what happens after it. This is the tool I use, to make sure that thought never gets the last word.

1

BEFORE YOU START – COUNT IT

Any time you catch yourself thinking, even for a second, *this is too much, this is too hard, I can't do this* — count it. Keep a number running in your head. Don't push the thought away. Just notice it, count it, and keep moving.

2

WHILE YOU TRAIN – LET IT GROW

Train exactly like normal. If it's hard, it's hard. That's real, and it counts. Every time the thought shows up, add one. You're not trying to keep the number low. You're just simply keeping the score.

3

WHEN YOU'RE DONE – ADD ONE, SAY IT OUT LOUD

Take your number. Add one. Say the new number, out loud!

"I wanted to give up on myself 6 times. Yet, I chose to stay and show up 7!"

The +1 isn't generous. You're still standing there, saying the number. That's the extra one.

6+1=7

Why it works

You don't need the research to use this with a client (or yourself) tomorrow morning. Yet, you want to understand why it lands, here's the short version:

NAMING IT

Putting a feeling into words (even just naming it) measurably lowers the brain's threat response to it. Psychologist Matthew Lieberman's 2007 research on "affect labeling" found this effect directly: naming calms the nervous system before anything else has to happen.

COUNTING, NOT SUPPRESSING

Exposure therapists use the same principle with a live 0-100 distress scale during hard moments: turning an overwhelming feeling into a trackable number stops it from feeling limitless. Counting doubt-thoughts mid-session does the same job.

THE +1

Psychologist Albert Bandura's research on self-efficacy found that mastery experiences (succeeding despite doubt) build a person's belief in themselves more than encouragement or watching someone else do it. The +1 makes that mastery explicit, every time.

SAYING IT OUT LOUD

Research on self-affirmation shows that stating something true and self-relevant, right after a challenge to your sense of competence, leaves people more open to the next hard thing. Not more defensive about the last one.

TRACK IT! SESSION OVER SESSION

DATE	DOUBTED	DIDN'T QUIT



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I bring applied sport psychology into everyday coaching (group classes, HYROX training and 1:1 work). After a decade on the training floor, I've learned the real work is rarely just physical. The +1 Protocol is one of the tools I use to make that visible in a single session.

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