

# RE 67 FLEX

THE KIESER TRAINING MAGAZINE



## BODY IN BALANCE

Professional musician Tae-Hyung Kim has a clearly defined goal: He wants to be a good pianist. This is what motivates him to practice every day for hours on end – and also to go to Kieser Training.

### MONIKA HERBST

Tae-Hyung Kim, 33 is well travelled. He has studied in Seoul, Moscow and Munich and played in orchestras in several countries, including Japan, Russia and France. He now lives in Munich where until 2015 he was a student at the University of Music and Performing Arts. However, he is often away from home and spends about one-third of the year travelling. Being out on the road is part of his life – as is the piano.

Kim often closes his eyes when he is sat at the piano. When he plays he needs to conjure up pictures, colours and feelings in his mind's eye. To find and retain the right tone colour he has to practice for many hours and repeat individual phrases over and over again. In the run-up to a concert, Kim practices for six to seven hours per day and at other times it is three to four hours. This requires energy and so strength and motivation are extremely important attributes for him.

Kim started playing the piano when he was 5 years old. As a child, it was all very simple. "For me it was a game. I learned quickly and so it was fun," he says. Now as a professional musician, the demands on his body and mind are such that he often has to take a break. To regain his strength and enjoyment of music, he has to get away from the piano. He often goes for a walk, to a museum or to Kieser

Training. When his strength returns so does his motivation. The way in which motivation and excellence are treated varies from country to country. Kim is aware of these differences. In Korea, children hoping to become professional musicians attend special schools from 12 years of age. As in Russia, the timetable is focussed on the end goal and in both countries the teaching tends to stick religiously to the timetable. In Germany, the approach is somewhat different: Kim found the teaching and interaction with professors in Germany much more open: "I had many more opportunities to express my feelings through the music."

In the final analysis it was the methods in all three countries that helped him progress. For him, it has always been important to get to know the home country of the great composers whose music he plays. He likes to experience life in those countries, to discover how the inhabitants think, speak and live and to become familiar with the countryside. What that means for his music he explains with an example: Last spring, he was on a train travelling from Moscow and from the window he saw the endless forests with their snow-capped birch trees. The view immediately reminded him of a piano concerto by the Russian composer Sergei Rachmaninoff. Now when Kim plays Rachmaninoff, he calls up these pictures and feels a little closer to the composer. For him, the situation is clear: "What I see and feel is very important for my music."

In order to play well, Kim's body also has to be in balance and function properly. Strength training is a great help. "Playing the piano involves not just the fingers but the entire body," he explains. If his body is in good shape, Kim can devote all his energies to music – and be what he wants to be: a good musician. To hear his music or find out about his concert dates and recordings, visit <https://www.pianist-taehyungkim.com>.

*"For me, strength means confidence in myself."*

# USE SELF-MOTIVATION TO ESCAPE MEDICINE'S "REVOLVING DOOR"

Most people find it difficult to lead an active lifestyle. However, if you want to keep your back healthy, you must have a strong muscle corset. Dr Martin Weiß explains what needs to be done differently – by patients, healthcare systems and doctors.



## MONIKA HERBST

It may well be practical: You go to the doctor with acute back pain; the doctor gives you an injection and you return almost immediately to your desk. That benefits everyone; patients because they are soon "back in action" and doctors because it's profitable to work that way. Nevertheless, the system has one major snag. Whatever triggered the pain is still there. In most cases, back pain is linked to a facet joint dysfunction or weak back extensor muscles. Not a good idea, therefore, to go straight back to your comfortable office chair. No sooner have you left the consulting room than you need to return. This is because after a while – it may be three weeks or three months – it starts all over again: The pain returns and you need to go back to the doctor.

"Only about one-tenth of an iceberg shows above the surface of the water. This one-tenth represents your pain and symptoms. The rest of the iceberg is invisible because it is under water; these nine-tenths represent your weak muscles," explains Dr Martin Weiß, a general practitioner and specialist in manual medicine. The problem is that "medical treatment is normally limited to removing the top of the iceberg". The results are predictable: The iceberg produces a new top, e.g. another joint dysfunction and so the pain returns.

## Working together to remove the iceberg

Weiß aims to end this vicious circle: "I have to make it clear to patients who consult me that the real work does not start until the pain has abated. We then have to work together to tackle the iceberg." That is uncomfortable because it is about changing lifestyles and dealing with the root causes of the problem, e.g. by targeted strength training as well as daily exercise such as climbing the stairs or going for a walk. "Humans are not designed for a sedentary lifestyle," says our expert.

In his experience, only a very few manage to tackle the root cause and motivate themselves to do more physical exercise. According to Weiß, "only 15% of the population manage to

follow a lifestyle that is appropriate for the human species". For the remaining 85%, calls to take more exercise simply fall on deaf ears. How can we change that and what can patients, doctors and healthcare systems do?

*"Only about one-tenth  
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*Dr Martin Weiß*

The patient is central to this debate. For Weiß, it is clear: "Success largely depends on patient motivation and their personal initiative. If patients fail to cooperate fully and take personal responsibility for their exercises as treatment progresses, they will fail to escape medicine's revolving door. They will simply continue to go back and forth to the doctor." Weiß knows that he is asking a great deal from his patients. "Irrespective of whether they are unskilled workers or university professors, I expect them to follow my recommendations and do their strength-training exercises regularly and with the utmost precision". If that does not happen, he can get a little annoyed!

## Discussions with patients take time

However, doctors and healthcare system also play an important role. In order to reach the majority of the population, patients need more time than the few minutes normally allocated for a doctor's appointment. Weiß is lucky: His patients genuinely want to change things but even he still has preparatory work to do: He has to listen to what the patient says, put it into some sort of order and create a basis for trust. In particular, the first appointment needs time, one hour is normal. He gives the patient a thorough examination and places great emphasis on ensuring that the diagnosis is explained as clearly and vividly as possible. His objective: Patients should understand that they have a responsibility to do something for their health.

Weiß realizes that he can only afford this time commitment because he runs a private practice and patients are either paying for their own treatment or have private health insurance that covers the higher cost. "If I didn't have a private practice, I would not be able to provide this service or only to a very limited extent," he says.

## Educational sessions? Unfortunately nowhere in sight!

Weiß takes the view that there is a need for more than just a visit to the doctor. Many patients with back problems would benefit from intensive educational sessions similar to those offered in Germany to people with Type 1 diabetes. However, for back patients such services are nowhere in sight.

So what should we do? Weiß reckons that general practitioners also have some responsibility, as do health managers. They need to identify what measures are actually appropriate and where the patient is best treated. The importance of muscles is central to this – even though only a few doctors are actually aware of this. Weiß is asking the profession to undergo a paradigm shift: "There is now good scientific evidence that strong muscles are crucial. However, patients are still more likely to find out about the benefits of strength training from the media or recommendations from friends than from their own doctor. This must change. Many medical conditions respond so well to strength training that patients recover fully and remain resilient." In this respect, doctors can provide patients with the crucial, long-term motivational impetus that encourages them to adopt an active lifestyle, do strength training and ideally play a sport. Not only that but they should be doing it out of conviction; after all, you cannot delegate "being healthy".



## Our expert:

Dr Martin Weiß, 66, is a general practitioner and a specialist in manual medicine in Rosenheim. He focusses on medical strengthening therapy and preventive strength training.

# "I ALWAYS FEEL GOOD AFTER TRAINING"

There are days when you simply don't want to train. If that happens, how do you manage to motivate yourself? With a positive suggestion, says Marion Sulprizio, a psychologist at the German Sport University in Cologne. She explains how that works.

## MONIKA HERBST

You are sorely tempted to skip training that day. After all, the day was jam-packed with meetings or one of your best friends has suggested that you meet that evening for a drink. Often, just one negative thought is enough to push those good intentions to work out on the back machine right out of the window. You may be thinking "I really don't fancy it today," or "it is always so strenuous". However, you are not completely at the mercy of such thoughts. Instead, why not think to yourself: "I always feel so good after training. My head is clear and my body pleasantly tired." And before you know it, you are there lacing up your trainers.



## Think positively

Exert an influence on yourself! Experts call this autosuggestion and it is also the method recommended by the psychologist Marion Sulprizio from the German Sport University in Cologne: "All you have to do is to switch from thinking

negatively to thinking positively," explains the expert. To ensure that you have the right phrase on the tip of your tongue when you need it, Sulprizio recommends that you write them down (for examples see box). However, not only words can be used for autosuggestion. Pictures can as well: Perhaps you are particularly motivated by a photo of yourself standing erect and confident giving a presentation in public or possibly on a beach showing off your strong and healthy body.

## Diary says "Kieser Training"

To a very large extent, what convinces you are your own personal goals. For example if you want to strengthen your back, think about the individual steps you need to take to achieve that goal. "Make them as concrete as possible," says the psychologist Sulprizio. For example, write "Kieser Training" every Monday and Thursday in your diary or place a note in your training bag: "Today, I will exceed my limit and train to the point of local muscle fatigue on each machine."

## Rewards as extra motivation

If you have not exercised for many years, you may need a little more support until training becomes a habit. "One good way is social control," says Sulprizio. Ask someone you trust to ask regularly how it is going or ask someone to come with you to train. When you first start, rewards can be helpful, e.g. a homemade smoothie or your favourite magazine. "We like rewards; they help motivate us to repeat what we have just done," explains Sulprizio. There will come a time when your intrinsic motivation is such that you no longer need this external motivation. You can still go for a drink with your best friend but not until you have done your training and you are feeling good.

## Positive suggestions Sentences to help you stick at it

Thanks to the training,  
my back feels good and strong.

I train so that I remain strong  
and have lots of energy.

I have my training to thank for my good figure.

After training I feel comfortable in my body.  
I stand tall and am confident.

Training relaxes me  
and allows me to sleep soundly.



## Profile:

Marion Sulprizio is a qualified psychologist, a systemic coach and change manager at the Psychology Institute at the German Sport University in Cologne.

## FINGER ON THE PULSE OF SCIENCE



## DR SC. ETH DAVID AGUAYO KIESER TRAINING RESEARCH DEPARTMENT

Physical inactivity is the cause of 9% of all deaths worldwide. According to a study carried out in 2010, it is one of the top ten risk factors for disease development. In other words, inactivity has "pandemic status" with far-reaching health, economic, ecological and social consequences.

Despite this, 30% of the world's population does not take the recommended amount of

## STRENGTH TRAINING IS A NECESSITY

physical exercise per day and the situation is even worse with older people: Amongst those over 60 years of age, some 45% fail to achieve the recommended amount of physical activity. If you also take account of the factor "social apathy", the figure for those over 75 years of age is 75%.

Bearing in mind the predicted increase in global population, this level of inactivity should be of public concern. Physical activity and in particular strength training is not an option but a necessity.

However, what are the reasons for inactive lifestyles? Irrespective of age, gender and health, the pretexts put forward are often a lack of time, no gym or at least no gym within easy reach.

The fact is that an investment in your own body not only pays dividends now but also

in the future as your descendants will benefit from your genes. Strength training not only increases muscle mass but it also has an impact on the systems that interact with muscles such as the heart, brain and bones. If you use your musculoskeletal system regularly, you also trigger the release of signals that are vital for a healthy life.

## Important for motivation:

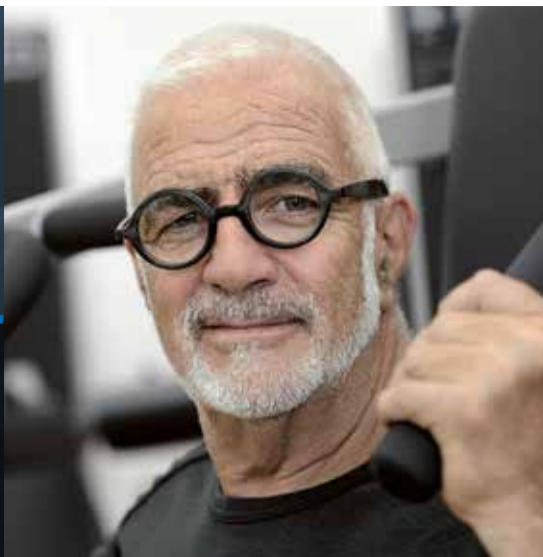
You need a recovery phase of about 48 hours as this gives your muscles time to regenerate. If the recovery period is too short, then the quality and intensity of the exercises are likely to suffer at your next session. Don't try to achieve too much too quickly. It is much better to have more realistic goals: Structure your training so that the frequency and the quality of the exercises keep you motivated in the longer term.

*"The concept of strength training thrives on the realization that it is a necessity."*

*Werner Kieser*

## WERNER KIESER'S CORNER

TRAINING  
PRINCIPLES  
ARE ESSENTIAL



Beginners often say “but that is not pleasant”. True, it is not pleasant but it is effective. After all, you don’t come to Kieser Training for fun. You come because you want to achieve something.

*“True, it is  
not pleasant  
but it is effective.”*

This is not just some catchy slogan; it is a fact. Instead of asking customers who no longer trained why they had stopped, I started asking customers who had been training for 10, 20 or even more years why they continued. In essence, their answer was always the same. “When I first started, I found the training boring. I remember training with you (or some other instructor). I did not want to appear a wimp and so I did every exercise to muscle fatigue. After the session I was really tired but strangely enough I felt happy. From then on I did not find the training boring. Quite the opposite: I had reached my limit and my body wanted to reach that at every session.”

**Training Principle 3: “Select a weight that allows you to do an exercise for 90 to 120 seconds”.**

I am sometimes asked “why not shorter or longer”. The relationship between duration and intensity of muscle contractions determines the success or otherwise of your training. This relationship is reciprocal: If the resistance (weight) is too high, the period of time under load will inevitably be

shorter. If the period under load is too long, the resistance is insufficient and not enough muscle fibres are being activated.

In the past, it was assumed that the optimum period under load was 60 to 90 seconds but several recent studies have indicated that muscles should be contracted for longer than that. Ideally, the target muscle should fatigue in 90 to 120 seconds.

For more than 60 years, I have been telling people that the body’s growth metabolism is only stimulated if you exert yourself. What is more, strength training should be done throughout life not just for a short period. Similarly, when asked “what about my inner couch potato”, my answer is always the same: Train hard for a full year – and you will have overcome it.

Psychologists call this “intrinsic motivation”. The first time you experience your limit is likely to be as a result of “extrinsic motivation”, i.e. from an instructor and in the case of men it is frequently a female instructor. This is followed by a breakthrough and the inner couch potato disappears.

Werner Kieser

## NEW: I-B6

In future, train with a particularly exciting partner – yourself!

Our colleagues in Research and Machine Development have just revealed their latest impressive machine: the i-B6. This infimetric machine trains the thigh and gluteal muscles: without weights, it is gentle on the knees and it is highly effective.

How does it work? Find out in the next edition of Reflex.

We will gradually  
be equipping our centres  
with the new machine.



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